

Cluster 8 Written Statement presented by Major Groups of Women, Children and Youth, Indigenous People, NGOs

Thank you Co-Chairs.

Co-Chairs, at the outset, we commend the changes made to the new version of your Focus Areas document.

We are happy to see articulation on Peaceful, Non-violent Societies and Rule of Law in the Focus Areas document as, without this basic precondition, no development can be envisioned. However, the clubbing of critical issues of Peaceful Non-violent Societies with Rule of Law addresses a lot in a limited frame. Hence, we call for two separate focus areas to address these. We also seek an additional standalone focus area on Governance.

It is critical that the Post-2015 SDG agenda address root causes of violence and conflict and build on existing commitments to promote sustainable development and peace. We submit following five areas for your consideration and also call upon the Co-Chairs to consider the indicative targets provided as part of each of the areas for consideration:

1. **Promote peaceful societies:** The SDGs should strengthen investments in peaceful societies based on just and equitable norms. For this, additional focus must be towards ending conflicts due to resource extraction and militarization that lead to displacement and human rights violation (especially of women, children, persons with disabilities and religious minorities). The SDGs must also recognize role of women's participation and rights to conflict prevention and peacebuilding*.

Focus must be to reduce spending on militaries, armaments; eliminating stockpiles and production of anti-personnel landmines and cluster munitions; demilitarizing lands and oceans particularly of Indigenous Peoples; recognition of all minorities (linguistic, ethnic, religious, sexual) by the State as citizens with equal rights; recognition of all peoples' identity in a nation and preventing identity-based violence.

Illustrative targets:

- Reduce by 2030 x% the number of violent deaths per 100,000 and reduce the number of people from all social groups affected by all forms of violence.
- Reduce by 2030 x% trade in arms and conflict commodities and drug trafficking (international stresses that drive conflict and violence)
- Recognise all minorities (linguistic, ethnic, religious and sexual) by the State as citizens with equal rights
- Identity database creation for all citizens within a nation and bringing down identity-based violence by y% by 2030.

2. **Secure human rights and rule of law:** The document would be strengthened by focus on involving state, non-state actors to implement protective measures against human rights abuses through targets to

* The 'Women, Peace and Security' (WPS) Agenda of the UN Security Council was initiated with UNSCR 1325 (2000) which provided historic recognition of the disproportionate and unique impact of armed conflict on women; the under-valued and under-utilized contributions that women make to conflict prevention, peacekeeping, conflict resolution and peacebuilding; and the importance of women's equal and full participation as active agents of peace and security. The WPS Agenda now comprises seven resolutions: UNSCR 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009), 1960 (2010), 2106 (2013), and 2122 (2013) as well as accountability mechanisms including the (2010) WPS Global Indicators.

eliminate child, early and forced marriage, female genital mutilation, honour killings, other harmful traditional practices, and violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Promotion of rule of law must be seen through increasing access to and confidence in justice processes by all, specifically the most-vulnerable, through strengthened legal systems consistent with international human rights standards; and ensuring Economic Social Cultural Rights for all.

We recommend process mechanisms such as: increased budgets for human rights and gender equality issues in strategic intergovernmental and national planning frameworks; mechanisms to ensure public and private institutions are accountable to respect human rights and environment.

Illustrative targets:

- Bring down sexual violence and harmful practices against girls and boys by x% and establishing effective child protection systems by 2030.
- Increase access to and confidence in justice processes for all people, specifically the most vulnerable, through a strengthened legal system that is consistent with international human rights standards:
 - o Time taken in delivery of justice, and
 - o Availability of free quality legal resources for marginalised and poor
- Ensure that by 2030 people from all social groups feel safe and have confidence in security provision by x%
- Increase budgets by x% to address human rights and gender equality issues in strategic planning frameworks of intergovernmental and national financial institutions
- Institutionalise x number of accountability mechanisms to promote respect for human rights and environment by public and private institutions by 2030.

3. **Citizen and civil society participation:** While the document briefly notes inclusive decision-making, the new frame must focus on bolstering citizens', civil society participation and institutionalise inclusive, gender-equitable participatory mechanisms through creation of regular, reliable, disaggregated database; public access to information¹; and, independent oversight. Critical add-on is to bring people to the centre of policy processes and outcomes through ensuring economic entitlements for vulnerable groups.

Illustrative targets:

- Ensure by 2030 maintenance of data disaggregated by disadvantaged groups (young, women, girls, indigenous people, and persons with disabilities) to measure extent of participation in design, implementation and monitoring of public policies at sub-national, national and global levels
- Develop capacity building programs to empower all people to participate in local, national and global-level dialogues.
- Creation of regular, reliable, disaggregated database
- Governments, private sector, civil society and international institutions work together to ensure that everyone has access to, understands, and is able to use and share the information that is necessary to promote sustainable development⁶

⁶ To elaborate: providing information on basic rights and entitlements, public services, environment, health, education, work opportunities, and public expenditure. Source: <http://beyondaccess.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Access-to-Information-and-the-Post-2015-Development-Agenda1.pdf>

- Regular database on independent community and civil society oversight processes, mechanisms and institutions
- Economic entitlements for vulnerable groups

4. **‘Just’ Governance[¥]**: Co-Chairs, we call for the SDG frame to mainstream deliberative and accountable governance with a standalone goal incorporating transparent, accountable, inclusive, responsive and participatory governance mechanisms and institutions. It must address specific disadvantages confronting children, youth, women, persons with disabilities and indigenous people. Right to information, independent media, freedom of association and speech, legislative and civil society oversight, and effective local governance structures are central to ensuring these.

Illustrative targets:

- Ensure by 2030 maintenance of publicly accessible, yearly, disaggregated (age, sex, population groups) data to monitor budget provisions, taxation policies, outputs and outcomes.
- Mechanisms and infrastructure (ICTs) are in place to ensure independent media, freedom of speech, public right to information covering government and private sector
 - o Right to Information legislation enacted
 - o Statement presented in national legislature outlining private sector participation in extractive resources sector
- Existence of legislative and independent civil society oversight mechanisms
- Consultative mechanisms such as pre-budget consultations to address concerns of socially-excluded, economically-weaker sections with robust follow-up institutional processes for action
- Locally-relevant plan formulation with follow-up institutional mechanisms to address multiple disadvantages confronting women, children, aged, persons with disability, religious minorities, indigenous castes and tribal communities
- Strengthen practice of and institutions for gender-responsive budgeting and budgeting for the disadvantaged sections of population to ensure earmarked, non-divertible budgetary provisioning

5. **Ending Corruption**: The new frame must explicitly seek to end corruption and promote integrity in public life (government, private sector and IFIs) through targets to curb transnational corruption, reduce illicit financial flows and tax evasion, national measures to promote progressive tax structures, strengthen independent ombudsman mechanisms and effective legal redress.

Illustrative targets:

- Reduce illicit financial flows, including money laundering, tax evasion, trade mispricing, transnational corruption, and bribery by x%, and recover at least y% of illicit financial flows, by 2030.
- Review and rationalise tax exemptions and incentives in order to reduce the perpetuation of inequalities

[¥] Some of the proposals outlined in the statement reflect consensus positions of Indian civil society for the new development agenda anchored by Wada Na Todo Abhiyan. Source: <http://www.wadanatodo.net/documents/outputs/mdgs/3%20Democracy.pdf>, <http://www.wadanatodo.net/documents/outputs/mdgs/4%20Just%20Governance.pdf>, <http://www.wadanatodo.net/documents/outputs/mdgs/6%20Peace.pdf>, <http://www.wadanatodo.net/documents/outputs/mdgs/13%20Finance.pdf>

- Ensure progressivity in the tax structure where a greater percentage of tax revenue is mobilized from direct taxes such as corporation tax, personal income tax, wealth and property tax as the poor (especially women, aged and persons with disabilities) bear a much greater burden of indirect taxes (like VAT).
- Existence of independent ombudsman
- Openness of state-business transactions to public scrutiny
- Conviction rate in corruption charges / corruption charges against government or public officials