

THE GLOBAL GOALS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

We envisage a ... world in which every woman and girl enjoys full gender equality and all legal, social and economic barriers to their empowerment have been removed.ⁱ

IWDA welcomes this recognition of the importance of gender equality and women's empowerment to achieving sustainable development.ⁱⁱ This is reflected in the Global Goals for Sustainable Development (SDGs) in a standalone goal on gender equality and women's empowerment (Goal 5), and in the recognition of gender dimensions in targets across other goals including those related to health, agriculture, education, climate change and economic inequality.

It is a major achievement that the importance of gender equality and women's empowerment is reflected across the SDG framework. This prioritisation was by no means guaranteed, particularly in the current global context where women's rights are constantly under attack. It resulted from the efforts of women's rights organisations and networks all over the world. It means that national governments have committed to act to empower all women and girls, and we have a new framework to hold them to account.

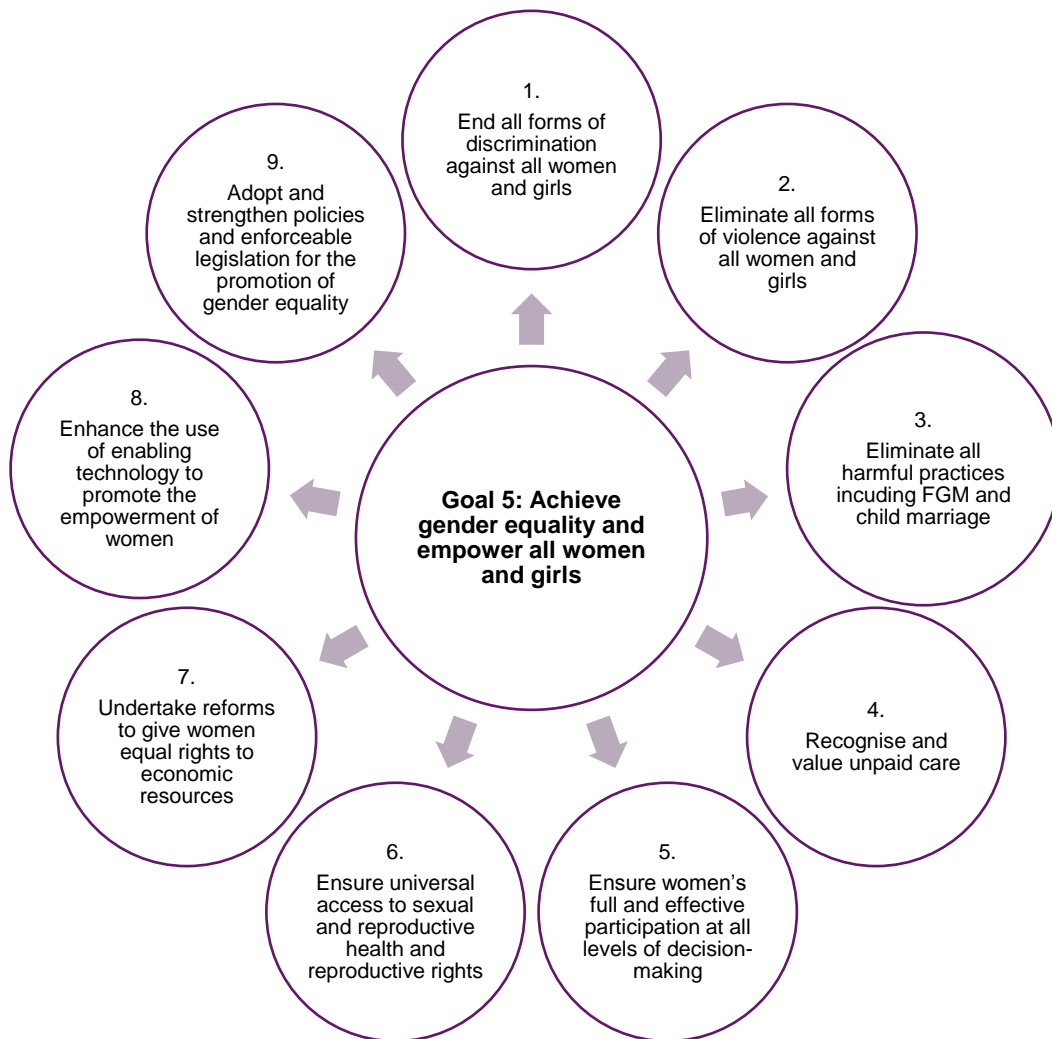
Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

At IWDA, as the leading Australian agency entirely focussed on women's rights and gender equality in the Asia Pacific, we will be focussing our efforts on Goal 5. It has enormous potential to drive forward Australia's commitment to women's empowerment and investment in gender equality both at home and abroad.

The breadth of the targets under Goal 5 is a major development in comparison to the more limited commitments on gender in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). We particularly welcome the inclusion of targets in relation to recognising and valuing unpaid care, eliminating violence against women, and universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights. It is also significant that the target in relation to women's participation in decision-making extends beyond the national level to include all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life.

There are limitations within Goal 5 such as the failure to recognise sexual rights or to tie any of the targets to a specific time frame. However, Goal 5 represents an important step forward from the previous MDGs framework and the range of targets provide important levers to drive implementation. We can use them to connect practical work with partners to a global change agenda, to demand action, track progress and push for resourcing.

Indicators to measure progress against the targets are still being developed by an expert group and are due to be finalised in March 2016. There will likely be at least two indicators per target. Civil society continues to engage with the aim of ensuring indicators are feasible and relevant yet ambitious and transformative.



Gender equality targets across other goals

In addition to Goal 5, 11 of 17 goals contain targets on gender equality. There are targets in relation to reducing maternal mortality and ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health services (Goal 3), eliminating gender disparities in education (Goal 4) and paying special attention to the needs of women and girls in the provision of clean water and sanitation (Goal 6) and safe and accessible green and public spaces and transport systems (Goal 11). Targets also include full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men (Goal 8) and a focus on women in climate change-related planning and management (Goal 13). There is also a commitment to increase gender disaggregated data (Goal 17) and to create policy frameworks based on gender-sensitive development strategies (Goal 1). Disappointingly, an explicit target on women, peace and security was not included under Goal 16 on the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies. However, the promotion of the full and effective participation of women in peace and security (as set out in United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and subsequent resolutions) is already a requirement, and so must form the foundation of efforts to achieve Goal 16.

A plan for action

Goal 5 and other gender equality-related targets provides a roadmap for change. Our collective challenge is to see this potential become reality. Governments have repeatedly signalled their support for gender equality through international agreements and commitments but the change for women and girls has been slow and limited. The first year of the SDGs is an opportunity for building the relationships and structures that will enable the Australian Government to be a leader on this agenda.

IWDA urges the Australian Government to lead by example, supporting Goal 5 through:

- *Targeted Resourcing:* Governments must meet their financing obligations, including through increasing the amount of overseas development assistance invested in gender equality and women's empowerment, both standalone gender equality programming and funding and support for women's rights organisations. [The Addis Ababa Action Plan on Transformative Financing for Gender Equality](#) developed by UN Women, the OECD and UN member states includes specific actions to address this under-investment in women's empowerment and must be a priority. Australia also needs to get better at tracking the funding which targets gender equality within its mainstream development spending.
- *Transformative Measurement:* There is a wealth of information and understanding about gender equality and women's empowerment, including the [Individual Deprivation Measure](#) which IWDA has helped to develop, which should inform the development of indicators and the measurement of progress. Mapping the data already being collected by the Australian Bureau of Statistics against the SDGs and assessing how data gaps can be addressed would be a good first step.
- *Ongoing Collaboration:* The SDGs apply to all countries. This provides an important opportunity for collaboration between local, national, regional and global women's rights networks, bridging divides between 'domestic' and 'international' issues and engagement. IWDA is uniquely positioned to foster these links and will continue to work with partners and across our networks to drive real transformative change for women and girls.
- *Coordinating Mechanism:* A whole-of-government approach, and coordination across local, state and national jurisdictions is key to ensuring Australia meets both its national and international obligations under the SDGs. A national action plan overseen by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) could include shorter-term targets as stepping stones to enable consistent progress towards the 2030 deadline, supported by specific financial commitments.

Table to support Goal 5 Article

Where are we now?	What are the global goals trying to achieve?
<p>Women and girls continue to suffer discrimination and violation of their rights in every part of the world, simply because they are women.</p>	<p>Target 5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere</p>
<p>It is estimated that 35 per cent of women experience violence in their lifetime and 30 per cent experience intimate partner violence.ⁱⁱⁱ ^{iv} Women and girls also make up 98 per cent of the estimated 4.5 million people forced into sexual exploitation worldwide.^v</p>	<p>Target 5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation</p>
<p>Over 125 million girls and women have been subjected to female genital mutilation^{vi} and child, early and forced marriage affects 15 million girls a year.^{vii}</p>	<p>Target 5.3 Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation</p>
<p>Women, on average, spend twice as much time on household work as men and four times as much time on childcare.^{viii} This is exacerbated for poor and marginalised women who have limited access to infrastructure, public services and social protection policies.</p>	<p>Target 5.4 Recognise and value unpaid care and domestic work</p>
<p>Women remain excluded from decision-making in public, political, economic and household life. Women's representation in national parliaments in the Pacific (15.7%) and Asia (18.4%) is particularly low.^{ix} Women hold mayoral positions in only 10 of the world's 195 capital cities.^x</p>	<p>Target 5.5 Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life.</p>
<p>In developing countries, pregnancy, unsafe abortion and childbirth remain the leading causes of death and disability among women of reproductive age.^{xi} There are currently some 222 million women in the developing world, including 140 million in the Asia Pacific region^{xii}, who would like to delay or stop childbearing but are not able to use an effective method of contraception.^{xiii}</p>	<p>Target 5.6 Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights</p>
<p>Worldwide, men are nearly twice as likely as women to have full time secure and highly paid jobs.^{xiv}</p>	<p>Target 5.a Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources</p>

<p>Women also continue to earn between 10 and 30 per cent less than men for doing comparable jobs.^{xv} In 15 countries, women still require their husband's consent to work.^{xvi}</p>	
<p>A 2010 study found that 21% fewer women than men own a mobile phone in low- to middle-income countries. For women who live in South Asia this gap rises to 37%.^{xvii} Domestic responsibilities, cultural restrictions to women's mobility and less access to income and resources, leads to women being marginalised from technology.^{xviii}</p>	<p>Target 5.b Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women</p>
<p>In a significant number of countries legislation which discriminates against women and girls remains, including laws that limit women's legal capacity, ownership of property, access to credit and access to education.^{xix} For example, in 26 countries statutory inheritance laws differentiate between women and men,^{xx} and a recent report into laws that limit women's employment and entrepreneurship found that women face employment restrictions in 100 of the 173 economies monitored.^{xxi}</p>	<p>Target 5.c Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels</p>

Useful Resources:

Transformative Financing for Gender Equality Action Plan (2015), available at: Statement by the Women's Major Group on the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030:
<http://www.womenmajorgroup.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Press-Release-WMG-re-2030-Agenda-WMG-10Aug2015.pdf>

Women's Major Group (2015). *Gender Equality, Women's Rights and Women's Priorities: Recommendations for the proposed Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Post-2015 Development Agenda*. Policy Statement. September 25.
<http://www.womenmajorgroup.org/strengthening-gender-justice-and-human-rights-to-achieve-sustainable-development/>.

Statement by AWID, *2030 Development Agenda Gets Adopted – Strong on Gender but Structural Obstacles Remain*, available at: <http://www.awid.org/news-and-analysis/2030-development-agenda-gets-adopted-strong-gender-structural-obstacles-remain>

Statement by APWLD, 'New Development Goals lack foundations to deliver according to women's rights network,' August 2015, available at: <http://apwld.org/new-development-goals-lack-foundations-to-deliver-according-to-womens-rights-network/>

For a detailed description of the monitoring framework for Goal 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls) see p145 of the [full report](#) or <http://unsdsn.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/150612-FINAL-SDSN-Indicator-Report1.pdf>

For a detailed description of proposed indicators, including a timeline:

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/7981List%20of%20Indicator%20Proposals%2011-8-2015.pdf>

ⁱ Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2015), para 8, available at:

http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/69/L.85&Lang=E

ⁱⁱ For example, gender equality and women's empowerment is recognised as 'a crucial contribution to progress across the Goals and targets (para 20).'

ⁱⁱⁱ London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (2013) *Violence against women: a global health problem of epidemic proportions*, available at: http://www.lshtm.ac.uk/newsevents/news/2013/gender_violence_report.html#sthash.DiS5epMy.dpuf

^{iv} London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (2013) *Violence against women: a global health problem of epidemic proportions*, available at: http://www.lshtm.ac.uk/newsevents/news/2013/gender_violence_report.html#sthash.DiS5epMy.dpuf

^v International Labour Organization (2012) *ILO Global Estimate of Forced Labour: Results and Methodology*. Geneva: International Labour Office, available at: http://apflnet.ilo.org/resources/ilo-global-estimate-of-forced-labour-2012-results-and-methodology/at_download/file1, p. 14

^{vi} UNICEF (2013) *Female genital mutilation/cutting: what might the future hold?* New York: UNICEF, available at: http://data.unicef.org/corecode/uploads/document6/uploaded_pdfs/corecode/FGM-C-Brochure-7_15-Final-LR_167.pdf

^{vii} United Nations (2014) *General Assembly Resolution on child, early and forced marriage*, New York: United Nations, available at: <http://www.un.org/un-general-assembly-adopt-historic-resolution-child-early-forced-marriage/>

^{viii} Duflo, E. (2012) 'Women Empowerment and Economic Development', *Journal of Economic Literature*, 50(4), 1052

^{ix} Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) as at 1 September 2015 available at : <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm>

^x United Cities and Local Governments Women: Standing Committee on Gender Equality (2013) *The Equality Agenda of United Cities and Local Governments*. Barcelona: UCLG, available at: <http://www.uclg-cisdp.org/en/equality-agenda-united-cities-and-local-governments-uclg>

^{xi} Lozano R., Naghavi M., Foreman K., et al. (2012) 'Global and regional mortality from 235 causes of death for 20 age groups in 1990 and 2010: a systematic analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2010,' *The Lancet* 380: 2095–128.

^{xii} <http://asiapacific.unfpa.org/public/pid/13199>

^{xiii} <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs351/en/>

^{xiv} World Bank (2014) *Gender at Work: A Companion to the World Development Report on Jobs*. Washington D.C.: World Bank, available at: <http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/gender/publication/gender-at-work-companion-report-to-world-development-report-2013-jobs>

^{xv} International Labour Organization (2009) *Global Employment Trends for Women*. Geneva: ILO, available at: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@dgreports/@dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_103456.pdf

^{xvi} World Bank (2014) *Gender at Work: A Companion to the World Development Report on Jobs*. Washington D.C.: World Bank, available at: http://www.worldbank.org/content/dam/Worldbank/document/Gender/GenderAtWork_web.pdf, p.2

^{xvii} GSMA, Cherie Blair Foundation for Women & Vital Wave Consulting (2010), *Women & Mobile: A Global Opportunity - A study on the mobile phone gender gap in low and middle-income countries*, 2010, available at:

http://www.gsma.com/mobilefordevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/GSMA_Women_and_Mobile-A_Global_Opportunity.pdf

^{xviii} A. Gurusurthy (2004), 'Challenging gender inequalities in the information society', *Gender and Development in Brief*, Issue 15, September 2004.

^{xix} The United Nations Working Group on Discrimination against Women in Law and Practice (2014) *Thematic Report*, A/HRC/26/39, 1 April 2014, available at; <http://www.ohchr.org/en/issues/women/wgwomen/pages/wgwomenindex.aspx>

^{xx} Klugman, J. et al. (2014) *Voice and Agency: Empowering Women and Girls for Shared Prosperity*. Washington, DC: World Bank Group, available at: <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/19036>

^{xxi} World Bank Group (2015), *Getting to Equal, Women, Business and the Law 2016* report, available at: <http://wbi.worldbank.org/~media/WBG/WBL/Documents/Reports/2016/Women-Business-and-the-Law-2016.pdf>