

GLOBAL GOALS: MOVING TOWARDS IMPLEMENTATION

“This is the moment to capitalise on all these positive commitments. It is a moment for all of us to ‘step it up’ with Agenda 2030 plans that are decisive, implementable and transformative.”¹

The Global Goals for Sustainable Development (‘the Global Goals’) provide us with an important moment to accelerate action on gender inequality and women’s empowerment worldwide. Our collective challenge is to see this potential become reality. Meeting the Australian Government’s commitments under these goals requires a coordinated approach across Australia’s work – domestically and internationally – and necessitates increased investment, improved data collection and active consultation with women’s rights organisations and networks both at home and abroad.

The first year of the Global Goals 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, by:

1) Consulting with women’s rights organisations and networks on implementation and review processes

The Australian Government has a key role to play in ensuring that women’s rights organisations, both at home and abroad, are actively consulted and engaged in the implementation and monitoring phase of the Global Goals. IWDA recommends that the Australian Government consider a **Global Goals Women’s Rights and Gender Equality Advisory Board** consisting of cross-government and civil society representatives with both a domestic and an international program focus, to enable ongoing consultation and shared expertise. The Australian Government should also take a lead in promoting the crucial role of women’s rights organisations and networks in making progress across the sustainable development agenda.

2) Developing a Cross-Government Coordination 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 global goals. 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.

3) Increasing investment to close the gender financing gap

Governments must meet their financing obligations, including through increasing the amount of overseas development assistance invested in gender equality and women’s empowerment. IWDA urges the Australian Government to increase its expenditure on aid investments which target gender equality as a principal objective. Alongside this, the Australian Government should also increase funding support for women’s rights organisations and networks, lifting aid coded as supporting ‘women’s equality organisations and institutions’ above current levels.² Improving the ability to track and report how much is spent on gender equality and women’s empowerment, and where, particularly when gender is mainstreamed within activities, is also crucial. Without this information, it will be very difficult to assess the effectiveness of efforts to achieve the gender-related targets within the Global Goals.

4) Drawing on existing international frameworks and commitments to inform action

Australia’s approach to implementation of the Global Goals must be informed by existing international commitments and language on women’s rights and gender equality such as the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Platform for Action, United Nations Security Council resolutions on women, peace and security³, the Cairo Programme of Action as well as various human rights treaties.⁴ In a context where hard won women’s rights gains are increasingly under attack, it is more important than ever that existing international commitments are reflected in national policies and practice.

5) Integrating efforts to achieve the Global Goals with existing mechanisms

Efforts to achieve progress across the Global Goals should be integrated with existing cross-government coordination mechanisms and action plans. For example, action to achieve Goal 16 on peace and justice should be integrated with existing efforts to implement the [Australian National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security \(2012-2018\)](#). Mechanisms to ensure a whole of government approach on women, peace and security, such as the Inter-Departmental Working Group on women, peace and security, can also be utilised to drive action on Goal 16. Similarly, the proposed third and fourth action plans under [Australia's National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010 – 2022](#) could provide a mechanism for coordination, consultation and cooperation spanning Australia's efforts to reduce violence against women both domestically and through the Australian aid program.

6) Leading on new international priorities

The inclusion of a target on unpaid care and domestic work in the Global Goals is a significant step forward in recognising the importance of unpaid care and its implications for poverty, gender inequality and human rights. As a developed country that supports gender equality, Australia can improve outcomes here and demonstrate the importance of unpaid care by making it a priority for advancing the sustainable development agenda. Action against this target should focus on steps to recognise, reduce and redistribute unpaid care work. This should also include regular surveys of time use such as the [Work, Life and Family Survey: Work, Care and Family Balance](#) (WoLFS) which was cancelled in 2013 to achieve budget savings.

7) Making connections across the goals and targets

The agreed conclusions of the sixtieth session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW60) affirmed that the empowerment of all women and girls is crucial to progress across all Global Goals and targets. As the Australian Government develops plans to implement the Global Goals, explicitly recognising gender equality as central to the new framework and connecting targets across goals will provide the basis for effective action. For example, progress on the unpaid care target under Goal 5 is linked to progress across goals such as Goal 6 on universal access to clean water and sanitation and Goal 8 on decent work and economic growth. Similarly, efforts towards peace, justice and strong institutions under Goal 16 must go hand-in-hand with the Goal 5 target to ensure women's full and effective participation at all levels of decision-making. We need to be deliberate about making these links, developing new partnerships and using the Global Goals as an impetus to move away from working in silos.

8) Addressing data gaps and measuring change at the individual level

Implementation of the [Global Indicator Framework](#) is essential for closing the gap between commitments and real change for women and girls. The Sustainable Development Agenda embraces the 'Leave No One Behind' principle, calling for the disaggregation of data by age, sex, income and geographic location, among other things. Mapping the data already being collected by the Australian Bureau of Statistics against the Global Goals and assessing how data gaps can be addressed is an essential first step for effective action. If we are going to 'leave no one behind', we need to measure change at the individual level. IWDA was part of an international research collaboration which developed a new approach to measuring poverty: the [Individual Deprivation Measure](#) (IDM), which measures the poverty of individuals.⁵ The IDM has the potential to track the extent to which progress towards the Global Goals, as measured by the national-level indicators, is leading to change for the most marginalised individuals.

¹ Speech by UN Under-Secretary-General and UN Women Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka at the opening of the 60th session of the Commission on the Status of Women on 14 March, 2016, available at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2016/3/ed-speech-csw60-opening#sthash.SZnN1TDg.dpuf>

² Currently less than 2% of sector allocable aid - 2014 Figures obtained from the OECD-DAC Creditor Reporting System.

³ UNSCR 1325, 1820, 1888, 1889, 1960, 2106, 2122 and 2242.

⁴ Including the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

⁵ The IDM can reveal how poverty and deprivation varies by sex, age, disability, rural/urban location, sociocultural background and more – including within the household – and how these factors interact to multiply disadvantage. Further refinement is underway so that it can be used globally.