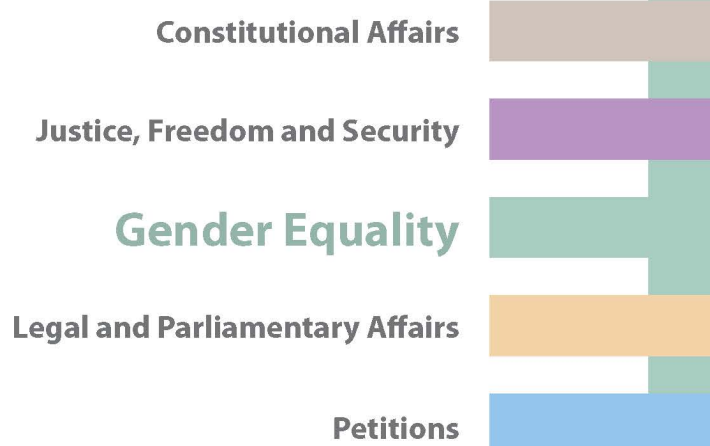


DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR INTERNAL POLICIES

# POLICY DEPARTMENT **C**

## CITIZENS' RIGHTS AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS



### Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls from a European Union perspective

Study for the FEMM Committee







**DIRECTORATE GENERAL FOR INTERNAL POLICIES**

**POLICY DEPARTMENT C: CITIZENS' RIGHTS AND  
CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS**

**GENDER EQUALITY**

# **Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls from a European Union perspective**

**STUDY**

## **Abstract**

Upon request by the FEMM Committee, this study provides background information for the delegation of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality of the European Parliament (FEMM) to the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)'s 58th Session. The key priority theme for the Session will be "Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls". Taking into account that the outcome of this meeting will be relevant for the formulation of the post 2015 international framework for development, the study outlines the state of play of preparatory discussions. It reveals that women's rights and gender equality are largely recognised as, on the one hand, a goal of development policy in itself, and, on the other hand, as an important tool for sustainable development. Bearing this in mind, most stakeholders advocate for a two-track approach: having gender equality as a stand-alone goal and a gender mainstreaming approach for all areas of the post 2015 framework.

**Document requested by the  
Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality.**

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<b>ACP</b>	Africa, Caribbean, Pacific
<b>COREPER</b>	Committee of Permanent Representatives
<b>CSOs</b>	Civil Society Organisations
<b>CSW</b>	Commission on the Status of Women
<b>DCI</b>	Development Cooperation Instruments
<b>EC</b>	European Commission
<b>EDF</b>	European Development Fund
<b>EP</b>	European Parliament
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>FEMM</b>	Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality
<b>GADN</b>	Gender and Development Network
<b>HLP</b>	UN High Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the post-2015 Development Agenda
<b>MDG</b>	Millennium Development Goal
<b>NORAD</b>	Norwegian Agency for Development Co-operations
<b>ODA</b>	Official Development Aid
<b>ODI</b>	Overseas Development Institute
<b>OECD</b>	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
<b>OWG</b>	Open Working Group
<b>PCD</b>	Policy Coherence for Development
<b>SDG</b>	Social Development Goals
<b>SSA</b>	Sub-Saharan Africa
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNSDSN</b>	United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network
<b>VAWAG</b>	Violence against women and girls

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Background

In September 2000, 189 heads of government came together at the UN Millennium Summit and signed the Millennium Declaration reaffirming the commitment of the international community to universal human rights and agreeing to concerted action around an agreed set of priorities. These priorities, spelt out in eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), were: halving world poverty, universal primary education, promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, reducing child mortality, improving maternal health, combating disease, ensuring environmental sustainability and building global partnership for development. The Committee on the Status of Women (CSW) has provided an important international forum for reviewing progress on the MDGs, not only those explicitly concerned with gender equality and women's empowerment, but also all the other goals. The 58<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission will be held between 16<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> March 2014. Its priority theme will be "Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls".

### Aim

The aim of the present study is to provide background information for the delegation of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality of the European Parliament who will be attending the 58<sup>th</sup> Session. The note discusses key issues relating to the priority theme from the perspective of the European Union (EU). These include:

- The main actors working on the implementation of the MDGs at European and international levels;
- Progress on the MDGs in relation to gender equality and assessment of lessons learnt;
- The role of the MDGs for the assignment of projects and funding through EU funding sources;
- The most important aspects of European Parliament resolutions on the MDGs from the present legislature with particular attention to those relating to gender equality and the rights of women and girls; and
- Recommendations on the way forward in the post-2015 development framework from the point of view of the European Commission and Parliament, drawing on other ideas and plans at the international level.

### Analysis

The UN 2013 Report on the Millennium Development Goals describes them as the 'most successful global anti-poverty push in history'. As the latest estimates suggest, there have been unprecedented rates of progress on a large number of goals. At the same time, the pace of progress has been uneven across countries, and between different groups within countries. The decline in extreme poverty, for instance, has been largely led by China with very slow progress in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA).



Progress has also been uneven across the different goals. This is evident in relation to the goals dealing explicitly with gender equality. While the goal on achieving gender parity in primary education is close to being achieved, disparities persist at higher levels of education while the goal of reducing maternal mortality appears to be the least likely to be met.

A number of **lessons** have been drawn out of the experience of the MDGs:

- Internationally agreed goals are important to galvanize political support and resources on a co-ordinated basis;
- The explicit attention to gender equality and the rights of women and girls within the goals has positive effects on increasing political will, leveraging funds and providing an accountability mechanism for Parliamentarians and civil society;
- Gender has to be mainstreamed across all other goals;
- There needs to be a focus on the causes, rather than merely the symptoms in order to bring about transformational change;
- The absence of core issues, notably violence against women and girls and unpaid care work hampered the achievement of the goals;
- There is a need for greater attention to certain issues included within the goals (reproductive rights) and other issues likely to be important in the post-2015 agenda (peace and the environment);
- The inadequacy of funding, particularly for gender equality, needs to be overcome;
- Broader, deeper and more disaggregated indicators are needed to measure progress and to capture inequalities in the pace of progress between different locations and social groups.

As the world's largest funder, the EU has a critical role to play in implementing the MDGs and in shaping the post-2015 agenda. But while the MDGs had a positive impact in initially increasing ODA funding by member countries, overall funding commitments were not met. Furthermore, the impact of this funding has been difficult to establish due to lack of investment in monitoring progress.

Nevertheless, there has been strong support for gender equality within the EU's official development assistance as evident in its resolutions, consultations, reports and plans of action. Cutting across these various contributions is a clear commitment to the **values** of equality, rights and justice. These are values that the EU should lead in making central to the post-2015 framework.

A common theme emerging from various international bodies and consultations is the continued need for a **stand-alone goal** on gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment **combined** with systematic attention to **gender mainstreaming** across all the other goals. This theme is strongly articulated in the Zero Draft for the 58<sup>th</sup> Session of CSW along with recognition of the structural nature of gender inequality and the need to address causes rather than symptoms; the need to broaden and deepen the conceptualisation of gender issues in the post-2015 framework; the importance of an enabling macro-economic framework for the promotion of gender equality, and finally, the need to significantly increase resources for grassroots, national, regional and global women's organizations in promoting and advancing women's rights.

## Recommendation

The European Parliament should call on the Commission, the EEAS and the Council to develop a strong common position on gender equality and women's rights in the post-2015 framework based both on the lessons of the MDGs and on the EU's own policies on gender equality. The EU should take a **leadership role**, in alliance with other like-minded countries and/or regions to in promoting the centrality of gender equality and women's rights within the framework. Negotiations around the Zero Draft for the 58<sup>th</sup> Session will provide an excellent platform for this.

## INTRODUCTION

The 58th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) has as its theme: **Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls**. The session will be held at the UN Headquarters in New York between 10th and 21st March. This session of the CSW will be an important opportunity for governments and CSOs to assess progress on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and ensure that the lessons learned are built upon in the new post-2015 development agenda. In the plethora of consultation processes leading up to the 2014 UN General Assembly, CSW 58 is seen as the **most important collective input** from those working towards gender equality and women's empowerment across the world. As such, it is vital that a strong Outcome Document is agreed, providing clear recommendations to the Secretary General and Member States. Documents available on the CSW website can be found here: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw58-2014/official-documents>.

### The goals and the actors

The Millennium Development Goals, agreed in 2000, have been described by the UN 2013 Report on the Millennium Development Goals as the 'most successful global anti-poverty push in history' (UN 2013a). They represent a set of aspirations for UN Member states, civil society organisations and the private sector to work towards. They consist of **8 goals**, each with a set of targets and indicators by which progress on the goals can be measured.

The importance of the MDGs stems from a number of factors which distinguish them from previous international agreements. First of all, they were signed off by the 189 heads of government from around the world, giving them a **high-level international profile**. Secondly, they were signed off within an international forum which gives equal weighting to the voices of donor and recipient governments, thus endowing them with **greater international legitimacy**. Thirdly, the timing of the Millennium Summit had symbolic value. It allowed the international community to come together at the dawn of the new Millennium to reaffirm its **commitment** to universal human rights through the Millennium Declaration. Fourth, the Declaration helped to shape a development agenda that moved decisively away from economic growth as the sole indicator of human progress towards a **multidimensional understanding of poverty** that prioritized its human dimensions. The goals that helped to operationalise this agenda drew their legitimacy from previously adopted international agreements. They helped to galvanize the international community around an agreed **set of priorities**. And finally, the MDGs were backed by **measurable indicators** that allowed the international community to monitor progress. By outlining relatively clear priorities that were limited in number, they have also proved to be a useful tool for Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and Parliamentarians to hold their governments, and donors, to account.

While the goals were agreed and adopted by the Member States of the UN, all the **major donors**, including the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and regional groupings, such as the Organisation for Economic and Development Co-operation (OECD) were involved in the process. In reaching the agreement, UN Member States participated both individually as well as in regional blocks such as the EU.

Implementing these goals has similarly required actions from all donors, bilateral and multilateral as well as by civil society organisations. Within Europe, funding has come both from the **EU Budget** and the **European Development Fund**. Key players include: Development and Cooperation – EuropeAid, the Directorate-General (DG) responsible for designing EU development policies and delivering aid through programmes and projects across the world; the Development Commissioner, Andris Piebalgs; the European External Action Service (EEAS), responsible for much of the overseas programming of EU aid such as the process of allocation and definition of priority sectors; the European Parliament; and CSOs such as the European Women's Lobby, Aprovev, Alliance2015, and Concord.

# 1. THE MDGS AND GENDER EQUALITY –A BRIEF REVIEW OF PROGRESS

## KEY FINDINGS

- The existence of MDG 3 was important in raising political profile and funding for gender equality.
- Some progress has been made on gender equality, particularly in relation to education, but much more needs to be done with both a broadening and deepening of the issues.
- Gender was insufficiently mainstreamed across the MDGs.
- Substantial lessons can be learnt from the experience of the MDGs, particularly in relation to the need to address more issues, and to tackle the root causes of inequality.

## 1.1 MDG 3: Gender equality and women's empowerment

In this section we provide a brief overview of progress on the MDGs, beginning with MDG 3 and 5 which bear most directly on the goal of gender equality and women's empowerment.

### Box 1. Millennium Development Goal 3

**MDG 3:** To promote gender equality and empower women.

**Target:** Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015.

**Indicators:**

- Ratios of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education;
- Share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector;
- Proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments.

The targets and indicators within MDG3, while important, were narrowly defined. **Progress has been uneven** both between and within countries, and indicators were inadequate to capture the lagging behind of the most marginalised groups and those facing multiple discrimination. Perhaps, the most positive impact of the inclusion of MDG3 was in creating political will and leveraging additional funds (GADN, 2012).

The most visible signs of progress have been in relation to gender equality in **access to primary schooling**, with parity achieved in many countries. The largest disparities remain in SSA, Oceania and the Middle East. Gender disparities are much greater for secondary and tertiary education (OECD 2013, OECD 2012). Only two out of 130 countries with available data have reached the target of gender parity in all levels of education (UN 2013a).

Between 1990 and 2011, the share of women in **non-agricultural wage employment** in developing regions has increased by only 5 percentage points from 35% in 1990 (UN 2013b). The greatest constraints to women's entry into such employment is to be found in South Asia and the Middle East/North Africa region, where less than one in five non-agricultural wage jobs were performed by women in 2011. Women continue to be over-represented in the **informal economy** with low earnings, insecure conditions and less access to social protection. Around two thirds of working women in developing countries are in vulnerable jobs, as own account (self-employed) or unpaid family workers, casual or seasonal agricultural labourers, workers in urban factories and workshops, or as domestic servants (OECD 2013). Even in the formal sector a **gender pay gap** and **occupational segregation** remain in almost all countries (OECD 2013, OECD 2012).

Globally, women continue to be under-represented in **decision-making**. Worldwide, only one in five parliamentarians (20.4%) is a women, but there has been a steady, if **very small increase** (on average 0.5% per year) under the MDGs, due partly to the use of quota systems (UN 2013a). They are also absent from senior positions in judicial systems, executive branch of governments, and the civil service (OECD 2012).

Thus, the OECD report *Closing the Gender Gap: Act Now* (2012) concluded that gender equality and women's empowerment remain "unfinished business" across all countries. In addition to legislative measures, it emphasized the need to **challenge cultural barriers and the stereotyping** of women's roles in society, business and the public sector.

## 1.2 MDG 5: Improving maternal health

### Box 2: Millennium Development Goal 5

**MDG 5:** Improve maternal health

**Target 5.A:** Reduce by three quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio

**Target 5.B:** Achieve, by 2015, universal access to reproductive health

#### Indicators:

- Maternal mortality ratio;
- Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel;
- Contraceptive prevalence rate;
- Adolescent birth rate;
- Antenatal care coverage;
- Unmet need for family planning.

Globally there were an estimated 287,000 maternal deaths in 2010, a **decline** of 47% from 1990 levels but **well below the target** to reduce the maternal mortality ratio by three-quarters by 2015 (UN 2013b). On current trends, this is one of the targets least likely to be met by 2015 (UN 2013a, OECD 2013). All regions have made progress, with the highest reductions in Eastern Asia (69%), Northern Africa (66%) and Southern Asia (64%) (UN 2013a).

Although progress was made in Northern Africa and South East Asia, only half of pregnant women in developing regions receive the recommended minimum of four antenatal care visits (UN 2013a).

**Unsafe abortions** also constitute a leading cause of maternal deaths, accounting for 13% of all maternal deaths in 2008 (UN 2013b).

While unmet need for **contraception** fell from 15% in 1990 to 12% in 2011, there are still 140 million women worldwide who are married or in union who say they would like to delay or avoid pregnancy, but are not using contraception, and the demand is likely to increase (UN 2013b).

Finally, childbearing at a young age, most often stemming from **early marriage**, constitutes a significant risk for women and their children. The adolescent birth rate declined from 64 per 1000 girls in 1990 to 52 in 2010 but rates remain high in SSA (118) and Latin America (80).

### 1.3 A review of the other MDGs from a gender equality perspective

This chapter analyses progress in relation to the other MDGs from a gender equality perspective.

#### **MDG 1**

MDG 1 aims to **halve world poverty** by 2015. While there has been progress on the target of reducing the proportion of people living on less than \$1.25 per day, progress is uneven between and within countries. The largest declines in proportions of undernourished people occurred in Asia. Despite a reduction of eight percentage points in SSA, numbers of people in extreme poverty actually increased from 290 million in 1990 to 414 in 2010. (UN 2013a). Importantly, the data does not capture **gender disparities** within households between women and men in terms of income and undernourishment, particularly among pregnant women, nor does it capture the significance of gender differences in 'time-poverty' and workloads.

Target 1b on access to **decent work** and **productive employment** was insufficiently disaggregated for women and men for example by not recognising women's concentration in insecure employment. Progress has been severely limited by women's extra vulnerability to external shocks. The role of **unpaid care work** in hindering women's paid employment was also not recognised (UN 2013b).

#### **MDG 2**

While there has been significant progress on MDG 2 to ensure **universal access to primary education**, progress has been slowest in SSA and the MENA region. But the heavy focus on enrolment rates has come at the cost of educational **quality and retention**, disproportionately affecting girls. **Secondary school completion** is particularly important for gender equality and should command increasing attention.

## **MDG 4**

Global progress on MDG 4, **reducing under-five mortality by two thirds** between 1990 and 2015, has been significant: under-five mortality has declined from 90 per 1000 live births in 1990 to 48 in 2012. But progress has been slow in some regions and by 2012, SSA and South Asia accounted for 83% of all under-five deaths compared to 69% in 1990 (UN 2013a). Based on current trends, the target is likely to be missed by 2015. Discriminatory practices relating to **son preference** mean that girls have considerably higher rates of under-five mortality in South and East Asia (UN 2013b). Further progress will be supported by an increase in **mother's health, education and rights**.

## **MDG 6**

MDG 6 is to **combat HIV/AIDs, malaria and other diseases**. The number of women living with HIV has been increasing globally since 2001, particularly in developing regions but around 80% are in SSA (UN 2013b). Structural inequalities combined with gendered power dynamics in relationships have been major drivers of HIV/AIDS. **Violence** against women and girls has hampered attempts to reduce HIV rates as have concepts of **masculinity** that encourage men's sexual risk taking and discourage them from seeking health services.

## **MDG 7**

MDG 7 seeks to ensure **environmental sustainability**. The proportion of people with sustainable access to **safe drinking water** increased from 76% to 89% between 1990 and 2011 but progress was uneven, and accounts for just 63% in SSA (UN 2013b). And while access to **sanitation** improved from 49 % to over 60%, it remains well below the target of 75% (UN 2013a). Slow progress on these targets has a profound impact on women and girls for example in their ability to go to school and in the prevention of violence. Where water sources are still not available, women and girls do most of the collection (UN 2013b).

## **MDG 8**

MDG 8 which relates to the need to develop a **global partnership for development** is conspicuous by the absence of any indicators to monitor progress. The lack of gender-related data on any achievements in relation to trade, debt relief and aid flows limits analysis on what are key gender issues. **Trade agreements**, including intellectual property rights, directly impact on the cost and availability of pharmaceutical products and therefore the right to health. While women have benefited from trade-generated employment, it has largely been in sectors which do not enforce labour and environmental standards. There is a discernible gender gap in **internet use**, much larger in developing countries. Official Development Assistance (ODA) to developing countries has fallen since 2010. In 2011, only five % of total bilateral sector-allocable aid went to programmes that made gender equality their principal objective. The gender implications of **macro-economic choices** remain largely undiscussed.

## **1.4 Learning from MDGs**

As noted earlier, the targets and indicators within **MDG3** were narrowly defined and not designed to pick up the slower pace of progress among the most marginalised groups and those facing multiple discrimination. One important lesson from the experience of MDG 3 is therefore to **broaden and deepen indicators** to measure progress. For instance,



- **education:** more focus on the completion of secondary and tertiary education and on the quality of education has been signalled as important priorities;
- **economic empowerment:** there is need for a much more detailed set of indicators on women's control over, and access to, assets and decent work;
- **political participation:** indicators are being developed that measure women's effective participation and influence at international, national and community levels.

Other lessons learnt from the MDGs regarding gender equality and women's rights include:

- The MDGs proved valuable in providing a **focal point** to galvanise political support and resources towards meeting the goals. Much progress was made, but much more needs to be done.
- Overall **progress** for women and girls remains **slow and uneven**, both within and between countries. This is particularly true for those facing multiple discriminations based on gender, status, age, income, geographical location, language, ethnicity, disability, and race, or because they are rural or indigenous women and girls, or women and girls living with HIV and AIDS or because they live in countries affected by conflict.
- Targets on **maternal mortality and basic sanitation** are particularly off-track, and are both undermined by gender inequality.
- The MDGs were **insufficiently transformational**, tackling the symptoms rather than addressing the underlying causes of poverty and marginalisation. This was particularly true on gender equality: more, for example, is needed on tackling the social norms that perpetuate inequality and the discriminatory laws that legitimise it.
- Attention to **social norms** is an important means of addressing some of the underlying and previously overlooked causes of gender inequality, such as the deeply-entrenched asymmetries within household and communities including unpaid care work, decision making within the household and tolerance of **violence** against women and girls (VAWAG) within households and communities.
- The focus under each goal was often too narrow, particularly for MDG3. Women's political **participation** and influence, and women's control over **economic assets** both need to be defined more broadly in the future.
- Certain core issues were **missing**, notably **violence** against women and girls and **unpaid care work**. This was justified partly on the grounds that there were no suitable measures. Efforts are on-going to address this gap and should be given political and funding priority.
- **Funding**, particularly for gender equality, was inadequate.
- Indicators to monitor progress on targets related to poverty, hunger, environmental sustainability and global partnership for development did not provide the necessary **disaggregated data** to assess the impact on women and girls, suggesting that the mainstreaming of gender across the goals could be improved.
- The inclusion of a **gender focal point** in MDG3, despite some limitations, proved very positive in increasing political will, leveraging funds, and providing an accountability mechanism for Parliamentarians and CSOs.

- The need to define goals which maintain the **principle of universality**, but allow **national sovereignty** in implementing the goals, and setting ambitious but realistic targets, is an important challenge.

It is also widely recognised that a number of issues vital for gender equality and women's empowerment were **missing** from the MDGs. Examples in addition to VAWAG and unpaid care work include:

- women's sexual and reproductive health and rights will need more focus in the future to bring about advancement of women;
- peace and security and environmental sustainability are themes likely to be more prominent in the post-2015 framework, and women's role in both will need to be addressed (OECD 2013).

## 2. FINANCING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MDGS – THE EU’S ROLE

### KEY FINDINGS

- As the world’s largest donor, the EU has a key role to play in implementing the MDGs.
- While the MDGs had an impact on EU aid both in the type and level of funding, insufficient resources were made available.

As the world’s largest donor, the EU has had a **substantial role** to play in the design and implementation of the MDGs. In 2011, the EU provided about €53 billion (or more than 50% of global aid) to developing countries, making it the largest donor of official development aid worldwide (European Commission, 2012 in EP 2013b).

EU development policy is led by the Agenda for Change (2011) implemented in 2012. As the European Report on Development 2013 (prepared by the Overseas Development Institute, the German Development Institute and European Centre for Development Policy Management, and co-financed by the European Commission, henceforth ERD, 2013) points out, the EU and its Member States made the MDGs a **central reference point** for their official ODA soon after the Millennium Declaration was agreed. The impact has been visible both through the level and type of funding provided.

### 2.1 Level of funding

An increased interest in and commitment to development was apparent among Member States and there was an initial increase in ODA (ERD 2013). In 2008, the MDG contract was launched with a strong focus on the MDG related results, with the majority of funding going to **health** and **education** sectors<sup>1</sup>. This was followed by an **Action Plan** agreed in 2010<sup>2</sup> and the MDG Initiative later that year that focused new resources on those countries most successful in implementing the goals, and on the most off-track goals<sup>3</sup>.

Despite these announcements, the initial increase in funding was not sustained. The ERD, cites a European Council report of October 2012 that concluded that the **EU is unlikely to meet its funding targets**. In the same sense, the European Commissioner Piebalgs is cited to have said in the same year that the *EU should do more to meet the MDGS* (ERD (2013)).

The MDGs have served to increase **public awareness** of development, partly through the efforts of development NGOs and the European Parliament who reached agreement with

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<sup>1</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/millennium-development-goals/contract\\_mdg\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/millennium-development-goals/contract_mdg_en.htm)

<sup>2</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/millennium-development-goals/action\\_plan\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/millennium-development-goals/action_plan_en.htm)

<sup>3</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/millennium-development-goals/mdg\\_initiative\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/millennium-development-goals/mdg_initiative_en.htm)

the Council on having 2015 as the European Year of Development<sup>4</sup>. As a result, Member States may have public support for more allocation of development funds in the future.

The MDGs appear to have had a positive impact on increasing the ODA funding of UN member countries (ERD, 2013). Yet despite this, overall funding commitments were not met. The new framework will have to include **renewed call for financial commitments** from donor states if it is to be effective.

## 2.2 Sources of funding

The impact of the MDGs has primarily been through the direction of aid funding. There are two main funding streams at EU level: The **EU budget** (Heading 4 – Global Europe) and the **European Development Fund** (EDF, for ACP countries). Development cooperation instruments (DCIs) set **benchmarks** for EU spending, and have been influenced by the MDGs, particularly in requiring a set percentage of spending to go to health and education sectors. There has been a clear increase in funds directed towards social infrastructure (EP 2013b). The EU 'non state actor' budget line will also be focused towards supporting MDG implementation.

In addition, important contributions at bilateral level should be noted. Examples range from the **Dutch MDG3 Fund**, to **NORAD's dedicated gender budget line**, to **UN Women's Gender Equality Fund**, as well as new funding to Women's Funds by donors like **Irish Aid** and **DANIDA**<sup>5</sup>.

Establishing an exact figure for the amount of EU aid contributing to the MDGs has proved difficult. The Commission's figures (ERD 2013 Fig 3.2, see Annex II) show a trend in spending by both the EDF and EU budget towards those sectors highlighted in the MDGs, but it is not possible to calculate an exact amount. The EU has not done its own assessment specifically on its financial support for the MDGs. However a forthcoming internal study suggests that **roughly one third of the EU budget** for development has gone towards the MDGs (ERD 2013).

Showing a link between this funding and actual progress is even harder. A brochure produced by the European Commission (EC 2013) shows some indirect **anecdotal evidence**. For instance, under MDG 3, the brochure mentions that EU programmes "*support women's political participation, for example, facilitating their contribution in peace – and state – building processes*". It also states that "*the EU...works to improve their economic and social status, by promoting equal rights for women and men – for instance inheritance and property rights – and by ensuring that women have control over and access to resources*". These are very general statements and highlight the **need for the EC to better monitor its own progress** in future.

The Alliance2015 report *Keeping the Goals alive* is in most part critical of the EU's contribution towards achieving the MDGs (Alliance2015, 2010). The report suggests that

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<sup>4</sup> To be approved by the European Parliament during the first plenary session of April 2014.

<sup>5</sup> Alpizar, L. et al, 2010 op cit; AWID, 2010, *Where Is the Money for Women's Rights? Select 2009 Research Highlights and Trends*, February 2010, available at: <http://www.awid.org/Library/Where-is-the-Money-for-Women-s-Rights-Select-2009-Research-Highlights-and-Trends>

**funding on promoting gender equality actually fell** between 2005 and 2008 (p.9 and 23) and that the Commission's evaluations of its country programmes showed that **out of 13 evaluated only two had had a positive impact** on promoting gender equality (p.10). Among other things, the report recommends that in order to consolidate gains made under the MDGs, **the EU should:**

*"target gender equality and reproductive health through financial allocations that address specific problems and obstacles in this regard in specific partner countries, and identify gender equality as a potential focal area in the revision of country programmes". (Alliance2015 2010 p.11)*

## **2.3 An enabling global environment for funding in development cooperation**

In addition to the provision of finance, the EU has a role to play in influencing the climate of development assistance provision. This has been done partly through the Paris-Accra-Busan aid and development effectiveness process, although this has had limited success.

### **Box 3: Building a comprehensive aid effectiveness agenda**

From 2003 to 2012 the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness (WP-EFF) promoted the better use of aid resources for more inclusive development. The WP-EFF, hosted by the OECD-DAC, brought together a large number of developing and developed countries, south-south providers, multilateral organisations, civil society and parliamentary organisations. The WP-EFF provided the main substance for discussion at the high level fora on aid effectiveness in Paris (2005), Accra (2008) and Busan (2011), and also led the monitoring survey processes on the implementation of the Paris Declaration commitments<sup>6</sup>.

**Policy coherence for development** (PCD) and the need, as outlined under MDG 8, to ensure that all policies (not just aid spending) contribute towards the achievement of the goals is another challenge for the EU and has been particularly difficult to achieve. Illicit financial flows (eg tax avoidance and money laundering); unsustainable consumption causing environmental degradation, and a patenting system that is not in the interests of the poorest are all cited as problem areas by ERD (ERD, 2013). The report recommends that PCD should be given at least as much if not more prominence in the new post-2015 framework than is currently the case.

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<sup>6</sup> OECD website: <http://www.oecd.org/dac/effectiveness/>.

### 3. THE EU AND GENDER EQUALITY IN DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION POLICIES

#### KEY FINDINGS

- The EU has been making progress towards gender equality within its official development assistance.
- In theory, at least, there is a strong commitment to mainstreaming gender beyond the recognition of women and girls as vulnerable groups but more work is needed to put this into practice.
- This understanding of mainstreaming and of the concept of rights provide useful starting points in the EU's approach to the post-2015 framework

EU policy on gender equality has been developing since the Beijing Declaration of 1995<sup>7</sup>. An assessment of the EU's work on women's rights and gender equality suggests that the 2007 Conclusions of the **EU General Affairs and External Relations Council** outline shortly and clearly the EU's approach on the international level:

*'Gender equality is a fundamental human right, a question of social justice and also a core value of the EU, including EU development policy....The promotion of gender equality and the enjoyment of human rights by women and girls are goals in their own right and also instrumental and key to achieving internationally agreed development goals.'* (ODI 2013)

The Council Conclusions emphasise the relevance of **gender equality beyond the social sectors** to economic growth, trade, migration, infrastructure, environment and climate change, governance, agriculture, fragile states, peace building and reconstruction. The Council also stresses that development is only one of the policy areas that have an impact on women and girls, thus there is "the need to ensure that policy in other areas is **coherent** with the objectives of promoting gender equality and women's empowerment".

In 2010, the EC agreed the **EU plan of action on gender equality and women's empowerment in development 2010–2015** (EC 2010). The Overseas Development Institute (ODI) has recently produced a report analysing the plan (ODI, 2013). It argues that the Gender Action plan can be seen as a strong document and particularly **innovative among donor approaches** in recognising the importance of mainstreaming gender analysis across all policy and practice. Mainstreaming gender analysis enables the vital move away from viewing women and girls as a vulnerable group to the recognition that **gender power relations prevent progress in all areas** of sustainable development. The weakness of the plan arises with implementation. The report recommends that senior management must move beyond policy rhetoric "to actively commit to the concept of

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/>.

gender mainstreaming and put in place the **necessary organisation-wide systems and resources** to make gender everyone's business" (ODI 2013,p.18).

The implications of the ODI report are that the EU should propose the following for the post-2015 framework: strong mainstreaming of gender analysis<sup>8</sup> across the post-2015 framework focusing on gender power relations rather than women and girls as a vulnerable group; and action on gender equality that extends beyond development policy to include the areas of foreign and security, trade, environment and agriculture policy.

In addition to gender mainstreaming, a number of **other tools** have been acknowledged by the EU but have yet to be properly utilised. **Gender budgeting** has been an important tool used by countries to assess the implications of government spending. Sri Lanka for instance has carried out gender analysis of expenditure in selected ministries while gender issues have been integrated into a public expenditure review in Vietnam. While **quotas** have been used to boost women's representation in parliament, the pace of progress is slow. According to UN Women (UN Women, 2013), the average share of women members in parliaments worldwide has increased from 14% in 2000 to just over 20% in 2013. At the pace of change witnessed in last 15 years, it will take nearly 40 years to reach parity zone in parliament.

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<sup>8</sup> ECOSOC has defined gender mainstreaming as the: "process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality." (ECOSOC agreed conclusions 1997/2: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/pdf/ECOSOCAC1997.2.PDF>).

## 4. THE EU AND THE POST-2015 FRAMEWORK

### KEY FINDINGS

- There has been a keen interest across the EU in the post-2015 framework with a variety of reports and consultations.
- The concepts of equity and rights are common among many of the publications.
- Commitment to gender equality is apparent across the EU's comments on the new framework providing a strong foundation for more specific proposals during negotiations.
- There is clear consensus among most other international actors for a stand-alone goal on gender equality and a broadening of targets. The EU could now be more specific in its commitments in line with these other statements.

### 4.1 The European Parliament

The study *Millennium Development Goals and Beyond 2015, A strong EU engagement* published by the European Parliament (EP 2013b) identifies weaknesses in the MDGs relating to **inequalities** within and between countries and to limitations in the value of the indicators used. These should be rectified under the new structure with an increased focus on the most marginalised, and by more appropriate **indicators** under each target. An increased focus on **environmental sustainability** is also proposed. The study does not go into any detail with regard to the issues to be covered so there is **little explicit mention on gender equality**. The specific recommendations for the European Parliament focus instead on the need for **PCD** and **adequate financing**.

The European Parliament resolution 'Millennium Development Goals – defining the post-2015 framework' was agreed in May 2013 (EP 2013a). It recognises that the situation of **women** has not progressed a great deal and recommends that in defining the EU position consideration should be given to "*accelerating **gender equality** and the empowerment of girls and women at all levels of society*".

**The European Parliament Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM)** (2013) also provided an opinion to the report on which the above mentioned resolution is based. Point 1 urged the UN to **accelerate progress** in advancing the development agenda and enhancing the importance accorded to women's rights and gender equality by making them the subject of several specific globally agreed goals in the post-2015 MDG framework and emphasizing their status as **cross-cutting issues** within the development co-operation programme as a whole. This is expanded with detailed and specific recommendations in point 6 that:

*"calls for the post-2015 MDG framework to **set ambitious targets** for women's rights and gender equality in terms of women's empowerment and well-being, women's full and equal participation in decision-making in public life, whether in the political, economic, social or environmental sphere, combating violence against women, access to quality education (at primary, secondary and higher levels) and*



*training, promotion of universal health coverage through health systems which are public and free at the point of use, access to micro-credit facilities in order to combat poverty and social exclusion, access to effective, quality health care, universal access to and improvements in sexual and reproductive health and rights, the quality and stability of employment, equal pay, career development, the representation of women in politics and economic activity, and ownership and inheritance rights".*

## 4.2 Positions of other actors on EU level

The EU and its various actors have been moving towards agreement on its final position on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), emerging out of the Rio+20 conference held in 2012 and on the **post-2015 framework** from a variety of positions and consultations (EC 2013a). These positions will continue to be added to and can be accessed from the **Europe Aid website**:

[http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/millennium-development-goals/post-2015\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/millennium-development-goals/post-2015_en.htm).

### Box 4: Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

One of the main outcomes of the Rio+20 Conference was the agreement by member States to launch a process to develop a set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which will build upon the Millennium Development Goals and converge with the post 2015 development agenda. It was decided to establish an *"inclusive and transparent intergovernmental process open to all stakeholders, with a view to developing global sustainable development goals to be agreed by the General Assembly"*.<sup>9</sup>

Based on consultations with involved actors, it is understood that Member States will develop further the EU joint position, which is now based on the Commission Communication "A decent life for all" from April 2013 and the consequent Council Conclusions from June 2013. Currently, Working groups in the Council (CONUN/CODEV/WPIEI) and the European Parliament are both feeding into the process. There could be a new Commission Communication which could lead to further Council conclusions to be agreed first by COREPER and then be adopted by the Foreign Affairs Council. A draft position paper for the 58<sup>th</sup> CSW meeting has been prepared but is not publicly available at the present time.

In addition, a variety of different **reports** are discussed and **consultations** take place, some with more clearly worked out positions on gender equality than others. A number of these have referred specifically to women's rights and gender equality, others provide a broad-brush framework within which to promote them. Common to these various contributions is clear recognition that the two processes – **post MDGs and SDGs- should be brought together**. Also common to these contributions, as will be seen from the discussion below, is the **clear commitment** across the board to the values of equality, rights and justice. These are values that the EU should take a lead in making central to the post-2015 framework.

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<sup>9</sup><http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?menu=1300>.

#### 4.2.1 European Commission

In February 2012, the EC published ***A Decent Life for All – Ending poverty and giving the world a sustainable future*** (EC 2012). The paper recognises that justice and equity have value beyond their role in meeting the other MDGs goals; in other words, that they must be **enduring values** within the development agenda. It suggests five building blocks for a new overarching framework for poverty elimination and sustainable development:

- *“**Basic living standards** for all, under which no-one should fall: finish the unfinished business of the MDGs and establish new, **modernised goals** which should apply to every citizen in the world.*
- *Promoting “**drivers**” of inclusive and sustainable growth: investing in e.g. infrastructure or energy creates growth and decent jobs, while boosting human development.*
- *More **sustainable management of natural resources**: this is vital to halt environmental degradation.*
- ***Tackling insecurity and state fragility**, which impede poverty reduction and sustainable development.”*

While gender is not covered in much detail, the paper does call for a framework that provides a catalyst for **women’s empowerment** with a focus on human rights and reducing inequalities and with improved implementation spurred on by a set of social guarantees (EC 2012). It further argues that:

*“The framework should also address **justice, equality and equity**, capturing issues relating to human rights, democracy and the rule of law, as well as the empowerment of women and gender equality, which are vital for inclusive and sustainable development, as well as important values in their own right”* (EC 2012, p.12).

In the Annex to the EC report, specific actions are listed that will contribute to the implementation of Rio +20 that focus on **mainstreaming of gender equality and women’s rights** through the EU Gender Action Plan in development cooperation 2010-2015 and follow up to Beijing Platform for Action. Specifically:

- *“Mainstream gender equality and the empowerment of women in EU development policies; implement the 2010-2015 EU Gender Action Plan in development cooperation; contribution to the UN programme increasing accountability on financing for gender equality. Implement actions for women’s economic empowerment through the “Investment in People” programme.*
- *Implement Actions (proposed) in the Communication Social Protection in European Union Development Co-operation.”* (EC 2012 p.15)

In relation to *A Decent Life for All*, it is worth noting that Andris Piebalgs, the European Commissioner for Development, outlined **three pillars for the new framework** reiterating the fundamental values of dignity, justice and equity:

- *“First, updated and modernised MDGs, providing decent living standards for all - a **set of minimum floors** below which no one should fall.*

- *Second, as we are all aware, the MDGs alone will not guarantee a decent life. Without dignity, poverty remains. This means focussing on the drivers for **prosperity**, creating **jobs** and guaranteeing **justice** and **equity**.*
- *Third; we all know that we are living today, quite literally, unsustainably. If we continue as today, when faced with a global population of 9 billion by 2050, we will undo so much of the progress thus far achieved, and impoverish future generations".*

*(Piebalgs 2013)*

Commissioner Piebalgs was also member of the UN High Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the post-2015 Development Agenda (HLP). **The report of the HLP** (UN 2013d) proposes, what it calls, **Five Big Transformative Shifts** which should shape the post-2015 agenda:

- *leave no one behind;*
- *sustainable development at the core (of the agenda);*
- *transforming economies for jobs and inclusive growth;*
- *building peace and effective open and accountable public institutions;*
- *forging a new global partnership.<sup>10</sup>*

The report proposes **12 'illustrative goals'** which would translate the five transformative shifts into measurable objectives. One of these 12 goals is: '**Empower Girls and Women and Achieve Gender Equality**' and the report argues that gender equality is an important issue in its own right, with **a stand-alone goal** necessary to catalyze progress.

The HLP further adds the recommendation that, "*Gender equality is **integrated across all of the goals**, both in specific targets and by making sure that targets are measured separately for women and men, or girls and boys, where appropriate*" (HLP 2012).

#### 4.2.2 The Council

A common EU position was agreed by the Council of the European Union General Affairs Council meeting **on the Overarching post-2015 Agenda** in June 2013 included the following conclusion:

*"16. The Council emphasises that the framework should recognise that poverty eradication and sustainable development are mutually reinforcing and interlinked and therefore should: (...)*

*e) Ensure a **rights-based approach** encompassing all human rights. It should also address justice, equality and equity, good governance, democracy and the rule of law, with a strong focus on the **empowerment** and rights of women and girls and gender equality, and on **preventing and combating violence** against women as essential preconditions for equitable and inclusive sustainable development, as well as important values and objectives in themselves. We remain committed to the*

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<sup>10</sup> <http://www.post2015hlp.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/UN-Report.pdf>

*promotion, protection and fulfilment of all human rights and to the full and effective implementation of the **Beijing Platform for Action** and the **Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development** and the outcomes of their review conferences and in this context sexual and reproductive health and rights.(...)"* (Council of the European Union 2013).

In the same vein, the Provisional Version of the **Report of the Council** of the EU meeting held in Brussels on 10 February 2014<sup>11</sup>, under its discussion of EU human rights policy, approved EU work to advance women's rights, gender equality and women's empowerment throughout the year. In particular, the EU would continue to be vocal against all forms of violence against women. In addition, it reaffirmed the following (item 17): "*The EU will strive to ensure the inclusion of a **rights-based approach, encompassing all human rights and gender equality in the post-2015 global agenda***". It also resolved to seize the theme of the 2014 Commission for the Status of Women on challenges and achievements in the implementation of the MDGs for women and girls as a key opportunity to address these issues.

#### 4.2.3 Independent experts

The **European Report** (EDR, 2013) is written by three independent institutes, funded by the EU. In its conclusions, the report calls for a **wider and more transformative approach** than the MDGs, tackling the causes of poverty. This should include a focus on inclusion and recognition of the importance of inequality, relative poverty and non-income dimensions of poverty.

Decent and productive **employment** is presented as a core element of the solution:

*'the implementation of the MDGs became focused still further on the social sectors as a means to reducing income poverty and little was achieved on environmental sustainability, on reducing inequalities, or indeed on the all-important issue of achieving economic transformation through fairer global systems'* (EDR 2013, p.235/320).

### 4.3 Positions of other international actors

There have been a plethora of reports and comments at the international level on the best way forward for the new framework. Many of these echo those coming from the EU in calling for a more ambitious approach that achieves social transformation and **tackles the causes as well as symptoms of poverty**. Some, although not all, also point to the need to address inequality and relative poverty as noted in the *European Report*. Others, such as the report of the High Level Panel, have used the concept of 'Leave no-one behind' to ensure that success in raising average levels do not mask continuing deprivation of the most marginalised.

The need to address **gender equality is fairly universally recognised**, with many reports giving this a high level of **priority**.

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<sup>11</sup> EN 6264/14

#### 4.3.1 UN Secretary General

In 2012, the UN Secretary General recommended that the pursuit of gender equality and the **empowerment of women should feature prominently**. (UN 2012a) This view was then supported by the UN System Task Team on the post-2015 UN Development Agenda (UN 2012b). In the 2013 report of the UN Secretary General paragraph 85 states:

*“The new agenda must ensure the equal rights of women and girls, their **full participation** in the political, economic and public spheres and zero tolerance for violence against or exploitation of women and girls. The practice of child marriage must be ended everywhere. Women and girls must have **equal access** to financial services, infrastructure, the full range of health services, including in the area of sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, and water and sanitation; the right to **own land and other assets**; a safe environment in which to learn and apply their knowledge and skills; and an **end to discrimination** so they can receive equal pay for equal work and have an equal voice in decision-making.”*

Many of the most influential papers recognise the need for a **stand-alone goal** for gender equality to ensure that progress made under MDG 3 is built upon. This approach was not only recommended by the HLP (UN 2013d) but also the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network (UNSDSN 2013) and the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC 2013).

#### 4.3.2 UN Women

UN Women (2013) also produced its own report that argues strongly that a **stand-alone goal** is essential to ensure progress, combined with transformative targets mainstreamed across the framework. Within this approach they outline **three priorities**:

- *“**Freedom from violence** against women and girls – Concrete actions to eliminate the debilitating fear and/or experience of violence must be a centrepiece of any future framework.*
- *Gender equality in the **distribution of capabilities** – knowledge, good health, sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights of women and adolescent girls; and **access to resources and opportunities**, including land, decent work and equal pay to build women’s economic and social security.*
- *Gender equality in **decision-making** power in public and private institutions, in national parliaments and local councils, the media and civil society, in the management and governance of firms, and in families and communities” (UN Women 2013 p.3)*

#### 4.3.3 OECD

The OECD report (2013) suggests **four ‘actions** that will make a difference’:

- *“Retaining a **stand-alone gender equality and women’s empowerment goal** and addressing gender equality throughout the post-2015 development agenda.*
- *Confronting and **transforming the social norms and institutions** that discriminate against women and girls, such as the acceptability of domestic violence.*

- *Gathering and using **high quality data** to monitor progress and build evidence about what works.*
- *Tracking governments' **expenditure** and the proportion of all development co-operation focused on achieving gender equality and women's empowerment."*

#### 4.3.4 Open Working Group on Sustainable Development

In February 2013, the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development in its 8<sup>th</sup> session (OWG-8) met to discuss: promoting equality, including social equity, gender equality and women's empowerment. The Co-Chairs' summary of the session affirmed that gender equality was **an end in itself** as well as **an essential means** for sustainable development and poverty eradication, recognising gender inequality as the **most pervasive form of inequality** in the world. They also concluded that there was widespread support for a **stand-alone goal** on gender equality, supplemented by **cross-cutting targets** under other goals. This call was echoed by among others Ireland, Denmark, Norway, Netherlands, the UK, Spain and Italy.<sup>12</sup>

#### 4.3.5 The African Union Ministers of Gender Equality and Women's Affairs

The African Union Ministers of Gender Equality and Women's Affairs have adopted a **Ministerial Declaration** supporting a **stand-alone goal** on gender. The issues they would like to see covered are clustered under **four themes**:

- *women's economic empowerment,*
- *social transformation,*
- *governance, peace and security and*
- *institutional frameworks.*

In addressing the need for social transformation, the recommendations:

- *note that ending violence against women and girls is a glaring omission in the MDG framework;*
- *agree that the new development framework must provide for women's and girls' sexual and reproductive health and rights;*
- *call for an end to female genital mutilation, early and forced marriage, and early pregnancies.<sup>13</sup>*

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<sup>12</sup> [www.NGOsBeyond2014.org](http://www.NGOsBeyond2014.org)

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2014/2/african-union-post-2015-position#sthash.hmM4aWqg.dpuf>



#### 4.3.6 Consultations for the Latin American and Caribbean Region

The Consultations for the Latin American and Caribbean Region in preparation for the 58<sup>th</sup> UN Commission on the Status of Women, held in Mexico in February 2014, concluded with the **Mexico Declaration**. Key recommendations include:

- A transformative, comprehensive and specific **stand-alone goal** to ensure gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment that **addresses violence** against women and girls, gender equality in **resource distribution** and gender equality in **decision-making** in the public and private sectors, as well as in the household.
- The integration of **gender mainstreaming** in all goals and indicators.
- **Goals** that are: **transformative**, tackling the structural factors that constrain sustainable development; **universal**, applying to all countries regardless of economic status; and **rights-based**, addressing equality, including gender equality and women's rights and the empowerment of women.
- Ensuring **sexual and reproductive health and rights**, explicitly reaffirming the progressive and forward-looking agreements reached in the Montevideo Consensus of the First Regional Conference on Population and Development last year and the Cairo Programme of Action.
- A framework that builds on **lessons learned**, by tackling both **unequal power relations** between men and women, and **persistent social norms** and gender stereotypes that impede sustainable development and discriminate against women and girls.<sup>14</sup>

#### 4.3.7 10<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Women's Affairs Ministers meeting

The Dhaka Communique issued by the 10<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Women's Affairs Ministers meeting held in Bangladesh (June 2013) supported a twin-track approach to gender equality in the post-2015 development framework meaning on the one hand a **stand-alone goal** to ensure gender equality is an objective in its own right, and, on the other hand, **gender to be mainstreamed** across all other goals. It recommends that the post-2015 framework should address gender inequality in social institutions, **norms and practices** and emphasize the importance of **working with men and boys as partners**; recognize that **violence** against women and children remains a critical issue affecting women's empowerment and should receive priority attention in the post-2015 development framework; and acknowledges the impact of **climate change and natural disasters** on women's economic empowerment and livelihoods and recommends it be given due priority in the post-2015 framework.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2014/2/lac-call-for-stand-alone-goal>

<sup>15</sup> <http://thecommonwealth.org/sites/default/files/news-items/documents/FINAL10WAMMCOMMUNIQUEDhaka19June2013a.pdf>

## 5. THE WAY FORWARD

### KEY FINDINGS

- At CSW, the EU could now take a clear and detailed position on specific elements of the final outcome document to promote a strong and transformative goal on gender equality and women's rights.
- During negotiations over the coming year, the EU has an important role to play in calling for a stand-alone goal, mainstreaming across the framework, and targets and indicators that address the structural causes of inequality.

### 5.1 Next steps at the CSW

As a result of the experience of the MDGs, a number of **priorities** have emerged for the post-2015 agenda. Within the context of the CSW, some states have been cautious about proposing specific goals and targets, wanting to wait to see the passage of the negotiations. However after over two years of consultations and numerous reports, a number of governments have already pointed to the need to be more specific. We propose that the CSW Outcome Document should suggest **specific lessons** that can be learnt from the MDGs, and be confident to **propose solutions** in the form of goals, targets and indicators to be discussed at the forthcoming inter-governmental negotiations. While the agreed text of the 58<sup>th</sup> Session of **CSW cannot pre-empt the inter-governmental negotiations** that begin in September 2014, it will be looked to as an **important starting point** and so needs to spell out an **ambitious agenda**. We have therefore highlighted key points.

Having seen the Zero Draft (see Annex I), the most important limitation of the document seems to be its **failure** to sufficiently emphasize the importance of gender equality and women's rights as **goals in their own right**, rather than as means to the achievement of other goals.<sup>16</sup>

Overall, valuable elements of the draft that need to be developed and carried over into the final Outcome Document are the following:

- A **stand-alone goal** on gender.
- **Mainstreaming** across the framework.
- Recognition that **inequalities** hinder the achievement of all goals.
- Recognition of the structural nature of most inequalities.

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<sup>16</sup> *Advance Draft CSW 58*  
[http://www.unwomen.org/~media/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/CSW/58/CSW58-AC\\_Draft\\_presented\\_by\\_the\\_CSW\\_Bureau\\_4\\_February\\_2014%20pdf.pdf](http://www.unwomen.org/~media/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/CSW/58/CSW58-AC_Draft_presented_by_the_CSW_Bureau_4_February_2014%20pdf.pdf) -



- Recognition of the importance of **social norms** and the **persistence of unequal power relations** between women and men.
- Recognition of the need to **broaden and deepen issues** (violence against women and girls, unpaid care work, sexual and reproductive health and rights, equal participation in decision-making, gender wage gaps, equal access to assets and productive resources).
- Ensure that macro-economic policies promote gender equality by creating decent work for all, by mobilizing resources to **finance social protection, infrastructure and essential services**, and by reducing inequalities based on context-specific characteristics.
- Increase significantly **resources** for grassroots, national, regional and global women's organizations to promote and advance women's rights.

## 5.2 Recommendations for the EU

The European Parliament should call on the Commission, the EEAS and the Council to develop a **strong common position** on gender equality and women's rights in the post-2015 framework based both on the lessons of the MDGs and on the EU's own policies on gender equality. The EU should take a **leadership role**, in alliance with other like-minded countries and/or regions, in promoting the centrality of gender equality and women's rights within the framework.

We recommend that the EU make the following proposals for inclusion in the post-2015 framework:

- 1) A specific **stand-alone goal** on gender equality and women's rights which should be separate from any other goal on inequalities to ensure that the priority given to gender is at least as strong as that within the MDGs.
- 2) The **mainstreaming** of gender analysis throughout the framework recognising the impact of gender relations on the way in which society is organised, beyond the categorisation of women and girls as a 'vulnerable group' and the disaggregation of data to ensure women and men benefit equally.
- 3) **Transformative targets** under all goals that tackle root causes beyond symptoms, including the social norms that perpetuate gender inequality.
- 4) The inclusion of issues of particular importance to gender equality and women's rights such as **violence** against women and girls, **economic empowerment**, **political participation** and influence and **sexual and reproductive health and rights**.

We further suggest that the EU should:

- 5) Expand on the call for **better data** as part of the 'data revolution' outlined in the High Level Panel and the OECD (2013) report.

- 6) Call on all countries to develop systems to **track and make public allocations** for gender equality and women's empowerment, as are being developed by UN Women.
- 7) Promote the **Policy Coherence for Development** Agenda within the context of the post- 2015 framework.
- 8) Reiterate financial commitment to the MDGs and commitment to providing **increased financing specifically for gender equality and women's rights**, within the post-2015 framework. This includes significantly increasing resources for grassroots, national, regional and global women's organizations who, as evidence shows, have proved to be key actors in promoting, advancing and implementing women's rights.

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## **ANNEX I: 58<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN (2014) -DRAFT PRESENTED BY CSW BUREAU**

*4 February 2014  
Draft presented by CSW Bureau*

**Commission on the Status of Women 58<sup>th</sup> session  
10 – 21 March 2014**

### **Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls**

#### **Draft agreed conclusions**

1. The Commission on the Status of Women reaffirms the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, and the declarations adopted by the Commission on the occasion of the tenth and fifteenth anniversaries of the Fourth World Conference on Women. **(CSW 57 AC, para 1)**
2. The Commission reaffirms that the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Optional Protocol thereto, as well as other relevant conventions and treaties, provide an international legal framework and a comprehensive set of measures for the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and girls and promotion of substantive gender equality. **(based on CSW57 AC, para 3)**
3. The Commission reaffirms that the full and effective implementation of the goals and objectives of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action is an essential contribution to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration. **(based on A/RES/65/1, A/RES/60/1)**
4. The Commission also reaffirms the international commitments made at relevant United Nations summits and conferences in the area of gender equality and the empowerment of women, including in the Programme of Action at the International Conference on Population and Development and the key actions for its further implementation. **(CSW 57 AC, para 2)**
5. The Commission also reaffirms the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled “The future we want”, which recognized the vital role of women in achieving sustainable development and resolved to unlock the potential of women as drivers of sustainable development. **(based on A/RES/66/288, paras 45 and 238)**
6. The Commission reaffirms that gender equality, the empowerment of women, women’s full enjoyment of human rights and the eradication of poverty are essential to economic and social development, including the achievement of all the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The Commission also reaffirms the vital role of women as agents of development **(Annual Ministerial Declaration, ECOSOC, 2010, para 2)**



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7. The Commission welcomes the commitments and concerted policy action at national, regional and global levels to achieve the MDGs for women and girls. The Commission recognizes the innovative efforts by some countries in the implementation of the MDGs for women and girls by adapting targets to local contexts and reporting on a broader range of gender equality and women's rights issues. **(based on E/CN.6/2014/4, para 6)**
8. The Commission welcomes progress made for women and girls in several areas of the MDGs, and recognizes the importance of MDG 3 in signaling gender equality and women's empowerment as a global priority. It especially welcomes the progress made in reaching gender parity in primary education enrolment and progress made on increasing the proportion of women in national parliaments. **(based on E/CN.6/2014/3 paras 19 and 21)**
9. The Commission is deeply concerned that overall progress for women and girls across all the MDGs remains slow and uneven, both within and between countries. It is especially concerned about the lack of progress for the most marginalized groups of women and girls and those who experience multiple forms of discrimination based on gender, status, age, income, geographical location, language, ethnicity, disability, and race, or because they are rural or indigenous women and girls, or women and girls living with HIV and AIDS. **(based on E/CN.6/2014/3 para 55)** It is also concerned that the MDGs are least likely to be achieved for women and girls in countries affected by conflict. **(based on E/CN.6/2014/3 para 57)**
10. The Commission notes that in regard to MDG 1 (Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger) significant gender gaps in employment rates persist and women are more likely than men to be in vulnerable forms of employment and have less access to social protection. **(based on E/CN.6/2014/3 paras 7 and 12)**
11. The Commission notes that in regard to MDG 2 (Achieve universal primary education) gender parity in primary education enrolment has been achieved in all regions. **(based on E/CN.6/2014/3 paras 16)**
12. The Commission notes that in regard to MDG 3 (Promote gender equality and empower women) progress has been slow with persistent gender gaps in secondary and tertiary education enrolment, women remaining significantly under-represented in non-agricultural wage employment and a low proportion of women in national parliaments. **(based on E/CN.6/2014/3 paras 19, 20 and 21)**
13. The Commission notes that in regard to MDG 4 (Reduce child mortality) significant progress has been made to reduce child mortality globally, and also notes that some regions have higher female under-five mortality rates due to discriminatory practices. **(based on E/CN.6/2014/3 para 26)**
14. The Commission notes that in regard to MDG 5 (Improve maternal health) progress has been especially slow and there continues to be unacceptably high numbers of

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maternal deaths and a significant number of women with an unmet need for family planning. **(based on E/CN.6/2014/3 para 27)**

15. The Commission notes that in regard to MDG 6 (Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases) progress has been limited, with the number of women living with HIV increasing globally since 2001. It also notes the particular vulnerability of young women to HIV, compared to young men. **(based on E/CN.6/2014/3 paras 34, 35 and 36)**
16. The Commission notes that in regard to MDG 7 (Environmental sustainability) while progress has been made in access to safe drinking water, progress on access to basic sanitation has been particularly slow, with the target likely to be missed, with serious implications for women and girls. **(based on E/CN.6/2014/3 paras 40 and 41)**
17. The Commission notes that in regard to MDG 8 (A global partnership for development) the share of official development assistance in support of gender equality has remained inadequate. It also notes that a gender gap in access to information and communication technologies persists. **(based on E/CN.6/2014/3 paras 46, 47 and 48)**
18. The Commission is concerned that several indicators to monitor the MDGs do not provide any information about the situation of women and girls, including those on poverty, hunger, environmental sustainability and global partnership for development. **(based on E/CN.6/2014/3 paras 8, 15, 36, 48)**
19. The Commission is concerned that several critical gender equality issues were not covered by the MDGs such as violence against women and girls, women's disproportionate share of unpaid care work, women's equal access to assets and productive resources, the gender wage gap, women's sexual and reproductive health and rights and women's equal participation at all levels of decision-making. The Commission recognizes that unless all dimensions of gender inequality are addressed, gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment cannot be achieved. **(based on E/CN.6/2014/3 para 52)**
20. The Commission recognizes that progress on all the MDGs for women and girls has been held back due to the persistence of unequal power relations between women and men and discriminatory laws, social norms, practices and stereotypes. **(based on E/CN.6/2014/3 para 53)**
21. The Commission recognizes that the achievement of the MDGs for women and girls has been adversely affected by the impacts of the world financial and economic crises, volatile food and energy prices, food insecurity and climate change. **(based on E/CN.6/2014/3 para 57)**
22. The Commission further recognizes that progress on the MDGs for women and girls has been limited due to the lack of systematic gender mainstreaming and integration



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of a gender perspective in the design and implementation of the MDGs. **(based on E/CN.6/2014/4 para 5)**

23. The Commission also recognizes that insufficient priority given to and significant underinvestment in gender equality and women's empowerment continues to limit progress on the MDGs for women and girls. It stresses that the allocation of resources to achieve gender equality through domestic resource mobilization and official development assistance remains extremely inadequate. **(based on E/CN.6/2014/3 para 59)**
24. The Commission also recognizes that gender-responsive monitoring of the MDGs has been limited due to a lack of investment in gender statistics. **(based on E/CN.6/2014/3 para 61)**
25. In accelerating the achievement of the MDGs and laying the ground for prioritization of gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment in the post-2015 development agenda, the Commission calls on States to: realize women's and girls' full enjoyment of all human rights; strengthen the enabling environment for gender equality; maximize investments in gender equality and women's rights; strengthen the evidence-base for gender equality; and ensure women's participation at all levels and strengthen accountability.
26. Therefore, the Commission urges governments, the relevant entities of the United Nations system, international and regional organizations, women's and other civil society organizations, and the private sector, to take the following actions at the national, regional, and global levels:

**A. Realizing women's and girls' full enjoyment of all human rights**

- (a) Ratify and fully implement the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, withdraw all reservations to the Convention, and ratify or accede to its Optional Protocol; **(based on CSW 57 AC para 34 (a))**
- (b) Ensure full and effective implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development; **(E/CN.6/2014/3 para 66 (i))**
- (c) Eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and girls through: the adoption and accelerated and effective implementation of laws and comprehensive policy measures; the removal of discriminatory provisions in legal frameworks; and comprehensive measures to ensure women's access to justice; **(based on E/CN.6/2014/4 paras 88 (a) (b) and CSW 57 AC paras 34 (v) (cc))**
- (d) Implement concrete and long-term measures to transform discriminatory social norms, stereotypes and harmful practices to promote gender equality and women's empowerment; **(based on E/CN.6/2014/4 para 88 (b))**
- (e) Work with men and boys as strategic partners and allies in the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and girls; **(based on CSW 57 AC para 34 (pp))**

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- (f) Implement specific and targeted measures for the most marginalized groups and for women and girls who experience multiple forms of discrimination; **(based on E/CN.6/2014/3 para 66 (l))**
- (g) Address the multiple factors contributing to women's poverty by ensuring women's economic and social rights, including rights related to employment and decent work, health, education, social protection over the lifecycle and an adequate standard of living, including the right to food security and adequate nutrition, water and housing; **(based on E/CN.6/2014/3 para 9)**
- (h) Eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls through multi-sectoral and coordinated approaches to prevent and respond to violence; **(E/CN.6/2014/4 para 88 (l))**
- (i) Ensure women's sexual and reproductive health and rights, including the provision of high quality and universally accessible reproductive and sexual health services across the lifecycle and comprehensive HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment services; **(based on E/CN.6/2014/4 para 88 (n))**
- (j) Ensure women's and girls' right to a quality education, with specific attention to improving completion rates, the quality of education and girls' safety in the school environment; **(based on E/CN.6/2014/4 para 23)**
- (k) Ensure women's right to work and rights at work through policies that promote decent work for all, promote equal pay for work of equal value, prohibit sexual harassment and support the reconciliation of paid work with family/care responsibilities for both women and men; **(based on E/CN.6/2014/4 para 88 (m))**
- (l) Guarantee women's equal access to and control over assets and productive resources, including land, property and finance; **(based on E/CN.6/2014/4 para 74)**
- (m) Provide gender-responsive, universally accessible and high quality services and infrastructure, including health, water and sanitation, transport, energy, housing, financial services, and information and communication technologies; **(based on E/CN.6/2014/4 paras 57 and 88 (o))**
- (n) Provide universal social protection across the lifecycle that gives women and girls protection against risks and vulnerabilities and promotes their rights; **(E/CN.6/2014/4 para 88 (p))**
- (o) Recognize, value, reduce and redistribute unpaid care work through policies on social protection and essential services including care services, infrastructure development, and employment; **(based on E/CN.6/2014/4 para 88 (q))**

#### **B. Strengthening the enabling environment for gender equality**

- (p) Ensure that global trade, financial and investment agreements promote gender equality and complement national development efforts to achieve the MDGs for women and girls; **(based on E/CN.6/2014/3 para 66 (c))**
- (q) Ensure that macro-economic policies promote gender equality by creating decent work for all, by mobilizing resources to finance social protection, infrastructure and essential services, and by reducing inequalities based on context-specific characteristics; **(based on E/CN.6/2014/3 para 66 (d))**

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- (r) Ensure that global and national policy responses to financial and economic crises and to volatile food and energy prices promote gender equality by creating decent work for all, redistributing resources and generating revenues to finance essential services, social protection and infrastructure; **(based on E/CN.6/2014/3 para 66 (e))**
- (s) Prioritize systematically, and mainstream gender equality perspectives in all social, economic and environmental policies and programmes to implement the MDGs, including national development policies and strategies to reduce poverty, and budgeting and public expenditure allocation processes; **(based on E/CN.6/2014/4 para 88 (d))**
- (t) Adopt specific measures to implement the MDGs for women and girls in armed conflict and post-conflict situations and ensure women's participation in all aspects of peacebuilding and recovery; **(based on E/CN.6/2014/4 para 88 (h))**
- (u) Strengthen international cooperation in technology and innovation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women, including through public-private partnerships; **(based on CSW55 AC, para. 22 (i))**

#### **C. Maximizing investments in gender equality and women's rights**

- (v) Increase significantly financial resources across all sectors for the realization of gender equality and women's rights, through domestic resource mobilization and increased official development assistance;
- (w) Institutionalize gender-responsive budgeting across all sectors of public expenditure to address gaps in resourcing for gender equality; **(based on E/CN.6/2014/3 para 66 (f) and E/CN.6/2014/4 para 88 (j))**
- (x) Ensure all national and sectoral gender equality plans and policies are fully costed and adequately resourced to ensure their effective implementation; **(E/CN.6/2014/4 para 88 (i))**
- (y) Monitor the impact of all economic decision-making on gender equality, including public sector expenditures, public-private partnerships and investments, and official development assistance, and take corrective action to prevent discriminatory impacts and promote gender equality; **(based on E/CN.6/2014/3 para 66 (g))**
- (z) Increase significantly resources for grassroots, national, regional and global women's organizations to promote and advance women's rights; **(E/CN.6/2014/3 para 66 (h))**

#### **D. Strengthening the evidence-base for gender equality**

- (aa) Improve systematic and coordinated collection, dissemination and analysis of gender statistics at the national level through financial and technical support and capacity-building; **(based on E/CN.6/2014/3 para 66 (o))**
- (bb) Collect regularly and disseminate the minimum set of gender indicators and the core set of violence against women indicators adopted by the United Nations Statistical Commission in 2013; **(based on E/CN.6/2014/3 para 66 (o))**



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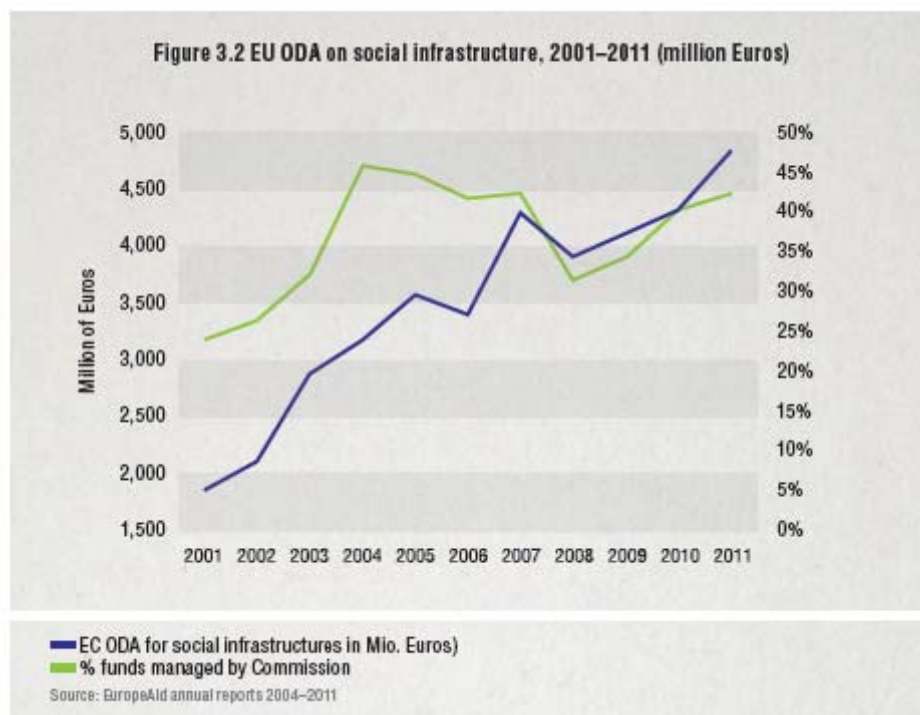
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- (cc) Develop international standards and methodologies to improve data on women's experiences of poverty, unpaid care work, women's participation at all levels of decision-making and women's access to assets and productive resources; **(based on E/CN.6/2014/3 para 61)**
- (dd) Develop national monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess policies and programmes to achieve the MDGs for women and girls and promote the sharing of best practices and experiences; **(based on CSW 57 AC, paras 34 (ppp) and (qqq))**

#### **E. Ensuring women's participation at all levels and strengthening accountability**

- (ee) Ensure women's full and effective participation at all levels of decision-making in public and private institutions, through policies, temporary special measures and by setting concrete goals, targets and benchmarks; **(based on E/CN.6/2014/4 para 88 (t))**
  - (ff) Support the participation of women's organizations and other civil society organizations in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies to implement the MDGs and in the formulation of the post-2015 development agenda; **(based on E/CN.6/2014/3 para 66 (r))**
  - (gg) Ensure accountability of state and non-state actors for the promotion of gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment; **(E/CN.6/2014/3 para 66 (s))**
  - (hh) Strengthen institutional arrangements for monitoring the implementation of the MDGs and ensuring transparency by making available relevant information and supporting women's full and effective participation. **(based on E/CN.6/2014/4 para 88 (u) and E/CN.6/2014/3 para 66 (r))**
27. The Commission urges States to build on the lessons from the implementation of the MDGs as the new post-2015 development agenda is being shaped. It urges States to tackle critical remaining challenges through a transformative approach and calls for gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment to be reflected as a stand-alone goal and to be integrated through targets and indicators into all goals of any new development framework **(based on E/CN.6/2014/3 para 66 (b))**.
28. The Commission also urges all States and all other stakeholders to undertake comprehensive national and regional level reviews of the progress made and challenges encountered in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly so that the outcomes of these reviews can effectively feed into its fifty-ninth session, in 2015. The Commission especially encourages all stakeholders to analyze current challenges and identify opportunities for accelerating actions to realize gender equality and the empowerment of women, and to undertake appropriate commemorative activities for the twentieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women **(based on E/RES/2013/18 paras 3 and 4, and A/RES/68/140 on follow-up to the FWCW)**.

## ANNEX II: EU ODA ON SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE, 2001-2011 (MILLION EUROS)



Source: European Development Report 2013, available at [http://www.erd-report.eu/erd/report\\_2012/report.html](http://www.erd-report.eu/erd/report_2012/report.html)





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