



Recommendations for the follow-up, review, monitoring and accountability mechanisms of the post-2015 agenda

As a European coalition of 87 civil society organisations from 42 countries, we offer the recommendations below for consideration by our governments and the European Union (EU) in the context of discussions at the 18-22 May intergovernmental negotiations on the follow-up and review of the post-2015 agenda, as well as on the upcoming Council Conclusions on the Global Partnership for Poverty Eradication and Sustainable Development after 2015.

We call on the EU to maintain its strong commitments to **gender equality, human rights and sexual and reproductive health and rights for all**, and to the full and effective implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and the Beijing Platform for Action, in line with the **Council Conclusions on a Transformative Post-2015 Agenda**.¹ In this context, we also recall the reaffirmation by European governments during the ICPD Beyond 2014 and Beijing+20 reviews, at regional and global level, of their commitment to combating discrimination, advancing gender equality and realising women's and girls' empowerment and human rights, including sexual and reproductive health and rights.²

According to General Assembly resolution 68/309, the Sustainable Development Goals agreed in the Open Working Group proposal will form the principal basis of the post-2015 negotiations.³ We welcome the inclusion in the goals on **health (SDG 3) and gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls (SDG 5)** of transformative targets on universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, and the elimination of discrimination, violence and harmful practices against women and girls.

A strong post-2015 follow-up, review and accountability framework is indispensable to ensure that commitments to these targets are translated into sound policies, that adequate levels of investment are made available and that, allied to this, effective measures, including legislation, are put in place for the promotion of gender equality, the empowerment of all women and girls, and the elimination of discriminatory laws and policies.



We support the call by the European Commission in its **Communication on A Global Partnership for Poverty Eradication and Sustainable Development after 2015** for the establishment and implementation of a strong and ambitious monitoring, accountability and review process as an integral part of the post-2015 agenda, which will operate at local, national, regional and international level and involve representatives from all stakeholder groups, while **paying particular attention to the needs and rights of discriminated groups and people in vulnerable situations.**⁴

In line with the UNECE Regional Ministerial Consultation on Monitoring and Accountability for the Post-2015 Development Agenda, we emphasise the **pivotal importance of strong monitoring and accountability mechanisms in Europe**, which will build ownership and understanding of the universal nature of the post-2015 agenda in the region, and thus add to its credibility and effectiveness at a global level.⁵

The post-2015 monitoring and accountability framework must be guided by **principles of human rights, empowerment, inclusive participation and transparency** and should **ensure meaningful and institutionalised engagement of civil society,**⁶ including women's, feminist and youth-led organizations, human rights defenders, national human rights institutions, as well as representatives of diverse constituencies and excluded groups.

Furthermore, **high-quality and relevant data, disaggregated**, at a minimum, on the basis of sex, age (including for the age group 10 to 14), geographic location and income, will be a prerequisite for the effective monitoring and accountability of the post-2015 agenda. Data should be collected in a manner respectful of human rights, and should be accessible, transparent and user-friendly, allowing for public access and social accountability. Investments in strengthening national capacities for data collection, analysis and utilisation will be essential.

We strongly recommend that the follow-up, review, monitoring and accountability mechanisms for the implementation of the post-2015 framework should draw on:

- 1) **The outcomes of other review processes under the auspices of the UN**, such as the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Recommendations of the **Commission on**



Population and Development (CPD) and the **Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)** should serve as important guidance for follow up in relevant thematic areas, including gender equality, health and sexual and reproductive health and rights.

- 2) **The outcomes and recommendations within existing Human Rights Mechanisms** at regional and international levels, such as the Human Rights Council, including its Universal Periodic Review and Special Procedures, and human rights treaty bodies, including in particular the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). At the same time, human rights mechanisms should integrate follow-up on the post-2015 agenda into their work.
- 3) **Goal or issue-specific global independent expert review and accountability mechanisms** should be considered for tracking progress and guiding necessary improvements in particular thematic areas, such as in the areas of gender equality, health and sexual and reproductive health and rights. The Independent Expert Review Group (IERG) of the Global Strategy on Women's and Children's Health, for example, has been key in setting up national oversight mechanisms and Country Accountability Frameworks, as well as in strengthening data collection and monitoring.
- 4) National **accountability and redress mechanisms** need to be put in place and strengthened to ensure that performance of the health, education, judiciary, security and other sectors is aligned with international human rights standards, with emphasis on non-discrimination, equality and gender justice. These mechanisms, including national human rights institutions and ombudsman's offices, should monitor compliance, by all relevant actors, with human rights, ethical and professional standards and codes of conduct, for instance by monitoring the availability, accessibility, acceptability and quality of sexual and reproductive health services, information and education. Structures for independent reviews, social audits and citizen- and parliamentary monitoring need to be in place, enabled by guaranteed rights to access information, as well as freedom of expression and of the media.



- 5) **Gender and youth-responsive budgeting** should be institutionalized across all policies and sectors, and should include mechanisms of monitoring and accountability, with civil society organisations recognised and supported as enablers for good governance and social accountability. All national and sector plans, policies and legal reforms for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls should be fully costed and adequately resourced to ensure their effective implementation.⁷
- 6) **Reporting at global level** should build upon reporting processes at regional and national levels and draw on inputs and analyses from all relevant stakeholders, including human rights bodies and civil society organisations. Global reports should be comprehensive, summarising progress, challenges and gaps across all areas of the post-2015 agenda, and provide clear recommendations for further implementation. They should be **complemented by thematic reports** allowing for more in-depth discussion of particular thematic areas or cross-cutting issues of the post-2015 agenda, such as gender equality, health, and sexual and reproductive health and rights.

¹ Council conclusions on a transformative post-2015 agenda, General Affairs Council meeting, 16 December 2014, available [here](#)

² Chair's Summary, *UNECE Regional Conference, Enabling Choice: Population Priorities for the 21st Century*, 1-2 July 2013, available [here](#); Co-chairpersons' conclusions, *UNECE Beijing+20 Regional Review Meeting*, 6-7 November 2014, available [here](#)

³ *Report of the Open Working Group of the General Assembly on Sustainable Development Goals*, 12 August 2014, available [here](#); *Report of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 66/288*, 12 September 2014, available [here](#)

⁴ European Commission, *A Global Partnership for Poverty Eradication and Sustainable Development after 2015*, 5 February 2015, available [here](#)

⁵ Chair's Summary, *Regional Ministerial Consultation: Monitoring and Accountability for the Post-2015 Development Agenda – The Regional Dimension*, 15-16 September 2014, para 60, available [here](#)

⁶ Ibid, para 26

⁷ See also Countdown 2015 Europe position paper, *A New Global Partnership After 2015*, March 2015, available [here](#)