



MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT
GOALS
AGENDA POST 2015 :

VISION OF SOCIALIST
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN

*58th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women
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P R E A M B L E

In September 2000, during the General Assembly of the United Nations, 147 Heads of State and Governments and 189 nations pledged to “make the right to development a reality for everyone and to free the entire human race from want”¹. A Global commitment translated into eight Millennium Development Goals: **1)** To halve world extreme poverty and hunger, **2)** To achieve universal primary education for all, **3)** To promote gender equality and empower women, **4)** To reduce the mortality of children under five, **5)** To improve maternal health, **6)** To combat HIV, malaria and other diseases **7)** To ensure environmental sustainability and **8)** To develop a global partnership for development.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were established by the United Nations to fight against poverty, enable human development and offer all human beings a decent and dignified life. These objectives, specific and quantitative, were beneficial in mobilising the political will of the international community to build a better world. Strengthened by a global partnership and supported by funding instruments, including the F-MDG², significant progress has been made in countries by all eight MDGs. Poverty rates were cut in half, and in 2010, about 700 million fewer people were living in extreme poverty compared to 1990³. But the few results achieved were very uneven and unbalanced especially regarding the situation of women and girls worldwide. The MDGs did not explicitly support women’s rights and gender equality, nor did they involve properly civil rights.

Through its 149 organisations Socialist International Women found that women are still considered vulnerable victims instead of being involved as agents of change. Although gender equality and empowerment have been erected as global priorities, millions of women and girls around the world continue to face inequality and strong social and legal discrimination. The human sex ratio is 1.01 or 1000 women for 1010 men, which makes the female population half the

¹ United Nations, III Millenarian Declaration, 11 September 2000.

² MDG Fund created in 2007 following an agreement between the Spanish Government and the United Nations.

³ UN Millennium Development Report 2013.

world's population⁴, which counts in 2014 more than 7 billion people⁵. Nearly 3.5 billion women suffer physical, economic, legal and social violence as well as other forms of violence.

One can only welcome the 58th session of the Commission on the Status of Women⁶ (CSW), which is dedicated to "Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the MDGs for women and girls". The CSW, which plays an important role in the monitoring of the Beijing⁷ Declaration and the Programme of Action, offers through its 58th session a final opportunity to warn about the link between gender equality, women's empowerment, violence and development.

4 Statistics of 2013 world fact book.

5 www.un.org

6 Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)

7 Adopted 20 years ago during the 4th World Conference of Women in 1995

INTRODUCTION

Socialist International Women considers that there cannot be a sustainable and equitable development without the participation of women. The MDGs are real humanitarian challenges which will remain elusive without gender equality, women's emancipation, their empowerment and the end of violence. These are the prerequisites for achieving these objectives and preserving the gains made in reducing poverty, accessing water, education, health, child labour... etc...

These achievements are fragile, threatened, and even, in some countries, were wiped out by population growth, climate changes, political crises and present and past armed conflicts, as well as the economic crisis that hit the major donors, such as the European Union and the United States of America, but also because of. It is not easy to make a thorough assessment of the MDGs as all countries do not have the same development opportunities. The status of women differs from one continent to another, from one country to another, and sometimes from one region to another. The status of women also differs depending on their social and cultural environment. Moreover, the available statistics suffer from the absence of gender indicators and therefore there is no understanding of the true situation of women and girls in some countries.

An overview of the results related to the fight against poverty, the strengthening of the rights of women and to the improvement of their living conditions, helps to better understand the MDGs post 2015 and the gaps.

MDGS : BETWEEN PERFORMANCE AND REALITY

MDG 1 “Eradicate extreme poverty” has declined from 43% in 1990 to 22% in 2008 in the proportion of people living on less than \$1.25. The goal of halving the proportion of people without access to safe water is declared to be global in 2010. But if between 1990 and 2010, more than 2 billion people have obtained access, 60% of workers in developing countries earn less than \$1 a day. 1.2 billion people still live in poverty⁸, particularly in the African and Asian continents.

Nearly 870 million people, or one in eight people in the world, could not consume a sufficient amount of food on a regular basis to meet their minimum food energy needs during the period of 2010-2012. The vast majority of undernourished people chronically (852 million) live in developing countries. More than 100 million children suffer from chronic malnutrition and one in four children have stunted growth⁹ as a result.

Despite the global decline there were more than 700 million people living in extreme poverty between 1990 and 2008 and while millions of women are living in extreme poverty, their number is unknown. The overall goal of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger is still very far away.

Women have a higher risk than men of living in poverty. Large disparities remain between man and woman in North Africa, West Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. Women in these regions are facing low pay and lack a safe job and social benefits.

Poverty is often the cause of internal or international migration, an important issue that has not withheld the attention of the MDGs despite the interdependence between migration and development. Today, nearly 232 million people live outside their country of origin. 50% are women and 10% are less than 15 years old. 4 in 10 migrants live in developing countries.

⁸ Cooperation for development (2013): Ending poverty (OCDE)

⁹ United Nations, Millennium Development goals, Report of 2013

Much remains to be done to halve the poverty rate in the world. In sub-Saharan Africa the number of people living in extreme poverty fell from 290 million in 1990 to 414,000,000 in 2010. Without the necessary resources, technical and financial resources and good governance poverty will increase. From 2010 to 2012, about one eighth of the world's population did not reach its minimum nutritional requirements.

One child in 6 under the age of five is underweight and one in four children is suffering from stunting growth. Most malnourished people live in developing countries. Worldwide, nearly 200 million people do not have a job and 384 million more are "working poor" earning less than \$1.25 a day. Women and girls suffer more than men and boys because of the discrimination they face.

Gender inequality creates and feeds several inequalities, such as access to education and empowerment. Poor and with little or no education, women cannot weigh their influence either within the household or within their community. Poverty has many faces; hunger is only one. It is a scourge that goes beyond hunger.

The link between poverty and gender inequality is a major development challenge and a tool in the fight against extreme poverty. States should invest in promoting the social and economic status of women to lower poverty rates.

MDG 2 “Achieve universal primary education for all” appears to have increased the opportunities for girls to benefit from schooling.

Globally, the primary school enrolment has increased to an average of 89% and girls are now almost as likely as boys to be enrolled. In 2011, 57 million children of primary school age were not in school – a figure down from the 102 million children in 2000. More than half of these school children live in sub-Saharan Africa.

Globally, 123 million young people (aged 15-24 years) do not have the basic skills in reading and writing, 61% of them are young women. If gender parity in primary education is claimed to have been reached, the gender differences are important and in countries such as Cape Verde or Eritrea parity has regressed¹⁰. The gender disparities persist at both regional and national levels.

In Sub-Saharan Africa 26% of girls of school age do not attend primary school: 55% in Southern Africa, 65% in Asia and 79% in West and North Africa. Nearly 61 million children still do not attend school institutions.

In 63 countries, girls are more likely to be uneducated than boys in the age groups of primary and lower secondary education. The difference between the sexes in enrolment is more important in junior high, even for girls from wealthier households. In several countries in Africa, forced marriages and unwanted pregnancies prevent girls from continuing their education and those who do not go to school are more likely to be married very young. Research shows that an additional year of high school for girls can increase their future wages by 10 to 20%¹¹.

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¹⁰ www.terrangaweb.com: MDG Report of 2012, Numerous Challenges for Africa.

¹¹ www.banquemondiales.org: Half a Century of Investment in Education.

for 1990 to 36%. But disparities exist: Gambia, Guinea, Liberia, Malawi, Niger, Senegal and Tunisia saw a significant education gap in secondary education between girls and boys, 25 to 45 percent from 1991 to 2008. Others, such as Ethiopia, Madagascar, Mauritius and Namibia are facing a widening gap¹².

Today, only two out of 130 countries have achieved gender equality at all levels of education. 123 million young people are illiterate. In 2011 half of the school children in the world were in sub-Saharan Africa which has nearly 32 million children of school age¹³.

The poorest girls still do not attend secondary school, which is a gateway to training and empowerment, and women still represent two-thirds of 793 million illiterates in the world, mostly in rural areas. While some progress has been made, the goal of providing education for all will not be achieved by 2015.

Education and training are fundamental rights of women and men. They are a development tool without which there can be no growth or progress.

¹² <http://www.un.org/fr/millenniumgoal>

¹³ UNESCO, press release, July 2010 (2010c).

MDG 3 “Promote gender equality and empower women” has seen a progress which remains, however, very small. Women are gaining ground representation in elected bodies. They represent nearly 20% of the world’s MPs. In 2012, in a third of developing countries, the number of women in Parliament is still less than 10%, and sometimes women are absent. Progress towards equal representation has been too slow over these past 15 years and parity can only be achieved in 40 years at the current rate.

Women remain disadvantaged in the labour market irrespective of their level of education or experience. They currently represent 40% of all employees outside the agricultural sector but their jobs are less secure with fewer benefits in developing countries. Full employment, creation of productive employment, decent work for all is still far from being achieved in the world. Only 20% of the world population has adequate social protection.

The average wages of men are higher than women in urban and rural areas. Rural women work more hours than men because of their unpaid domestic responsibilities. In Benin and Tanzania, for example, women work respectively 17.4 and 14 hours more per week than men. In India, rural women work almost 11 hours more than urban¹⁴ women and 12 hours more than urban men.

Globally, women hold only 25% of directional positions. In 2008-2009 they had wages 23% lower than those of men. In 2012, in 22 of 48 countries where elections were held in 2012, the use of quotas was the cause of the increase in the higher than average number of women MPs¹⁵. In most countries, the representation of women in the executive, judicial or traditional system in the spheres of public life is low because of cultural norms and the absence of public policy establishing parity or quotas.

14 FAO, FIDA, OIT. 2010. Orientation Note on gender equality and rural employment #1: Gender Equality in Rural employment to reduce poverty and stimulate economic growth (<http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/i2008e/i2008e01.pdf>)

15 MDGs, 2013 report.

Data from the International Labour Organization show a loss of 13 million jobs for women between 2007 and 2012. During the same period, in addition to paid work, the burden of unpaid work (not included in the MDGs) is a major obstacle to women's ability to access education, training and opportunities for decent employment or to engage in politics¹⁶. For countries where data are available, women spend, on average, about twice as much time as men on domestic work, including care of the family. Rural women spend more time than urban women and men in domestic and household work, including time spent obtaining water and fuel, caring for children and the sick, and processing food.

In 2012, more than half of all employed women in the world were in insecure jobs. In sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, vulnerable employment is more than 80% of total employment for women. In all developing countries business ownership is concentrated mainly among men. Only between 1% and 3% of women are entrepreneurs. The largest differences are found in North Africa and Western Asia.

Greater political participation of women will advance gender equality and empowerment. The example is significant in India in the counties with municipal councils headed by women. It was also found that there was an increase of 62% in the number of drinking water projects in areas where municipal councils were headed by women instead of men.

Meanwhile, the paid work of women increases their decision-making in the home, which can have a positive impact on several objectives. Therefore supporting women and girls' participation to empowerment can influence public policy. But gender equality and empowerment are not a main theme of the MDGs even if they now occupy the second place, no longer the third, following the report of High-level individuals of the United Nations for the post 2015 agenda.

The integration of women in the market economy is a gateway to empowerment and decision making power.

¹⁶ For the period 2002-2011. OIT (2012). OIT Global Estimation of global forced labour. Results and Methodology.

MDG 4 “reduce the mortality of children under five years old” helped reduce the risk of infant mortality in the world. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), 90% of child deaths are due to malaria, measles, HIV-AIDS, pneumonia, diarrhoea but also to neonatal reasons.

The number of children below the age of 5 who died in 2012 is estimated at 6.6 million¹⁷. In 2011, 20.1 million children, mostly poor, have not even received a first dose of vaccine against measles. Nearly 50% of deaths occur in five countries: India, Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Pakistan and China. The number of countries whose mortality of under 5 year olds is 100 per 1,000 births diminished from 52 to 31 between 1990 and 2009 births. But the proportion of deaths during the first month after birth has increased from 37% in 1990 to 40% in 2010. Almost 3 million children die new-borns each year. The mortality rate of children under five years was 60% in 2011.

The countries most affected by infant mortality are in Africa. Only North Africa and South East Asia achieved the target under MDG 4. Child mortality fell from 89 deaths per 1000 births in 1999 to 60 deaths per 1,000 births in 2009. Sub-Saharan Africa, which has the highest mortality rate of children in the world, has doubled its average reduction rate, which rose from 1.5% per year in 1990-2000 to 3.1% per year in 2000-2011.

Mortality of children under five years decreased by 2.5% per year, but the mortality of infants during their first months of life decreased by only 1.8% per year. Neonatal deaths among children under five years old in the world increased from 36% in 1990 to 43% in 2011. These neonatal deaths account for 57% of all child deaths in 2011. In sub-Saharan Africa, 1 in 9 children die before the age of five. In Southeast Asia, 1 in 16 children die before the age of five.

Infant mortality also knows major disparities within countries. Children born in the poorest households, especially those in rural areas are twice more likely to die before the age of five than those from richer households. But poverty is

¹⁷ World Health Organisation: www.who.int

not the only cause. Several factors feed these deaths such as prevention, care of new-borns and their mothers, vaccines, conflict, access to health care, water, nutrition, health and education of mothers.

Recent research shows that between 1970 and 2009, the average number of years of education increased from 4.7 years to 8.3 years for men and 3.5 years to 7.1 years in women.

In developing countries, for women of childbearing age (15 to 44), the increase was even greater, from 2.2 years to 7.2 years. Over the same period, the mortality of children under 5 years fell to 8.2 million deaths¹⁸.

The objective of a 30% lower mortality rate among children under five by 2015 seems unrealistic if the mother's education is not taken into account. The education of women and girls contributes significantly to reducing the risk of infant mortality.

¹⁸ Emmanuela Gakidou, Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation, Washington University of Seattle, published in the lancet on the improvement of the education level of Women, 18 September, Vol. 376, No 9745, p 959-974.

MDG 5 “Improve maternal health” has sensitised the international community, particularly the developing countries on the target of reducing by three quarters the maternal mortality percentage. Maternal mortality has been reduced by 47% in twenty years, from 400 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births in 1990 to 210 deaths in 2010. East Asia 69%, North Africa 66% and South Asia 64% recorded the largest declines.

But the main cause of death for girls between 15 and 19 years in developing countries lies in premature births, caused by malnutrition, lack of prenatal monitoring and female genital mutilation in some countries in sub-Saharan Africa. More than 15 million of the 135 million live births in the world are from women aged between 15 and 19 years old. The highest birth rates for teenage girls between 15 to 19 years old come from Sub-Saharan Africa, 118 births per 1,000 girls. Access to care is very difficult for these girls because of cultural considerations, which often lead to forced marriages.

Marriage age has increased overall, but in some countries, girls still marry very young. The average age for a first marriage is the lowest in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, at respectively 18 and 16 years old. They do not go or no longer go to school, have no decision-making power in the household and incur more health risks associated with premature births and domestic violence. Sexual and reproductive rights continue to be violated in many countries, despite international conventions working to protect women’s health and bodily integrity.

Rural women in developing countries have little or no access to reproductive health. Hundreds of thousands of women die every year due to the shortage of services. Women and girls do not have access to legal security and medical services, treatment, care, education, prevention and awareness on HIV-AIDS. In 46 million of 135 million live births in 2011, women gave birth alone or without proper care. 140 million women want to delay or avoid pregnancy but do not have access to contraception.

To achieve the MDG target we must double our efforts to provide access to women and girls, in urban and rural areas, to antenatal care, emergency obstetric care, assistance with deliveries by skilled health personnel and antiretroviral therapy. Support for family planning should be a priority for public policy. We cannot deal with the health of mothers without a family planning policy, which would include men and was based on the respect of sexual and reproductive rights.

“Improve maternal health” in family planning reduces poverty, helps to extend schooling, empowers women, increases the survival of children and mothers, protects against communicable diseases, and conserves resources.

MDG 6 “Combat HIV-AIDS, malaria and other diseases” has contributed to the decline of several pandemics. Worldwide, HIV infections continue to decline and access to antiretroviral drugs has been greatly expanded. The number of new HIV infections is declining, especially in sub-Saharan Africa. Central Asia is the only region where new infections are on the rise, mainly due to the use of injected drugs.

In 2011, 45 million people were infected with this virus. Among those, 600,000 young women, were newly infected with HIV. 7 million people infected with HIV-AIDS still do not have access to treatment. Out of a total of 2.7 million new infections in 2010, nearly one million were young people between the age of 15 and 24, and more than 60%, were women. In 2011, the number of children under 15 years infected with HIV-AIDS has decreased compared to 230,000 in 2001 and still in 2011 8 million people were receiving antiretroviral therapy against HIV-AIDS.

In 2010, 6.6 million people received therapy. In 2011, only 55% of the 14.4 million people in developing countries who needed treatment received it. The target of universal access to antiretroviral therapy has not been reached. In 2011, 17 countries (Botswana, Namibia, Rwanda, Swaziland, Zambia, Cambodia, Cuba, Fiji, Guyana, Mexico and the Dominican Republic) have achieved universal access. 57% of pregnant women in need of such treatment in developing regions did receive it in 2011. Sub-Saharan Africa is home to approximately 93% of the 1.5 million pregnant women who should receive antiretroviral drugs. Young people, particularly women and girls, do not have a good knowledge of this disease and very little use condoms.

Between 2000 and 2010, 1.1 million deaths, mostly caused by malaria have been avoided. In 2010, about 219 million cases of malaria worldwide led to nearly 660,000 deaths and more than 80% of these deaths concerned children under five. The Democratic Republic of Congo and Nigeria account for over 40% of the estimated malaria deaths worldwide.

Malaria continues to be a disease of poverty. At national level, the prevalence of malaria infections is higher among the poor and those living in rural areas. Malaria caused the death of over one million people, mostly children.

Treatment against tuberculosis has saved nearly 20 million lives out of 51 million lives between 1995 and 2011. But it is estimated that the number of people infected by tuberculosis is 5.8 million. Many people develop tuberculosis when infected with HIV-AIDS and while they receive no treatment. These diseases have a negative impact on the economy and development.

These diseases require huge resources both from states and households. But the health of a population also depends on peace, security, political will, education and information for women and men.

Mothers and youths' education is paramount in the fight against infectious diseases and communicable diseases. It is a way to reverse the trends.

MDG 7 “Ensure environmental sustainability” to reverse the loss of environmental resources has seen some substantial results but vary widely across regions and countries. Protected areas have increased by 58% and their surface area by 48%. More than 2.1 billion people and nearly 1.9 billion people have gained access, respectively, to improved water sources and improved sanitation since 1990.

Global emissions of carbon dioxide have increased by over 39% since 1990, despite a slight decline between 2008 and 2009. This decrease is due to the global economic crisis which led to a slowdown in economic activity in developed countries: 10 metric tons of CO₂ per capita in 2009 against 3 metric tons for the developing world¹⁹. Meanwhile, species extinctions have increased despite an increase in protected areas. Almost a third of fish stocks have been overexploited.

If the percentage of the population having no access to safe drinking water has been halved as planned by MDG 7, the percentage of the population, which has no access to sanitation services remains high and very variable, with improvements occurring in China and India, West Asia while Sub-Saharan Africa is still lagging behind. Since 2010, some 800 million people did not have access to improved drinking water sources.

863 million people live in slums in the developing world²⁰ and this number continues to increase, although the proportion of the urban population in developing countries living in slums fell from 39% in 2000 to 33 % in 2010.

In 2011, during the United Nations Conference on Climate Change in Durban, it was agreed to hold a stronger position to control climate change action, including emissions of greenhouse gas emissions. The consequences of climate change: droughts, floods, famines, epidemics, are harmful to poor countries who suffer first, especially women, girls and children.

¹⁹ United Nations: <http://www.un.org/en/millenniumgoals>

²⁰ United Nations: Millennium Development Goals, 2013 Report

Every day, 6,000 children die from diarrhoea or one child every 15 seconds. The water management should be the concern of all. Agriculture is the largest consumer of water. To produce one kilogram of wheat, it takes a ton of water. In Africa, only 7% of the land is irrigated. Drought which started in 2011, on the Horn of Africa continues and more than 13 million people in Kenya, Ethiopia, Somalia and Djibouti, now depend on humanitarian aid to survive.

Women can play an important role in achieving MDG 7 if national policies and programs for sustainable development have a gender approach and these policies fight against the sexual division of labour. Women in poor countries suffer sexual division of water management. They are primarily responsible for the management and use of water and walk for hours every day to collect it. In sub-Saharan Africa, only about half of the households live less than 15 minutes from the nearest source of water.

Women and girls are the first victims of lack of drinking water and of sanitation. It is with them that we can protect this resource.

Water is the source of life, health and development but also peace and security. Good governance of sustainable development implies the participation of women and gender equality in the fields of health and education and child nutrition and environmental factors, including water and sanitation, pollution and climate change.

MDG 8 “Develop a global partnership for development” provides, inter alia, to pursue the establishment of an open and non-discriminatory trading and financial system, to address the special needs of the least developed countries, to implement national and international measures to alleviate the debt burden of developing countries, to collaborate with the private sector, especially the pharmaceutical industry, to make essential drugs available and affordable in developing countries and to provide all countries the new information and communication technologies. MDG 8 is of wide spectrum and acts as a base for good governance of the seven MDGs without which the expected results would be compromised.

The Official Development Assistance totalled 126.6 billion and represents a 4% decline in real terms in 2012, after falling by 2% in 2011. This decrease is due to austerity measures taken by several donor countries because of the economic and financial crisis and turmoil in the euro area.

Since 2010, when it reached its peak, official development assistance fell by 6.0% less in real terms. If we exclude 2007, which corresponds to the end of exceptional operations of debt relief, the decline observed in 2012 is highest since 1997. It is also the first time since 1996-1997 that aid has contracted for the consecutive years²¹.

Bilateral aid to sub-Saharan Africa totalled USD 26.2 billion, a drop of 7.9% in real terms compared to 2011. Aid to Africa has been reduced by 9.9% and brought back to USD 28.9 billion in 2011 after a year marked by the exceptional support granted to certain North African countries following the “Arab Spring”.

The group of the least developed countries (LDCs) also saw the net inflows of the intended bilateral aid decline 12.8% less in real terms and fall to about USD 26 billion.

²¹ OCDE aid statistics: <http://www.oecd.org/>

In the developing world, 31% of the population uses the Internet, against 77% in the developed world. Internet users in developing countries accounted for 65% of total global users in 2013, when they used to account for 40% in 2005. In addition, the penetration rate of Internet use in developing countries increased from 25% in 2011 to 31% in 2013. Prices of information technology and communications (ICT) services become more affordable but the cost difference between developed countries and developing countries remains high. Studies show an increase of 10% of Internet broadband connections would result in a 1.3% economic growth in developing countries.

Prices of essential drugs are still too high in developing countries, but there has been an improvement in access to drugs for HIV-AIDS, as well as an increased local production of other essential medicines.

It remains difficult to obtain essential medicines in developing countries, especially in low-income to low middle-income countries. In 2012, we could only find essential medicine in 57% of public health facilities and 65% in private institutions. In low-income and low middle-income countries, prices were on average 3.3 times higher than international reference prices in the public sector institutions and 5.7 times higher in private establishments.

Help is also less available to the poorest countries, in favour of middle-income countries. To continue progress towards achieving the MDGs, it is necessary to change this approach. Donor countries and donors must meet their aid commitments, especially to fragile countries, low-income and debt ridden countries. The weight of external debt affects the financial capacity of a country and its resilience to economic shocks.

Bilateral aid allocated to specific sectors has increased every year between 2008 and 2010. But aid devoted to gender equality has declined slightly in 2010 after an increase in 2009. The international donor community has an extremely important role to play in investing in development programs that empower girls and women. Because of the cross section nature of the objective of gender

equality, financial assistance programs and projects in favour of gender equality should increase to accelerate the achievement of the MDGs.

The post 2015 period will likely confront the limits of the official development assistance because of the global crisis and find new sources of additional funding such as local resources. However, the crisis should not be an excuse to undermine the global partnership for development, but an opportunity to improve the effectiveness of aid. The contributions of urban and rural women are important to eradicate poverty and hunger.

That is why development aid should put more effort towards the empowerment and equal gender mainstreaming in legislation, social norms, public policies and budgets to eliminate inequalities between women and men.

The global partnership must also work for peace and security. We cannot set up a sustainable development in an environment of conflict or war where women, girls and children are the first victims.

Women are at the heart of development issues and the reduction of inequalities between men and women is a key driver of development and growth.

What lessons?

The Socialist International Women reiterates that by adopting the Millennium Declaration (2000), the countries of the world are committed to: (1) Support the economic, social and cultural protection and promotion of civil and political rights for all and (2) combat all forms of violence against women and to implement the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and (3) encourage the ratification and full implementation of all the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols on the involvement of children in armed conflict and on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography of children.

Women and girls have made the least progress and have been most adversely affected by progress in the eight MDGs by 2015. The post 2015 agenda should integrate gender into all objectives because they are all interrelated to the situation of women and girls with a framework for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation based on sex-disaggregated data.

The available statistics do not always reveal the truth. Very recently, a review of gender statistics in 126 countries found that although gender statistics are governed by statistical laws on gender, only 15% of these countries have specific legislation requiring a national statistical survey system based on sex²². The MDGs have suffered from data availability, international comparability but also suffered from having been defined in relation to global trends. Quantitative targets have benefited from being defined in relation to regions and in partnership with women's organisations.

The Socialist International Women is convinced that it is essential to establish a viable framework with clear monitoring mechanisms and indicators of gender. It seems easy to "genderise" data on education, health, mortality, work, political participation and thus to measure, at some level, equality and women's rights. But results remain distorted because equality and women's rights require

²² <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/3090statnote2.pdf>

new data sources such as violence, age, the burden of unpaid work or gender poverty to have more accurate statistics.

Recommendations

It is with women and by women that the MDGs will be achieved and that we can reduce poverty and hunger, increase school enrolment, reduce child mortality, improve maternal health, fight against HIV-AIDS and promote environmental sustainability and peace. It is necessary to include in the agenda for the post-2015 development measures proposed by the Beijing Platform (1995) and CEDAW (2004)²³.

Socialist International Women strongly recommends a sensible approach to gender and age and based on human rights, involving all levels of civil society and focusing on three priorities: **1/elimination of violence, 2 / free education and training, 3/ eradication of poverty.**

- » **Elimination of Violence:** The Socialist International Women reiterates that rape, and trafficking of women, forced marriage, female genital mutilation and sexual exploitation of women and girls in conflict and violence are significant risk factors for HIV transmission. The violence was the forgotten MDG when it is both a cause and a consequence of poverty which also has an important impact on other objectives such as wage employment of women and maternal and infant mortality. According to a comprehensive review of available data from 2013, 35% of women worldwide have undergone either intimate partner violence or sexual violence by non-partners. This violence is also verbal, physical and psychological.

Approximately 140 million girls and women worldwide have undergone female genital mutilation. More than 603 million women continue to suffer social norms that do not criminalise domestic violence. Women and girls

²³ Convention for the elimination of all forms of discrimination towards women ratified in 2004 by 179 countries

represent 55% of the approximately 20.9 million victims of forced labour in the world and about 98% of the 4.5 million are forced into sexual exploitation. Rape is also a widespread and systematic tactic in conflicts and wars.

- » **Free education and training:** The Socialist International Women affirms the need to educate and/or train women and girls for free. Girls who have completed primary education level are two times more likely to marry earlier than those with a secondary or higher²⁴ education, and girls without primary education have a three times higher probability of marrying before 18 years old than those who have completed secondary or higher²⁵. Education and training play a key role in the emancipation and equality and are prerequisites to the fight against poverty. By providing education and training for girls, mortality can be greatly reduced as the mother's education is a key factor in child mortality.
- » **Eradication of Poverty:** Socialist International Women recalls that 70% of the poor are women and therefore the fight against poverty is a priority. The role of women is recognised in food security, family welfare, and farming. But access to land, means of production, property is still too low in some countries and sometimes even non-existent for them to have a decent life. To help their family live or survive, women work in the informal sector without social security or protection of their rights and suffer exclusion, discrimination and violence. Fight against poverty involves the fight against inequality to guarantee women their rights and access to economic resources.

Elimination of violence, free education and training and eradication of poverty are the three main factors in achieving any goal for a better world.

24 www.undp.org

25 2012 Report: United Nations Funds for Population

The Socialist International Women is the international organisation of women's organisations of the socialist, social democratic and labour parties affiliated to the Socialist International.

It currently has 149 member organizations worldwide.

Its objectives are to:

- » Promote gender equality, combat all forms of discrimination against women and promote women's rights, which are the rights of the human person;
- » Strengthen relationships between the member organisations of the International Socialist Women in order to coordinate their policy positions and activities;
- » Encourage member organisations to ensure the implementation of resolutions and declarations adopted at meetings of the Socialist International Women;
- » Seek to develop relationships between member organisations of the Socialist International Women and other groups and women's organisations of socialist orientation which are not members but who are committed to the progress of gender equality and wish to collaborate with the Socialist International Women;
- » Promote programs of action to overcome discrimination against women and girls, and to promote the empowerment of women and girls in all areas, and
- » Work for peace, security and rights of the human person in general.

The Socialist International Women is a non-governmental organisation in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.

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