



**Submission of the Equality Rights Alliance to the  
Sustainable Development Goals Inquiry**

**23 April 2018**

## Equality Rights Alliance

Equality Rights Alliance (ERA) is Australia's largest network advocating for women's equality, women's leadership and recognition of women's diversity. We bring together 64 non-government organisations and social enterprises with a focus on the impact of policy or service delivery on women.

We are one of six National Women's Alliances, funded by the Commonwealth Office for Women.

We appreciate the opportunity to make this submission to the *Inquiry on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals*.

## Summary of Recommendations

**Recommendation 1:** *Develop and enact a gender responsive SDGs implementation plan with proper resourcing, backed up by appropriate governance and accountability structures.*

**Recommendation 2:** *Assess current policies for SDG implementation capability and recalibrate accordingly. Develop institutional mechanisms to ensure policy coherence across government for SDGs implementation.*

**Recommendation 3:** *Develop open, participatory, accountable and systematic processes for SDG reporting and accountability.*

**Recommendation 4:** *Develop an Australian SDG baseline and formulate a national SDG data plan that is gender-responsive and people-centred.*

*Note: ERA also endorses the Treaty body recommendations set out in appendix 1.*

## Executive Summary

Despite the momentous global consensus that the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) represent, very little is known about the Agenda in Australia and awareness and action within government is low. This submission focusses on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls through the sustainable development agenda and responds to the terms of reference (a), (c), (d) and (e).

Using a gender analysis, this submission makes recommendations on integrating gender responsiveness into the domestic implementation and monitoring of the SDGs. Gender-responsive implementation is a tool to ensure policy coherence and complementarity in this broad-ranging and ambitious agenda. In developing a plan for gender-responsive implementation, we recommend looking to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Strategy as a benchmark for domestic roll out.

Given the far-reaching remit, whole of government coordination and governance mechanisms will be essential for effective implementation. We posit that such mechanisms are an opportunity to boost awareness of and engagement with the SDGs within government and in the community.

Underlying an overarching implementation plan is the need for substantive policies that will achieve the SDG targets. This requires recalibrating current policy settings by looking to reporting from UN human

rights treaty bodies and processes. Formulating Australia's SDG plan is an opportunity to reinvigorate our engagement with and responsiveness to the UN human rights system.

In developing plans for implementation and monitoring, attention is inevitably drawn to the fragmented and incomplete patchwork of information and data currently available on where Australia sits in relation to the Agenda. The need for a baseline, underpinned by a robust, intersectional and gender-responsive dataset and a properly resourced statistical capacity, would inform the development of national plans, substantive policies and ongoing monitoring.

## Agenda 2030: The Sustainable Development Goals

The 2030 Agenda is comprised of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a transformational roadmap for the planet, peace and prosperity. The SDGs have been active since the multilateral agreement of all 193 UN Member States in September 2015. Unlike the previous Millennium Development Goals, the SDGs apply universally and thus provide a global blueprint under which all must strive to “*end extreme poverty, fight inequality and injustice and protect the planet.*”<sup>1</sup> As well as a shared vision for member states, the SDGs offer alignment for Australia's Federation; the SDGs are an opportunity for a shared vision and ambition for all levels of Australian Government, from Local to Federal. Agenda 2030 is a beacon for Australia and the world. Owing to the low profile and lack of political attention and investment, the SDGs are under-utilised and untapped. Offering great promise and a shared vision of transforming our world, this agenda demands focus, funding and fulfilment, “*business as usual will not be enough to achieve the agenda's aspirations.*”<sup>2</sup>

Agenda 2030 calls for approaches that are transformative, redistributive, intersectional and capable of fulfilling the human rights of everyone. The central and underlying principle of the SDGs is “Leave No One Behind,” which is to be achieved by “reaching the furthest behind first.” The most just and effective solutions demand urgent prioritisation of the rights of people who experience multiple, intersecting and compounding systems of inequality and marginalisation. We welcome Australia's first Voluntary National Report (VNR) on the SDGs as an opportunity to construct a baseline for measuring progress, but call for greatly increased engagement and investment at all levels of Government in Australia to ensure measurable progress is achieved before our second VNR.

## Achieving Gender Equality in the Sustainable Development Agenda

*“Together we can make 2030 an expiry date for gender inequality.”*<sup>3</sup>

*Goal 5 - Gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls* is a standalone goal, and an essential pre-condition for achieving the remaining 16 SDGs. The Agreed Conclusions of the 60<sup>th</sup> Commission on the Status of Women (CSW60) prescribe a range of actions for member states to undertake gender-responsive implementation of the SDGs. Through an express acknowledgement that gender equality is underpinning and central to Agenda 2030, CSW60 makes clear that the consideration of

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<sup>1</sup> ACFID, ACOSS, SDSN, Global Compact Network Australia, ‘Australian SDGs Summit - On the Road to Implementation’, in Sustainable Development Solutions Network Australia/Pacific, 7 September 2016, viewed on 28 March 2018, <http://ap-unsdsn.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/FINAL-Australian-SDGs-Summit-Outcomes-Document.pdf>, p.5

<sup>2</sup> ACFID, ACOSS, SDSN, Global Compact Network Australia, p.4

<sup>3</sup> P Mlambo-Ngcuka, ‘Together, we can make 2030 an expiry date for gender inequality’, in UN Women, 14 October 2014, viewed 27 March 2018, <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2014/10/ed-geneva-ipu-assembly-speech>

gender is not limited to Goal 5. Goal 5 in itself is ambitious and yet broad and high-level. It addresses ending gendered discrimination and violence, valuing and redistributing unpaid care, increasing women's leadership and economic empowerment, advancing sexual and reproductive health and rights and strengthening gender machineries. Recognising its breadth, Goal 5 is a springboard for action, providing the "energy, momentum and consensus" to drive serious and meaningful action in domestic contexts.<sup>4</sup> The detail required to guide and direct this broad call to action should be derived from the *Beijing Platform for Action* (BPFA) and other human rights processes, such as the Treaty Body reporting systems.

In the context of the SDGs, gender equality should not be conceptualised as limited to Goal 5. Notwithstanding its ambition, Goal 5 is far from exhaustive and comprehensive. A gender-responsive approach to the implementation of the entire Agenda 2030 is critical to integrating gender into areas that are absent from Goal 5 (such as, but not limited to, education, decent work and income gaps, financing for development, housing and Women, Peace and Security) and thereby advancing gender equality in all areas and inoculating against policies that could potentially undermine gender equality action. The integration of gender into the implementation of the SDGs necessitates both mainstreaming *and* targeted action for equality. This entails developing an overarching national gender equality strategy with commensurate tactics, such as gender-responsive budgeting. Target 5.C and indicator 5.C.1 call for the implementation of policies to promote gender equality at *all* levels, setting the scene for the consideration and integration of gender across the 2030 Agenda. ERA's own SDG mapping draws attention to the need for gender responsiveness to feature in action on Target 11.1 ensuring access to adequate, safe and affordable housing for all.<sup>5</sup> Gendered implementation of the SDGs has the advantage of combating policy incoherence that could potentially emerge in SDG implementation under a gender-unaware model. Adopting a gender lens across the implementation of the 2030 Agenda ensures that actions to implement the 17 goals are interlinked and complementary.

Gender equality and women's empowerment is central to Australia's international development program through the Department of Foreign Affairs' *Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Strategy*.<sup>6</sup> This strategy is an example of a policy framework that guides gender responsiveness through specific, targeted gender equality actions *and* mainstreaming. Under the strategy, 80% of investments made under the Strategy must address gender equality regardless of their objectives. Such an approach to gender equality is missing from Australia's domestic policy settings. In the absence of a national, overarching domestic plan on gender equality, it is unclear how and to what extent gender equality considerations are integrated across all policy areas. It is worth noting the inconsistencies in Australia's gender equality standards internationally and domestically. As IWDA points out in their submission to this Inquiry, the SDGs provide a mechanism to "*bridge the divide between a domestic and international focus*" and provide opportunities to bring home these strong gender equality standards.<sup>7</sup>

However, high standards and good policy settings are only as effective as the resourcing behind them. In the context of development, the SDGs redouble the commitment by developed countries to achieve the target of 0.7% of gross national income (GNI) spent on overseas development assistance (ODA). As highlighted by the Research for Development Impact Network, the Australian Government's continued and substantial cuts to the budget for development assistance "*undermine the role that Australia can play within*

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<sup>4</sup> S Duus, 'SDG 5: What does Sustainable Development Goal 5 mean for Australia?', in Broad Agenda, 20 November 2017, viewed 2 April 2018, <http://www.broadagenda.com.au/home/sdg-5-what-does-sustainable-development-goal-5-mean-for-australia/>

<sup>5</sup> Equality Rights Alliance, 'Mapping Domestic Priorities and International Commitments' in Equality Rights Alliance, 1 November 2017, viewed 28 March 2018, <http://www.equalityrightsalliance.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/02-ERA-Mapping-FINAL.pdf>, p.4

<sup>6</sup> Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 'Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Strategy', in Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, February 2016, viewed 27 March 2018, <http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Documents/gender-equality-and-womens-empowerment-strategy.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> International Women's Development Agency, 'UN Sustainable Development Goals Inquiry Submission', submission 98 in Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, March 2018, viewed 3 April 2018, [https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Committees/Senate/Foreign\\_Affairs\\_Defence\\_and\\_Trade/SDGs/Submissions](https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Foreign_Affairs_Defence_and_Trade/SDGs/Submissions), p.2

*the Pacific region and globally” and fly in the face of a shift to donor-recipient relationships based on “universality, shared challenges and multi-directional exchange.”<sup>8</sup>*

The *Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment Strategy* would be a good starting point for improving gender integrated policy-making domestically, providing a benchmark for gendered implementation of the SDGs domestically. But, it also highlights the critical importance of proper and just resourcing of gender equality efforts, both in overseas development and domestically.

## Frameworks for Implementation

Australia is expected to establish national frameworks to achieve the SDGs and report against progress. We support ACFID’s call for a whole of government, national implementation strategy which requires action across all policy areas and mechanisms in a cohesive and strategic way.<sup>9</sup> There is a need to develop an overarching structure for gender-responsive implementation and policy cohesion, as well as the integration of the SDGs into existing policy processes, such as the Federal Budget. As articulated by ACFID and IWDA, a national implementation plan needs short-term targets and specific financial commitments. We acknowledge the Inter-Departmental Committee (IDC) on the SDGs and join calls for a multi-sectoral reference group to support the IDC, enhancing transparency and bolstering governance for the implementation of the SDGs. Participatory, cross-sector and democratic governance to oversee implementation harnesses the spirit of partnership envisioned in the SDGs. ERA echoes the call for the involvement of organisations representing marginalised groups, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and people with disabilities. Gender balance in the membership of the proposed reference group, the presence of gender expertise and a co-chair model which reflects gender balance must also be addressed.

Situating leadership for the IDC in both PM&C and DFAT is critical to spanning both the domestic and international focus. As the UK SDG Inquiry found, the ability for robust governance and coordination structures to influence government departments ensures accountability and trackability for domestic implementation. Further, the UK Inquiry recommended a fully resourced internal communications strategy to ensure all departments understand their responsibilities to deliver on the goals.<sup>10</sup> Ensuring greater awareness of the SDGs within the Australian Government is critical for raising awareness of the 2030 Agenda publicly. In order to achieve the coordination and governance required to implement this complex and broad-ranging vision, the Government must establish participatory models of governance that embody the strong partnerships required and develop a publicly available gender-responsive national implementation plan.

The coordination and governance of implementation must be complemented by substantive policies designed to meet the SDG targets, with fit-for-purpose assessments of existing policy frameworks as a starting point. As previously noted, there is no overarching Australian gender equality plan that works to integrate gender across Government. The current VNR process brings this absence of policy direction into sharp relief. While the SDGs bring to light voids in the policy landscape, they are also an opportunity to recalibrate existing frameworks and build SDG capacity. It is critical that this process goes beyond “*SDG-washing*,”<sup>11</sup> which would simply add an SDG flavor to “*predictable, easily-measurable, initiatives that were being pursued anyway*.”<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Research for Development Impact Network, ‘The SDGs in the Asia-Pacific a shared agenda for action – Forum Summary Report’ in Sustainable Development Solutions Network Australia/Pacific, September 2016, viewed 6 April, [http://ap-unsdsn.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/19912\\_ISF-SDG-4pp-brochure-web.pdf](http://ap-unsdsn.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/19912_ISF-SDG-4pp-brochure-web.pdf), p.3

<sup>9</sup> Australian Council for International Development, ‘Inquiry into the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals’, submission 135 in Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, March 2018, viewed 10 April 2018, [https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Committees/Senate/Foreign\\_Affairs\\_Defence\\_and\\_Trade/SDGs/Submissions](https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Foreign_Affairs_Defence_and_Trade/SDGs/Submissions), p.6

<sup>10</sup> House of Commons International Development Committee, ‘UK implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals; Government Response to the Committee’s First Report of Session’, in UK Parliament, 20 September 2016, viewed 15 March 2018, <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201617/cmselect/cmintdev/673/673.pdf>, p.9

<sup>11</sup> ACFID, ACOSS, SDSN, Global Compact Network Australia, p.12

<sup>12</sup> S Duus

The table in **appendix 1** outlines target 5.2 against the existing policy framework and relevant recommendations from UN human rights treaty bodies that provide some direction to strengthen the current approach to 5.2. This example begins to answer questions about Australia's preparedness and capacity to act on just one target in Goal 5 and should be replicated across all goals and targets. Concluding observations and recommendations from these UN Treaty Bodies point to the need to design and strengthen strategies for reaching women and girls who are furthest behind. As UN Women highlights: *"strategies for leaving no one behind should **combine universal and targeted elements** to increase access for those who have been historically excluded while building universal systems that are collectively financed and used by all social groups."*<sup>13</sup> While this example looks at Target 5.2, it is important to note that there are gender-specific policy frameworks in place relevant to other goals and targets, such as the *Women, Peace and Security National Action Plan* and its relationship to Goal 16 or *Towards 2025: An Australian Government Strategy to Boost Women's Workforce Participation* which relates to Goal 8.

The cross-cutting agenda of the SDGs calls for the alignment of policies across government to ensure coherent implementation. Too often, work in one area of gender equality is undone or undermined by policies and direction elsewhere. The UK SDGs inquiry recommended a Secretaries of State and Ministers forum for discussion on implementation across Government. The forum was identified as a bulwark against policy incoherence, where incoherence could be flagged and dealt with at the highest level. Moreover, the same inquiry recommended a biennial report on policy coherence for sustainable development.<sup>14</sup> Mechanisms to facilitate policy coherence in SDG implementation should similarly be investigated for Australia.

***Recommendation 1: Develop and enact a gender responsive SDGs implementation plan with proper resourcing, backed up by appropriate governance and accountability structures.***

***Recommendation 2: Assess current policies for SDG implementation capability and recalibrate accordingly. Develop institutional and coordination mechanisms to ensure policy coherence across government for SDGs implementation.***

## **Setting the baseline for SDG implementation in Australia**

A picture of where Australia currently stands in relation to Agenda 2030 is required for effective implementation. A baseline would be the starting post for contextualised action on the SDGs in Australia. The development of a baseline raises important questions about the disaggregation of data to inform intersectional action that leaves no one behind. The use of averages obscures the reality and situation for people who are experiencing multiple and intersecting forms of disadvantage and marginalisation. A case in point is gender-based violence, where ANROWS has identified significant insufficiencies in data sources about diverse groups of women.<sup>15</sup> The COAG Panel on Reducing Violence Against Women pointed to the poor coverage of data on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, culturally and linguistically diverse women and girls and women and girls living in remote and rural communities;<sup>16</sup> while the 2014 CEDAW

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<sup>13</sup> UN Women, 'Turning Promises into Action: Gender Equality in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development', in UN Women, 14 February 2018, viewed 26 March 2018, <http://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2018/sdg-report-gender-equality-in-the-2030-agenda-for-sustainable-development-2018-en.pdf?la=en&vs=5653>, p.44

<sup>14</sup> House of Commons International Development Committee, p.10

<sup>15</sup> T Mitra-Kahn, C Newbigin & S Hardefeldt, 'Invisible women: invisible violence: Understanding and improving data on the experiences of domestic and family violence and sexual assault for diverse groups of women', in Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety, December 2016, viewed 14 March 2018, [http://media.aomx.com/anrows.org.au/DiversityData\\_UPDATED191216.pdf](http://media.aomx.com/anrows.org.au/DiversityData_UPDATED191216.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> COAG Advisory Panel on Reducing Violence against Women and their Children, 'Final Report', in Commonwealth of Australia, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, 2016, viewed 14 March 2018,

Shadow Report reiterated calls for robust data collection on violence against women and girls with disability in Australia<sup>17</sup> The creation of an Australian SDG index “which would present an aggregated measure of progress across all the goals based on indicators that better reflect Australian relevant and priorities could be useful.”<sup>18</sup> As an example, India has further developed the SDG indicators to be responsive and relevant to a national context, by including Goal 5 indicators that capture, for example, child sex ratio.<sup>19</sup> In this sense, the SDG indicators are the ground floor for developing a contextualised baseline. Australia can do the same, evolving SDG indicators without falling short or stepping back from what is required.

This baseline should comprehensively bring together data on the status of women and gender inequality in Australia for goal 5 and across the remaining 16 goals. The Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) has prepared a global SDG index on which all UN member states have been assessed. This is a starting point, but needs to be refined and reframed for the Australian context. The National Sustainable Development Council has developed an Australian SDG baseline<sup>20</sup> and still gaps remain, underlining “the lack of data being collected or reported in relation to key goals, the fragmented and incomplete way the SDGs-related issues are currently measured and lack of agreement on definitions to some key goals (e.g. poverty).”<sup>21</sup> We have mapped the baseline ratings from both the National Sustainable Development Council and SDSN in relation to Goal 5 in a table below, which reveals the patchwork of available data and information in Australia. Currently available baseline assessments are a starting point for a more comprehensive baseline from which to evaluate the state of play and measure progress until 2030. While bringing to light what we know in this moment, the incompleteness of this information points to the need for a contextual and intersectional baseline. We explore these issues further in the Monitoring, Reporting and Accountability section.

| Goal 5 Targets and Indicators   | National Sustainable Development Council   | Sustainable Development Solutions Network  |
|---|--|--|
| <b>Goal 5 Overall</b>   | <i>Not assessed</i>  | 78.4/100.<br>Orange.  |
| <b>Target 5.1</b><br><br>End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere<br><br><b>Indicator 5.1.1</b><br><br>Whether or not legal frameworks are in place to promote, enforce | Green.  | <i>Not assessed</i>  |

<http://www.coag.gov.au/sites/default/files/communiqu/COAGAdvisoryPanelonReducingViolenceagainstWomenandtheirChildren-FinalReport.pdf>, p.9

<sup>17</sup> YWCA Australia, ‘2014 CEDAW Shadow Report’ in Equality Rights Alliance, September 2014, viewed 14 March 2018, [https://www.equalityrightsalliance.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/YWCA\\_CEDAW\\_Main-Report\\_final.pdf](https://www.equalityrightsalliance.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/YWCA_CEDAW_Main-Report_final.pdf), p.59

<sup>18</sup> ACFID, ACROSS, SDSN, Global Compact Network Australia, p.12

<sup>19</sup> R. K. Murphy, ‘Indian draft SDG 5 indicators when compared to global ones: One step forward and two steps backward?’ in The Communication Initiative Network, 1 February 2018, viewed 3 April 2018, <http://www.comminit.com/global/content/indian-draft-sdg-5-indicators-when-compared-global-ones-one-step-forward-and-two-steps-b#.WnQPw8jMmw4.linkedin>

<sup>20</sup> National Sustainable Development Council, ‘SDG Baseline for Australia’ in Sustainable Development Goals Transforming Australia, viewed 3 April 2018, <https://www.sdgtransformingaustralia.com/?wpv-relationship-filter%5B0%5D=1246>

<sup>21</sup> ACFID, ACROSS, SDSN, Global Compact Network Australia, p. 12

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| <p>and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex</p>   |   |  |
| <p><b>Target 5.2</b></p> <p>Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation</p> <p><b>Indicator 5.2.1</b></p> <p>Proportion of women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months</p> | <p>Red.</p>    | <p><i>Not assessed</i></p>   |
| <p><b>Target 5.4</b></p> <p>Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate</p> <p><b>Indicator 5.4.1</b></p> <p>Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex</p>                            | <p><i>Not assessed</i></p>  | <p>Ratio of female to male labour force participation rate - 81.9%</p> <p>Green.</p>    |
| <p><b>Target 5.5</b></p> <p>Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life</p> <p><b>Indicator 5.5.1</b></p> <p>Proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments</p>  | <p>Red.</p>  | <p>Proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments- 28.7%</p> <p>Orange.</p>  |

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|--|---|---|
| <p><b>Target 5.5</b></p> <p>Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life</p> <p><b>Indicator 5.5.2</b></p> <p>Proportion of women in managerial positions</p>  | <p>Red.</p>    | <p>Gender wage gap (total % of male median wage) -15.4%</p> <p>Red</p>  <p>Ratio of female to male mean years of schooling of population age 25 and above - 103</p> <p>Green</p>  |
| <p><b>Target 5.5</b></p> <p>Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life</p> <p><b>Indicator 5.5.NEW1 (SDSN)</b></p> <p>Average superannuation balance at retirement age, by gender (gender gap as baseline)</p> | <p>Red.</p>  | <p><i>Not assessed</i></p>  |
| <p><b>Target 5.5</b></p> <p>Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life</p> <p><b>Indicator 5.5.NEW2 (SDSN)</b></p> <p>Full-time average weekly earnings and gender pay gap</p>                                 | <p>Red.</p>  | <p><i>Not assessed</i></p>  |
| <p><b>Target 5.6</b></p> <p>Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International</p>  | <p><i>Not assessed</i></p>  | <p><i>Not assessed</i></p>  |

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|---|----------------------------|---|
| <p>Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences.</p> <p><b>Indicator 5.6.1</b></p> <p>Proportion of women aged 15-49 years who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health care</p>   |                            |   |
| <p><b>Target 5.6</b></p> <p>Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences</p> <p><b>Indicator 5.6.2</b></p> <p>Number of countries with laws and regulations that guarantee women aged 15-49 years access to sexual and reproductive health care, information and education</p>  | <p><i>Not assessed</i></p> | <p>Estimated demand for contraception that is unmet (% of women married or in union, ages 15-49) -16.9%</p> <p>Green.</p>  |
| <p><b>Target 5.a</b></p> <p>Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws.</p> <p><b>Indicator 5.a.1</b></p> <p>(a) Proportion of total agricultural population with ownership or secure rights over agricultural land, by sex; and (b) share of women among owners or rights-bearers of agricultural land, by type of tenure</p> | <p><i>Not assessed</i></p> | <p><i>Not assessed</i></p>  |

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|--|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| <p><b>Target 5.a</b></p> <p>Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws.</p> <p><b>Indicator 5.a.2</b></p> <p>Proportion of countries where the legal framework (including customary law) guarantees women’s equal rights to land ownership and/or control</p> | <p><i>Not assessed</i></p> | <p><i>Not assessed</i></p> |
| <p><b>Target 5.b</b></p> <p>Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women</p> <p><b>Indicator 5.b.1</b></p> <p>Proportion of individuals who own a mobile telephone by sex</p>  | <p><i>Not assessed</i></p> | <p><i>Not assessed</i></p> |
| <p><b>Target 5.c</b></p> <p>Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all level</p> <p><b>Indicator 5.c.1</b></p> <p>Proportion of countries with systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women’s empowerment</p>  | <p><i>Not assessed</i></p> | <p><i>Not assessed</i></p> |

**Monitoring, Reporting and Accountability**

Monitoring and reporting on the SDGs needs to be seen as central to implementation. Under the VNR system, every UN member state reports twice over the lifecycle of the SDGs. Australia’s first VNR is currently underway, with Australia due to appear at the UN High Level Political Forum in July 2018. The

VNR is an opportunity to demonstrate integration of the SDGs into national frameworks, adoption of institutional mechanisms of implementation and reflect on challenges.<sup>22</sup> Despite work well underway for this appearance and reporting, little is known about the process publicly and avenues for public participation could have been expanded. To illustrate, the call for Goal 5 case studies sought examples from civil society organisations of their work that is contributing to the achievement of Goal 5. This selective focus on showcasing, highlights the need for deeper and more inclusive public engagement that is constructive, frank and fearless and which opens up the Government's action on the SDGs to domestic scrutiny.

In *Promises to Actions*, UN Women identifies the VNRs and other SDG-related review processes “as an opportunity to conduct a joint assessment of progress, gaps and challenges, harnessing the knowledge and skills of all relevant stakeholders, including women's rights organisations.”<sup>23</sup> Given that the VNR is expected only twice over the SDGs course, it is vital other reporting and reviewing processes are developed and embedded in consistent and ongoing ways. Reporting on the SDGs in this way demonstrates the collective ownership of this agenda and would have the effect of raising public profile and awareness. This can be complemented through Government support of and an enabling environment for “citizen-led initiatives to monitor progress and hold governments accountable for gender equality commitments.”<sup>24</sup> The low community profile of the SDGs also presents opportunities for Government to partner with civil society on educative campaigns and awareness raising about the agenda.

**Recommendation 3: Develop open, participatory, accountable and systematic processes for SDG reporting and accountability.**

*“Better data from everyone, enables better decisions for everyone.”*<sup>25</sup>

Setting the baseline and reporting on implementation and progress can only be done effectively with the requisite data revolution.<sup>26</sup> In Australia, it is estimated that around two thirds of SDG indicators can be measured and reported on based on currently collected and available data.<sup>27</sup> If what is measured gets done then Agenda 2030's embrace of the *Leave No One Behind* principle mandates a dataset that is disaggregated, intersectional and people-centred. Data collected should reflect the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators stipulation, “indicators should be disaggregated, where relevant, by income, sex, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability and geographic location, or other characteristics.” At a minimum we could settle for the 53 gender-specific and 12 disability-specific indicators.<sup>28</sup> However, ultimately, we should be reaching higher and disaggregating, where relevant, across all 230 indicators. A report from the Australian SDGs Summit, *On the Road to Implementation*, makes the push for a renewed effort to improve data collection and reporting in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other disadvantaged groups.<sup>29</sup> The data revolution also highlights the need for standards on measuring and collecting gender identity data so that people beyond the gender binary aren't

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<sup>22</sup> Division for Sustainable Development, ‘Synthesis of Voluntary National Reviews’, in Department of Economic and Social Affairs United Nations, 2016, viewed 3 April 2018,

[https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/126002016\\_VNR\\_Synthesis\\_Report.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/126002016_VNR_Synthesis_Report.pdf), p.9

<sup>23</sup> UN Women, p.45

<sup>24</sup> Ibid

<sup>25</sup> Data 2X, ‘Better Data, Better Decisions’, 16 October 2017,

<sup>26</sup> United Nations Secretary-General's Independent Expert Advisory Group on a Data Revolution for Sustainable Development (IEAG), ‘A World that Counts’ in UN Data Revolution, November 2014, viewed 3 April 2018, <http://www.undatarevolution.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/A-World-That-Counts2.pdf>

<sup>27</sup> ABS, email, 22 March 2017

<sup>28</sup> United Nations, ‘Disability in the SDGs Indicators’ March 2016, viewed 3 April, <http://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/2016/SDG-disability-indicators-march-2016.pdf>

<sup>29</sup> ACFID, ACOSS, SDSN, Global Compact Network Australia, p.12

left behind.<sup>30</sup> To this end, individual-level data (as opposed to household) will be critical in robust disaggregation. We refer to IWDA’s submission and work on the Individual Deprivation Measure for further information. In terms of the 53 gender-related indicators, UN Women has reviewed the reported and available data in Australia to conclude Australia has coverage for 26.3% of the 53 gender-specific indicators (findings captured in the table below).

While critical, not all the solutions to gender data gaps can be found in disaggregation. *What* we count is just as important as *who* we count. There is a need to ensure what we are counting is responsive and inclusive of women’s lives and tells us what we need to know about persistent gender inequality challenges. To this end, time-use data and routine, standardised and national data collection on abortion are two glaring gaps in the gender-responsive data landscape. These gaps are underlined by continued funding reductions to the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Proper resourcing of national statistical offices is the foundation of the data revolution required for SDG progress. A resourced national data plan with localised, disaggregated, intersectional gender data must accompany an SDGs national implementation plan.

***Recommendation 4: Develop an Australian SDG baseline and formulate a national SDG data plan that is gender-responsive and people-centred.***

| Goal   | Total Indicators | Number of Gender related (specific) Indicators | Reported/available gender data | Not reported not available gender  |
|--|------------------|--|--------------------------------|--|
| 1. No Poverty                                | 9                | 6  |                                | 6 (1.1.1, 1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.3.1, 1.4.2, 1.b.1)                                     |
| 2. Zero Hunger                               | 14               | 1  |                                | 1 (2.3.2)  |
| 3. Good Health and Well-Being                | 26               | 6  | 4 (3.1.1, 3.1.2, 3.3.1, 3.7.2) | 2 (3.7.1, 3.8.1)   |
| 4. Inclusive Education and Lifelong Learning | 11               | 8  | 3 (4.1.1, 4.2.2, 4.5.1)        | 5 (4.2.1, 4.3.1, 4.6.1, 4.7.1, 4.a.1)  |
| 5. Gender Equality                           | 14               | 14   | 3 (5.4.1, 5.5.1, 5.5.2)        | 11 (5.1.1, 5.2.1, 5.2.2, 5.3.1, 5.3.2, 5.6.1, 5.6.2, 5.a.1, 5.a.2, 5.b.1, 5.c.1) |
| 6. Clean Water and                           | 11               | 0  |                                |  |

<sup>30</sup> UN Women, p182

|  |    |   |                    |                                       |
|--|----|---|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Sanitation                                 |    |   |                    |                                       |
| 7. Affordable and Clean Energy             | 6  | 0 |                    |                                       |
| 8. Decent Work and Economic Growth         | 17 | 7 | 2 (8.5.2, 8.8.1)   | 5 (8.3.1, 8.5.1, 8.7.1, 8.8.2, 8.9.2) |
| 9. Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure | 12 | 0 |                    |                                       |
| 10. Reduced Inequalities                   | 11 | 1 | 1 (10.2.1)         |                                       |
| 11. Sustainable Cities and Communities     | 15 | 3 |                    | 3 (11.2.1, 11.7.1, 11.7.2)            |
| 12. Responsible Consumption and Production | 13 | 0 |                    |                                       |
| 13. Climate Action                         | 7  | 1 |                    | 1 (13.b.1)                            |
| 14. Life Below Water                       | 10 | 0 |                    |                                       |
| 15. Life On Land                           | 14 | 0 |                    |                                       |
| 16. Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions | 23 | 6 | 2 (16.1.1, 16.2.2) | 4 (16.1.2, 16.2.3, 16.7.1, 16.7.2)    |
| 17. Partnerships for the goals             | 25 | 1 |                    | 1 (17.18.1)                           |

*This information is drawn from the UN Women Promises to Action report and a presentation from Jo Crawford, International Women's Development Agency at the National Women's Alliances 2016 International Forum 19 October 2016.*

Across the globe, countries are faced with similar challenges and threats to people's well-being, to the planet and to peace. Agenda 2030 is an agreed blueprint for people, the planet, peace and prosperity and proves that we also share the same vision and resolve for transformation. In this critical consensus, we are reminded that the world's problems are not inevitable or necessary, but dependent on our ability and willingness to act. The Sustainable Development Goals paint a picture of what the world should look like in 2030, what happens until then is up to all of us.



## Appendix 1: Target 5.2 Mapping Domestic Policy Settings and Treaty Body Recommendations for SDG Capability

Concluding Observations Recommendations are drawn from:

- **Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination**  
[Concluding observations \(2017\) CERD/C/AUS/CO/18-20](#)
- **Human Rights Committee**  
[Concluding observations \(2017\) CCPR/C/AUS/CO/6](#)
- **Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights**  
[Concluding observations \(2017\) E/C.12/AUS/CO/5](#)
- **Committee against Torture**  
[Concluding observations \(2014\) CAT/C/AUS/CO/4-5](#)
- **Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**  
[Concluding observations \(2013\) CRPD/C/AUS/CO/1](#)
- **Committee on the Rights of the Child**  
[Concluding observations \(2012\) CRC/C/AUS/CO/4](#)

*Note: Concluding Observations from the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women are due after Australia's appearance in July 2018.*

| SDG   | Domestic Policy Settings  | Treaty Body Concluding Observations and Recommendations  |
|---|---|--|
| <p><b>Target 5.2</b></p> <p>Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual</p> | <p>National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children 2010-2022 and Action Plans</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Adopt a specific national action plan on violence against indigenous women and on gender equality</u>, supported with appropriate special measures that would accelerate the advancement of those women and girls; Redouble efforts to combat domestic violence against women and children, including among indigenous peoples; Ensure that the factors contributing to the high levels of violence among Aboriginal women and children are well understood and addressed in national and state/territory plans (Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Convention on the Rights of the Child)</li> </ul> |

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| <p>and other types of exploitation</p> |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Improve support services to women with disabilities who are victims of domestic violence, including through the implementation of the relevant recommendations from the Stop the Violence project</u>; Increase its efforts to address violence against indigenous women and women with disabilities ; The Committee recommends that the State party include a more comprehensive consideration of women with disabilities in public programmes and policies on the prevention of gender-based violence, particularly so as to ensure access for women with disabilities to an effective, integrated response system. (Human Rights Committee, Committee Against Torture, Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities)</li> <li>• <u>Allocate adequate resources to initiatives such as the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022, the National Framework for Protecting Australia’s Children 2009-2020 and its action plan, ensuring genuine participation of civil society organisations in the implementation and evaluation of such initiatives</u>; Further intensifying community-based approaches to addressing violence against women, with the involvement of all relevant stakeholders. (Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Committee Against Torture)</li> <li>• <u>Increase accommodation and support services, especially in rural and remote areas, with a view to reducing the risk of homelessness among victims of domestic violence</u>; Providing victims with access to legal, medical and psychological assistance and sufficient, safe and adequately funded shelters; Guaranteeing in practice that all victims benefit from protection and have access to sufficient and adequately funded medical and legal aid, psychosocial counselling and social support schemes, which take into account their special needs, and that victims not placed under the “safe at home” model have access to adequate shelters (Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Human Rights Committee, Committee Against Torture)</li> <li>• <u>Take effective measures to facilitate access to justice and legal aid for victims, and take steps to prosecute perpetrators and punish them adequately, if convicted</u>; Ensuring that cases of domestic violence are thoroughly investigated, that perpetrators are prosecuted and, if convicted, punished with appropriate sanctions, and that victims have access to effective remedies and means of protection; Taking measures to facilitate the lodging of complaints by victims and to address effectively the barriers that may prevent women from reporting acts of violence against them; Ensuring the effective enforcement of the existing legal framework by promptly, effectively and impartially investigating all reports of violence and prosecuting and punishing perpetrators in accordance with the gravity of their acts (Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Human Rights Committee, Committee Against Torture)</li> <li>• <u>Ensure data collection on domestic violence throughout all jurisdictions</u> (Human Rights Committee)</li> <li>• <u>Step up preventive measures and ensuring their effective implementation, including those funded through the Indigenous Advancement Strategy’s Safety and Wellbeing Programme</u>; Strengthen public awareness-raising activities to combat violence against</li> </ul> |
|--|--|--|

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|--|--|---|
|  |  | <p>women and gender stereotypes (Human Rights Committee, Committee Against Torture)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Consider undertaking an independent study on the probable linkages between domestic violence and corporal punishment.</u> (Committee on the Rights of the Child)</li> <li>• <u>Abolish the practice of involuntary non-therapeutic sterilization of women and girls with intellectual disabilities and/or cognitive impairments;</u> Repeal all legislation that authorizes medical intervention without the free, prior and informed consent of the persons with disabilities concerned, abolishing the use of restraint and the enforced administration of intrusive and irreversible treatments. In that regard, the State party is encouraged to take into account the 2013 report of the Senate Community Affairs References Committee entitled “Involuntary or coerced sterilisation of people with disabilities in Australia”; (Human Rights Committee, Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Committee Against Torture, Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Committee on the Rights of the Child)</li> <li>• <u>Adhere to the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders (Bangkok Rules)</u> (Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, Committee Against Torture)</li> <li>• <u>Investigate human rights violations in regional processing centres,</u> prosecute the alleged perpetrators, punish them appropriately if convicted and provide full reparation to the victims; Address the conditions of detention in immigration facilities, provide adequate mental health care, refrain from applying force or physical restraints against migrants and ensure that all allegations of use of force against them are promptly investigated, that perpetrators are prosecuted and, if convicted, punished with appropriate sanctions, and that victims are offered reparation (Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, Human Rights Committee)</li> </ul> |
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