

Indicator 8

Gender equality and women's empowerment

Measure government efforts to allocate and track resources for gender equality.

Draft Assessment and Proposals

1. Introduction

Track Three of the MAG's work plan is to provide advice on the continued relevance and usefulness of the GPEDC monitoring framework to the GPEDC Co-Chairs and Steering Committee. The MAG initiated this review process at its February 2016 meeting.

In doing so, three working groups examined the ten indicators in three clusters – ownership and results, inclusiveness, and transparency and accountability. At its February meeting, MAG members contributed perspectives on the continued relevance of the indicator (in light of the SDGs and Agenda 2030), the effectiveness and efficiency of the methodology at a practical level in gathering data, and the usefulness of the indicator for GPEDC stakeholders. The draft assessment and proposals for each indicator is the result of this work. The MAG is also examining issues affecting the structure of the monitoring framework as a whole.

These documents are posted on the [MAG's Teamworks web site](#) for review and comments. Our advice will be finalized at the MAG's next meeting, June 4-6, in Paris.

Comments and suggestions are very welcome from GPEDC stakeholders. Comments can be provided on the site, or submitted to the MAG Chairperson, Brian Tomlinson (brian.t.tomlinson@gmail.com).

2. Overview

This indicator focuses on gender equality and women's empowerment. Specifically, the indicator seeks to measure the percentage of countries with systems that track and make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment. Given the importance of progress in gender equality and women's empowerment for development effectiveness, an indicator focusing on these issues in development cooperation is essential. However, the MAG raises concerns about sufficiency of the particular focus on the current indicator methodology.

3. Key Issues and Challenges

- a) **Indicator too narrow and insufficiently focused on key areas affecting actual progress in gender equality** The MAG suggests that this indicator is too narrow: what is measured is relevant, but it is insufficient. Moreover, it would be possible even to get "good marks" by having only a policy on tracking gender issues, whether or not this policy is properly

implemented. Or a country in which women may face significant discrimination, which nevertheless had a 'women's ministry, could also score well. The indicator as currently configured can therefore be easily 'gamed'. As currently constructed, the indicator will not allow an assessment whether a government is genuinely committed to changing the conditions affecting women's equality and empowerment, which is the intention of §20 in the Busan Outcome. We propose that the indicator be improved to address these limitations.

- b) Limited purview of the indicator** Given the centrality of gender equality for development progress, this indicator seems very limited in scope. By contrast, indicators 2 and 3 also deal with very important areas for development, but are calibrated in such a way as to recognise their magnitude. Their methodologies seek out a range of information, allowing for a more comprehensive understanding of issues affecting progress.

Gender equality is an issue of similar magnitude, yet the indicator selected to demonstrate progress seems reductive and standing alone, seems insignificant in relation to the challenges. This indicator therefore needs to demonstrate similar ambition to those related to CSOs and the private sector by broadening its scope away from a simple focus on budget policy and tracking.

4. Steps Forward

This indicator should be seen within a broader framework that includes more than just public allocations in partner countries. The MAG have several suggestions.

- a) Situate this indicator in the context of the indicators for SDG Goal #8** An analytical suggestion is to systematically analyse at the country level the outcomes for this indicator in relation to progress for the 14 gender indicators for SDG #8 on gender equality and women's empowerment. This approach would take advantage of synergies between the GPEDC's monitoring framework and the SDGs.
- b) Increase the rigour of the current methodology** An easy step relating to the current methodology would be to increase the number of criteria that have to be 'ticked' in relation to a system for gender responsive budgeting. At the moment, a country is considered to have met the indicator if it reaches one of 3 criteria, with a fourth criteria (transparency) mandatory. Requiring at least 2 criteria to be met would be an easy way to improve the focus for this indicator. Alternatively, requiring a system to be in place for gender responsive budgeting, with flexibility as to the nature of this system, would be another more straightforward approach.
- c) A more inclusive methodology** The indicator methodology should be expanded to be more inclusive of other development actors and process. Bringing a multi-stakeholder process into the methodology for this indicator will also strengthen this indicator. As currently structured, there is no opportunity for dialogue with women's rights organizations and other CSOs, developing a mutual assessment of the systems in place (or not) and the usefulness of the gender equality focused budget information being made available. The indicator would benefit from an inclusive multi-stakeholder approach similar to indicators 2 and 3.

d) Include a focus on providers' disbursements for gender equality The indicator should include information on providers' disbursements for gender equality. It is currently possible to access the DAC policy marker for gender equality on a provider-by-provider basis. Consideration would be needed to account for weaknesses in this marker system, but the extent to which providers are disbursing resources to projects/programs where gender equality is a principal objective is a strong proxy for the place of gender equality in providers' programs. Another equally relevant proxy is provider allocations to women's rights organisations, which is also available in the DAC data. Further investigation may be needed to get country-level data for these markers from aid providers.

e) Gender equality focus for other development actors Consideration should be given to how to capture what CSOs and other development actors are doing in this area – how are they using their money for gender equality and women's empowerment? One approach for CSOs might be a survey of the largest International NGOs seeking similar information on gender equality disbursements.

Given the complexity and importance of gender equality for effective outcomes in all development areas, a multi-stakeholder approach to enhancing this indicator is the way forward, and in particular, in close collaboration with women's rights organisations involved in development cooperation.