



## INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S HEALTH COALITION

### WHAT THE NEW DEVELOPMENT AGENDA MEANS FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS

*"The achievement of full human potential and of sustainable development is not possible if one half of humanity continues to be denied its full human rights and opportunities."*

*-Declaration of Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*

After nearly three years of negotiations, 193 Member States of the United Nations have agreed to the most comprehensive agenda ever on global sustainable development. At the center of this agreement—*Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*—are the Sustainable Development Goals, a set of 17 goals and 169 targets aimed at eradicating poverty by 2030. They include a range of actions, including: ending hunger, improving health, strengthening education, protecting the environment, and promoting economic growth.

Unlike the Millennium Development Goals adopted in 2000, the Sustainable Development Goals are universal—applying to developing and developed countries alike. The new Goals go much further in addressing gender inequality by tackling its root causes and recognizing women's rights.

#### What's in the 2030 Agenda for Women and Girls?

The 2030 Agenda acknowledges that gender equality and women's human rights are essential to—and underpin—global development. Taken together, the Sustainable Development Goals will make a significant impact on the lives of women and girls, who often bear the brunt of social, economic, and environmental crises. Specifically:

- **Goal 5** commits to achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls. Targets include:
  - Ending discrimination [5.1] and violence [5.2] against women and girls;
  - Eliminating harmful practices such as child, early, and forced marriage and female genital mutilation [5.3];
  - Recognizing and valuing unpaid care and domestic work [5.4];
  - Ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health and recognizing reproductive rights [5.6];
  - Ensuring women's full participation and leadership in political, economic, and social life [5.5]; and
  - Giving women equal rights to economic resources and ownership of land and other property [5.a].

- **Goal 3** commits to ensuring healthy lives, including for pregnant women. It includes a target calling for reduction of maternal mortality to less than 70 per 100,000 live births by 2030 [3.1]. Importantly, this goal also includes a commitment to ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health care services, including family planning [3.7].
- **Goal 4** calls for inclusive and equitable education and includes a target on ensuring education on human rights and gender equality [4.7].
- Governments also made strong commitments to reduce poverty [**Goal 1**], end hunger [**Goal 2**], increase access to sustainable energy [**Goal 7**], address climate change [**Goal 13**], and promote peaceful societies [**Goal 16**]. All of these measures are critical for women and girls to be able to lead fully-empowered, healthy, and fulfilling lives.

The political declaration for the 2030 Agenda includes language that reflects a strong commitment to protecting human rights and promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women. It envisions a world where ***“every woman and girl enjoys full gender equality and all legal, social and economic barriers to their empowerment have been removed.”*** The declaration reaffirms the International Conference on Population and Development’s Programme of Action and the Beijing Platform of Action—global agreements that advance women’s health and rights.

Critically, the declaration recognizes that gender equality and women’s empowerment are essential to reaching all of the Sustainable Development Goals. It calls for taking a gender perspective when implementing the Agenda and commits to increasing funding for women’s organizations.

### **What’s Next?**

The 2030 Agenda will be formally adopted by the UN General Assembly at the end of September and come into effect on January 1, 2016. The Agenda will provide the framework for development policies, funding, and national level initiatives for the next 15 years.

The current priority is developing a set of indicators by which progress on the 2030 Agenda will be measured. These indicators are critical as they will determine how success is defined. The International Women’s Health Coalition, the Women’s Major Group, and other women’s organizations are advocating for indicators that will accurately measure progress on the goals and targets related to gender equality and women’s rights.

The 2030 Agenda has the potential to be transformational, but to ensure this change happens, women’s advocates and others must continue to hold governments accountable for the commitments they have made.

To learn more go to [www.iwhc.org](http://www.iwhc.org) and [www.womenmajorgroup.org](http://www.womenmajorgroup.org).