

# WOMEN GRADUATES–USA

WG-USA is the USA affiliate of Graduate Women International

## Resolution

**Issue:** Gender Equality - Measuring SDG Progress

**Resolution Title:** Gender Equality Inclusion for Measuring SDG Progress

**Resolution Number:** 2017.2.R18

### Resolution Text:

*WG-USA RESOLVES: to monitor and advocate for gender equality in accountability methods and criteria used by the United States Department of State in the progress reporting of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), those which we determine are priorities for WG-USA; these methods and criteria should be applied at the local and state levels by any entity which implements the SDGs.*

### Supporting Statement:

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by applying to all countries, rather than just 'developing' countries, and it covers a more comprehensive set of issues, therefore better addressing the complexities of sustainable development and reflecting the whole spectrum of human rights. And unlike MDGs, the SDGs also has a central focus on achieving equality across all seventeen (17) Goals, as well as two specific Goals (#s 5 & 10) addressing inequality issues. The Agenda also recognizes the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, as among its foundations.

During negotiations for the passage of the SDGs, and in spite of sustained lobbying especially by civil society organizations (CSOs), the final text of the 2030 Agenda includes only a weak voluntary process of reporting or monitoring of compliance, and not the much stronger "accountability" measures preferred. Moreover, compliance with gender-related goals and targets also requires gender-responsive accountability mechanisms that are not included. This means, at a bare minimum, that women should be full participants in any oversight or accountability process and that women's human rights standards must be those against which public decisions are assessed.

In seeking accountability, there are at least two different tracks to address: SDG-specific ‘follow-up and review’ mechanisms (i.e. those processes and platforms established specifically to monitor SDG progress in each country), and external mechanisms that exist to monitor other sets of obligations or commitments which are nonetheless related to the SDGs and could be local, national, regional or international. These mechanisms include human rights monitoring bodies or commissions, e.g. on gender equality, climate change, environmental sustainability, access to education, public health or food security.

Several principles are identified in the 2030 Agenda that the voluntary follow-up and review processes at all three levels should follow, including that they will be “people-centered, gender-sensitive, [and] respect human rights”, but there is no express recognition of the critical role of independent monitoring, data collection and reporting, raising the risk of review mechanisms based entirely on governments’ official reports. Civil society organizations and other stakeholders need to pressure for improvements in the process.

### **Suggested Resources:**

- U.S. Department of State - <https://www.state.gov/s/partnerships/releases/reports/2017/268159.htm>
- USAID – Sustainable Development Goals: <https://www.usaid.gov/globalgoals>
- MakeWatered Down SDGs Work, AWID (Ass'n for Women's Rights in Development) <http://www.alliancemagazine.org/>

### **Plan of Action:**

1. The Program and Advocacy committees shall form a joint task group which will: a) work with the Board and Committees to identify which SDGs/targets shall constitute the focus of WG-USA programs and advocacy; b) and produce educational materials for the membership to increase their understanding of the SDGs, and in their ability to take actions.
2. The WG-USA Board and Committees will include the relationship of our programs and advocacy with the SDGs and/or the 169 targets, and include such actions that will contribute to the advancement of this Resolution.
3. One or more task group member(s) will be appointed to be a liaison to other NGOs working to monitor the U.S. government bodies assigned the responsibility to enforce and account for U.S. actions that implement the SDGs.
4. WG-USA members will be encouraged to monitor local/state/national private, civic and government entities that undertake implementation actions related to achieving the SDGs to be certain that gender equality accountability measures are used.

Note: The proposers have identified the following SDGs they will present at the 2017 AGM:

- #3 Healthy lives #4 Equitable and quality education and life-long learning #5 Gender equality
- #8 Sustainable economic growth and employment #10 Equality within and among countries
- #11 Safe cities and human

### **Financial Impact:**

Financial Implication for WG-USA: At this time no cost is anticipated.



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