

CLOSING Civil Society Statement

2nd Meeting of the Interagency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators

Bangkok, 28 October, 2015

Thank you chair and thank you to the members of the IAEG for the hard work and long hours you have put into this taxing and yet crucial meeting.

Reflecting on this meeting we, as civil society, feel compelled to raise 2 major concerns. First the capacity of observers and stakeholders to interact with this meeting and the indicator process was insufficient to ensure the commitments to transparency and inclusion promised to people was respected. Our second concern is the continued potential of these indicators to reduce the ambition and intent of the AGENDA2030 that the GA promised would not occur.

It is clear, for example that the indicators fail to measure either the process or outcomes required to meet the ambition of the very hard fought goal 10 on inequalities.

Where is the indicator to measure inequality between countries?

Where is an indicator that measures real changes to address the vast gap in wealth that is now so high that 66 people in the world own as much wealth as half the world's population: the indicators that will make sure that the world is actually livable for the world's most affected by austerity measures and by the histories of structural adjustment policies and inequitable global economies and power?

In the GA we heard the Pope urge states to reverse the obscene level of inequalities produced by capitalism. Indeed, we urge the Holy See to speak about these inequalities rather than their constant focus on controlling women's bodies we heard here.

We now have many grey and green indicators. We hope you don't leave people's lives hanging in the grey.

This morning 2 of the most important goals – 16 and 17 were condensed. This meant indicators measuring the worst violations of human rights and the vital means of implementation required to transform our world were reduced to a few minutes. We want to work with you but both civil society and UN agencies had very little capacity to help you make this agenda meaningful in such a rushed and reductive process.

Let's all recognise the moment we are in. Let's all recognise that we have the power to genuinely change the future of this planet for billions. This is not simply a technocratic process.

We commend the expert group members and observer countries for doing the ground work to provide an informed perspective on all indicators. Your tireless work through late nights and early mornings is truly commendable. However, we think that in the ambitious attempt to decide on the final indicator proposal in only three days, there was not enough time to give all of the indicators the due diligence they deserve. The green indicators were not discussed even though many remain problematic and there is no clear plan for what happens to the grey.

We were encouraged by meeting with Dr. Bersales yesterday who said that this set of indicators will never be completely final. We hope that this framework for indicators will be a living, breathing document which can be updated as the countries pilot new indicators, learn from the process, and learn from each other. In 2015, we feel bound by what we can measure today. But, with our collective determination, measurements can soon match our aspirations.

Since the indicators and disaggregation of data has not been fully addressed within each indicator, the rights of the most vulnerable citizens, who have the potential to benefit most from this framework, may be ignored,

To help us help you, we ask you during the closed door meeting to consider the following requests

1. We request access to the platform that has been established to facilitate communication on the indicators.
2. We propose that the co-chairs and Secretariat facilitate regular on-line communication with stakeholders globally.
3. We wish to make proposals on both the Grey indicators as well as assist in responding to the outstanding questions on Green indicators. Can you please let us know how we can do that to the group and to any groups focused on specific indicators.
4. For transparency and effective input can the working group release drafts and provide adequate time for feedback from stakeholders from all region.

In closing, the intrinsic violence of inequality and historical dispossession are often lost in statistical aggregates that measure the victims of poverty and not its culprits - the 1%. Together we can change this.

Thank you

ENDS