

Baroness Sandip Verma
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State
Department for International Development
22 Whitehall
London
SW1A 2EG

11th January 2016

Dear Baroness Verma,

As you are aware, the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (IAEG-SDGs) has been consulting on the best way to measure the goals and targets of the SDGs, and it delivered its report to the UN Statistical Commission on 17 December.

From a gender perspective, the upcoming UN Statistical Commission in March is vital as it could lead to the collection and analysis of better disaggregated data on women and men, girls and boys, which must underpin development efforts. The President of the General Assembly's briefing on 28 January could also provide an opportunity to boost the potential of the SDGs for women and men of all ages. We are writing to urge the UK Government to reiterate its support by addressing specific areas where older women risk being excluded, at both of these meetings.

The process of deciding indicators has focussed attention on the importance of ensuring that women and men of all ages are adequately represented. This has come to the fore especially in the discussions that have been taking place on the SDG indicators for target 5.2 on violence against women.

The Gender and Development Network is pleased that the IAEG-SDGs report proposes removing the age cap on measuring violence against women so that it would be inclusive of women of all ages and measure from age 15+. If adopted, this amendment would send a clear signal that violence against older women will not be tolerated, as well as helping to

provide invaluable support to the many older women whose experiences remain largely invisible.

However, this agreement is far from set in stone and we are aware that there is opposition to removing the age cap, despite strong support from member states and other actors for its removal. This issue is likely to be discussed at the UN Statistical Commission and age caps could be reintroduced at the final hurdle. As you have made clear, the UK Government supports the measurement of progress to end violence against women at every stage of life. We urge the Government to carry this commitment forward by defending the proposal to remove the age cap on the indicators for target 5.2.

We thank you for your support in ensuring that older women and men are firmly a part of the SDGs implementation and urge you to ensure these messages carry through in the negotiations.

Yours sincerely,



Kate Horstead

On behalf of the Gender and Development Network violence against women and girls and post-2015 working groups.

CC Glenn Everett, Office for National Statistics
 John Pullinger, UN Statistical Commission
 Carrie Netting, Department for International Development