IT for Change's inputs to the consultation on Indicators of Gender Equality Goal 5 of the proposed 'Transforming Our World: 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development'[1]

August 2015

Table of Contents

Section 1: Overall comments on the <u>proposed 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Developmental Goals</u>

The post 2015 text (<u>proposed 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Developmental Goals</u>) mentions ICTs in the following paragraphs:

5b. Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women (pp 15).

9c. Significantly increase access to information and communication technology and strive to provide universal and affordable access to the internet, by 2020 in least developed countries (pp 9c).

17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development (pp 22).

17.6 enhance North-South, South-South and triangular regional and international cooperation on, and access to, science, technology and innovation and enhance knowledge sharing on mutually agreed terms, including through improved coordination among existing mechanisms, in particular at the UN level and through a global technology facilitation mechanism (pp 22).

17.8 Fully operationalize the technology bank and science, technology and innovation capacity-

---

[1] This consultation is being convened by the Second High Level Panel Committee on the Status of Women in India, in New Delhi, on 25 August 2015.

building mechanism for least developed countries by 2017 and enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology (pp 22).

Section 2 : Comments on the <u>indicators and monitoring framework </u>for SDGs developed by the Leadership Council of the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN)

The following comments are based on the indicators developed in the <u>SDSN report</u>. While ICT access is relevant to Goal 5, it is equally important for the realisation of other Goals.

– Given that the use of ICTs for women's empowerment is seen as a means to achieve Goal 5, the indicators of measurement seem to focus only on the core aspects of the Goal from point 5.1 to 5.6, with the exception of 5b, on mobile subscriptions (pp 42-43).

– It is well recognised that ubiquitous availability, universal and affordable accessibility, and meaningful use, of information and communication technologies, are critical for women's safety, mobility, SRHR, civil and political participation, and their access to economic opportunity and public services.

– The movement towards such universal, affordable and meaningful access to ICTs is fraught with challenges, not only in least developed countries - which fact has received emphasis in the Post 2015 Goals with respect to 'enabling technologies', but also in many parts of the developing world. These challenges are gendered and require that we do not take the enabling role of ICTs for granted. ICTs are as contested as other resources - land, property and natural resources and tracking their access and ownership is vital.

– The uptake and use of ICTs in the world reveal huge inequalities and gendered patterns that disadvantage girls and women in different ways. As ICT diffusion takes place, not having the data to track access and usage patterns by gender will result in the lack of systematic evidence on gendered barriers to access and use.

– Indicators measuring ICT access, disaggregated by sex, are needed to map individual, institutional and social capabilities. Measuring for example, individual aspects alone, will not be useful since personal access to information is one side of the coin and public institutional provisioning of such information, the other.

While measures for ICT access are critical to Goal 5, they are also relevant to other Goals, notably, 2, 3 and 4.

Section 3: Indicators for Goal 5

On Goal 5: Empowerment for women, through *"enabling technology"* depends on information and communication infrastructure and capabilities that catalyse meaningful cultures of use, which include considerations of <u>individual access, institutional capability and community-social aspects</u>:

3.1. Considerations of individual access, including non-traditional ways of connecting, safety, convenience, inclusiveness and affordability

3.1.1 Indicators for Goal 5:

It is suggested that Goal 5 indicators include the following:

- Mobile cellular telephone subscriptions per 100 inhabitants, disaggregated by gender, age and location, income.

- Per capita data use in kbps by gender, age, location and income. (This should ideally be measured separately for data upload and download.) Whereas number of subscriptions illuminates one dimension of the so called digital divide, an important quality consideration, reflecting the 'communication capacity gap' - how many bytes is a person able to receive and send online. It allows assessment of variations in the capacity to transmit information online[2]. The statistical effort has to go beyond the mere accounting of subscriptions to measuring telecommunication capacities. There is an urgent need to register and to track the global evolution and distribution of the installed (and possibly effectively used) communication bandwidth[3].

- Percentage of households (rural/urban) with access to internet - both broadband and mobile.

 Broadband access to the remotest village is a necessity for equalising opportunity and ensuring that historical exclusions can be addressed through ICTs; while mobile internet is important and perhaps more 'accessible'.

The current indicator *"59. Mobile broadband subscriptions per 100 inhabitants, by urban/rural"* (pp. 43 of the SDSN report) - is important, but equally important is access to fixed broadband, which reflects access to high quality Internet, that is high-speed and reliable.

ITU's 2012 report, *Measuring the Information Society,* talks about the vital role of high speed, reliable broadband for public services and institutional development. It is important not to replace the argument for fixed broadband with mobile networks, which may be unsuitable for intensive uses. Also, the empowering potential of the open and unfettered internet is critical to equality and women's empowerment, and hence the emphasis on Mobile Broadband - without qualifiers - can lead to Net

---

2   Between 2002 and 2010, Japan's fixed-line Internet penetration stayed constant at between 30 and 33 subscriptions per 100 inhabitants. However, during the same time, Japan's fixed-line Internet capacity grew from 54 kbps per capita, to 6.7 Mbps per capita. Informed telecommunications policies have to consider this development.

3   Mapping the dimensions and characteristics of the world's technological communication capacity during the period of digitization (1986 – 2007/2010), ITU Working Papers, December 2011, Martin Hilbert

Neutrality violations, pushing a walled Internet to more and more people on the planet, undermining its role for sustainable development and people's real empowerment.

For 2a, 5b, 9c and Goal 17 specified in the proposed 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development Goals, the mobile broadband measure - without an emphasis on unconditional access (that is,whose nature and quality is not mediated by telcos, or, in other words, ensuring net neutrality), can seriously undermine tracking of 'enabling access'.

3.1.2 Complementing indicators, at national level for Goal 5, disaggregated by gender, should include the following that take care of the individual aspects:

- Percentage of households (rural/urban) with access to mobile internet.

- Percentage of households (rural/urban) with a computer (Household ownership is likely to foster cultures of use at an early age, giving girls and women greater accessibility for computing and communication).

- Fixed broadband Internet access costs per month as a percentage of income.

- Fixed broadband Internet access costs per month, and as a percentage of monthly per capita income (access to the broadband is vital and cost is a disincentive in many developing countries. Household level access may be key for women and girls and to ensure a sustained culture of use).

- Mobile data subscriptions per 100 inhabitants, disaggregated by gender, location, age and income

3.2. Considerations to measure institutional capability - (Critical to Goal 5, also 2, 3, 4)

This is about ICT-enablement of local public agencies and authorities for effective public service delivery and about public access connectivity . Women, especially rural and illiterate women , will need affordable and/or publicly-provisioned assisted access points. Rural cooperatives of poor women and Self Help Groups will need assisted public access for being able to access information, markets, bank linkages, etc.

3.2.1 Indicators to measure institutional capability

The following do not seem to find mention in the pertinent goals, and must be included, at least in the complementing indicators at the national level.

- Percentage of public agencies with web presence, by rural/urban, at different levels of government,
- Percentage of public agencies websites disaggregated by language.
- Free public access points per 100 inhabitants.
- Paid public access points per 100 inhabitants.
- Percentage of schools with internet by type of access .
- Percentage of internet users that have interacted with government organisations in the last 12 months.
- Level of development of online service delivery (e-government maturity index) across levels of

government.
- Percentage of public libraries with a) broadband access, b) providing public internet access and c) with a web presence.

3.3 Considerations to measure community-social aspect:

The community-social aspect, is vital to track
a. Use of ICTs for wider social functionalities beyond browsing and email and
b. The depth of ICT socialisation in a particular context

3.3.1 Indicators to measure the community-social aspect
Indicators in this regard don't seem to find mention at all in the SDSN report. These would include:

- Percentage of civil society organisation with web presence (by location).
- Percentage of businesses using the internet (disaggregated by size, rural/urban, states).
- Percentage of internet users using peer-to-peer functionalities (by type, gender, income, location, age).
- Percentage of enterprises / businesses with web presence (by size, location and gender based ownership).

Section 4. Index on ICT maturity as an indicator for Goal 8

Index on ITU's ICT maturity for Goal 8 (proposed in page 45 of the SDSN report) is welcome, but without complementary and drilled down data at national levels on individual, institutional and social aspects, it may be inadequate and not very meaningful.

Section 5. Indicators for Goal 17

Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development (pp 22).

Indicators to be developed on this are - 17.5. [Indicator on technology sharing and diffusion] – to be developed and 17.6. [Indicator on the creation of / subscription to the Technology Bank and STI (Science, Technology and Innovation) Capacity Building Mechanism for LDCs by 2017] – to be developed

For 17.5 - on technology sharing and diffusion, ITU and UNCDF have proposed using 'Fixed Broadband subscriptions, broken down, by speed', which, would give a picture of the variation in quality of access for the total subscriptions.

The following may also be considered:

– e-government maturity index

– Per capita data use in kbps (disaggregated by gender, location, age, income) - an indicator that reflects communication capacity

– Number of domain name registrations for each country code TLD, weighted by population - an indicator that reflects inter-country differences