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African Centre for Gender and Social Development (ACGS)

**Ad Hoc Expert Group Meeting on developing supplementary targets
and indicators to strengthen social inclusion, gender equality and health
promotion in the Millennium Development Goals**

**To be held May 7-9, 2008,
United Nations Conference Centre, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

AIDE MEMOIRE

I BACKGROUND

Mid-term reviews of the progress made towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) have highlighted the need to measure the progress made towards reaching them in a way that truly represents the empowerment of women and the inclusion of vulnerable groups in society. Certain social groups are wholly or partially excluded from the society in which they live from participating in the economic, social and political life of the community, resulting not only in diminished material and non-material quality of life, but also in tempered life chances, choices and reduced citizenship. Countries have been adopting policies to improve social inclusion and gender equality. However, reviews have indicated that MDGs targets and indicators, as they exist, may not meaningfully measure the progress that countries have made towards the empowerment of women and the inclusion of socially vulnerable groups such as the elderly, youths, persons with disability, and People living with HIV/AIDS. The reviews also indicate that existing MDG targets and indicators may not adequately capture the progress of countries towards improving equity in health. Yet it is crucial that the progress made on social inclusion, gender equality and health equity is measured and closely monitored to provide information essential for effective policy development.

Social inclusion is a key element of a strategy to minimize social conflict and tap into the productive potential of minority groups that may otherwise feel alienated. It is in this context that a study was commissioned to develop supplementary targets and indicators relevant to Africa, that would improve the capacity of countries to measure progress towards inclusion of vulnerable groups, promote gender equality and address health inequities, thereby improving the effectiveness with which MDGs are monitored. The draft report of this study will be presented to the Ad Hoc Expert Group Meeting for its review.

This Expert Group Meeting is a component of a project that is being undertaken jointly with the other regional Commissions (Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific (ESCAP), Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), and Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)), as part of an interregional Development Account project entitled “Interregional cooperation to strengthen social inclusion, gender equality and health promotion in the MDGs.” The aim of the interregional project is to enhance the capacity of member states in these regions to design and implement development policies and programmes in a manner that substantially contributes to social inclusion and achievement of gender equality and health promotion. The targeted beneficiaries under the project are senior level policy makers in various economic and social ministries as well as civil society entities. The project is contributing to this goal by providing policy makers with a set of additional targets and indicators within the existing MDGs framework that measure progress towards the MDGs in a way that takes into account the empowerment of women, the inclusion of vulnerable social groups as well as equity in health.

II OBJECTIVES OF THE AD HOC EXPERT GROUP MEETING

The main objective of the meeting is to critically review the draft study on that highlights some proposed MDG targets and indicators which have been developed from synthesis of existing secondary information on social inclusion in African situations and from consultations with some member States. In this regard the experts are expected to:

1. Review the draft report on *Strengthening social inclusion, gender equality and health promotion in the Millennium Development Goals in Africa*;
2. Identify key issues and suggested supplementary MDG targets and indicators in the areas social inclusion, gender equality, disability, ageing, youths, sexual and reproductive health and health equity;
3. Prioritize the proposed targets and indicators;
4. Propose a mechanism for bringing up the recommendations to the attention of policymakers for their consideration for implementation.

III PARTICIPANTS

The meeting will bring together high-level policy experts and practitioners from governments, academia, civil society, as well as representatives from a number of international organizations and UN agencies from the fields of gender, youths, health equity, ageing, disability, statistics and poverty alleviation.

IV EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- A report setting out proposed additional Africa - specific MDG targets and indicators on inclusion of the socially excluded groups, gender equality and health equity and sexual and reproductive health; and
- Basis for knowledge networks to discuss and disseminate relevant information on social exclusion and the MDGs.

V. WORKING LANGUAGE

The working languages of the Ad Hoc Expert Group Meeting will be English and French.

VI DATES AND VENUE

The Ad Hoc Expert Group Meeting on “*Developing supplementary targets and indicators to strengthen social inclusion, gender equality and health promotion in the Millennium Development Goals*” is scheduled to take place at ECA Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 7 to 9 May 2008 in conference room 6. The meeting is organized by the African Centre for Gender and Social Development of the UNECA.

VII. CONTACTS

All communication on the meeting should be addressed to:

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