



United Nations  
Development Fund for Women  
**UNIFEM**

## A User's Guide to Measuring Gender-Sensitive Basic Service Delivery



A USER'S GUIDE TO MEASURING GENDER-SENSITIVE BASIC SERVICE DELIVERY.  
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## A User's Guide to Measuring Gender-Sensitive Basic Service Delivery

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## List of Abbreviations

<b>ADB</b>	Asian Development Bank	<b>ODI</b>	Overseas Development Institute
<b>APRM</b>	African Peer Review Mechanism	<b>OECD</b>	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
<b>CEDAW</b>	Convention Against All Forms of Discrimination Against Women	<b>OPHI</b>	Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative
<b>CIET</b>	Community Information, Empowerment and Transparency (NGO)	<b>NGO</b>	Non Government Organization
<b>CIRI</b>	Cingranelli-Richards (Human Rights Database)	<b>NSO</b>	National Statistics Office
<b>CPIA</b>	Country Policy and Institutional Assessment (World Bank)	<b>OGC</b>	Oslo Governance Centre
<b>Devinfo</b>	Development Information Database (UN)	<b>PETS</b>	Public Expenditure Tracking Surveys
<b>DFID</b>	Department for International Development	<b>PRSP</b>	Poverty Reduction Strategy Process/Paper
<b>DHS</b>	Demographic and Health Survey	<b>QSDS</b>	Quantitative Service Delivery Surveys
<b>DIAL</b>	Développement Institutions & Analyses de Long Term	<b>SADC</b>	Southern African Development Community
<b>EGI</b>	Electricity Governance Initiative	<b>SNA</b>	System of National Accounts
<b>GDI</b>	Gender Development Index	<b>SPA</b>	Service Provision Assessment (DHS module)
<b>GEI</b>	Gender Equity Index	<b>TUGI</b>	The Urban Governance Initiative
<b>GEM</b>	Gender Empowerment Measure	<b>UGI</b>	Urban Governance Index
<b>GGI</b>	Gender Gap Index	<b>UNDAW</b>	United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women
<b>GSI</b>	Gender Status Index (Africa)	<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>HDI</b>	Human Development Index	<b>UN-ECA</b>	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
<b>IBP</b>	International Budget Project	<b>UNECE</b>	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
<b>ICT</b>	Information, Communications, Technology	<b>UN-ECLAC</b>	United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
<b>ICVS</b>	International Crime Victims Survey	<b>UN-ESCAP</b>	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia-Pacific
<b>IDASA</b>	Institute for Democracy in South Africa	<b>UN-ESCWA</b>	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for West Asia
<b>IDRC</b>	International Development Research Centre (Canada)	<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Programme
<b>IERI</b>	Institute for Economic Research on Innovation	<b>UNIFEM</b>	United Nations Development Fund for Women
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organization	<b>UNMISSET</b>	UN Mission for East Timor
<b>IMF</b>	International Monetary Fund	<b>UNODC</b>	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
<b>INEGI</b>	Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática (National Institute of Statistics, Geography and Informatics) Mexico	<b>WGA</b>	World Governance Assessment
<b>IPU</b>	International Parliamentary Union	<b>WGI</b>	World Governance Indicators
<b>IVAWS</b>	International Violence Against Women Survey		
<b>LGB</b>	Local Governance Barometer		
<b>LGPMSP</b>	Local Governance Performance Management System (Philippines)		
<b>LSMS</b>	Living Standards Measurement Survey		
<b>MDGs</b>	Millennium Development Goals		
<b>MSI</b>	Media Sustainability Index		
<b>MICS</b>	Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey		
<b>ODA</b>	Official Development Assistance		

## Foreword

It is my pleasure to introduce this *User's Guide to Measuring Gender-Sensitive Basic Service Delivery*. The Guide is produced as part of a UNIFEM, UNDP, and Gender at Work initiative called *Gender and Democratic Governance in Development*, which aims to improve the governance of basic services provision for women.

Gender, governance and basic services are inextricably inter-linked. They are essential for poverty reduction and growth from which all benefit. While gender equality is crucial for the achievement of all of the MDGs, the gender equality goal (MDG 3) has seen the least progress and particularly in the areas of women's economic activity. Similarly, most gaps in progress toward achieving service-related MDGs are gender gaps, where women and girls are missing out on vital services.

It is important to recognize that current governance reforms are often not gender-responsive, but neither are they gender-neutral. This is partly because the governance objectives, systems and services at all levels have been defined, designed and managed by men, who are the principal decision makers. They therefore reflect men's priorities and perspectives. Even where women are targeted, this remains largely within the framework of men's assumptions and perspectives on women's needs and situations.

Furthermore, these interventions are supported by statistics and other sources of information that have not taken explicit account of differences between women/girls and men/boys. Consequently, even when women are able to participate in governance decision making, they (and their male counterparts) are typically constrained by lack of gender-responsive statistics and accurate information on the situation and needs of women, particularly poor and disadvantaged women.

Gender sensitive governance reforms have often tended to promote women's access to public office. While this is an important goal in itself, it is not enough. The Gender and Democratic Governance in Development program therefore seeks to go beyond the numbers and focus on institutional change in the delivery of basic services.

As part of the initiative, the UNDP Oslo Governance Centre (OGC) has produced this *User's Guide to Measuring Gender-Sensitive Basic Service Delivery*. The Guide is a part of OGC's Global Program on Democratic Governance Assessments which advocates for national ownership of governance measurements that are pro poor and gender sensitive. The Guide should be seen as a generic and basic tool to map and analyse governance of basic service delivery through a gendered lens. It includes indicators and measurement tools developed by multilateral and bilateral agencies as well as by national counterparts. The Guide also presents

national examples of newly developed and innovative measurement initiatives in women's access to public services. The Guide aims to help national stakeholders as well as donors and international actors involved in service delivery measurements and programs to improve the measurements of basic services delivery in various areas of governance. The primary focus is on whether the *processes* that define, generate and deliver the services are sensitive to differences in the needs and situations of women and girls compared to men and boys. It focuses on the processes of governance rather than just the *outcomes* of governance because it believes that implementation processes are key to improving the delivery of basic services.

A guide like this can hopefully be a useful and inspirational tool for those involved in policy making at national as well as sub-national levels. But I would also like to emphasize that it is not intended as a blueprint, nor should the information in the Guide be seen as a magic bullet.



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The analysis and policy recommendations of this Guide do not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations Development Program, its Executive Board or its Member States or of the United Nations Development Fund for Women. The Guide is an independent publication commissioned by UNDP and UNIFEM.



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## Introduction



## Introduction: About This Guide

The delivery of gender-sensitive basic services for women is a prerequisite for development. The current global development objectives, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), will not be achieved unless and until women are able to contribute to and benefit from development on equal par with men. This means ensuring that women have access to services that enable them to fully develop and use their capabilities and support the full realization of their human rights.

Three kinds of basic services are essential for women: those conventionally regarded as basic services that support their human rights, such as health and education services; those not conventionally regarded as basic services but that also support women's human rights, such as employment and economic services; and those that are fundamental components of governance itself, such as electoral and related political services<sup>1</sup>, civil registration, and legal, justice and police services.

Data and indicators are integrally linked with governance, and an important tool for the development and delivery of effective and efficient services. Sex-disaggregated and gender-sensitive indicators are essential for delivering gender-sensitive services that recognise and address the different roles, needs and situations of women and men. Indicators are also essential for effective monitoring, evaluation and accountability.

A functioning system of governance is equally important for service delivery, and a gender-sensitive system of governance is essential for the delivery of gender-sensitive services. Gender-sensitive governance would ensure that the statistical system provides quality gender-sensitive data and indicators. It would enable women's voices to be heard through the political process and ensure that the political system responds appropriately. It would ensure that the bureaucracy is able and willing to develop gender-sensitive service programmes that are accessible and responsive. Gender-sensitive governance provides the framework within which qualified, gender-sensitive service providers would deliver gender-sensitive basic services.

### A. Target audience for this guide

This Users' Guide on Gender-Sensitive Indicators of Basic Service Delivery is intended to contribute to the development and more effective use of gender-sensitive indicators so that services are delivered more efficiently and effectively to women.

The Guide targets a range of potential users. Two key target groups in particular are familiar with the use of statistics and indicators on gender and service delivery. One is UNDP and UNIFEM staff working with national counterparts to use data and indicators to improve the delivery of services, monitor and evaluate impact, and demand accountability from governments and service providers. The other is government departments, donors and international agencies involved in developing, funding and implementing service delivery programmes.

Other important groups that have been generally poorly served in the past are also an important potential audience. These include local governments, which are often most directly involved in the delivery of services; and end-users of the services, particularly women. Both are likely to be less familiar with the use of data and indicators and may need to enhance capacity in this area.

### B. How to use this Guide

Chapter 1 is a background section. It answers some basic questions:

1. What are basic services?
2. Why are basic services important, particularly for women?
3. What is the role and obligation of government in providing basic services?
4. What is the role of governance in service delivery?
5. Why does the delivery of services need to be gender-sensitive?
6. Why is measurement important?
7. What is the role of data and indicators in the delivery of services?

It also provides a framework for analysing the role of governance and indicators in the gender-sensitive delivery of basic services.

Chapter 2, *Voices and Experiences from the Field*, presents some experiences of practitioners in the collection and/or use of indicators of basic service delivery and some examples of good practice.

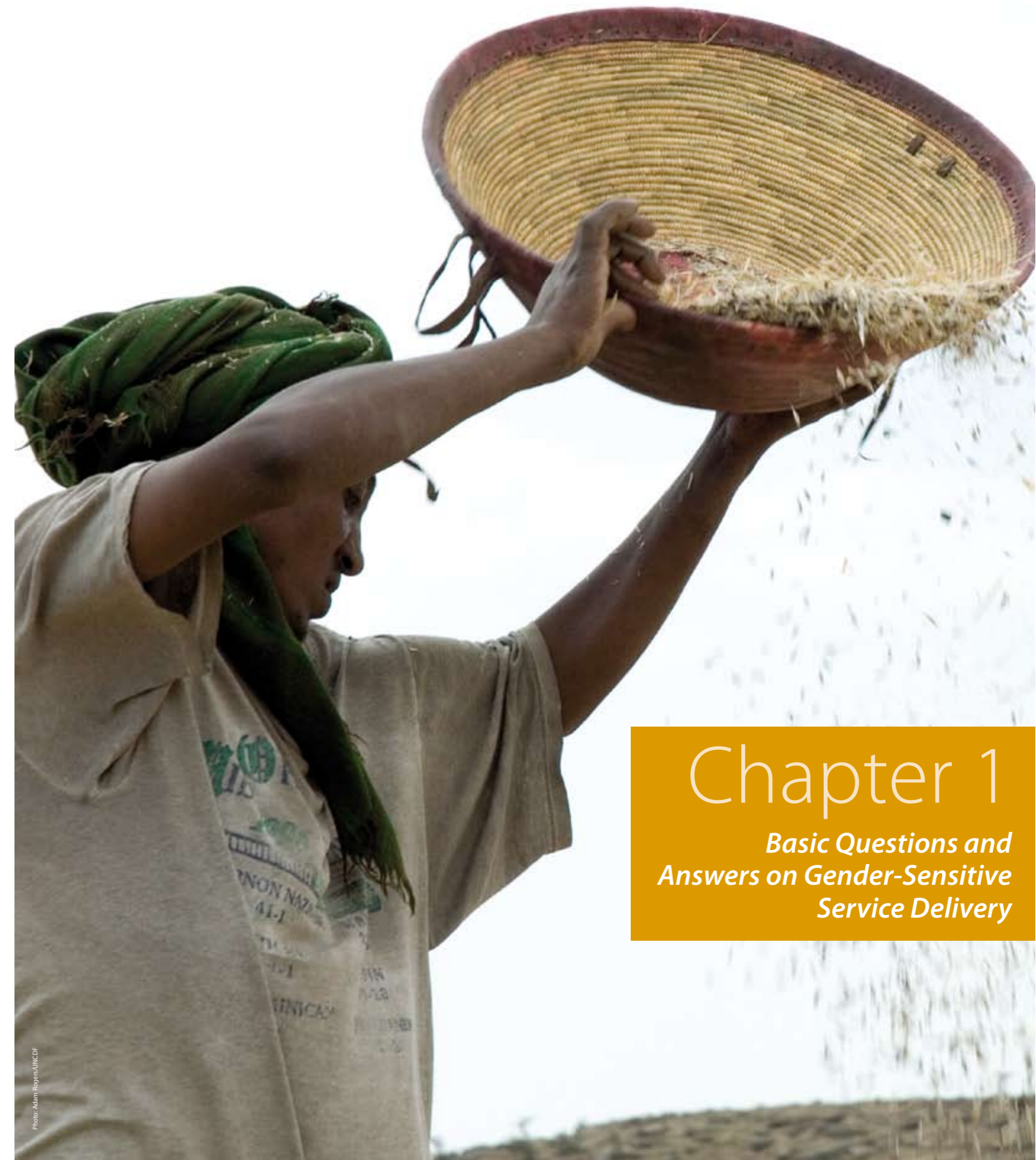
Chapter 3, *A Fictional Case Study*, illustrates some ways in which gender-sensitive indicators can be used to improve the relevance and quality of services to women. It offers perspectives of various actors in different positions administration, from national to local. It also shows how committed individuals can use indicators to challenge and inspire others to change their thinking on gender and the different needs and situations of women and men, girls and boys.

Chapter 4, *Recommendations*, offers suggestions and tools to help users develop appropriate indicators for various contexts.

Chapter 5 and 6 is a mapping and review of existing databases, assessments and indicators. It shows a general lack of indicators that directly measure the delivery of services, particularly to women. Gender-related data, databases and indicators (Section 6.B) only indirectly address the delivery of services. Assessments, data and indicators on governance (Section 6.C) more directly address the outcome of services. However, even governance assessments rarely directly address the delivery of services, particularly to women. A third set of methods and frameworks (Section 6.D) is introduced as a way of addressing these gaps, focusing on processes and at the national or sub-national levels.

Annex II provides a copy of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights for the convenience of users.

<sup>1</sup> Services required for the operation of basic democratic institutions, such as parliaments.



# Chapter 1

*Basic Questions and  
Answers on Gender-Sensitive  
Service Delivery*

## Basic Questions and Answers on Gender-Sensitive Service Delivery

### A. What are 'basic' services?

Agreeing on which services are basic can be contentious, because until recently there has been no widely accepted basis for a definition. While there is general agreement that governments are obligated to provide basic services, there has been much less agreement on what kinds of services are required. Some, such as education and health, are generally included, but others, such as welfare services, are considered 'basic' by some agencies and governments but not by others. For example, the Philippines takes a fairly broad view of basic services, which are defined as those that give everyone the opportunity to lead healthy, fulfilling and productive lives, to earn a decent living, and to learn new skills. By contrast, the World Bank web site suggests that it regards basic services primarily as health, broadly interpreted to include water supply and sanitation, and education. However, social protection services also became a concern for the Bank in the aftermath of the Asian financial crisis. The Asian Development Bank takes a broader approach including as 'basic' those services that facilitate access to information and markets and provide power to households.<sup>1</sup>

International human rights law is now increasingly accepted as providing a clearer and more robust basis for defining the range of basic services that citizens have a legal right to expect the state to provide (Box 1).

#### BOX 1

##### Water and food upheld as basic human rights in South Africa

*A High Court ruling against a prepaid water scheme in South Africa's largest township, Soweto, may set a global precedent for the basic right to water.*

*Five residents asked the court to order the city to provide at least 50 litres of free water per person per day – double what they currently received but equal to the basic minimum prescribed by the World Health Organisation.*

to all persons. The Declaration provided the foundation for the International Covenants on Civil and Political Rights, and on Social and Economic Rights, as well as many other legally binding international human rights treaties.

Because governments have acceded to the Declaration and associated instruments, they are obligated to ensure the provision of the services necessary for their citizens to achieve their human rights. Based on this interpretation, justice, legal and police services would be basic services because they are essential to guarantee the *right to life, liberty, and security of person; the equal protection of the law and against any discrimination in violation of this [Universal] Declaration [of Human Rights]; the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial;* and a number of other legal rights and freedoms. Similarly, the electoral and associated political system is a basic service in that it is necessary to support the *right to take part in the government of one's country, directly or through freely chosen representatives, and equal access to public service in one's country.*

Employment and unemployment services, social security and social welfare services are basic services because they are necessary to support the *right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work, to protection against unemployment and to equal pay for equal work.*

Basic medical, health and other social services are basic services because they are essential to support the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of oneself and one's family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond one's control.<sup>2</sup>

A human rights approach to defining basic services embraces a range of issues often not considered in the literature on service

property and access to inheritance as necessary to fulfil women's right to *a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of oneself and one's family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services.*

#### BOX 2

##### Lack of civil registration or a birth certificate denies children access to education

*Two-thirds of the world's 50 million children who go unregistered at birth each year live in Asia.*

*Without an official identity they become invisible, and are often denied such basic rights as nationality, health care and education.*

*They are also especially vulnerable to exploitation, trafficking, child labour, early marriage and forced military recruitment.*

Source: UNICEF, PLAN, A Child's First Right. Third Asia Regional Conference on Birth Registration Bangkok, Thailand 6-9 January 2003: foreword.

Gender-based violence has also been found to be a significant barrier to women's and girls' access to many services. Although not covered directly by the Universal Declaration, CEDAW established women's *right to be free of gender-based violence* under General Recommendation 19.<sup>2</sup> This Recommendation identifies a range of services that states parties are required to provide in order to support women victims, monitor the occurrence of gender-based violence and eliminate it.

### B. Why are basic services important to women?

The delivery of services is especially important for women because their primary gender roles as mothers, housekeepers and caregivers are more dependent on basic services such as health care, water supply, sanitation and education for children than are men's roles. Basic governance services such as political and electoral services, justice and police services and civil registration are also strategically important for women in the pursuit of gender equality and the realization of their human rights. The MDG indicators show that governments are currently failing in their obligations to ensure that services are delivered effectively, particularly to women.

The MDGs are not only development objectives. They are also universally accepted human values, as laid out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other human rights covenants, conventions and treaties, including CEDAW.<sup>3</sup> However, from a human rights perspective, the MDGs are an incomplete set of development indicators. Although they include indicators for many basic services, they do not cover all of the basic services needed to ensure the full realization of human rights. For example, they do not include indicators of justice or security, which are now recognised as especially important for the realization of women's human rights (Box 3).

<sup>2</sup> The English language version of the Declaration refers to 'his' family and 'himself', reflecting the prevailing lack of gender awareness at the time of drafting.

#### BOX 3

##### All MDGs depend to some extent on the delivery of basic services

Target 3 cannot be achieved without basic education services: *Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling*

Target 10 addresses access to services: *Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation*

Source: <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/The%20Millennium%20Development%20Goals%20Report%202008.pdf>

### C. What is the role and obligation of government in providing basic services?

The state is responsible for ensuring the provision of all services adequate in quantity and quality to support the realization of human rights (Box 4). The state is also responsible for providing equal access to services for all citizens, including women, the poor and minorities.

At the lowest levels of development and for specific groups in the population, state provision of basic services is essential for the achievement of the MDGs. It is also essential that governments ensure the provision of basic services in order to fulfil their human rights obligations under the international conventions to which they are signatories, such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Social and Economic Rights, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. Some of these services must be provided directly by the state because they are essential elements of governance itself.

#### BOX 4

##### Services must be of sufficient quantity and quality

*The maternal mortality indicator for MDG5 on maternal health indicates that in many countries, the provision of reproductive and maternal health services are not only insufficient in quantity but also inadequate in quality.*

*For example, the proportion of birth deliveries attended by skilled personnel increased from 27% to 40% in Southern Asia between 1990 and 2006. However, over the same period the maternal mortality rate fell very little – from around 920 to 900 deaths per 100,000 live births.*

Source: Millennium Development Goals Report 2008: 25. [mdgs.un.org/.../Resources/Static/Products/Progress2008/MDG\\_Report\\_2008\\_En.pdf](http://mdgs.un.org/.../Resources/Static/Products/Progress2008/MDG_Report_2008_En.pdf)

In the poorest developing countries, the public provision of basic services is essential. The high costs of investment and low levels of disposable income and effective demand provide few incentives for private sector service delivery. Poverty means that

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