

Focus area 3. Health and population dynamics

Mr Co-chair,

In designing a goal on health, a **comprehensive approach** is required, which is people-centred and equity-focused and incorporates the underlying social, environmental, economic and political determinants of health. The **multidimensional and multi-sectoral** characteristic of health should be reflected in the targets.

As part of a goal on Health, special emphasis must be placed on the following issues:

- We strongly support a global commitment to ensure **Universal Health Coverage**, both in regards to ensuring that all people have access to quality essential medicines and basic health services, without discrimination, and also in ensuring coverage from financial risk. This can only be achieved through a joint commitment on **strengthening of health systems**. The two components of access to quality health services as well as financial protection from impoverishment due to health expenditures should be addressed through specific targets, as proposed by the World Bank and WHO.
- It is crucial to build on the lessons learned from the implementation of the MDGs and to complete unfinished business in relation to the health MDGs. Therefore, we welcome the inclusion of target areas in **maternal and infant mortality** and the spread of **HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis and neglected tropical diseases**.
- We also support a target on reducing the risk of premature mortality from **non-communicable diseases** and the promotion of mental health. The elements under target h) could also fit in this context, so as to make clear that drug use must be tackled as a health concern.
- We would like to particularly highlight the importance of a target on universal access to **sexual and reproductive health and rights**, including modern methods of family planning, information, education and services.

- As an example of a target that promotes a **cross-sectoral approach** to health, we support the proposed target (g) on reducing number of deaths and illnesses due to indoor and outdoor air pollution, exposure to hazardous chemicals and waste, lack of water and sanitation and other forms of environmental degradation. Hence, we support that such a cross-sectoral approach should be applied more generally, so as to move away from “silo” thinking.