



Date: 6 May 2014

Gender equality and women's empowerment
Water and sanitation
SI and MNE elements for 11th session of OWG SDGs

Focus area 5: Gender equality and women's empowerment

We call for a strong stand-alone goal on gender equality and empowerment of women.

We welcome the inclusion of gender perspective in numerous possible areas for action in other focus areas. However mainstreaming gender issues throughout all focus areas should be further strengthened.

We would support all possible targets proposed under this goal as they comprehensively reflect some of the main issues hindering gender equality.

We wish to point out the need that boys and men are fully informed about and actively take part in elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and girls, in law and in practice.

We would favour seeing targets on ensuring access to justice for women and girls in order to eradicate gender based violence and discrimination, as well as women's equal participation in decision-making positions, including in humanitarian and conflict-affected societies, which we see as key prerequisites for fair, equitable and sustainable development.

We believe that harmful customary practices against women and girls should be included in possible target g.

We support targets on ensuring respect, promotion and protection of the sexual and reproductive health and rights that are precondition for achieving gender equality. Therefore, we believe that this target should be reformulated respectively to this end.

We also reiterate our view that human rights of elderly women should be taken into account with a life cycle approach, which would address the needs of women throughout their lives in a more comprehensive manner.

Focus Area 6: Water and sanitation

We reiterate our view that water is a multidimensional and a cross-cutting issue. We continue our strong support for a stand-alone SDG on water and sanitation.

We welcome the approach to this goal and proposed set of possible targets. We especially emphasise the importance of access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation as means for the realisation of human right to water and sanitation while upholding the human rights principles of non-discrimination and gender equality.

We highly support targets aimed at improvement of water quality, elimination of pollution and dumping of toxic materials in water bodies and protection of aquifers. In this regard we would like to stress the importance of applying relevant multilateral environmental treaties and strengthening monitoring and reporting system on the status of surface and underground waters. It is a precondition in identifying pressures on the vulnerable water ecosystems and providing proper actions as to increase their resilience. As possible indicator for measuring water quality we suggest Water Quality Index as the indicator based on the method according to which 10 parameters of physic-chemical and microbiological quality are aggregated into the composite indicator of the quality of surface waters.

We also welcome the inclusion of waste-water treatment and increasing water-use efficiency. We have also called for the protection and sustainable management of ecosystems that provide water-related ecosystem services, such as mountains, forests, wetlands, as well as trans-boundary lakes and rivers.

We are also strongly supportive of targets aimed at strengthening the trans-boundary water cooperation.

We welcome the inclusion of chemicals and disaster risk reduction and resilience among possible targets especially prevention measures for decreasing economic losses caused by water-related disasters and preventing derogation of the ecological status of water ecosystems. In this regard we would also like to emphasize the importance of providing higher level of coverage of sewage systems in both urban and rural areas in order to prevent possible damages.

We believe that stronger link could be made with the protection of water biodiversity, e.g. through progressing towards achievement of the good ecological status of water bodies and making progress in controlling and reducing pressures caused by invasive alien species to water bodies.