



**Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Sweden**

*Ambassador
Anna Brandt*

Swedish statement at OWG 10 on cluster 2 – gender equality and the empowerment of women, education & health and population dynamics

Mr Co-chair,

Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls are prerequisites for poverty eradication and sustainable development. They are goals in and of themselves as well as key enablers for us to achieve our desired outcome. I would also like to stress that gender equality is inter-linked to all other clusters.

Hence, we suggest a separate goal on **Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls**, as well as integration of these aspects in targets and indicators across the goal framework. This integration across all goals needs to be strengthened and furthermore the interlinkages to all other focus areas need to be brought out clearer in the final report.

We are supportive of all the targets mentioned in your document, Mr Co-chair, but would like to underline the following five targets as leading to the most transformational outcomes:

1. Eliminate gender-based differences in access to and control over economic resources, e.g. to access to finance, land and ICT.
2. Eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls, including early forced child marriages and harmful practices including FGM (female genital mutilation)
3. Guarantee equal political participation and representation of women and men at all levels, from local councils to national parliaments
4. Guarantee literacy for all women and girls and eliminate gender-based differences in access to education at all levels, this target is also linked to a goal on education.
5. Guarantee women and girls' sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), this target can also link to the health goal, i.e. this is a strong target leading to the fulfillment of more than one goal.

Mr Co-chair your colleague, Ambassador Kamau, asked us earlier today to specify what we mean by SRHR. I will give you three examples: access to contraception, access to skilled birth attendants and sexual education.

Mr Co-chair,

It is crucial that **education** is regarded as a basic human right for all, including marginalized groups. In general our focus should shift from enrollment levels to completion and qualitative outcomes of education. Education for sustainable development should be an integral part in all education systems.

We suggest a goal on **Good quality education and lifelong learning for all** with the following four targets, emphasizing that these targets are applicable to all countries:

1. Guaranteeing literacy for all boys and girls after completing compulsory schooling and ensuring adult literacy for all
2. Ensuring that all adolescents reach their national knowledge requirements after completing compulsory schooling
3. Ensuring the possibility for all young people, including those with disabilities, to be given the possibility to gain a high quality education preparing them for work life
4. Ensuring the possibility for lifelong learning for all women and men

With regards to **employment and decent work** for all, we will return to this topic in relation to sustainable and inclusive economic growth, discussed tomorrow.

Good **health** is an important end in itself as well as a means to sustainable development. It has inter-linkages to most other goals across all clusters, which needs to be brought out clearer in the document.

We suggest a goal titled **Improving healthy life expectancy**, with the following targets:

1. Ensure universal health coverage, including equal access to prevention, treatment and strengthened health systems as well as medicines and vaccines.
2. Elimination of preventable child and maternal deaths
3. Elimination of the HIV/AIDS epidemic and prevention and reduction of malaria, tb and other tropical diseases
4. Decrease the incidence of non-communicable diseases (through reducing exposure to harmful use of tobacco, alcohol, hazardous substances, unhealthy diets and other risk factors)
5. Increase the capacity for early warning and management of health risks
6. Address social and environmental causes of disease, which has clear linkages to other goals.

And as mentioned earlier, a target on sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) should also feature under this goal.

Thank you, Mr. Co-chair.