



3 March 2014
9th Session of the OWG on SDGs

Response by the Women's Major Group to the 19 Focus Areas document by the co-chairs of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals

Presented by Organising Partner for the Women's Major Group, Sascha Gabizon, Women International for a Common Future

Thank you chairs,

We thank you for the opportunity to share our comments regarding your document with the proposed focus areas.

We are glad that you have decided for a comprehensive approach and have proposed 19 focus areas with many sub-areas to be further discussed in the 2nd phase of the Open Working Groups and not a too restrictive and limited number of focus areas for future goals and targets.

The Women's Major Group is furthermore glad to see an **integrated approach**, with inter-linkages identified between the focus areas, **in particular we are glad to see both a stand-alone goal area for Gender Equality and Women's empowerment** as well as 7 focus areas where linkages to gender equality are indicated. We would like however to propose inter-linkages proposals all focus areas, and will be glad to discuss this with you during the dialogue session on Wednesday afternoon.

At the same time we feel there are many areas where the document uses languages which falls back behind **existing agreements**.

Nor does it do credit to what you yourselves have set as goal, namely that the focus areas should be so **ambitious** that they will remain **relevant till 2030**.

We particularly regret that this draft for Sustainable Development Goals does not clearly recognize "women's rights" or "planetary boundaries" --- how can that be?

We are glad that the text acknowledges the multidimensional causes of poverty, and that inequalities within and between countries are addressed, and that instruments to of poverty eradication include social protection for those living in poverty.

However, we feel that this section lacks recent global understanding of how poverty and inequalities are increasing in particular in some higher and middle income countries, and that we need to address **not only the bottom poverty but also the top wealth** in order to reach sustainable development. Addressing power structures, redistributive mechanisms such as progressive taxation and universal social protection and services need to be part of the solution, and should be clearly mentioned in this section.

Regarding the stand alone goal on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

We welcome some of the proposed language on ending violence, ending discrimination, equal participation in decision making, equal pay etc. However, your summary of Open Working Group 8 was stronger that this version, **including on SRHR**, and we would recommend to use that version for the focus area document.

Thank you very much for your attention.