

# Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals Summary of 11<sup>th</sup> Session (Day 2)

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On 6 May 2014, the OWG continued its 11<sup>th</sup> session. Under discussion were the focus areas on:

- *Health and population dynamics and Education and life-long learning*
- *Gender equality and women’s empowerment and Water and sanitation*

## General themes

- There was continued strong consensus on the need to address the situation of vulnerable groups, particularly in the domains of education and health care. As countries used the words *vulnerable* and *marginalized* groups interchangeably, a number of delegations expressed a preference for the word ‘vulnerable’.
- The need for refined, additional and disaggregated data was stressed. While some countries called for data under each focus area, with specific suggestions of data-disaggregation, others e.g. Bangladesh, emphasized the systemic nature of data, asking that it be dealt with comprehensively across the framework instead of piece by piece.

## Migration

- Addressing vulnerable groups’ access to health care and education was a general theme throughout the day and migrants were specifically mentioned both in terms of promoting access to health care as a fundamental right, as well as a means of facilitating integration. (G77 and China, Group of LDCs, CARICOM, Nicaragua, Brazil, Spain, Italy, Turkey, Switzerland, France and Germany, African Group, Uruguay and Bangladesh).
- Some delegations made a general call to see issues related to migration better integrated into the agenda in recognition of migration being a strong catalyst for development. For example, Benin (for LDCs) highlighted a number of issues that should be included in order to address migration, such as:
  - Reduce the costs of migration and of remittances;
  - Implement measures to foster the development impact of remittances;
  - Resist imposition of unreasonable barriers relating to labor migration;
  - Promote access to benefits; and
  - Develop assistance for short-term migrants, including workers from developing countries.

- Bolivia (for the G77 and China) noted the need to change the negative narrative on migration as it benefits both countries of origin and destination. Reducing the cost of migration and of transferring remittances, while resisting unreasonable barriers for labor migration is key, as is access to benefits and developing assistance for short-term migration.

### **Health and Population Dynamics**

- Discussions featured broad agreement on including quality universal health care; on breaking maternal and child mortality into two separate targets; as well as to broaden the concept of health to include mental health and well-being - drawing on WHO definitions.
- Non-communicable diseases were highlighted as a key issue to be addressed under the health Focus Area.
- While a vast majority of statements called for the inclusion of reproductive rights, the issue remains contentious.

### **Education and life-long learning**

- A majority of countries called for the link between education and the labor market to be recognized, including through a 10-year primary education target and the need for an agenda for education that recognizes teachers. A vast majority of states expressed the need broaden targets relating to educational access to include disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, including migrants.

### **Water and sanitation**

- There was strong concern that sanitation was inadequately reflected in the revised document. In that context, delegations suggested a number of different ways to include that issue, with a standalone goal on sanitation receiving some support.

### **Gender**

- As has been reported previously, gender equality has received overwhelmingly strong support amongst governments. That support was again reflected today, with many countries, without notable opposition, expressing concern over the lack of women's economic empowerment in the draft document. Access to land, inheritance, credit, and natural resources were highlighted as possible concrete target proposals.
- While a number of middle and high-income countries highlighted the need to include redistribution of unpaid work, the African Group expressed concern this was not primarily an economic issue; including it in the agenda would, in their view, impinge on the values informing the social fabric.