

**10th Session of the Open Working Group on the Sustainable Development Goals  
31 March - 04 April, 2014**

Cluster 2 - Education; Health and population dynamics; Gender Equality and Women's  
Empowerment; Employment and decent work for all  
1 April, 2014

Statement by Brazil and Nicaragua

Mr. Co-chair,

Brazil and Nicaragua support the statement by Bolivia on behalf the G-77 and China.

In our national capacities, we would like to present the following comments on the focus areas in cluster 2, namely education, decent jobs, health and gender.

(EDUCATION)

Education is a basic human right, and is arguably the main driver of social inclusion, economic growth and environmental awareness. It is essential for the full exercise of citizenship and political rights. Universal access to education is a pre-condition for the eradication of poverty and the achievement of sustainable development with social justice.

Nicaragua and Brazil welcome the proposed text for focus area 4, which also addresses the right to quality education from early childhood to adult life.

However, focus area 4 does not make explicit the transformational impact of education in promoting sustainable consumption and production patterns, and we cannot lose the opportunity to work on this interlinkage. We therefore suggest item "g" to read "integrating sustainable consumption and production in education curricula".

We must also acknowledge the role of education in promoting a culture of peace based on an enhanced awareness of our common humanity and safeguarding cultural diversity, in an environment of tolerance and plurality. We propose adding an item on these issues as a substitute for item "e" of area 19.

Under means of implementation, we should reaffirm that making good on ODA commitments is essential for developing countries, especially least developed countries, to implement education-related SDGs. We should also declare education a national priority for all countries, developed and developing, keeping it shielded from cuts in national budgets whatever the reason.

Conditional cash transfer schemes that combine income support with education responsibilities and health commitments should be recognized and supported, in light of their powerful contribution to breaking the intergenerational cycle of poverty. These concepts should be spelled out under item h) on MoI.

The interlinkages document should also be amended to reflect the cross-cutting nature of education.

#### (DECENT JOBS)

Mr. Co-chair,

According to the International Labour Organization ILO, Decent Work involves opportunities for work that is productive and delivers a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families, better prospects for personal development and social integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives, and equality of opportunity, and equal treatment for all women and men. Decent work is, above all, the availability of employment in conditions of freedom, equity, human security and dignity.

To comply with the ILO definition, Nicaragua and Brazil propose some changes to focus area 11.

First, we need to address slave and forced work as well as the elimination of child labor as a priority. We suggest creating a new item a), which would read: *"end child labor, forced labor, human trafficking and slavery"*. This new item in focus area 11 could replace current item "g" in focus area 19.

Regarding the rights of migrants and their families, we believe item "n" of focus area 11 could be further strengthened in order to address concerns expressed in item "h" of focus area 19. In our view, the improvement of conditions of migrants and their families should be considered within the framework of the right to decent work, not in association with transnational crimes and security-related issues.

On gender related aspects of the decent work agenda, we should keep to agreements of the recently concluded 58th CSW in all applicable areas. Item c) should read: *"ensure women's right to work and rights at work through gender-responsive policies and programs that promote women's economic empowerment"*.

At the end of item h), we need to acknowledge the *"positive correlation between minimum wage, poverty eradication and social inclusion"*. In fact, we have to be stronger advocates for minimum wage promotion and protection policies, as they are often the only safety net available for the most vulnerable segments of society, especially in times of crisis and hardship.

Training and re-skilling are necessary not just for displaced workers but for the work force in general. Item m) should duly reflect it. We suggest wording as follows: *"investment in professional training as a means to realizing decent work for all, including by training and re-skilling of displaced workers"*

The link between decent work and the promotion of equality and gender equality must be recognized.

(HEALTH )

Mr. Co-chair,

Focus area 3 appropriately recognizes the right to the highest attainable standard of mental and physical health. Important elements of the MDGs agenda are also adequately reflected therein, in particular child and maternal mortality, as well as ending HIV/AIDS epidemic. These issues should be further strengthened. WHO agreed strategies and plans of action, as they relate to specific issues under our consideration, should be used for the definition of the health-related goals and targets.

Regarding item a), Brazil and Nicaragua believe the verb "achieving" should be added before the word "universal".

We note that that the Rio+20 outcome document does not present a definition for "universal health coverage". In this regard, we recall paragraph 10 of resolution 67/81, entitled "Global health and foreign policy", which reads: "Acknowledges that universal health coverage implies that all people have access, without discrimination, to nationally determined sets of the promotive, preventive, curative and rehabilitative basic health services needed and essential, safe, affordable, effective and quality medicines, while ensuring that the use of these services does not expose the users to financial hardship, with a special emphasis on the poor, vulnerable and marginalized segments of the population;"

Brazil and Nicaragua propose such definition be kept as reference for the elaboration of targets and indicators, and that it should be included as a footnote in a revised version of the document.

Brazil and Nicaragua believe current item i) does not conform to paragraph 141 from the Rio+20 outcome document. The word "addressing" should be replaced by "preventing and early diagnosing and treating".

References to minority groups throughout the document should be coherent. Specifically in item l), a reference to women should be included, as well as to racial and ethnic minorities. Health SDGs, in particular with respect to the vulnerable groups, should *"develop and use evidence-based, high quality, timely, disaggregated and impartial data"*.

Means of implementation should refer to *"increasing health financing, development and training of the health workforce"*, as per paragraph 143 of Rio+20 and in line with item "a" of the focus area.

MDG8 target "8E", on the Global Partnership for Development, should be brought in as an additional sub-item under means of implementation. It originally reads: "In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries."

Yet another indispensable sub-item under a health-related means of implementation should reaffirm countries' right to use, to the full extent, existing flexibilities in the TRIPS agreement for the protection of public health and to promote access to medicines for all and the provision of assistance to developing countries in this regard, as per paragraph 142 of Rio+20 outcome document.

Cross-referencing paragraph 145 of the Rio+20 outcome document, Brazil and Nicaragua suggest the inclusion of a sub-item, under means of implementation, which would read: *“implementing the Beijing Platform for Action and the Program of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, and the outcomes of their review conferences, including the commitments leading to sexual and reproductive health and the promotion and protection of all human rights in this context.”*

Health, education and employment linkages should be recognized.

Commitments to universal goals and the means for their implementation must be differentiated in accordance with the respective historical responsibilities and capacities of developed and developing countries.

(GENDER)

Mr. Co-chair,

Nicaragua and Brazil believe that gender equality and the promotion of the empowerment of women have to follow a human rights-based approach, including the right to development.

In our view, Focus area 5 should be further strengthened in order to widen the scope of the MDGs agenda and to ensure its consistency with The Future We Want and the recently adopted Agreed Conclusions of 58th Session of the Conference on the Status of Women, held a few weeks ago in New York.

Specifically regarding item "b)", we should acknowledge the multiple forms of violence affecting women and girls from different societies, cultural backgrounds, religions, among others. We should also recall that violence against all women and girls must be avoided not only in public but also in private spaces. The item should, therefore, read as follows: *"eliminating all forms of violence against all women and girls in public and private spaces"* (Paragraph l of CSW Agreed Conclusions). In this regard, Nicaragua and Brazil believe that item "b" of focal area 5 is the right item to deal with the elimination of all forms of violence against girls and women, not focus area 19 item "d".

On item c), Nicaragua and Brazil suggest emphasizing women's and girls' right to education on an equalitarian and non-discriminatory basis. The item could, therefore, read as follows: *"ensuring women's and girls' right to education on the basis of equal opportunity and non-discrimination throughout their lifecycle and ensuring equal and inclusive access to quality education at all levels"* (Paragraph "u" of CSW Agreed Conclusions).

Regarding item h), Nicaragua and Brazil would like to reflect provisions contained in Paragraph k) of the Agreed Conclusions. Therefore, we propose that item h) reads: *"ensuring equal sharing of unpaid work, and ensuring valorization, reduction and redistribution of unpaid care work"*.

On item "i", we suggest strengthening the language, which would read *"ensuring sexual and reproductive health, and sexual and reproductive rights, in accordance with existing national legal frameworks"*.

Mr. Co-chair,

With regards to item j), Nicaragua and Brazil observe that disaggregating data by gender only is not enough. Other dimensions, such as race and ethnicity, are crucial for identifying drivers of vulnerability and exclusion. In many countries, women who belong to racial and ethnic minorities are more vulnerable within the vulnerable groups.

We would also like to call attention to the need to ensure an item on women's access to modern forms of information technology. Having access to information and to communication is a very effective way of empowering women and ensuring the fulfillment of their rights.

The recently adopted Agreed Conclusions contain a comprehensive set of measures that could serve as a basis for means of implementation to achieve these goals.

Thank you.