

Women's Major Group

To attention of USGs Ms Amina Mohammed and Mr Thomas Gass
Copied: Co-Facilitators Kamau and Donoghue, Member States, UN agencies

Re: Concern regarding Images to present 2030 Agenda and SDGs to the world

23 September 2015, New York

Honourable USGs Ms Amina Mohammed and Mr Thomas Gass,

The Women's Major Group, bringing together over 600 national and international women's CSOs, continues to be actively engaged in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We want to contribute to the success of the 2030 Agenda, and the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in all countries, and help ensure that real transformative change towards gender equality, human rights, and responsible and equitable stewardship of the earth's climate and natural resources. As always, please accept our proposals below in that sense of a constructive contribution by the women's organisations.

Overall concern: Although it is good that many different people have become engaged in spreading the word about the 2030 Agenda and the 17 SDGs, we call on leadership from the UN to avoid trivialization and over-simplification in the main messages to the public. We need to maintain integrity and forward momentum of the SDGs in substance and scope in all messages coming from the UN.

Concern 1: Maintain "sustainable development"

The latest proposals for the outreach of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals now speak only of "the Global Goals". Although we appreciate the effort to bring in melody and alliteration, we entirely disapprove of dropping "Sustainable Development". It has been a key achievement of the negotiations of the last 5 years from Rio+20 to the Post-2015 summit that all governments have finally agreed that development cannot be achieved when people and the planet continue to be exploited, which is why only a balanced "sustainable development" should be the aim of the new 2030 Agenda. By suddenly dropping the SD from SDGs, the United Nations is giving an entirely wrong message to the world.

- ➔ We call on you to consistently speak of "SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS" and not just 'the global goals'. If needed, add in small letters (as now used for Sustainable Development) 'global' at the beginning.



Concern 2) Over-simplification and misrepresentation of the SDGs



These icons are too much of a simplification and wrongly re-interpret the titles of the SDGs. We object to the use of these icons, for the following reasons:

→ 'Family' icon can be misunderstood as regression

The icon used to present **goal 1** could easily be misunderstood as a regression to the "husband, wife, child" icon used for decades to promote population control. Unfortunately the icon does not reflect the UN agreements since 1994 that all forms of family be supported and that adolescents' needs and rights be explicitly recognized as well. A better reflection of these commitments in the goal 1 icon would be **at least three different heights of people**, in a mixture that is **not symmetrical**, e.g. the woman could be in the centre.

→ All goal 'titles' are too simplified and do not reflect the delicate negotiated balance

The **goal 5 icon and title are too reductive**. Since women and girls were dropped from the title, the image should be of strong and empowered women and girls.

For **goal 12** Why is **the word sustainable being deleted** everywhere? This goal is about sustainable consumption and production therefore the image should reflect this instead of only focusing on consumption.

Goal 14 called 'Life under water' completely ignores the **food sovereignty, sustainable livelihood and economic importance** of oceans for millions of small fishers and women and men processing fish in coastal communities, whose livelihoods are under threat from i.e. unsustainable industrial fishing, seabed mining, oil industries and mass-tourism.

Worst is the short title of **goal 17 "partnerships"**, which completely invisibilises hard won language of 'means of implementation', and specifically recognition of financial and investment regulation, debt restructuring and trade policy changes needed to achieve the SDGs.

Concern 3) Private ownership of UN messages? Privatising of public goods?

Finally, we are very concerned that that the 'Global Goals' and the 'icons' are a private initiative of "Project Everyone", which has the license for use and holds the domain name. It is inconceivable that the UN should give away like this the results of member state and CSO commitment and expertise. This seems to be entirely against the spirit of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which aims at including all people in contributing to the SDG implementation. We wonder about the process of this, and why member states have not been consulted on such an important issue as the UN giving a licence for use to a group which has mis-represented and over-simplified the results of 3 years of intergovernmental negotiations.

We call on the UN to correct the wrong impression, and provide images for the SDGs that use the full SDG titles and ensuring free use for all of these images.

The WMG will be happy to work with you in promoting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with all its ambition and in all its diversity, and would be glad to meet with you on this matter during the coming days before and after the post-2015 summit!

Sincerely yours,

Undersigned representatives of the **Women's Major Group**:

WECF International / Women in Europe for a Common Future
Women for Women's Human Rights
Diverse Voices and Action for Equality
Pacific Partnerships on Gender, Climate Change and Sustainable Development (PPGCCSD)
Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN)
CoopeSoliDar
Equidad de Género: Ciudadanía, Trabajo y Familia
Women Environment and Development Organisation
Asia Pacific Forum on Women Law and Development
Global Forest Coalition
Women Environmental Program
Forum of Women's NGOs of Kyrgyzstan
Third World Network TWN
South Asia Women's Network (SWAN)
GESTOS Brazil
FEMNET
Red de Educacion Popular entre Mujeres A. Latina y el Caribe , REPEM
Jamaica Community of Positive Women
FEIM; Fundacion para estudio e Investigacion de la Mujer, Argentina
World YWCA
Asian-Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women (ARROW)
Huairou Commission: Women, Homes and Community
Reaccion Climatica-Bolivia
Alga rural women's association, Kyrgyzstan
WOCAN (Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resources Management)
Solar Cookers International
WAVE (Women in Adult Vocational Education Inc.)
NGO Committee CSW LAC
Women Won't Wait Campaign: End HIV and Violence NOW
Women's Sports Foundation USA
Women Sport International
Rutgers WPF
Medical Mission Sisters
Climate Change and Development NGO Alliance
Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights
Feminist Task Forum
Coordinadora de la Mujer - Bolivia
Siglo XXIII, El Salvador
Support for Women in Agriculture and Environment (SWAGEN)
SHAZET public association from Kyrgyzstan

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Lotus Circle
SERR - Servicios Ecumenicos para Reconciliacion y Reconstruccion – USA
Afrihealth Optonet Association
Echoes of Women in Africa Initiative Nigeria
Centre for Human Rights and Climate Change Research Nigeria
Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd
The Consortium on Gender, Security and Human Rights
Akina Mama wa Afrika, Uganda
Charles and Doosurgh Abaagu Foundation
Community Emergency Response Initiative
Shacks and Slum Dwellers Association of Nigeria
MEXFAM AC
Farmers Rights Defense, AFRD
Women Rights to Education Programme