



Concept note – *Private Sector Consultation*

## **Synergies with the Private Sector and UN Working Group on discrimination against women and girls (WGDAWG): Strategies to Promote Gender Equality**

**2 May 2024, 10:00am-12:00pm**

**UN Headquarters (New York), Conference Room 8**

### **Background**

The [Working Group on discrimination against women and girls](#) (WGDAWG) is an independent mechanism created by the United Nations Human Rights Council in 2010 to work with States and other entities to end discrimination against women and girls. The Working Group is made up of five experts from different regions of the world (Western Europe and Other States, Asia-Pacific, Africa, Eastern Europe, Latin America).

In 2023, the Working Group published its [annual thematic report](#) on gendered inequalities of poverty. In this report, the Working Group recognized that globally, women and girls are disproportionately represented among those living in poverty, and that mainstream approaches have failed to transform the unequal economic systems that they live in. As the direction forward, the Working Group has proposed the model of a feminist and human rights-based economy, an approach based on the reaffirmation of substantive equality of women in the legal, social, economic, cultural, environmental and political arenas and in all spheres of life, and as well as on principles of participation, accountability, non-discrimination, equality, and empowerment.

### **Objectives**

Recognizing that businesses and the private sector are key allies and driving forces behind the transformation towards a feminist and human rights-based economy, the Working Group is convening a consultation with private sector representatives during its forthcoming session from 29 April – 3 May 2024 in New York City. This consultation will be an opportunity to meet with four new Working Group members who have taken up their mandate as of November 2023, as well as discuss perspectives, strategies, and efforts made by businesses to promote gender equality, identifying synergies between the Working Group's activities and the private sector.

### **Proposed structure/agenda for the consultations**

Welcome and introductory remarks: Chair of the Working Group on Discrimination against Women and Girls

Introduction to the new members of the Working Group

Moderated discussion

Conclusions and final remarks: Chair of the Working Group

### **Guiding questions for the discussion**

The discussion will be guided by the following questions:

- What are **efforts** made by your company and/or industry to advance gender equality and women’s empowerment within your leadership, employees, trade unions, and/or in your operations within various local communities?
  - How do you incorporate gender equality in your hiring, payment, internal policies, due diligence, grievance mechanisms, sourcing, and in the supply chain?
- In your industry and/or company, what are the **main obstacles** to incorporating gender equality and women’s empowerment within your leadership, employees, trade unions, and/or in your operations within various local communities?
- In your view, what are **effective strategies** to encourage the private sector to promote the advancement of gender equality in their work? On the other hand, what are ineffective strategies?
  - Some States and the EU have promulgated due diligence requirements and standards on human rights performance and sustainability for companies within the jurisdiction and their supply chains. How have or will these laws impact your company or industry, including on gender equality within your company and for those working within the supply chains?
- Please share any suggestions on how the Working Group and UN mechanisms can **collaborate** with the private sector on promoting gender equality and synergize efforts.