

Draft General Recommendation No. 35 on the gender-related dimensions of disaster risk reduction in a changing climate – Comments by Malta

Malta has reviewed Draft General Recommendation No. 35 on the gender-related dimensions of disaster risk reduction in a changing climate, and wishes to comment on two.

1. The first comment concerns Paragraph 25 (e), which reads as follows:

25 “As outlined in General Recommendation no. 28, State parties have obligations to respect, protect and fulfil the principle of non-discrimination and to ensure women’s equal development and advancement in all fields. To ensure substantive equality for women in the context of climate change related disaster risk reduction, State parties should take concrete, targeted and measurable steps to:

....

25 (e) Eliminate discriminatory laws and practices, including those related to the ownership, disposal, control and inheritance of assets and resources such as property and land, as well as barriers that prohibit women from exercising full legal capacity and autonomy in areas such as sexual and reproductive rights, freedom of movement and equal access to social protection schemes.”

Malta suggests the addition of the qualifier “**in line with the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action**”, to the term “sexual and reproductive rights”, which is also in line with language used in General Recommendation no. 28 – section IV, Recommendation to State parties. The amended text would therefore read as follows:

*25 (e) Eliminate discriminatory laws and practices, including those related to the ownership, disposal, control and inheritance of assets and resources such as property and land, as well as barriers that prohibit women from exercising full legal capacity and autonomy in areas such as sexual and reproductive rights **in line with the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action**, freedom of movement and equal access to social protection schemes.”*

2. The second comment concerns Paragraph 47 (d), which reads as follows:

47 (d) “Prioritize the provision of family planning and reproductive health care services including access to emergency contraception and safe abortion and reduce maternal mortality rates through safe motherhood services and prenatal assistance”.

The reference to “safe abortion” is not acceptable to Malta in its current form and it therefore suggests the addition of the term “**in accordance with national legislation**” or “**where legal**” following. The amended text would therefore read as follows:

*47 (d) “Prioritize the provision of family planning and reproductive health care services including access to emergency contraception and safe abortion **in accordance with national legislation / where legal** and reduce maternal mortality rates through safe motherhood services and prenatal assistance”.*