



**Policies Empowering Migrant Women and Girls in the Context
of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
CSW Side Event
24 March 2016
GMG Statement**

Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentleman,

On behalf of the Global Migration Group, I would like to welcome you all to this CSW side event on “Policies empowering migrant women and girls in the context of the 2030 Agenda”.

I would like to start by thanking the Permanent Missions of Bangladesh and Italy to the United Nations for co-organizing this event, and our distinguished panellists for their participation. I thank you for the strong partnership to tackle the different dimensions of the migration issue.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development offers a unique opportunity to address international migration in a comprehensive, human rights-based and gender-sensitive way. Pledging to leave no one behind, the Agenda offers the unique potential to ensure that the rights of even the most vulnerable migrants are protected and fulfilled.

Marking the first year of implementation of the 2030 Agenda, UN Women is delighted to chair the Global Migration Group in 2016. The Global Migration Group is an interagency group that brings together 18 entities to encourage the adoption of more coherent, comprehensive and better coordinated approaches to the issue of international migration.

UN Women is undertaking the important role of chairing the Global Migration Group in 2016 in line with three objectives:

First, ensuring that both men and women migrants are impacted positively by the work of the UN System and the GMG and elevating the focus on women in the migration debate.

Second, strengthening the role of the GMG members and their partners, in particular GFMD, in the implementation and monitoring of the migration-related targets and indicators of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Third, strengthening the GMG's effectiveness and impact, through increased coordination and cooperation.

As GMG Chair in 2016, UN Women will highlight the importance of mainstreaming a gender-sensitive and human rights-based approach to the implementation and monitoring of the migration-related targets and indicators of the 2030 Agenda. Orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration can be an empowering process for women that can enable them to establish a better life at their destination as well as in their community of origin, upon voluntary return with enhanced skills and financial means.

I would like to share a few reflections on the importance of advancing the rights of migrant women and girls in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Migrant women are central to realizing SDG 5 on achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls. With women constituting approximately half of the 244 million people who live outside their countries of birth, it is imperative that SDG 5 is applied to migrant women, ending all forms of discrimination and inequality in law and practice – including migration policies.

Currently, many women and girls face discrimination, violence and exploitation at various stages of the migration cycle. In this context, target 10.7 (To facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies) is of particular relevance to reduce the multiple vulnerabilities women migrants in an irregular situation and those working in the informal economy face.

For migrants using irregular channels, forced labour is a particular risk, yet migrant women are more susceptible to being trafficked for sexual exploitation, constituting 98% of all such victims. Here, target 8.7 is of critical importance (To take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms).

Further, many migrant women face gendered vulnerabilities that are specific to their sector of labour market insertion – which is often guided directly by migration admission policies.

In the highly feminized care sector, for example, large numbers of women migrants have frequently their passports or i.d. documents confiscated and are often isolated in private homes, working excessive hours without or with very low pay, with restrictive employment contracts that do not permit them to change employers in case of labour exploitation, without collective bargaining rights, access to legal or social protection (such as employment insurance or parental benefits), and inadequate access to health care (such as reproductive and sexual health care), as well as lack of recognition of skills and qualifications. In this context, target 8.8 (To protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment) is particularly important.

Further, in line with target 17.18, capacity building support in data disaggregation by sex, age and migratory status is vital in order to systematically monitor progress of vulnerable groups, including migrant women and girls, to protect their human rights and guarantee access to health, education, and employment for all.

And finally, reducing transaction costs of remittances, as agreed in target 10.c of Agenda 2030 will be crucial for migration to facilitate the economic empowerment of all migrants.

Last but not least, we must also focus on following up on the migration-related provisions of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development. Both the Agenda 2030 and Financing for Development outcomes have prioritized gender equality and women's empowerment as a key objective, enabler and beneficiary of sustainable development and financing for development efforts.

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is our collective responsibility to deliver on the pledge enshrined in the 2030 Agenda to 'leave no one behind'. This requires the design and implementation of policies that empower migrant women and girls to realize their fundamental freedoms and human rights, thus contributing to sustainable development.

Thank you.