

Informal Thematic Session # 4

“Contributions of migrants and diaspora to all dimensions of sustainable development, including remittances and portability of earned benefits”

UN Women Intervention in Panel 1 (TBC), 24 July

Thank you, Chair

It is critical that we recognise the valuable contributions of migrant women to sustainable development. Women were responsible for sending half of the global remittances of 601 billion USD in 2016. This means they sent over \$300 billion in remittances back home to loved ones. But this often comes at a cost. Many migrant women tend to send smaller amounts of money more often and for longer periods than men. This means paying more in fees, while earning less than men. Other costs include leaving behind their own families to care for strangers, working in informal often unregulated sectors under precarious working conditions, and being exposed to a heightened risk of sexual and gender-based violence. Yet for many of the over 66 million women migrant workers, these are necessary evils to achieve a better life for themselves and their families.

Migration does provide opportunities for many women that they do not have in their countries of origin: The chance to be financially independent, to gain new skills, and gain greater control of their lives. And they bring with them new ideas, knowledge and behaviours which can play a key role in breaking down traditional gender stereotypes. Migration hence can be real game changer- if the right policies are in place to make migration safe, regular and orderly for everyone.

Ladies and gentlemen, the global compact is a unique opportunity to develop an international blueprint for migration that addresses these needs, risks and priorities, and recognises the contributions of ALL migrants.

UN Women has worked with experts to develop a comprehensive set of recommendations for addressing women’s human rights in the global compact. Some of these are particularly relevant in the context of this thematic session, and include the following:

- 1. Recognise the positive contributions of migrant women to sustainable and inclusive development**, and acknowledge that development cannot be truly sustainable and inclusive unless it encompasses and fosters the full economic, social and political empowerment and leadership of all women and girls at *all* stages of migration;
- 2. Develop gender-responsive, human rights-based migration policy without delay** which recognises the agency of women in migration, and promotes their empowerment and leadership;
- 3. Adopt policies and programmes that aim to enable migrant women to fully participate in the societies of countries of origin, transit and destination** including labour market integration, social inclusion and political participation;
- 4. Eliminate sex-specific bans and discriminatory restrictions on women’s migration**

Ladies and gentlemen, we have a duty to all migrants to ensure that the global compact is more than just words on paper. It needs to be a commitment to act - for all of us.

Thank you.

