

Statement by the International Organization for Migration (IOM)
Sixty-ninth Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (Beijing +30)

Item 3: General Discussion

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Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Sixty-ninth Session of the Commission on the Status of Women is a pivotal moment to reflect on our progress in gender equality and recognize the broader impact of empowering women and girls over the last 30 years.

In today's world of crisis and politically charged migration debates, it is more critical than ever to focus on smart development interventions. **Investing in migrant women is an opportunity to unlock untapped potential and fostering inclusive, sustainable development.** It is an opportunity for a "triple win" - benefitting destination and transit countries, countries of origin, and the migrants themselves.

Evidence supports this approach.

Women make up 146 million, or 48%, of the global international migrant population. Migrant women are essential contributors to the global economy and social fabric. **Despite earning less than male migrants, women remit a larger share of their income, often funding education and healthcare back home.**

Migrants, including women from less developed countries, can **experience a 15-fold income increase, double school enrolment rates, and a 16-fold reduction in child mortality after migrating to developed countries.**

However, significant challenges remain. Migrant women are disproportionately channeled into informal, low-wage, and precarious employment, particularly in domestic and care sectors, with limited social protection. **They often face barriers to regular migration pathways, increasing their vulnerability to exploitation, abuse, and trafficking.** Data shows that 69.2% of registered trafficking victims of known gender are female.

Yet, when well-managed, migration offers powerful opportunities to advance gender equality. It can catalyze women's empowerment and economic independence, helping to address poverty and transform discriminatory gender norms globally.

To realize this potential, we need collective action:

First, we must invest in gender-responsive migration policy and programming that is designed with the leadership and meaningful participation of the diversity of migrant women and girls. This includes investing in sex-disaggregated data and gender analysis which is critical for understanding the gender dimensions of migration and informing effective policies.

Second, we need gender-responsive labour migration pathways that address the diverse needs of women. This includes promoting decent work, skills recognition, and protection in both formal and informal sectors for migrant women.

Third, we must strengthen access to social protection systems so that migrant women have access to essential services—healthcare, education, social protection, and gender-based violence support—regardless of their migration status or other intersectional identities.

IOM is committed to placing the human rights and well-being of migrant women and girls at the centre of its work. We support States in promoting migrant women’s rights and investing in gender-responsive migration governance, in line with the Global Compact for Migration.

Across IOM’s operations, we witness the extraordinary impact of migrant women when they are given a voice and opportunities to lead.

IOM has strengthened the participation of women and girls in governance and decision-making structures in displacement sites, **reaching over 15,000 internally displaced persons across 14 countries over the past nine years.**

In 2024, we expanded our efforts to **58 countries, increasing gender-based violence mitigation measures in crisis situations by 45%**, demonstrating our commitment to safer environments for migrant women and girls.

We stand ready to advance this global collaboration—with Member States, UN agencies, civil society, and migrant women themselves. **Together, we can create a future where migration is a choice, not a necessity—where every woman and girl can live with dignity, safety, and opportunity.**

Thank you.