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Global Compact
FOR Migration

DECLARATION ON INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2023

United Nations Network on
Migration in Argentina



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This 8 March, International Women's Day, **the United Nations Network on Migration in Argentina has come together to call for an inclusive digital world and for gender-inclusive innovation and access to technologies.**

Despite the undeniable efforts and the positive results achieved thanks to the close collaboration in various areas and fields, available data indicate that **the goal of reaching gender equality before 2030 will not be fulfilled.** Therefore, in addition to celebrating every step towards equality, we should also focus on the discrimination and legal protection barriers still in place which, at this rate, **may take up to 286 years to be removed** (UN WOMEN and UNDESA, 2022¹).

Both the 2030 Agenda and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration² adopt as one of their main purposes the consolidation of the full exercise of rights for women and girls in all their diversity. Specifically, **the SDG 5 of the 2030 Agenda** seeks to achieve gender equality and empower women and girls; while the perspective based on gender and human rights and the person-centred approach are underlined in the guiding principles of the Global Compact. Within this contextual frame, **the United Nations Network on Migration in Argentina is committed to continue working better together to achieve these objectives and ensure a more inclusive future for all migrant women and girls.** This Network is a work space which in Argentina is made of nine³ local United Nations Agencies, Funds and Programmes, working towards the right to migrate in safe, human conditions and so that migration is an option, never an obligation.

In 2023, the theme of the International Women's Day convenes us to work for an **inclusive digital world**, to the end that **innovation and technology contribute to gender equality.** This matter is of the utmost significance for an intersectional analysis of the phenomenon focusing on the situation of migrant women and girls and their unequitable access to TICs, to information and to the multiple doors opened by digital literacy, bearing in mind that an increased access of migrant women to economic, educational and social opportunities is crucial for making headway towards gender equality and inclusion.

It is not new to point out that migrant, refugee and internally displaced women and girls are especially vulnerable to serious phenomena such as climatic change, armed conflicts, and the violation of their fundamental human rights. It is also known that half of not formally schooled girls live in conflict affected countries (UN WOMEN and UNDESA, 2022), conflicts which in many cases generate forced migration. Furthermore, women migrants face a number of obstacles in accessing financial services and products including mobility constraints, distance and safety impediments, lack of financial literacy and limited access to technology⁴, while many of them lack still lack access to bank accounts and loans globally⁵.

The **Progress Declaration**⁶ adopted by consensus at the **first International Migration Review Forum** held in May 2022 warns us that the lack of the recognition of skills and qualifications of migrants limits their potential and their contributions to sustainable development and aggravates situations of vulnerability and exploitation. Along these lines, the resolution postulates that **“especially women migrant workers continue to face precarious working conditions, wage theft, labour exploitation,**

reduced wages, discriminatory dismissals, withholding of benefits, forced unpaid leave and protracted separation from their families”, situations which were exacerbated during the COVID-19 pandemic (A/RES/76/266, par. 28).

Gender gaps are widespread also in the field of technologies and innovation; thus, **we notice with concern the fact that women are still underrepresented in the technology industry and the academic world.** According to data from the UN WOMEN and UNDESA’s The Gender Snapshot 2022, globally women hold only 2 in every 10 science, engineering and information and communication technology jobs and it has been observed that women’s continued exclusion from the digital world has resulted in a loss of a trillion US dollars in the gross domestic product of low- and middle-income countries in just the last decade. Moreover, at the 20 largest global technology companies, women hold only 1 in 4 leadership positions. Locally speaking, as reported from the World Economic Forum 2022⁷, in Argentina there are women managers in only an 8 per cent of companies.

On the other hand, Internet may also expose women and girls to network violence, cyberbullying (online harassment), sexting (sharing images without consent), grooming (online sexual abuse) and hate speech, among other aspects affecting women and children through technology (UNICEF and Government of the Province of Buenos Aires, 2020). This leads to a greater concern by women, in comparison with men, about their personal data privacy and, at the same time, urges us to work on specific protection measures to address these risks. In this sense, it is fundamental to guarantee that women and children have information, control, and safety at digital environments to increase their trust in digital tools and initiatives and enable them to make informed decisions, including in their migration journeys.

If we focus on migrant women living in Argentina, in consonance with the situation at the global and regional levels, it may be noticed that their **living conditions and workforce participation have been historically disadvantageous.** Therefore, even nowadays and especially after the pandemics, migrant women are the largest proportion of migrant population suffering poverty and extreme poverty (Rubinstein et al, 2021 and 2022⁸).

The infringement of migrant women’s rights is straightforwardly translated into their workforce participation in precarious, informal, and lower income sectors, where they are seldom able to learn and use new technologies. In Argentina, according to data from the Permanent Household Survey 2021, a 28.8 per cent of migrant women are domestic workers, and this percentage increases to a 45.7 per cent among unregistered migrant women (Rubinstein et al, 2022). Furthermore, the rate of unregistered jobs among migrant women is higher than those of both migrant men and non-migrant women. If we analyse the situation in inter-sectional terms again, the double salary gap experienced by migrant women is remarkable, both vis-à-vis their male peers and non-migrant women. The above-mentioned fact is added to their undeniable burden in sustaining care chains at the global, regional and local levels, broadly speaking.

The last **Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean**, organized in November 2022 in Buenos Aires, was gathered under the theme: "Care society: a horizon for sustainable recovery with gender equality" and concluded with the adoption of the "Buenos Aires Commitment". This document mentions with concern the unfair distribution of time use, underlining how the current social organization of care disproportionately affects women and, among other groups of particularly affected women, it **makes reference to migrant and refugee women.** The Commitment also encourages a systemic

change in the approach to migration from a gender, intersectoral, intercultural and human rights perspective to highlight the contributions made to societies by migrant women, and the urgent need to systemically assess the structural conditions that expose them to vulnerability in the migration cycle.

Moreover, the **Los Angeles Declaration on Migration and Protection**⁹ adopted in June 2022 affirms the intention to multiply efforts to ensure employment free of exploitation, violence, and discrimination for migrants, consistent with a gender perspective and respect for human rights and emphasizing the importance of the recognition of qualifications and the portability of social benefits.

Against this background, the United Nations Network on Migration in Argentina would like to cast the spotlight on the **enormous challenges, biases and gaps that should be urgently targeted in order to achieve a fairer world for all women and girls, especially those at risk of vulnerability, as in the case of migrant women and girls in all their diversity.**

Therefore, on this 8 March we salute the strenuous efforts made to reach equality and we underline the added value of always working from a whole-of-society and whole-of-government perspective, while we celebrate that the text of the **IMRF Progress Declaration** stresses “the importance of **ensuring the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in the formulation and implementation of migration policies, while recognizing their independence, agency and leadership**” (A/RES/76/266. Pár. 56).

We advocate a migration governance centred on the respect for the dignity and human rights of persons who migrate, the incorporation of the gender perspective to public policies, norms, and programmes and the promotion of opportunities, and we trust that innovation and the continuous development of new technologies will contribute to living in a world where women and girls fully participate in society, exercise their rights, live a life free from any violence and have access to developing their full potential. Along these lines, **from the United Nations Network on Migration in Argentina, we commit ourselves to continue working in close collaboration with relevant actors to approach persistent challenges and move forward towards achieving gender equality and digital inclusion for all women and girls, regardless of their origin or migration status.**

References

¹ UN WOMEN and UNDESA, 2022. “Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals. The Gender Snapshot 2022”. Available in: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/gender-snapshot/2022/GenderSnapshot.pdf>

² On 10 and 11 December, 2018, the United Nations Members States adopted the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM). The GCM seeks to establish a series of principles, commitments, and understandings among States with regard to international migration in all its dimensions.

³ They are: ILO, UN Women, UNCHR, UNAIDS, WHO/PAHO, UNPD, UNICEF, UNESCO and IOM (which exercises the roles of Technical Secretariat and Coordinator). In addition, the UN Resident Coordinator in Argentina supports the Network, and she is part of the Executive Committee.

⁴ Hennebry, J., Holliday, J., & Moniruzzaman, M. (2017). At What Cost? Women Migrant Workers, Remittances and Development. UN Women. Available in:

<https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/Library/Publications/2017/women-migrant-workers-remittances-and-development.pdf>

⁵ Bridging the Digital Gender Divide: Include, Upskill, Innovate. (2018). OECD. Available in: <https://www.oecd.org/digital/bridging-the-digital-gender-divide.pdf>

⁶ Progress Declaration of the International Migration Review Forum. United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/76/266, 14 June 2022. Available in: https://migrationnetwork.un.org/system/files/resources_files/Final-%20IMRF%20Progress%20Declaration-%20English.pdf

⁷ World Economic Forum “Global Gender Gap Report 2022. Insight report. July 2022. Available in: https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2022.pdf

⁸ Rubinstein, F.; Lieutier, A.; Segal, N. y Marchoni, C. (2021). Impacto de la pandemia por COVID-19 en las condiciones de vida de las personas migrantes en la República Argentina. OIM Argentina. Available in: https://argentina.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbdl901/files/documents/2021_Impacto%20de%20la%20pandemia%20por%20COVID%2019%20en%20las%20condiciones%20de%20vida%20de%20las%20personas%20migrantes%20en%20la%20Rep%C3%ABlica%20Argentina.pdf and Rubinstein, F.; Lieutier, A.; Segal, N. y Marchoni, C. (2022). “Las personas migrantes en la pospandemia. Condiciones de vida y situación laboral de las personas migrantes en la República Argentina durante el año 2021. OIM Argentina. Available in: https://argentina.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbdl901/files/documents/Las%20personas%20migrantes%20en%20la%20pospandemia_2022.pdf

⁹ The Los Angeles Declaration on Migration and Protection was adopted by Heads of State and Government of the Argentine Republic, Barbados, Belize, the Federative Republic of Brazil, Canada, the Republic of Chile, the Republic of Colombia, the Republic of Costa Rica, the Republic of Ecuador, the Republic of El Salvador, the Republic of Guatemala, Co-operative Republic of Guyana, the Republic of Haiti, the Republic of Honduras, Jamaica, the United Mexican States, the Republic of Panama, the Republic of Paraguay, the Republic of Peru, the United States of America, and the Oriental Republic of Uruguay, gathered on the margins of the Ninth Summit of the Americas. Available in: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/06/10/los-angeles-declaration-on-migration-and-protection/>