



WIMN Statement on International Women's Day 2019

Overcoming Barriers, Seeking Solidarity to Claim Rights for All

On International Women's Day, the Women in Migration Network (WIMN) joins millions of women and girls around the world in the ongoing struggle for gender equality and women's human rights.

Women's mobility is a continuum within countries and across borders, based in some cases on choice, but increasingly driven by economic, political, gender-based, conflict-driven, or climate change factors. The lives of women and girls in migration and LGBTQI migrants continue to be marked by abuse and discrimination, gender-based violence, racism, precarious work conditions, social exclusion and migration policies that prioritize migration enforcement over human rights.

The rise of nationalism, xenophobia and right wing populism emerges from decades of austerity that has undermined social protections and quality public services for women and their families. This has intensified the care-burden of women everywhere and increased migration care chains to fill gaps. At the same time, populist figures pit women against each other, targeting migrants as the cause for job losses or reduced services. This obscures growing inequality within and between nations, shifting cost burdens onto working people and the impact of the financial crisis and austerity policies onto communities—with a disproportionate impact on women.

This situation opens the door for an agenda that is rolling back women's human rights, attacking human rights defenders, challenging environmental protections, and deepening cuts to social protections and labor rights. In this adverse context, undocumented migrant women and girls face heightened risks, as accessing even basic services and accessing justice can mean possible arrest, detention and deportation.

Towards the critical need to address the current political climate of rising xenophobia and nationalism, we affirm the call to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women, regardless of legal status or intersectional markers of "difference" and to ensure that the irregular entry, stay and work of migrants is not criminalized.

Yet, 2019 also marks the launch of the UN Global Compact for Migration, adopted by the UN General Assembly last December with the positive vote of 152 countries. It is the first-ever comprehensive UN agreement on international migration and global migration governance. The Compact is "migrant-centered" and has gender-responsiveness and human rights as guiding principles. The Compact can be a tool for policies at all levels that advance the human rights of women and migration.

Simultaneously, civil society launched the ***Marrakech Women's Rights Manifesto*** calling on governments to put women and girls at the center of migration policy, ensuring their full, equal and meaningful participation at local, national, regional and global levels and guaranteeing their human rights. The Manifesto urges "firewalls" between immigration enforcement and social services including healthcare, housing, and education, as well as migrant women's access to services and to justice regardless of migration status.

WIMN also welcomes the International Labour Conference process for a new [Convention for Ending Violence and Harassment in the World of Work](#). A strong new legal instrument will serve migrant women workers, particularly domestic workers and farmworkers, who frequently face violence in the workplace.

As women around the world mobilize for rights on International Women's Day, let us work across our different realities to enable all women to claim their rights, particularly migrant women.

We invite organizations and individuals to sign the Manifesto, through March 30, at <http://womeninmigration.org/2018/11/endorse-the-marrakech-womens-rights-manifesto/>

The Manifesto serves as an ongoing tool for advocacy with governments on the #RoadFromMarrakech

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The Women in Migration Network – WIMN -- is made up of national, regional and global organizations from women's, migrant, human rights, and development and faith communities representing all regions of the globe. The Network works to impact national and global migration and development policy as it affects women, and to hold States accountable for human rights commitments regarding women in migration.

www.womeninmigration.org