

CSW Youth-Led Conversation Report

Focus: Climate change and its impact on migration, human trafficking through a gender lens.

Discussion Points:

1. *Recalling* Article 47 (u) of the Agreed Conclusions of the Sixty-third session E/CN.6/2019/L.3 and Articles 30 and 61 (qq) of the Sixty-fifth session E/CN.6/2021/L.3, especially concerning women, girls and youth who are migrants, refugees, or internally displaced persons due to climate disasters being at an increased risk to gender-based violence and trafficking in persons, **introduce international legal instruments to facilitate safe internal and international migration, and promote effective international co-operation to support climate migrants; and commit to the full and effective implementation of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, as well as the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons, and the UN Convention on Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families;**

Comments:

It is excellent that the nexus between climate change, modern slavery, and migration is reflected in this recommendation. However, there is scope to further highlight that women and girls – who already face disproportionate risk to modern slavery – are even more vulnerable to such exploitation during climate-induced crises. The Walk Free Foundation’s 2020 [report](#), *Murky Waters*, illustrates the increased vulnerability women in Pacific Island Countries faced in the wake of natural disasters, where limited land rights intersected with climate change to increase the risk of forced marriage and domestic servitude (p. 36). This also relates to *Recommendation 3* of the published Youth Recommendations, mainstreaming a gender lens into climate change, and *Recommendation 14*, recognising limited land rights of women. Addressing unequal gender laws is crucial to reducing the vulnerability of women, girls and youth in the wake of the impacts of climate change.

The Walk Free Foundation’s 2020 *Stacked Odds* [report](#) additionally explores how climate change drives vulnerability to modern slavery among women and girls (p. 101).

In addition to the introduction of international legal instruments to facilitate safe internal and international migration and the utilisation of a gender lens in climate action, **we recommend gender and modern slavery considerations are mainstreamed in all humanitarian responses.**

Stacked Odds recommended that multi-pronged, counter-trafficking and modern slavery action must be built into all humanitarian action taken to respond to crisis situations (p. 62). Existing work on this issue can be further tailored for the needs of climate-induced displacement.

For example, Walk Free was involved in the development of the Global Protection Cluster’s 2020 [guidance](#), ‘An Introductory Guide to Anti-Trafficking Action in Internal Displacement Contexts’ which assists to embed anti-trafficking action in humanitarian response in all forms of internal crisis displacement, including climate-induced displacement.

2. *Recognizing* the importance of protecting the labor rights of women, girls and youth and planetary resources, **introduce mandatory human rights and environmental due diligence laws with concrete liability provisions, to ensure that women, girls and youth have a healthy work environment that safeguards their well-being, according to the care economy ideal**; and call for a legally binding international treaty to cover global trade and supply chains with an emphasis on protecting women, girls and youth from forced labor; and in this regard, encourage the ratification of the Protocol of 2014 to the ILO's Forced Labour Convention 1930;

Comments:

It is important that international legal frameworks strengthen environmental and labour protections, particularly for women, girls, and youth. Insofar as this Recommendation calls for a new global treaty on global trade and supply chains, **we suggest that it calls for the World Trade Organisation to formally include forced labour as a topic on the agenda and take a multilateral decision to address the intertwined issues of forced labour, climate change, and gender.**

Other experts note that the World Trade Organisation must formally address modern slavery issues [to progress the Sustainable Development Goals](#) and to remain relevant as an institution.

Insofar as this Recommendation relates to mandatory human rights and environmental due diligence laws, **we recommend it include explicit modern slavery provisions and include the right of action for victim/survivors.**

There may also be scope here to acknowledge that modern slavery, including the forced sexual exploitation of women and girls, often occurs alongside illegal logging, mining, and fishing activities that further contribute to environmental degradation.

In [Murky Waters](#), we recommend that governments implement and increase the frequency of monitoring of high-risk sites to identify modern slavery, sexual exploitation, and flouting of labour laws.

3. *Recalling* Article 69 Decision -/CP.26 Glasgow Climate Pact, **strengthen the implementation of the enhanced Lima work programme on gender and its gender action plan;**

Comments:

There is currently limited data on experiences of domestic violence and modern slavery in conflict and crisis settings. There is scope to include, either as part of the recommendation related to the Enhanced Lima Work Programme on Gender or separately, **the systematic collection of comprehensive and disaggregated data on the risk of domestic violence and modern slavery during crises to inform evidence-based policies.**

This data should be disaggregated by gender, age, and marriage. Ensuring accurate information is available on what works to reduce risk is particularly important where multiple crises intersect, such as conflict and climate change.

Concluding Recommendations:

1. *Recognizing* that women, girls and youth who are migrants, refugees, or internally displaced persons due to climate change are at an increased risk to gender-based violence and trafficking in persons, **introduce international legal instruments to facilitate safe internal and international migration, and promote effective international co-operation to support climate migrants; and commit to the full and effective implementation of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, as well as the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons, and the UN Convention on Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families;**
2. *Call upon* Member States to **mainstream gender and modern slavery considerations in all humanitarian responses;** including the implementation of a multi-pronged, counter-trafficking in persons action in all humanitarian responses across all forms of internal crisis displacement, including climate-induced displacement;
3. *Recognizing* that women, girls and youth, who already face disproportionate risk to trafficking in persons, are even more vulnerable during climate-induced crises, with particular note to the increased vulnerability women, girls and youth in Pacific Island Countries faced in the wake of natural disasters and where limited land rights intersected with climate change to increase risk of forced marriage and domestic servitude, **address unequal gender laws to reduce the vulnerability of women, girls and youth in the wake of the impacts of climate change;**
4. *Recognizing* the importance of protecting the labor rights of women, girls and youth and planetary resources, **introduce mandatory human rights and environmental due diligence laws with concrete liability provisions, with explicit contemporary forms of slavery and trafficking in persons provisions and right of action for victim/survivors, to ensure that women, girls and youth have a healthy work environment that safeguards their well-being, according to the care economy ideal;**
5. *Call upon* Member States to **form a legally binding international treaty to cover global trade and supply chains with an emphasis on protecting women, girls and youth from forced labor;** and call for **the World Trade Organisation to formally include forced labour as a topic on the agenda** and take a multilateral decision to address the intertwined issues of forced labour, climate change, and gender; and in this regard encourage the **ratification of the Protocol of 2014 to the ILO's Forced Labour Convention 1930;**
6. *Recognizing* that contemporary forms of slavery and trafficking in persons, including the forced sexual exploitation of women and girls, often occurs alongside illegal logging, mining, and fishing activities that further contribute to environmental degradation, **implement and increase the frequency of monitoring of high-risk sites to identify contemporary forms of slavery, sexual exploitation, and flouting of labor laws;**
7. *Recognizing* that there is limited data on experiences of domestic violence and modern slavery in conflict and crisis settings, undertake **the systematic collection of comprehensive and disaggregated data on the risk of domestic violence and modern slavery during climate-induced crises to inform evidence-based policies;** ensuring data is disaggregated by gender, age, and marriage, to provide accurate information on best practices to reduce risk, especially where multiple crises intersect, such as conflict and climate change.