

Monthly Newsletter

June 2025



GFCDD

GLOBAL FORUM OF
COMMUNITIES DISCRIMINATED
ON WORK AND DESCENT



CDWD MATTERS

Power-packed action at the UN Human Rights Council, the Toronto Declaration against caste discrimination, the launch of Roma and Sinti NHRI guidelines, read on about our engagements in the recent month

Historic Strides at the 59th Session of the Human Rights Council

Landmark Recognition for Descent Communities at UN Human Rights Council

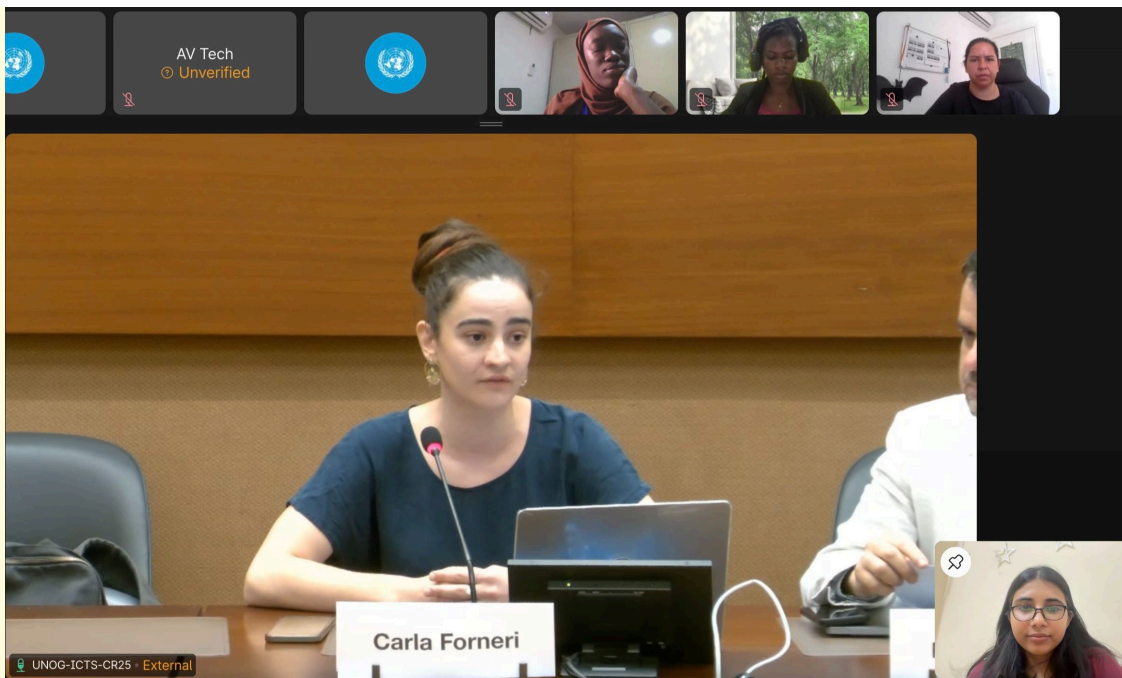


 **16/06/2025** | In a historic development for global human rights, the 59th Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council opened with a powerful statement of solidarity and recognition for Communities Discriminated on Work and Descent (CDWD).

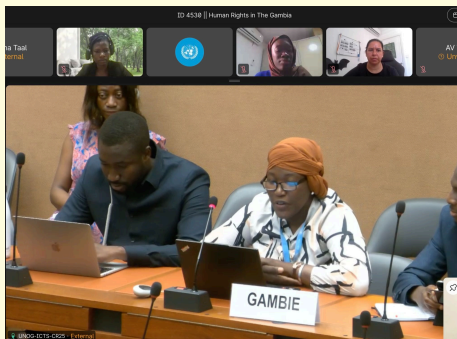
During his global human rights update at the opening session, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Türk spotlighted a major breakthrough: the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights' adoption of Resolution 619 on Discrimination Based on Work and Descent. The resolution passed during the Commission's 81st Ordinary Session held from 17 October to 6 November 2024 in Banjul, The Gambia, was hailed by Türk as a "global milestone for equality."

[Read more](#)

First-Ever side event on Descent-Based Discrimination at the UN Human Rights Council



 **02/07/2025** | For the first time, The Inclusivity Project and GFoD hosted a side event at the UN Human Rights Council (HRC59), bringing visibility to the Descent Communities and Good Practices examples, especially focusing on the Gambia, at Palais des Nations and online. Titled “Protecting Communities Discriminated on Work and Descent through the UPR: Gambia’s Good Practices,” the event emphasized that descent-based discrimination (DWD) is often invisible but deeply internalized, and that communities across continents, Dalits, Roma, Quilombolas, Burakumin, Haratin, face strikingly similar forms of inherited exclusion. They reflected on the recent successes in Africa, particularly the emphasis on addressing DWD through the Gambia’s UPR, and the Resolution adopted by the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights (ACHPR) on protecting & promoting the rights of CDWD.



★ The highlight: The Gambia’s Permanent Mission representative reflected on the growing international attention to the issue, highlighted the steps the country is taking to address it and stressed on building partnerships with civil society.

“We welcome the growing international attention to this issue and stand ready to engage in meaningful conversation—bilaterally, regionally, and multilaterally. We believe that addressing DWD is essential for achieving the goals of dignity, equality, and peace for all.”

Interventions at the 59th session of the HRC

 **25/06/2025** | At the 59th Session of the UN Human Rights Council (15th Meeting), our Senior Rights Expert Yacouba Ibrahim Oumarou delivered an intervention on the systemic exploitation of Wahaya women in Niger, a practice of sexual and domestic slavery that continues to impact thousands of young girls and women. Drawing on survivor testimony and the recent resolution of the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights, Yacouba urged greater global recognition of caste- and descent-based discrimination within international human rights mechanisms.



[Watch here](#)



[Watch here](#)

 **01/07/2025** | At the 23rd meeting of the 59th Session of the UN Human Rights Council, Alima Taal delivered a powerful video intervention commending the progress made through The Gambia's Universal Periodic Review (UPR)—especially the state's acknowledgment and member states' recommendations to address caste and descent-based discrimination, including against so-called "slave descendants." She urged The Gambia to take concrete steps to implement UPR recommendations and ensure effective remedies and justice for all.

Toronto Declaration 2025: A Global Call to End Caste Discrimination

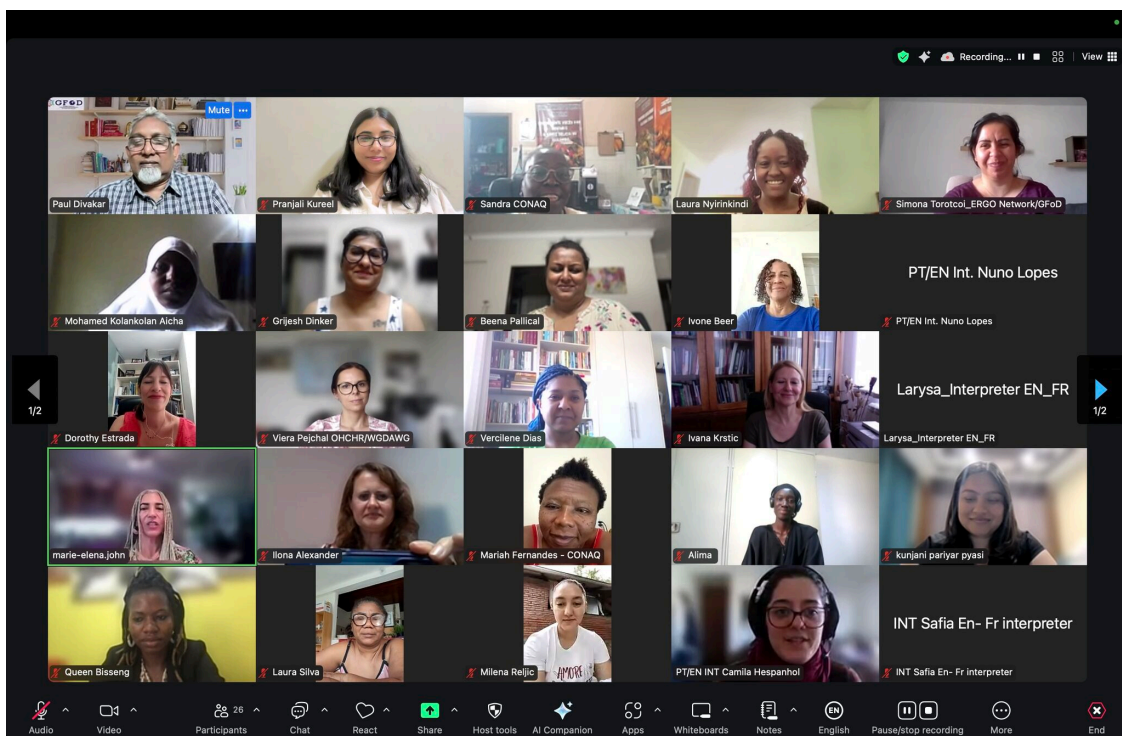


In a landmark event marking success for the global CDWD movement, The Global Conference for a Caste-Free World 2025, held in Toronto from May 25–27, culminated with the adoption of the Toronto Declaration, a sweeping international call to dismantle caste-based and analogous systems of discrimination worldwide. The declaration demands urgent and coordinated action across governments, civil society, and international institutions to address centuries of injustice affecting over 250 million people globally.

The conference brought together survivors of caste violence, policymakers, academics, civil society leaders, and international allies. Participants called for systemic change rooted in human dignity, equality, justice, and solidarity.

[Read more](#)

Dialogue with UN Experts Offers Pathways Ahead for CDWD Women

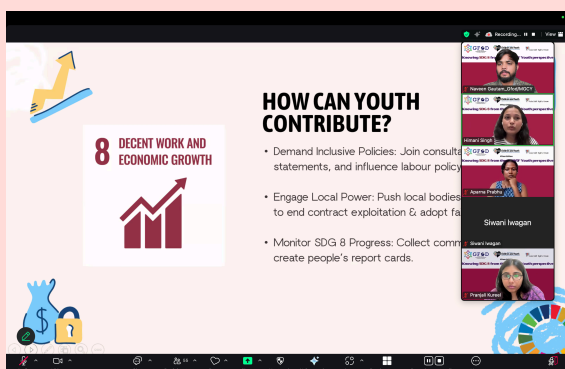


A strategic meeting between TIP-GFoD, the UN Working Group on Discrimination Against Women and Girls (WGDAWG) and UN Women, focused on centering the voices of women discriminated on work and descent and building collaborations ahead. Speakers from GFoD, as well as regional CDWD organizations such as NCDHR, the Feminist Collective of Romani Gender Experts, CONAQ and others, shared testimonies. These ranged from Quilombola women resisting climate violence to the forced servitude of Wahaya women in Niger, and the systemic targeting of Dalit and Roma women.

WGDAWG members offered concrete pathways for collaboration, including thematic reports, strategic litigation, and country visits. They emphasized the need to recognize CDWD women's lived realities to achieve true gender equality. UN Women's Marie-Elena John also highlighted the upcoming joint Policy Brief by GFoD and UN Women, set to launch at the UN High-Level Political Forum in July.

Regional Consultations to Strengthen CDWD Youth Engagements

This month, GFoD, in collaboration with UN Major Group for Children and Youth (MGCY) and regional partners, organised regional consultations with the Youth from Descent communities. The aim of these consultations was to create a safe space for collaboration and sharing of lived experiences, identifying systemic challenges, and shaping collective strategies for justice and inclusion. A key aim of these ongoing engagements is to connect and empower CDWD youth, encouraging their active participation in the Global CDWD Youth Forum.

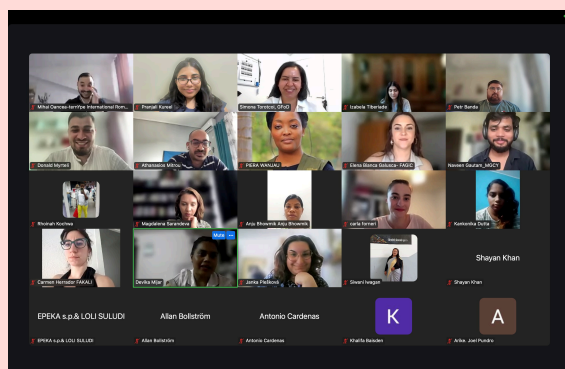
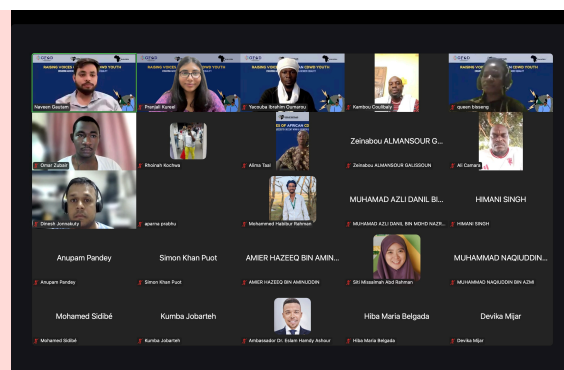


ASIA

03/06/2025 | The Asia Regional Youth Consultation, co-organized by GFoD, MGCY and Asia Dalit Rights Forum (ADRF), brought together young advocates from Descent communities to discuss the persistent barriers faced by Dalit and CDWD youth in accessing decent work and economic justice. The consultation explored the structural challenges facing youth such as lack of formal employment, wage inequality, and the impact of intergenerational discrimination. Panelists shared grassroots perspectives on the urgent need for community-led interventions, inclusive policies, and youth-centered economic reforms.

AFRICA

20/06/2025 | The Regional Youth Consultation for Africa centered around the theme of youth empowerment and inclusion, the consultation highlighted key SDGs and emphasized the importance of youth leadership in shaping just, inclusive societies. From spoken word performances to powerful testimonies, participants addressed issues like healthcare access, education, decent work, and political exclusion, and called for stronger legal protections, and youth-led advocacy to ensure the voices of marginalized communities are heard.



EUROPE

28/06/2025 | The event, organized by GFoD, ERGO Network, ternYpe, TIP, MGCY, featured presentations and testimonies from Greece, Spain/Catalonia, and Turkey, each offering a grounded perspective on persistent challenges and innovative responses in their respective contexts. Roma youth leaders, advocates, and institutional partners deliberated on the critical role of Roma youth in achieving the SDGs, and charting out a strategy going forward.

GFoD at the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FFD4) Seville

Virtual Side Event on Inclusive Development at FfD4: Reimagining Financing for the Most Marginalized

 **30/06/2025** | During the FFD4, we co-organized a virtual side event titled "Advancing Inclusive Development Through Accountable and People-Centered Social Protection." The discussion centered on how this global moment, marked by intersecting crises, can be reimagined to ensure development financing serves those most left behind. Key questions that we aimed to explore through this event were: How can we ensure decisions about global resource flows meet the needs of marginalized communities? What role should civil society play in reshaping these processes?

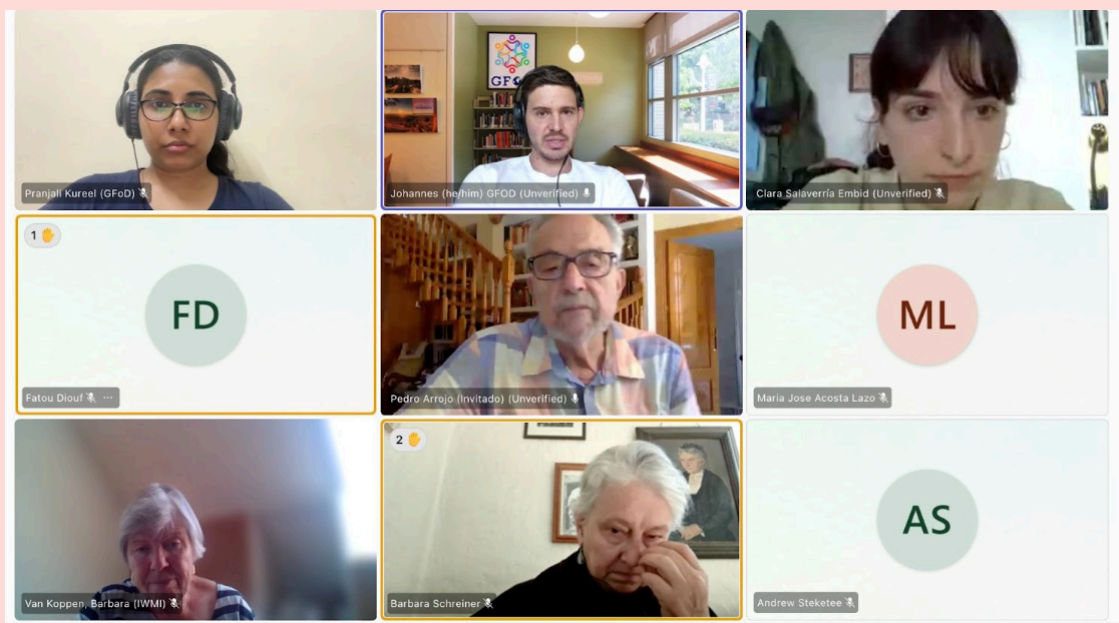
The event featured contributions from the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Development, the International Labour Organization (ILO), Eurodad, the International Budget Partnership, and Romalítico. Speakers addressed caste, race, and descent-based exclusion in economic policy, emphasizing the need for universal, shock-responsive, and community-led social protection systems. Some of the highlights of the event included call to integrate disaggregated data, lived experiences, and global tax justice into future FfD frameworks. Importantly, a realisation that the most marginalized contribute the most part to the financial fabric and hence, these conversations must be anchored in equity, accountability, and inclusion.

[Watch here](#)



At FFD4 in Seville, GfOD delegate connected with leaders working with descent communities worldwide. Dinesh met with the delegation on Barwaqa organization, working in Kenya. Another meeting was with Valerie Lolomari, CEO and Founder of Women of Grace, UK - who is working to end FGM. As we move ahead after the conference, we assert that real change begins when those most affected have a seat at the table.

Promoting CDWD Inclusion Ahead of UN 2026 Water Conference



 **17/06/2025** | GFD members joined an online session hosted by the UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights to water and sanitation, Mr. Pedro Arrojo-Agudo, aimed at building a rights-holder participative platform for the 2026 Water Conference. Pranjali Kureel, representing GFD, spoke about the caste-based exclusion faced by Dalit and other Descent communities across the globe in accessing water and sanitation, and called for recognition of CDWD communities as disproportionately impacted. She urged the Special Rapporteur to ensure affirmative inclusion of CDWD voices in all preparatory processes. Key questions raised included: How can we guarantee recognition of CDWD in UN documentation and conference outputs? Johannes Butscher emphasized the importance of civil society participation, cross-movement collaboration, and linkages with mechanisms like the coming World Social Summit.

Pushing for Accountability: Roma Voices at the Launch of New NHRI Guidelines

 **17/06/2025** | At the launch of the publication *"Integrating Roma and Sinti Issues in the Work of National Human Rights Institutions and National Equality Bodies - Guidelines,"* critical questions were raised about how meaningful Roma inclusion will be ensured in practice. GFD's Simona Torotcoi participated virtually, spotlighting the essential role of Roma civil society, particularly youth and women's organizations, in holding NHRIs accountable. Questions were posed about structured consultation, co-monitoring opportunities, and whether NHRI staff will receive the training needed to engage Roma communities in a participatory, rights-based way. With many institutions facing political and resource constraints, GFD also pressed for clarity on the expected minimum standards of engagement under the new framework.



Roma Voices Demand Structural Change at OSCE Human Dimension Meeting



 **02/06/2025 - 03/06/2025** | At the recent OSCE Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting, Simona Torotcoi delivered a powerful call for justice and accountability for Roma and Sinti communities. She highlighted that structural antigypsyism remains deeply entrenched, and Roma are still excluded from meaningful decision-making. "This is not just discrimination—it's a security issue," she warned. Simona urged governments to move beyond tokenistic consultation and commit to dismantling status-based exclusion. Her message—Roma must be co-creators of policy, not passive participants. It's time to prioritize structural change.

Stories from the Grassroots

No Consent, No Childhood: A Deep Dive into Pakistan's Forced Conversions

his article sheds light on the alarming rise of forced religious conversions of minority girls in Pakistan, impacting women and children from Descent communities in particular. The report, *No Consent, No*



Childhood, details how systemic failures and legal loopholes leave vulnerable children—mostly from Christian and Hindu communities—without protection. It's a harrowing account of how the absence of consent erodes not just individual rights, but the very fabric of minority protections.

[Read more](#)

What Néma's Death Reveals About Health and Human Dignity in Mauritania

In a powerful piece, the Global Forum for Communication and Development examines the tragic death of a young woman in Néma, Mauritania, and what it signals about the deep inequalities in the country's healthcare system. The article paints a stark picture of systemic neglect, gendered injustice, and the daily indignities faced by Mauritians who are denied basic medical care. It's a haunting reminder that health is not just a service—but a human right.



[Read more](#)



Kunjani Pariyar on Caste, Justice, and Change in Nepal

Our Senior Rights Expert Kunjani Pariyar Pyasi spoke to The Real Story Time Nepal (in Nepali), sharing her journey as a Dalit lawyer, the legal and social challenges she's faced, and her fight for justice in landmark caste-related cases. A must-watch for advocates and allies.

[Watch here](#)

Media Spotlight



Why (*Discrimination on*) Work and Descent (*DWD*) Still Define Human Worth for Millions Worldwide - Newsreel Asia writes

From Dalits in South Asia to the Haratin in West Africa and Roma in Europe, discrimination based on descent and traditional occupations still shapes lives today. This powerful piece by Surabhi Singh of Newsreel Asia highlights the urgent need for global legal recognition, public discourse, and solidarity—led by affected communities and global platforms like GFoD and The Inclusivity Project.

[Read here](#)

Counterview writes on the Historic UNHRC Recognition for Descent-Based Discrimination

In a landmark moment during the 59th session of the UN Human Rights Council on July 3, 2025, High Commissioner Volker Türk acknowledged the groundbreaking African Commission Resolution 619, which for the first time identifies caste-like systems of exclusion based on work and descent as a distinct human rights violation.



[Read more](#)

UPCOMING: Join us at the High Level Political Forum

17th July, 2025

🕒 2:30 PM EST

📍 UNHQ CRB, NY + Zoom

A landmark event that will launch a new policy brief by UN Women, supported by GFoD. A first-of-its-kind Policy brief by UN Women focuses on the rights, challenges, and leadership of women and girls from Communities Discriminated on Work and Descent. This event will feature a stellar panel with State representatives, UN agencies, CSOs, powerful grassroots voices and more!

🤝 Co-organized by: UN Women and Global Forum of Communities Discriminated on Work & Descent (GFoD)

The poster features logos for the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, UN Women, and GFoD. It announces the launch of a policy brief on July 17th, 2025, at 14:00 ET via UNHQ + Zoom. A QR code is provided for registration. Below the text is a collage of four photographs showing women in various settings: one in a red headscarf, one in a yellow headscarf, one in a black headscarf, and one in a yellow headscarf.

[Register here](#)

The poster has a green background and features a photo of three young girls. It promotes a youth side event on July 16th, 2025, from 16:00 to 17:30 PM EST. The theme is 'Advancing Inclusive, Sustainable, and Evidence-Based Solutions for CDWD* and Indigenous Youth in a Changing World'. Logos for GFoD, Children and Youth, Indigenous Youth, and MYCP are at the bottom. A QR code and a 'Register' button are also present.

[Register here](#)

16th July, 2025

🕒 4:00 PM EST

📍 UNHQ, NY + Zoom

Despite global development agendas pledging to “leave no one behind,” young people - particularly those Discriminated on Work and Descent, Indigenous youth, and young migrants, are often excluded from data collection, policy design, and financial support. This side event will centre their voices. It will amplify community-driven strategies and demand stronger cross-sectoral, cross-border partnerships that ensure these youth are agents of change—not casualties of exclusion.

🤝 Co-organized by: GFoD, UN Major Group for Children & Youth (MGCY), Global Youth of Indigenous Caucus, Migration Youth and Children Platform



Copyright (C) 2025 Global Forum of Communities Discriminated on Work and Descent. All rights reserved.

Our mailing address is:

Want to change how you receive these emails?
You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe](#)

