

CALL TO ACTION

ADVANCING GENDER EQUALITY BY RECOGNIZING WOMEN DISCRIMINATED ON WORK AND DESCENT AT CSW70



For decades, the **Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)** has been the principal global body advancing women’s rights and gender equality. Yet women discriminated on work and descent – including Dalit, Roma, Burakumin, Haratin, Quilombola, Palenque, and other descent-based communities – remain largely excluded from official CSW spaces and have not been recognized in outcome documents, reflecting persistent structural barriers that deny them visibility and equal protection. At the intersection of caste- or descent-based discrimination and patriarchy, these women and girls face compounded marginalization.

Despite global commitments to gender equality and the UN’s pledge to “leave no one behind,” **CDWD women and girls remain largely invisible in mainstream gender frameworks**. Although recent efforts, such as the [2025 UN Women Policy Paper](#), reflect a more intersectional approach, urgent and concrete action at CSW70 is needed, as CDWD women continue to face compounded discrimination that denies them safety, dignity, economic security, participation, and access to justice.

RECOGNITION AND INTEGRATION OF CDWD WOMEN & GIRLS IN THE AGREED CONCLUSIONS

We call for the formal recognition of “women discriminated against on work and descent” (CDWD) and the hierarchical systems of oppression surrounding us in the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW70) Agreed Conclusions.

We call the Commission on the Status of Women to recognize and address the unique issues of women and girls from CDWD (Dalit, Roma, Burakumin, Haratin, Quilombola, Palenque, and other descent-based groups) and **adopt an intersectional approach** in all programs and policies across the United Nations (UN) and government policies.

SPECIAL MECHANISM AND LEGAL REFORMS & CDWD WOMEN SENSITIVE JUSTICE

We call for the adequate legal reforms that explicitly prohibit discrimination based on caste, antigypsyism, work and descent ensuring disability-inclusive justice mechanisms, and legal aid promoting CDWD Women and girls participation.

We call for the establishment of a dedicated UN special mechanism such as a Special Rapporteur or Working Group mandate, to address the existing gaps and ensure the accountability for human rights abuses against CDWD globally, and continuing discrimination and exclusion. Additionally, the existing United Nations mechanisms and processes such as the Special Rapporteurs need to adequately address challenges related to CDWD women and girls.

We call for the adoption by all states of a UN Declaration on the Rights of CDWD to enshrine and ensure global recognition, protection and legitimacy of all rights of CDWD. We urge the UN mechanisms to adhere to key human rights standards and explicitly advance this Declaration for the rights of CDWD, emphasizing the intersecting discrimination faced by women and girls and ensure it consistently reflects in national and international laws, policies and practices, as well as in UN programs, initiatives, and activities through thematic research, awareness-raising and capacity-building.

We urge the Commission on the Status of Women to create inclusive and institutionalized spaces within the CSW where women affected by descent-, and work-based discrimination can actively participate, advocate for their specific needs, and have a meaningful seat at the table. This includes the introduction of dedicated thematic sessions that address the intersectional dimensions of gender inequality and the structural discrimination faced by CDWD women and girls, alongside strengthened capacity-building for Member States, civil society, and UN personnel to meaningfully engage with and integrate an intersectional, CDWD-informed approach across all CSW policies, processes, and programming.

Specific Recommendations on the Priority Theme of CSW 70

- **We call on Member states to eliminate discriminatory laws and enact and implement comprehensive anti-discrimination laws that specifically protect CDWD women and girls.** This includes legislative measures that address the intersection of caste, antigypsyism, work, and descent-based discrimination, ensuring legal frameworks provide explicit protection against violence, exclusion, and inequality.
- **We call on Governments and international organizations to invest in comprehensive and disaggregated data collection and research that specifically highlights the lived experiences of CDWD women and girls.** Such data is vital to understand the scale of discrimination and exclusion and to developing evidence-based policies and programs.
- **We call on Member states to prioritize the inclusion of CDWD women and girls in education systems,** ensure access to quality education free from discrimination, and create vocational and economic empowerment programs to address the specific barriers they face in entering the workforce. These initiatives should include mentorship, training, and access to finance, ensuring CDWD individuals are included in economic opportunities that foster their independence and growth.
- **We call on Governments to ensure universal and equitable digital access for women and girls from CDWD by expanding infrastructure, providing** digital literacy in local languages, protecting against caste and gender based online violence, supporting CDWD led innovation, and ensuring AI and emerging technologies are governed through inclusive, rights based frameworks that guarantee, access, privacy and data protection.

- **We call on member states to implement policies and programs that ensure the full and equal participation of CDWD women in both public and private sector employment.** This includes anti-discrimination protections, skills development programs, and access to decent work opportunities. Additionally, governments must recognize, redistribute, and reduce unpaid care work by investing in social protection, childcare infrastructure, and labor policies.
- **We call on governments to ensure full, equal, and effective access of women and girls from communities discriminated on work and descent (CDWD) to holistic health and social services,** including mental health services and sexual and reproductive health care, with specific attention to eliminating barriers such as stigma, discrimination, and lack of cultural competence among health professionals.
- **We call on UN agencies and national governments to establish special and dedicated mechanisms to ensure** the safety, relief, and rehabilitation of CDWD women impacted by climate change—including prioritizing their access to climate adaptation resources, Disaster Risk Reduction, and land rights protections.
- **We call on States and UN agencies to create safe, inclusive spaces and dedicated platforms that guarantee CDWD women and girls meaningful and active participation in all decision-making processes,** particularly in law reform, legislative amendments, public policy, gender equality, and human rights.
- **We urge the UN and its member states to develop and implement international cooperative frameworks to support the empowerment of CDWD women and girls.** These frameworks should ensure the sharing of best practices, resources, and technical assistance to combat gender, caste, descent, and work-based discrimination globally.

CSW70 has the opportunity and responsibility to correct persistent exclusion. Recognition and inclusion of CDWD women is necessary at CSW70 to affirm their contributions, struggles, leadership, and human rights. Without acknowledging the realities of CDWD Women, gender equality cannot be achieved globally or locally.



Suite 10A, 777 United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017



@CastoutSlavery



@globalforumcdwd



@globalforumcdwd



gfod@globalforumcdwd.org



For more news and publications on CDWD
Scan the QR Code to visit our website
<https://globalforumcdwd.org/>



Asia Dalit Rights Forum