

**Virtual Regional Dialogue for Europe and Central Asia ahead of the  
Second Session Of the International Dialogue on Migration 2023  
28<sup>th</sup> of September 2023, 9:30-12:30 CET, online**

**Isabella Szukits (WIDE), Speaking Notes**

Dear chairperson,

To start, please let me thank you for the opportunity to speak in this regional dialogue. In my speech today I would like to highlight the importance of gender aspects when discussing climate mobilities.

The climate crisis hits societies that are shaped by gendered power relations. This means that women\* and girls often face different challenges in case of climate disasters. Gender aspects of climate mobilities are complex and have various intersections like class, race, age, ethnicity or disabilities that have been produced and reproduced by societies.

In order to understand these gendered aspects and intersections, it is necessary to emphasize on the patriarchal power structures that lead to gendered vulnerabilities. These power structures result in limited access to public services, fewer educational opportunities, less property and formal employment for women\* and girls in all their diversity. Furthermore, significant portion of unpaid care work falls upon women\* within families. Their responsibilities encompass tasks such as procuring water and food, duties that become increasingly burdensome in climate-vulnerable areas. This existing gendered division of labor further exacerbates the challenges faced by women\* and influence their ability or inability to move.

Not only do women\* and girls face particular challenges when staying at their location during climate disasters; if they move, they also deal with specific issues on migration routes with higher risks to their safety and well-being. Violence and exploitation, insufficient hygiene products or a lack of reproductive healthcare services are only some examples.

Women\* are agents of change. They come up with solutions when facing direct threats and difficult situations. They are often the ones who ensure the family's survival. Moreover, when having the opportunity to participate in decision making processes, results are often more climate friendly and inclusive.

Research shows that studies as well as public funds on gender, climate and mobilities are rare. Thus, we need more funding and attention for this specific nexus. Concrete conclusions about gender and climate induced migration needs to be context specific and should be based on gender analyses and apply an intersectional

lens. The focus should be both an empowerment and a decolonial approach where women\* participate and are not talked about but talked with. Indigenous perspectives including perceptions of humans as part of nature and not separate from it can help the global community to learn and come up with solutions.

In order to protect people when facing climate disasters, a legal framework for protection is needed. At the moment there are no sufficient global instruments that do justice to affected people. In the following, I would like to outline three demands:

Firstly, there is a need for resources. The global community needs to provide money for mitigation, adaptation and losses and damages, particularly for the Global South. This climate finance needs to be gender sensitive, involve women\* on the ground and address their needs.

Secondly, a knowledge transfer can help to strengthen peoples' capacities, countries' resilience and improve the conditions in places relevant for migratory movements. When implementing projects, we do not only need technical experts, but also social and gender experts as crucial part of the planning and implementation phases.

Lastly, we need laws and regulations that center people and the planet. This includes a wellbeing economy where companies are held accountable and people can defend their rights. It also means human rights based global migration politics that allow for an intersectional approach to protect people.

All these measures should prevent the loss of livelihoods and enable all people to live a self-determined and good life.

To conclude, I would like to present an example of civil society collaboration from Austria. We are part of a Working Group on Migration and Development, which has in the past years, with the support of IOM and others, put a focus on the climate and migration nexus. The aim is to provide a solid basis for advocacy and policy making. Last year, we initiated an informal forum for NGOs, academia, activists, international organizations, ministries and affected communities to share information and knowledge in a trusted atmosphere.

Thank you.