



International Organization for Migration (IOM)  
The UN Migration Agency

## **IOM Statement at the Beijing+25 UNECE Regional Review Meeting**

Agenda Item 10: “Acting for climate: Empowering women to build climate resilience”  
Geneva, 29–30 October 2019

### **Empower Women from Migrant Households to Address Climate Change in Tajikistan**

Excellencies, dear Panelists, Chair, and Moderator, Distinguished guests, and fellow colleagues,

Since 2007, IOM member states requested IOM to work on the migration, environment and climate change Nexus. IOM has since established a dedicated Migration, Environment and Climate Change Division to address this nexus -making IOM the first international organization to have established an institutional unit fully devoted to this topic.

IOM’s Vision recognizes the necessity to step up national, regional, and international efforts to address human mobility challenges associated with environmental factors and climate change. IOM’s Objectives in this field are:

- To **prevent forced migration** that results from environmental factors
- To **provide assistance and protection** to affected populations when forced to migrate -and to **seek durable solutions** to their situation; and,
- To **facilitate migration** in the context of climate change adaptation and **enhance the resilience** of affected communities.

**More specifically to our session today, IOM also recognises the unequal distribution of vulnerability to climate change is exacerbated by pre-existing inequalities within the society especially for those disadvantaged by gender, age, class, affiliation to certain social groups and disability.** Allow me to present a concrete initiative in **our region** which *Empowers women to build climate resilience* -a project supported by the IOM Development Fund.

As the world met at the United Nations Climate Action Summit in New York on 23 September 2019, IOM Tajikistan launched a new project on **climate change, gender, and migration**.

The mountainous Central Asian nation is at risk from environmental hazards, including climate change and variability. Over the years, migration has become one of the strategies for many families, as tens of thousands of people, the majority of them male, to seek work in other places within Tajikistan, and in neighbouring countries as well as farther afield. **This leaves women managing new challenges, including the adverse impacts of climate change on their households and communities -be it droughts, floods, temperature fluctuations, etc.**

At the same time, little is known about the ramification of remittances on disaster risk reduction or climate change adaptation despite their substantial contribution to Tajik's economy, including poverty reduction. Remittances exceed 30% of Tajikistan's GDP -making it amongst the highest in this region, and the world.

**Bringing about behavioural change among migrant households by building capacities of women left behind, can reduce vulnerability of these households to environmental hazards. This includes -inter alia- providing tailored information on climate action, improving financial inclusion and literacy among women, and developing gender-sensitive training and extension services, all of which would better prepare their households to manage risks from drought, floods and other environmental hazards.**

In addition, this new IOM initiative aims to facilitate inter-ministerial interactions to ensure climate change is acknowledged in migration policies and programmes, -and there is a policy coherence on this issue across sectors -**ensuring women needs are duly addressed.**

IOM will support capacity building, operational activities, policy work and advocacy -specifically targeting **women in migrant households**- together with the Government of Tajikistan, international partners and national agencies. An impact assessment will provide us with the evidence on how these interventions will support the adaptation of **women in migrant households.**

Finally, this IOM project will contribute to the realisation of the Government of Tajikistan's National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy, which identifies migration as one of the cross-cutting issues.

In conclusion, IOM has implemented more than 1,000 projects worldwide to respond to -and address- environmental migration and disaster displacement. Creative, practical, and impactful solutions exist for communities affected by environmental hazards, and **migration does not have to be a "last resort" solution**, -but can also be a positive driver for change. IOM is determined in ensuring that **women are always part of this solution, and continue to be positive drivers for change!**

IOM appreciates this opportunity to share its experience on *Empowering women to build climate resilience*. I seize the opportunity to thank UNECE, UN Women, FAO and UNDP for organizing this session, as well as the distinguished panelists and speakers for their inspiring interventions. Thank you!