DWD Women’s Statement on International Women’s Day
March 08, 2020

Gender Equality = Leave No DWD Woman Behind
“We claim our right to development justice!”

On the eve of International Women’s Day, 2020, we women and girls facing Discrimination based on Work and Descent (DWD) and hailing from Africa, Asia, Europe, North and South America, call out for recognition, inclusion and adoption of DWD inclusive policies and implementation of all legal mechanisms for ensuring the equality, justice and dignity to all across the globe. We stand unitedly to reaffirm our faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women in the spirit of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) 1979.

Women across all societies face discrimination and violence unleashed on them by patriarchal structures. This results in inequalities in social, economic and political development as well as in their enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedom. Beijing Declaration (1995) laying the benchmark for women’s equality, development and human rights committed collectively to ensure the full enjoyment by women and the girl child of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and take effective action against violations of these rights and freedoms.

Since Beijing 1995, 25 years have passed, but still the women face multiple forms of discrimination in their access to water and sanitation, ownership of land, entitlements, education, decent work, political participation and decision making. The assertion of their rights and entitlements has resulted in retaliation through physical and sexual violence. The appalling situation is that the complexities of intersectional vulnerabilities directly proportionate to the forms of discrimination and violence faced by them. Budgets and global financing for development do not centre the needs of the DWD women while allocating resources for development plans. Women from indigenous communities, women from DWD communities, women from racially discriminated communities, women from other socially discriminated communities affected by intersectionality of disability, age, location including rural-urban, sexual orientation and the complexity in circumstances of disasters, conflict, riots, communal violence, war, displacement, migration etc – all these intersectional discrimination and violence have not been sufficiently and effectively addressed by the state and civil society.

This can hardly be understood considering the universally accepted global policy of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which strongly advocates for gender equality. It empowers all women and girls through Goal 5, and hammers the issue of reduction of inequalities through Goal 10. While gender equality cuts across all the SDG goals, Goal 10 provides a suitable ground to ensure women’s and girls’ rights to a sustainable development process and focussed social progress.
Against this background, We, women and girls from DWD communities call for equality in social status; education; employment; health care; access to services; treatment in humanitarian situation; combating climate change; access to human rights and justice; and most importantly a life of dignity and peace.

We demand urgent social change in this patriarchal and fundamentalist world and we commit ourselves to undertake relentless struggles in claiming our rights to development justice by breaking the barriers of socio-economic, cultural and authoritarian subjugation.

On this International Women’s Day, we call out to all our sisters and brothers of the world to express solidarity in demolishing the barriers of inequality through tweeting with hashtags #EachforEqual and #EqualityNow

#DWDWomenforEquality #InternationalWomensDay #FacesofInequality #dalitwomenrise

@asiadalitrights @ERGO_Network @TrustAfrica