

LEBANON

SUBMISSION TO THE 4th CYCLE OF THE UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW

51st SESSION OF THE UPR WORKING GROUP, JANUARY 2026

MIGRANT DOMESTIC WORKERS' RIGHTS

1. Introduction to Migrant Workers' Action

1. Migrant Workers' Action (MWA) is a non-governmental organisation (NGO) that was founded in 2019 to advance social justice for migrant workers and drive systemic change in labour migration systems in sending countries and Lebanon. Our goal is to build up the migrant workers' movement so that they can enjoy their fundamental freedoms, reclaim their rights, and abolish the sponsorship system (Kafala). We do that by providing protection and strengthening reintegration pathways, resourcing community organisations, and mobilising transnational support through knowledge production and advocacy. We envision a just world in which migrant workers move, work, and live in dignity.

2. MWA acts as a resource to strengthen the migrant-led movement, a channel to connect migrants with key stakeholders and support networks. To fulfil its role, MWA uses a multi-layered approach through direct casework, capacity strengthening, community organising, and research and advocacy at the local, regional, and international levels in partnership with its allies.

3. MWA's submission for the 4th UPR cycle on Lebanon focuses on the violations of a majority of international human rights endured by migrant domestic workers (MDWs) trapped in Lebanon's exploitative Kafala system. The report highlights how one of the most vulnerable and marginalised groups in Lebanon experiences widespread human rights violations at every level, and demonstrates how the Kafala system is so deeply abusive that it results in violations of nearly all rights and freedoms guaranteed under the international human rights framework.

2. Methodology and Context

4. MWA's submission draws on extensive knowledge and insight gained through years of working together with and on behalf of the migrant worker communities in Lebanon. It is primarily informed by MWA's case database, interviews with community leaders and local stakeholders, as well as findings of MWA's previous research publications.

5. The submission covers the time frame from before the 3rd cycle, beginning in 2020, through 2025, and addresses the various compounded crises in Lebanon and their impact on MDWs' rights. The report focuses on women migrant domestic workers¹ in Lebanon, including live-in and live-out domestic workers, with or without legal residency status. The majority of MDWs in Lebanon are originally from Sub-Saharan African countries such as Ethiopia, Sierra Leone, Kenya, Nigeria, Cameroon, and Sudan, as well as South and South-East Asian countries such as Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, and Nepal.

6. According to the IOM's Migrant Presence Monitoring Round 4 in 2024, 70% of the entire migrant population are women, with percentages varying based on nationalities, such as 99% of Filipino and 98% of Ethiopian migrant workers being women². The MPM identified a total of 176,504 migrants present in Lebanon³. However, MWA estimates the total number of migrants to be higher based on limited outreach to communities in South Lebanon due to the escalation of violence between Hezbollah and Israel in 2024, as well as limited access to accurate information on live-in MDWs.

7. The Kafala system is a loose collection of legal provisions and practices which tie the worker's legal residency to a single employer (or sponsor), creating a power imbalance that severely limits the worker's ability to change jobs, access justice, or leave abusive situations without risking arrest or deportation. Employment contracts are often unregulated and lack oversight, with little to no state mechanisms in place to monitor working hours, rest days, or wages. This legal gap has led to widespread exploitation and abuse, including non-payment of wages, restrictions on movement, and physical and psychological violence.

3. Legal and Institutional Framework

8. Lebanon, as a state party to key international human rights treaties, is obligated to protect and uphold the rights of all individuals within its territory, including MDWs⁴. However, despite receiving several recommendations⁵ to sign and ratify both the ILO's Domestic Workers Convention (C189/2011) and the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, Lebanon has yet to ratify either document.⁶

9. Under Lebanon's current legal framework, MDWs are excluded from the protections of the Labour Law of 1946 (Article 7), leaving their employment conditions regulated almost entirely by the Kafala (sponsorship) system with no effective legal safeguards.

10. The exclusion of MDWs from the Labour Law also extends to other fundamental protections under Lebanese law, including constitutional guarantees and legal provisions such as those addressing sexual harassment, including in the workplace or domestic violence. Despite repeated calls and advocacy efforts to abolish the Kafala system and replace it with a fair and just immigration and labour system, the Lebanese government has shown no signs of considering the abolition of Kafala⁷.

3.1 Recommendations from the 3rd UPR Cycle (2021)

11. In the previous 3rd UPR cycle in 2021, Lebanon received 29 recommendations relating to migrant (domestic) workers' rights, with Lebanon's response consisting of support/acceptance of 16, partial support/acceptance of 7 and noting of 6 recommendations⁸.

12. MWA notes that none of the recommendations, including the ones Lebanon accepted, have been implemented. The Lebanese state has failed to initiate any legal reforms regarding the abuse and exploitation of MDWs. Instead, as elaborated below the past five years and throughout the competing crises in Lebanon, discriminatory and exploitative practices were normalised in complete contradiction to Lebanon's international obligations as well as its commitment to the UPR.

4. Key Human Rights Violations

4.1 Freedom from Slavery, Forced Labour and Human Trafficking

13. Lebanon is obliged to ensure the freedom from slavery, exploitation and forced labour based on the scope of protection of ICCPR (Art. 8), CEDAW (Art. 6), CERD (Article 5(e)(i)) as well as the ILO Convention on Forced Labour, No. 29, which are all applicable to MDWs residing within Lebanon.

14. However, MDWs have faced repeated violations of their freedoms and rights, particularly with the onset of the economic crisis, which led to countless cases of wage theft and labour exploitation. Among the main violations documented by MWA are overwork and forced labour of up to 21 hours with no rest. Throughout the duration of the implementation period, MWA documented 164 cases of wage theft experienced by MDWs, with many reporting the non-payment of their salaries for several months or delayed and reduced salaries based on the devaluation of the Lebanese Pound or false promises of higher salaries given upon their recruitment in their country of origin⁹. The Kafala system has enabled the labour exploitation of MDWs due to the lack of oversight and monitoring by the authorities.

15. In the 3rd UPR cycle, Lebanon received four recommendations concerning human trafficking¹⁰. Whilst its domestic legislation criminalises human trafficking with its Law 164/2011, little to no efforts were made to enforce the law's provisions, including prevention and prosecution of the crime of trafficking. The US Trafficking In Persons Report of 2024 has placed Lebanon on the Tier 2 watchlist for the second consecutive year due to the state's failure to fully comply with the minimum standards, but making significant efforts to bring itself into compliance with those standards¹¹. In 2020 and 2021, the IOM identified 367 cases of human trafficking while MWA documented 24 cases¹².

16. A common indicator of trafficking and modern slavery is the confiscation of legal documents, such as passports, limiting the MDW's movement, including access to various services. MWA's data shows that at least 370 documented cases of MDWs have had their passport confiscated during the review period. The prevalence of the retention of passports by General Security officers and then being handed over to the employers clearly confirms it as a systematic practice encouraged by the state¹³.

17. The majority of Lebanese employers retain the MDWs' passports, with over 94% of a representative sample of employers (1,200) confirming the practice¹⁴. This practice occurs despite two court decisions deeming the practice of passport confiscation a violation of basic human rights and in contradiction to Lebanon's obligation under international law¹⁵. The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, as well as the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, both expressed their concerns on Lebanon's Kafala system, including the illegal practice of passport confiscations¹⁶. The Lebanese state has repeatedly failed to address this, which, in consequence, limits the MDWs' freedom of movement and increases their vulnerability to further trafficking. Instead, MDWs who abscond from abusive households without their legal documents immediately lose their residency status, often leading to arbitrary arrests and detention.

4.2 Exclusion from Labour Law Protection

18. The previous 3rd UPR cycle included eleven recommendations addressing legal protection of MDWs in Lebanon¹⁷. Both the exclusion from the Labour law as well as the shortcomings of the Standard Unified Contract cause a lack of access to legal protection for MDWs¹⁸. As a state party to the ICESCR and as a signatory to the ILO Convention, No. 29, Lebanon is failing in its duty to uphold labour rights. The Lebanese Labour Code in Art. 7 explicitly excludes domestic workers from the scope of protection of its provisions and furthermore denies them the right to join a union.

19. The recommendations accepted by the Lebanese state were the enforcement and implementation of the provisions included in the Standard Unified Contract¹⁹, which would guarantee some protections for MDWs' rights. However, during the implementation phases of the previous two cycles, Lebanon failed to adopt a new Standard Unified Contract in 2020, which would have guaranteed more extensive employment rights²⁰. The introduction of the amended version by the Ministry of Labour was suspended by the State Council following an appeal by the Syndicate of Owners of Recruitment Agencies in Lebanon (SORAL) claiming economic disadvantages to the recruitment agencies' interests²¹. Currently, the original Standard Unified Contract from 2009 remains in force, which is considered to lack adequate protections for MDWs²².

4.3 Impeded Access to Justice

20. Due to Lebanon's policy of criminalising absconding, where MDWs escaping abusive or exploitative households lose their residency status and reside illegally in the country, their access to justice is severely affected. This is further exacerbated by MDWs' exclusion from the protection of the Labour law²³. Key elements contributing to the impeded access to justice include insufficient access to legal representation or assistance, the absence of translation or interpretation services, as well as a general discriminatory attitude of the justice system favouring the employers²⁴. The adversity of the Lebanese justice system is further exacerbated by the common practice of employers filing false accusations of theft, as a retaliatory action to escape financial responsibilities towards their employees, as well as to impede any legal prosecution against them²⁵.

21. Lebanon received several recommendations concerning MDWs' access to justice and legal remedies, which it has failed to address.

4.4 Arbitrary Detention and Deportation

22. Due to the Kafala system's framework of tying the workers' legal residency status to their sponsors/employers, MDWs escaping abusive or exploitative households immediately lose their residency status, become undocumented and remain illegally in Lebanon. Similarly, MDWs wishing to change their employer lose their residency unless they receive written permission from their employer as well as a written pledge by the new employer, both requiring notarization by the necessary authorities²⁶.

23. Their voided residency, as well as their undocumented status, due to the confiscation of their passports, puts MDWs at a high risk of arbitrary detention with limited to no access to legal assistance²⁷. Furthermore, MDWs who escaped abusive employers often get charged with false accusations of theft²⁸. Most MDWs are placed under administrative detention, which is not regulated by any laws but rather based on arbitrary decisions by General Security. Administrative detention of MDWs does not require any legal charges, a trial or judicial oversight, oftentimes leading to extended periods of detention and consequential deportation in violation of Lebanon's obligation to guarantee access to a fair trial and due process.

4.5 Right to Equality and Freedom from Discrimination

24. Additionally, Lebanon accepted several recommendations relating to combating discriminatory laws and practices against MDWs. Some of the recommendations on discrimination addressed the issue of accessing healthcare and the right to access education regardless of nationality or immigration status²⁹. However, throughout the duration of the implementation phase, the Lebanese government failed to take the necessary steps to ensure an end to discriminatory practices in both the healthcare and education sectors. Examples of discriminatory practices against MDWs in the healthcare sector were documented during the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent vaccination campaign. MDWs reported being denied entry to Lebanese public hospitals for PCR tests or forced to pay for the tests offered by private healthcare providers. Internal sources from Beirut's Rafic Hariri University Hospital, Lebanon's largest public hospital, confirmed the internal policy of rejecting undocumented patients³⁰. Many MDWs are undocumented following their escape from abusive employers, who often confiscate the workers' passports and other legal documents. These barriers became further evident during the national vaccination rollout, with many undocumented MDWs being unable to access the vaccines, either due to rejection or the reluctance to register, fearing repercussions concerning their legal status³¹.

25. In the previous cycle, Lebanon received several recommendations addressing the issue of discrimination against MDWs³². The Lebanese government failed to implement the necessary legal reforms to combat the issue of discrimination against MDWs. Rather, the government itself adopted discriminatory policies during the Israeli war on Lebanon in 2024 by excluding non-Lebanese residents from the emergency response addressing the displacement crisis. MWA documented several evictions of MDWs from official shelters, forcing the affected communities to sleep rough on the street or stay in inadequate and overcrowded shelters³³.

4.6 Gender-Based Violence and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR)

26. SGBV against MDWs has become a systemic issue under the Kafala system. A report in 2022 documented that 86% of the interviewed MDWs were sexually harassed while employed or residing in Lebanon³⁴. MWA documented a total of 96 confirmed cases of SGBV against MDWs, with cases including sexual harassment, assault and exploitation³⁵.

27. Law 205 in Lebanon's domestic legislation criminalises sexual harassment, including at the workplace. However, MDWs are excluded from the scope of protection by only referring to formal employment structures and omitting other labour arrangements, such as domestic work in private households and informal employment for freelance and day labourers³⁶.

28. Lebanon has introduced a law on domestic violence with Law No.293/2014 and its amendment Law No. 204/2020, which criminalises physical, emotional, sexual and financial violence against women. However, the scope of protection applies only to family members, which is narrowly defined and excludes MDWs³⁷. MWA has documented 93 cases of MDWs experiencing physical abuse. Despite having received a recommendation to "*Take measures to effectively combat domestic violence against women, in particular migrant domestic workers*",³⁸ the Lebanese state has failed to take any necessary steps to address the issue in its legal framework or policies.

29. Under the Kafala system, MDWs are explicitly denied their reproductive rights, due to a no-pregnancy policy³⁹. Lebanon's no-pregnancy policy violates several international conventions by denying the MDWs their right to privacy and their right to family⁴⁰. The no-pregnancy policy irregularizes a pregnant MDW's residency status, making her subject to immediate deportation⁴¹. Furthermore, the Lebanese government's policies provide no protection or mechanisms for the documentation of children born to MDWs, leaving them particularly vulnerable and rendering them stateless. Undocumented migrant children face countless barriers, such as challenges in accessing education and services⁴².

30. Additionally, MWA has documented countless cases of MDWs experiencing violations of their SRHR relating to menstrual rights. MWA, in a collaborative report with Jeyetn, documented violations such as inadequate access to menstrual products and WaSH facilities, as well as access to medical care for menstrual complications⁴³.

5. Conclusion

Despite obligations under international human rights law and its commitment within the Universal Periodic Review framework, Lebanon has failed to take meaningful action to protect the rights of migrant domestic workers. Over the course of the review period, the Lebanese state not only neglected to implement previously accepted UPR recommendations, but actively maintained and, in some cases, exacerbated policies and practices that enable exploitation, discrimination, and abuse under the Kafala system. The systemic exclusion of MDWs from legal protections, coupled with the state's failure to ensure access to justice, healthcare, and essential services, has left thousands of women migrant workers in conditions that amount to modern-day servitude. The persistence of legal and institutional gaps, particularly during periods of crisis, underscores the urgent need for structural reform. MWA urges the Human Rights Council and Member States to prioritise Lebanon's compliance with its international obligations by calling for the abolition of the Kafala system, the inclusion of MDWs under labour and protective laws, and the establishment of robust, rights-based mechanisms to ensure accountability, dignity, and justice for all migrant domestic workers in Lebanon.

6. Recommendations to the Government of Lebanon

- Amend labour legislation to fully include domestic workers and bring all related regulations in line with the minimum standards set out in ILO Convention 189.
- Amend Law 205 on sexual harassment to ensure full protection for MDWS, and ensure domestic workers are explicitly covered under Law 293 on domestic violence and gender-based violence
- Ratify the Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention and take immediate steps to address forced labour in law and practice.
- Abolish the kafala (sponsorship) system and the criminalisation of “absconding”; in the interim, guarantee domestic workers the right to terminate contracts and change employers without prior approval or lengthy legal procedures.
- Guarantee all workers, including domestic workers, the right to a non-discriminatory, adequate minimum living wage.
- Strengthen enforcement of penalties against wage theft, ensuring victims receive unpaid wages and fair compensation for harm suffered.
- Ensure employers are held accountable through administrative, civil, and criminal sanctions, and guarantee that enforcement of judgments does not impose additional costs or burdens on migrant workers.
- End the arbitrary detention of migrant domestic workers, immediately release those unlawfully detained, and ensure that all detention practices comply with international standards of due process and fair trial rights.
- Investigate, prosecute, and prevent all forms of trafficking of migrant domestic workers, including through abusive practices such as passport confiscation, wage theft, and the misuse of absconding charges.
- Abolish the no-pregnancy policy and ensure full respect for the reproductive rights of migrant domestic workers, including the right to privacy and to family life as provided by Lebanon's obligations under international human rights law.
- Include legal mechanisms and processes to ensure that children born to migrant workers have the right to be registered at birth and to access all essential services, including access to healthcare and education.

- 1 For the purpose of this report, MWA's use of the words Migrant Domestic Workers (MDWs) or Migrant Workers is solely referring to migrant women, who have entered Lebanon through the legal framework of the Kafala (sponsorship) system.
- 2 <https://dtm.iom.int/reports/lebanon-baseline-assessment-round-4>
- 3 *ibid*
- 4 See Section 1.1 in Annex
- 5 Recommendations 150.6, 150.7, and 150.10
- 6 https://normlex.ilo.org/dyn/nrmlx_en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:11210:0::NO::P11210_COUNTRY_ID:103147 and <https://hrlibrary.umn.edu/research/ratification-lebanon.html>
- 7 ARM, Perceptions Of The Kafala System In Lebanon, p.11 (<https://armlebanon.org/chyfonee/2024/04/Perceptions-of-the-Kafala-System-in-Lebanon-How-Do-Lebanese-Citizens-Perceive-Domestic-Labor-and-the-Kafala-System-in-Light-of-the-Economic-Crisis-05.04.2024.pdf>)
- 8 See Section 1.2 in Annex
- 9 MWA Sierra Leone Report, pp. 15-20 (https://mwaction.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/MWA_SierraLeone_Report.pdf); MWA Kenya Report, pp. 22-24 (<https://mwaction.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/MWA-KenyaReport-231127.pdf>) and MWA's casework.
- 10 Recommendations 150.168, 150.169, 150.170 and 150.171
- 11 US Department of State, Trafficking in Persons Report 2024: Lebanon (<https://www.state.gov/reports/2024-trafficking-in-persons-report/lebanon/>)
- 12 AAND, UPR Midterm Report 2024, p. 41(https://annd.org/uploads/publications/UPR_Midterm_Report.pdf)
- 13 MWA Kenya Report, p. 31 and MWA Sierra Leone Report, pp. 15-16
- 14 ILO, Intertwined- A Study of Employers of Migrant Domestic Workers in Lebanon, pp. 36-37
- 15 Legal Agenda, Lebanese Judge: Passport Retention of Domestic Workers Violates International Law (<https://english.legal-agenda.com/lebanese-judge-passport-retention-of-domestic-workers-violates-international-law/>)
- 16 CERD/C/LBN/CO/23-24 (CERD 2021), p. 6 and CEDAW/C/LBN/CO/4-5 (CEDAW 2015), para. 37
- 17 Recommendation 150.261, 150.262, 150.263, 150.264, 150.270, 150.273, 150.283, 150.285, 150.177, 150.271 and 150.170
- 18 Amnesty International, Migrant Domestic Workers And Trafficking In Persons: Prevention, Rights Protection And Access To Justice Submission To The Un Special Rapporteur On Trafficking In Persons, Especially Women And Children, p. 6 (<https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/trafficking/cfis/dom-workers/subm-migrant-domestic-workers-cso-2-amnesty-international.pdf>)
- 19 Recommendations 150.263, 150.270 and 150.176 as documented in A/HRC/47/5/Add1 for the 3rd UPR Cycle
- 20 Legal Agenda, Lebanon's New Standard Domestic Worker Contract: A Coin with Two Sides (<https://english.legal-agenda.com/lebanons-new-standard-domestic-worker-contract-a-coin-with-two-sides/>)
- 21 L'Orient Today, The crisis, an opportunity to break the corrupt kafala system (<https://today.lorientlejour.com/article/1243877/the-crisis-an-opportunity-to-break-the-corrupt-kafala-system.html>)
- 22 AAND, UPR Midterm Report 2024, p. 41
- 23 Banchi Yimer et al., Access to justice for Ethiopian migrant domestic workers: unveiling legal, structural, and gendered violence in Lebanon, p. 6 (<https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/sociology/articles/10.3389/fsoc.2024.1486769/full>)
- 24 *ibid.*, p. 13
- 25 Legal Agenda and ILO, The Labyrinth of justice: Migrant domestic workers before Lebanon's courts, p. 12 (https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@arabstates/@ro-beirut/documents/publication/wcms_777078.pdf)
- 26 Amrita Pande, "The Paper that You Have in Your Hand is My Freedom": Migrant Domestic Work and the Sponsorship (Kafala) System in Lebanon, p. 419 (<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/imre.12025>)
- 27 Lebanese Ministry of Labour, Information Guide for Migrant Domestic Workers in Lebanon, p. 17 (<https://www.labor.gov.lb/Temp/Files/00243f80-7141-4535-ad2f-bfd2f248413b.pdf>)
- 28 Amnesty International, "Their House Is My Prison" Exploitation Of Migrant Domestic Workers In Lebanon, P. 29 (<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde18/0022/2019/en/>)
- 29 Recommendations 150.206, 150.207, 150.87
- 30 Al Jazeera, Undocumented in Lebanon: No papers, no coronavirus test (<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/3/28/undocumented-in-lebanon-no-papers-no-coronavirus-test>)
- 31 *ibid.*
- 32 Recommendations 150.261, 150.264, 150.269, 150.271, 150.275 and 150.87
- 33 MWA, Statement on the Displacement Crisis in Lebanon, p. 1 (<https://mwaction.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Statement-on-the-displacement-crisis-in-Lebanon-1.pdf>)
- 34 JL Diab et al.: Acknowledged but Forgotten: The Gender Dimensions of Sexual Violence Against Migrant Domestic Workers in Post-Crisis Lebanon, p. 5 (<https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/sociology/articles/10.3389/fsoc.2022.1091957/full>)
- 35 MWA Kenya Report and MWA Sierra Leone Report and MWA's database
- 36 The Public Source, "We Are Everywhere, But Invisible": How One System Facilitates Sexualized Violence and Protects its Perpetrators (<https://thepublicsource.org/invisible-sexualized-violence/>)
- 37 AAND, UPR Midterm Report 2024, p. 40-42
- 38 Recommendation 150.236
- 39 Ministry of Labour, Information Guide for Migrant Domestic Workers in Lebanon, p. 22 (<https://www.labor.gov.lb/Temp/Files/00243f80-7141-4535-ad2f-bfd2f248413b.pdf>)
- 40 ICCPR, ICESCR and CEDAW
- 41 Block, Immobilisation of migrant domestic worker women and their children born in Lebanon, p. 1926 (<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/epdf/10.1080/1369183X.2023.2245153?needAccess=true>)
- 42 AAND, UPR Midterm Report 2024, p. 42
- 43 MWA and Jeyetna, No Time to Bleed - Menstrual Experiences Under the Kafala System. (https://mwaction.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/MWA-NTTB-Report_Web.pdf)

1.1 Lebanon's Obligations under International Law

The rights of migrant domestic workers are protected within the scope of the following international treaties and conventions:

- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD)
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
- United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (Palermo Protocol)
- ILO Convention on Forced Labour, No. 29

These obligations require Lebanon to ensure non-discrimination, equal protection under the law, freedom from forced labour, and access to fair working conditions, healthcare, and legal remedies. Despite these commitments, the Kafala system continues to place migrant workers, particularly domestic workers, in conditions that often amount to exploitation, racial and gender-based discrimination, and denial of basic rights, with Lebanon failing to uphold its commitment to these international legal duties.

Furthermore, Lebanon has not signed or ratified pivotal international documents relating to the rights and protection of migrant domestic workers, including:

- International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families
- ILO Domestic Workers Convention, No. 189

Human Rights Theme	Legal Framework	Provision
Right to Freedom from Slavery, Servitude, and Forced Labour	UDHR	Article 4
	ICCPR	Article 8
	CEDAW	Article 6
	CERD	Article 5(e)(i)
	Palermo Protocol	Entire Protocol
	ILO C29	Entire Convention
Prevention of Human Trafficking	Palermo Protocol	Entire Protocol
	CEDAW	Article 6
	CRC	Article 35
Labour Rights and Right to Work	ICESCR	Articles 6 and 7
	ILO C29	Entire Convention
	CEDAW	Article 11
Right to Equality and Non-Discrimination	CERD	Articles 2 and 5
	CEDAW	Articles 1, 2 and 11
	ICCPR	Article 26
	ICESCR	Article 2 (2)
Right to Family Life and Right to Privacy	ICCPR	Article 23
	ICESCR	Article 10
	CEDAW	Article 16
Right to Access Justice and	ICCPR	Articles 2, 14 and 26

1.2. MWA's Assessment on Matrix of Recommendation: 3rd UPR Cycle - 37th Session

Recommendation	Recommending State	Position	Themes	MWA's Observations
Human Trafficking and Contemporary Forms of Slavery				
<p>150.168</p> <p>Step up efforts to combat trafficking in human beings, including considering the possibility of the adoption of a strategy or an action plan in this sphere, as well as additional measures to identify victims of trafficking, especially among children, and to ensure their comprehensive protection and rehabilitation</p> <p>Source of Position: A/HRC/47/5/Add.1</p>	Belarus	Supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Human trafficking & contemporary forms of slavery - Support to victims & witnesses - Children: protection against exploitation - National Human Rights Action Plans (or specific areas) / implementation plans - Children: definition; general principles; protection SDGs: - 8 - DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH - 16 - PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS Affected persons: - Children - Women & girls 	Not implemented (cf. para. 15-17, MWA's written submission)
<p>150.169</p> <p>Continue laudable efforts in combating human trafficking, as emphasized by the Committee on the Rights of the Child</p> <p>Source of Position: A/HRC/47/5/Add.1</p>	Morocco	Supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Human trafficking & contemporary forms of slavery - Children: protection against exploitation - Children: definition; general principles; protection SDGs: - 8 - DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH - 16 - PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS Affected persons: - Children - Women & girls 	Not implemented (cf. para. 15-17, MWA's written submission)
<p>150.170</p> <p>Adopt further measures to combat human trafficking, and ensure the protection of the rights of victims, as well as the rights of migrant workers;</p> <p>Source of Position: A/HRC/47/5/Add.1</p>	Nigeria	Supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Human trafficking & contemporary forms of slavery - Migrants - Support to victims & witnesses SDGs: - 8 - DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH - 16 - PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS Affected persons: - Children - Migrants - Women & girls 	Not implemented (cf. para. 15-17, MWA's written submission)
<p>150.171</p> <p>Make legislative amendments to protect and ensure support for the victims of human trafficking, particularly boys, girls and women, in line with Sustainable Development Goal 8 and others</p> <p>Source of Position: A/HRC/47/5/Add.1</p>	Paraguay	Supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Human trafficking & contemporary forms of slavery - Support to victims & witnesses - Children: protection against exploitation - Children: definition; general principles; protection - Constitutional & legislative framework SDGs: - 8 - DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH - 16 - PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS Affected persons: - Children - Vulnerable persons/groups - Women & girls 	Not implemented (cf. para. 15-17, MWA's written submission)

Labour Rights and Right to Work

150.261 Afford migrant workers full legal protections in line with Lebanon's	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Supported	- Labour rights and right to work - Equality & non-discrimination - Migrants	Not implemented (cf. para. 18, MWA's written submission)
international commitments on forced labour and discrimination; Source of Position: A/HRC/47/5/Add.1			- Human trafficking & contemporary forms of slavery SDGs: - 8 - DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH - 16 - PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS Affected persons: - Migrants	
150.262 Extend the protection of labour rights to migrant domestic workers in order to guarantee respect for their rights; Source of Position: A/HRC/47/5/Add.1	Belgium	Supported	- Labour rights and right to work - Migrants SDGs: - 8 - DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH - 16 - PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS Affected persons: - Migrants	Not implemented (cf. para. 18, MWA's written submission)
150.263 Implement and enforce the new Standard Unified Contract to protect migrant domestic worker rights, as a key step towards dismantling the work sponsorship system; Source of Position: A/HRC/47/5/Add.1	Canada	Supported	- Labour rights and right to work - Migrants SDGs: - 8 - DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH Affected persons: - Migrants	Not implemented (cf. para. 18, MWA's written submission)
150.264 Take specific measures to strengthen protection for domestic workers, including migrant women; Source of Position: A/HRC/47/5/Add.1	Angola	Supported	- Labour rights and right to work - Migrants - Advancement of women - Discrimination against women SDGs: - 8 - DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH Affected persons: - Migrants	Not implemented (cf. para. 18-21, MWA's written submission)
			- Women & girls	
150.270 Reform the sponsorship system for migrant workers, guaranteeing that the migratory situation of said workers does not depend on their employers, and promoting the use of a standard contract that includes protections for migrant domestic workers; Source of Position: A/HRC/47/5/Add.1	Mexico	Supported	- Labour rights and right to work - Migrants - Legal & institutional reform SDGs: - 8 - DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH - 16 - PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS Affected persons: - Migrants	Not implemented (cf. para. 18, MWA's written submission)
150.273 Intensify efforts to expand labour law protection to domestic workers and provide access to effective legal remedies for migrant domestic workers Source of Position: A/HRC/47/5/Add.1	Sri Lanka	Supported	- Labour rights and right to work - Migrants - Access to justice & remedy SDGs: - 8 - DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH - 10 - REDUCED INEQUALITIES - 16 - PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS Affected persons: - Migrants	Not implemented (cf. para. 18-21, MWA's written submission)
150.279 Take rigorous measures to regulate domestic work, prohibit the exploitation of migrant domestic workers, investigate the information contained in the death reports of migrant domestic workers, according to which these deaths are due to unnatural causes, and prosecute and punish the authors, if applicable Source of Position: A/HRC/47/5/Add.1	Togo	Supported	- Labour rights and right to work - Migrants - Rule of law & impunity SDGs: - 8 - DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH - 16 - PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS Affected persons: - Migrants	

150.281 Abolish the kafalah system with regard to migrant workers Source of Position: A/HRC/47/5/Add.1	Finland	Supported/Noted	- Labour rights and right to work - Equality & non-discrimination - Migrants SDGs: - 8 - DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH - 10 - REDUCED INEQUALITIES Affected persons: - Migrants	Not implemented (cf. para. 10, MWA's written submission)
150.282 Abolish the so-called kafalah system and introduce a modern legal framework for migrant workers in accordance with International Labour Organization standards; Source of Position: A/HRC/47/5/Add.1	Germany	Supported/Noted	- Labour rights and right to work - Migrants - Constitutional & legislative framework SDGs: - 8 - DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH - 10 - REDUCED INEQUALITIES - 16 - PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS Affected persons: - Migrants	Not implemented (cf. para. 10, MWA's written submission)
150.283 Protect the rights of foreign workers by abolishing the kafalah system Source of Position: A/HRC/47/5/Add.1	Italy	Supported/Noted	- Labour rights and right to work - Migrants SDGs: - 8 - DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH - 10 - REDUCED INEQUALITIES Affected persons: - Migrants	Not implemented (cf. para. 10, MWA's written submission)
150.284 Abolish the kafalah system and include domestic workers in their labour laws Source of Position: A/HRC/47/5/Add.	Sierra Leone	Supported/Noted	- Labour rights and right to work - Migrants - Constitutional & legislative framework SDGs: - 8 - DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH - 10 - REDUCED INEQUALITIES	Not implemented (cf. para. 10, MWA's written submission)
			- 16 - PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS Affected persons: - Domestic workers	
150.285 Expand labour law protection to domestic workers, provide access to effective legal remedies for domestic migrant workers and abolish the kafalah system; Source of Position: A/HRC/47/5/Add.1	Slovenia	Supported/Noted	- Labour rights and right to work - Equality & non-discrimination - Migrants - Access to justice & remedy - Constitutional & legislative framework SDGs: - 8 - DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH - 10 - REDUCED INEQUALITIES - 16 - PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS Affected persons: - Domestic workers - Migrants - Women & girls	Not implemented (cf. para. 18-21, MWA's written submission)
150.177 Amend the labour code to ensure the same protection for domestic workers as afforded to other workers, and in line with the International Labour Organization Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189) Source of Position: A/HRC/47/5/Add.1	Sweden	Noted	- Labour rights and right to work - Migrants SDGs: - 8 - DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH - 16 - PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS Affected persons: - Migrants	Not implemented (cf. para. 18-21, MWA's written submission)

Equality and Non-Discrimination				
150.269 Combat discrimination against migrant workers and refugees Source of Position: A/HRC/47/5/Add.1	Luxembourg	Supported	- Equality & non-discrimination - Migrants SDGs: - 8 - DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH - 10 - REDUCED INEQUALITIES Affected persons: - Refugees & asylum seekers - Migrants	Not implemented (cf. para. 24-25, MWA's written submission)
150.271 Take necessary measures to ensure that effective protection against discrimination in all aspects of their employment is provided to all migrant domestic workers Source of Position: A/HRC/47/5/Add.1	Nepal	Supported	- Equality & non-discrimination - Migrants - Labour rights and right to work SDGs: - 8 - DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH - 10 - REDUCED INEQUALITIES Affected persons: - Migrants	Not implemented (cf. para. 24-25, MWA's written submission)
Violence Against Women				
150.236 Take measures to effectively combat domestic violence against women, in particular migrant domestic workers; Source of Position: A/HRC/47/5/Add.1	Burkina Faso	Supported	- Violence against women - Migrants - Advancement of women - Sexual & gender-based violence SDGs: - 5 - GENDER EQUALITY - 8 - DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH Affected persons: - Migrants - Women & girls	Not implemented (cf. para. 26-30, MWA's written submission)
Right to Health				
150.207 Expedite the process to achieve universal health coverage and ensure that all citizens, including migrants, benefit from this scheme; Source of Position: A/HRC/47/5/Add.1	Thailand	Supported	- Right to health - Migrants SDGs: - 3 - GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING Affected persons: - Migrants	Not implemented (cf. para. 24, MWA's written submission)
150.206 Continue efforts to guarantee the rights of migrants and refugees and provide necessary health care to the most vulnerable groups among them, in particular women, children and persons with disabilities Source of Position: A/HRC/47/5/Add.1	Sudan	Noted	- Right to health - Migrants - Advancement of women - Persons with disabilities: definition, general principles - Children: definition; general principles; protection - Refugees & asylum seekers SDGs: - 3 - GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING Affected persons: - Refugees & asylum seekers - Children - Migrants - Women & girls - Persons with disabilities	Not implemented (cf. para. 24-25, MWA's written submission)
Sexual and Reproductive Health				
150.87 Guarantee universal access to sexual and reproductive health information and services, particularly for persons with disabilities, lesbian, bisexual, gay, transgender and intersex persons, migrants and refugees; Source of Position: A/HRC/47/5/Add.1	Mexico	Supported	- Sexual & reproductive health and rights - Equality & non-discrimination - Migrants - Persons with disabilities: definition, general principles - Right to health - Refugees & asylum seekers SDGs: - 3 - GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING - 5 - GENDER EQUALITY - 10 - REDUCED INEQUALITIES Affected persons: - Refugees & asylum seekers - Migrants - Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender and intersex persons (LGBTI) - Women & girls - Persons with disabilities	Not implemented (cf. para. 29-30, MWA's written submission)

Right to Education				
150.278 Continue efforts to ensure the rights of displaced persons and the right to quality education for children of migrant workers, refugee children and children with disabilities, and consider utilizing alternative measures to detention for children Source of Position: A/HRC/47/5/Add.1	Thailand	Noted	- Right to education - Children: juvenile justice - Persons with disabilities: definition, general principles - Children: definition; general principles; protection - Conditions of detention - Refugees & asylum seekers SDGs: - 4 - QUALITY EDUCATION - 8 - DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH Affected persons: - Refugees & asylum seekers - Children - Migrants - Persons deprived of their liberty & detainees - Persons with disabilities	Not implemented (cf. para. 29, MWA's written submission)
Right to an Adequate Standard of Living				
150.275 Continue efforts to further improve the well-being of female migrant workers, including through strengthening social protection measures for them; Source of Position: A/HRC/47/5/Add.1	Bangladesh	Supported	- Right to an adequate standard of living - Equality & non-discrimination - Advancement of women - Right to social security - Discrimination against women SDGs: - 1 - NO POVERTY - 10 - REDUCED INEQUALITIES Affected persons: - Migrants - Women & girls	Not implemented (cf. para. 24-25, MWA's written submission)
Migrants				
150.176 Ensure that the Standard Unified Contract enters into force without delay and introduce a system of effective oversight and enforcement Source of Position: A/HRC/47/5/Add.1	Austria	Supported	- Migrants - Labour rights and right to work SDGs: - 8 - DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH - 16 - PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS Affected persons: - 26 - Public officials	Not implemented (cf. para. 19-20, MWA's written submission)
Ratification of and Accession to International Instruments				
150.7 Take further concrete steps towards the ratification of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and towards upholding the rights of migrant workers, in line with the Global Compact for Migration, which Lebanon also joined Source of Position: A/HRC/47/5/Add.1	Philippines	Supported/Noted	- Ratification of & accession to international instruments - Migrants SDGs: - 10 - REDUCED INEQUALITIES - 16 - PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS Affected persons: - Migrants	Not implemented (cf. para. 8, MWA's written submission)
150.10 Consider ratifying the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and signing both the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees Source of Position: A/HRC/47/5/Add.1	Argentina	Supported/Noted	- Ratification of & accession to international instruments - Migrants - Enforced disappearances SDGs: - 16 - PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS Affected persons: - Disappeared persons - Refugees & asylum seekers - Migrants	Not implemented (cf. para. 8, MWA's written submission)
150.6 Sign and ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families; Source of Position: A/HRC/47/5/Add.1	Honduras Senegal	Noted	- Ratification of & accession to international instruments - Migrants SDGs: - 16 - PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS Affected persons: - Migrants	Not implemented (cf. para. 8, MWA's written submission)

1.3. Case Studies of Rights Violations against Migrant Domestic Workers

1.3.1. C.K. - Two Years of Impeded Access to Justice


C.K., a 22-year-old woman from Kenya, arrived in Lebanon in March 2022 after being recruited through an agency to work as a domestic worker. Upon arrival, her passport was confiscated, and she was taken to her employer's home in Tripoli, where she worked for five months under exploitative conditions. She was subjected to constant physical and verbal abuse, overworked, denied rest, and lived in fear due to the volatile behaviour of the male employer, who frequently used physical violence as a form of control and punishment. After several months of physical abuse as well as wage theft, C.K. reached out to her recruitment agency, requesting support. Despite requesting to be returned to the agency, her employer refused, which led C.K. to escape with help from a friend she had met online. Due to C.K.'s absconding and her employer retaining her passport, her residency immediately voided and she became an undocumented migrant in Lebanon.

After briefly staying with her friend, she found employment in another household, where she worked for over a year. In December 2022, she attempted to return to Kenya through IOM, but was informed that her previous employer had filed a false theft case against her, making her ineligible for repatriation assistance. She then began legal proceedings through a private law firm, which cost her over \$800, yet the case remained unresolved due to interference by the employer using corruption and intimidation. Her court case to challenge the false wage accusation stalled her repatriation process by two years, clearly illustrating Lebanon's inability to guarantee access to legal remedies and justice.

C.K. eventually became destitute and moved into a shelter, where she received medical, mental health, and legal support. She had been suffering from stress-related health issues, poor appetite, and vision problems. Although she had completed high school and a makeup course in Kenya, she had no savings, as most of her wages had been sent to her family or used to cover legal expenses. She requested support to continue her vocational training and build financial stability upon her return. During the recent Israeli war on Lebanon in 2024, C.K. was evacuated through the Kenyan embassy in Kuwait, since the Kenyan consulate in Lebanon only provided inadequate assistance and has been repeatedly accused of misconduct. C.K.'s case illustrated the widespread exploitation of migrant domestic workers under Lebanon's Kafala system and underscored the urgent need for systemic reform and survivor-led support mechanisms.

1.3.2. F.E.K. - A Preventable Death Caused by Discrimination

F.E.K, a Sierra Leonean migrant domestic worker, was employed as a live-in worker in a Lebanese household for several months. Immediately upon her placement, F.E.K's passport was confiscated by her employer. In her employment F.E.K. experienced repeated wage theft with her salary being withheld. Throughout the duration of her employment, she experienced severe physical and emotional abuse. F.E.K. started to get sick while being employed. Her employer not only refused to provide access to healthcare but actively neglected F.E.K.'s need for a specialised diet, claiming her inability to work absolves him from his duty to provide food. After prolonged sickness, F.E.K. was thrown out and dropped of in front of the Sierra Leonean Honorary Consulate, that did not provide any protection or assistance to her. She eventually found shelter among members of her community. In December 2022, Migrant Workers Action (MWA) was alerted on the medical emergency involving F.E.K., who was facing urgent and complex health needs. Although her case had been referred to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Lebanon as early as July 2022, highlighting her immediate need for protection, health care, basic assistance, and repatriation, it was not acted upon. No follow-up was provided, and F.E.K. remained without support, medical attention, or a plan for care.



After repeated delays of medical care, MWA intervened in F.E.K's case. After meeting with IOM staff in December 2022 and briefing them on F.E.K's critical condition, she was hospitalised at Sahel Hospital for three weeks. There, she was diagnosed with progressive multifocal leukoencephalopathy (PML), a rare and aggressive viral disease affecting the brain, requiring highly specialised medical treatment and a sterile, well-monitored recovery environment.

Following her hospitalisation, IOM inquired for temporary sheltering for F.E.K, an inappropriate and potentially dangerous suggestion, as most shelters are not equipped for the level of care F.E.K. needed. In January 2023, MWA learned that IOM had discharged F.E.K. to overcrowded, substandard accommodation with no professional care, and without providing a clear aftercare or case management plan.

As her condition worsened, and with no adequate support from INGOs and the government, MWA continued to monitor and advocate for her case. On 26 January 2023, MWA discovered that the migrant women who had been left to informally care for F.E.K. had been repatriated, leaving her alone and unattended in deteriorating health. The next day, a community leader working with MWA located F.E.K. and contacted IOM staff, who advised that she be hospitalised. However, Sahel Hospital refused her re-admission due to her need for isolation. She was transported by taxi to Rafic Hariri Governmental Hospital, which also refused to admit her. With MWA's intervention, the community member succeeded in having her readmitted to Sahel Hospital.

Tragically, the following day on 28 January 2023 F.E.K. passed away.

This case represents a stark and devastating illustration of the systemic failures in Lebanon's treatment of migrant domestic workers, including institutional negligence, lack of accountability, and violations of basic rights. F.E.K.'s death was not inevitable; it was the result of a complete collapse in duty of care by the responsible international and national actors. Despite clear knowledge of her condition and repeated calls for action, no appropriate medical or social support plan was provided. IOM's management failure to respond to professional concerns and ensure her safety directly contributed to her death.

Moreover, this case reflects the broader pattern of structural violence and indifference that defines the Kafala system in Lebanon. The government's persistent refusal to abolish the Kafala system, combined with the exclusion of domestic workers from legal protections and healthcare access, creates an environment where migrant women like F.E.K. are routinely placed in harm's way. Her death must serve as a call for urgent, systemic reform, one that centres accountability, equity, and the right to life and dignity for all migrant domestic workers in Lebanon.