**Factsheet on gender-based violence in the world of work**

*“Although achieving gender equality and equity is still unfinished business, progress has been made in areas such as pay and leadership. Arguably, the area in which we have made the least progress is in tackling gender-based violence in the world of work – itself a product of power relationships predicated on inequality and discrimination. The #metoo phenomenon has clearly demonstrated this. If it was so difficult, took so long for women working on film sets and in newsrooms to speak up, imagine how much more difficult it must be for the domestic worker working behind closed doors, for the leaf picker on a tea farm, for the machinist in a textile and garment factory.*

*The challenge to ILO constituents is to seize the moment. We cannot simply “recommend” or advise governments, employers and trade unions to act to stop gender based violence. To tackle this issue with the seriousness and urgency needed, to break the cycle of violence and silence, we need the full force of the rule of law. In ILO terms this means a strong Convention, backed up by a Recommendation”.*

**A comprehensive set of ILO instruments could cover, for example:**

* A broad definition of violence and harassment in the world of work in its diverse and multiple forms, including physical abuse, including assault, battery, attempted murder and murder; sexual violence, including rape and sexual assault; verbal abuse; bullying; psychological abuse and intimidation; sexual harassment; threats of violence and stalking.
* A strong focus on gender-based violence and harassment in the world of work.
* Provisions to prevent violence and harassment in the world of work.
* Measures to protect and support workers affected by violence and harassment in the world of work, without discrimination as to race, ethnicity, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, marital status, sexual orientation, HIV/AIDS status, migrant or refugee status, age or disability, or place of work.
* A description of the groups most at risk of experiencing violence and harassment in the world of work such as women, LGBTI workers, indigenous and migrant workers, workers living with HIV/AIDS and disabilities, workers in the informal economy, people trapped in forced and child labour.
* Measures to address the impact of domestic violence in the world of work.
* A broad definition of the “world of work”.
* Provision of various employment and social security rights for complainants, including the right to reduce or reorganise working hours.
* Specific provision for the appropriate and sensitive treatment of complainants of violence and harassment, including protection from reprisals or penalties for making the complaint.

**Data shows that gender-based violence in the world of work is a widespread and common experience for women workers in all industries and sectors globally.**

**Globally**

* 35 per cent of women – 818 million women globally – over the age of 15 have experienced sexual or physical violence at home, in their communities or in the workplace. - *Source:* [*World Health Organization*](http://www.who.int/gho/women_and_health/violence/en/)
* Nearly one third of women in G20 countries have faced harassment at work but few speak out. – *Source:* [*Thomson Reuters*](http://poll2015.trust.org/i/?id=8a70602c-025e-413f-9336-26947bf755d2)
* Women working as domestic workers in private households are often at risk of psychological, physical and sexual abuse and harassment. - *Source:* [*Human Rights Watch*](https://www.hrw.org/news/2008/11/24/protect-domestic-workers-violence)
* Nurses are three times more likely on average to experience violence in the workplace than other occupational groups, according to a 2002 study in five countries. - *Source:* [*ILO/WHO/PSI*](http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/interpersonal/WVstresspaper.pdf)
* One fourth (or nearly 22 per cent) of women media workers have experienced acts of physical violence at work. - *Source:* [*International Federation of Journalists (IFJ)*](https://www.ifj-stop-gender-based-violence.org/)
* Almost half (or 48 per cent) of women media workers have experienced sexual harassment in relation to their work. - *Source:* [*International Federation of Journalists (IFJ)*](https://www.ifj-stop-gender-based-violence.org/)
* Three quarters (or 65 per cent) of women media workers have experienced intimidation, threats or abuse in relation in their work. - *Source:* [*International Federation of Journalists (IFJ)*](https://www.ifj-stop-gender-based-violence.org/)

**Europe**

* Between 40 to 50 per cent of women in the European Union have experienced unwanted sexual advances, physical contact or other forms of sexual harassment in the workplace. - *Source:* [*UN Women*](http://www.endvawnow.org/en/articles/299-fast-facts-statistics-on-violence-against-women-and-girls-.html)
* More than 61 per cent of women employed in the services sector in the European Union have been subjected to sexual harassment. *Source:* [*EU Agency for Fundamental Rights*](http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2014/violence-against-women-eu-wide-survey-survey-methodology-sample-and-fieldwork)
* Surveys conducted by unions of hotel, restaurant, catering and tourism workers in Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden illustrate that around 35 per cent of all workers in the hotel and restaurant sector have experienced sexual harassment, and the number is closer to 60% for women working in frontline service such as waiters, baristas and bartenders. *Source:* [*The Nordic Union for Workers in the Hotel, Restaurant, Catering and Tourism Sector (NU HRCT)*](http://nordichrct.org/nyheder/we-are-not-on-the-menu)
* In the UK, half (52 per cent) of all women who participated in a TUC poll reported having experienced some form of sexual harassment in the work place. *Source:* [*Trade Union Congress*](https://www.tuc.org.uk/research-analysis/reports/still-just-bit-banter)
* In France, 1 in 5 women have been victims of sexual harassment during their professional life. - *Source :* *[Confédération General du Travail (CGT)](http://www.cgt.fr/-Stop-a-la-violence-sexiste-au-travail-.html)*

**Asia Pacific**

* In garment factories across India, Bangladesh and Indonesia, sexual violence and harassment is widespread and can range from verbal and physical abuse to sexual harassment and rape. In Bangladesh alone, over 60 per cent of female garment workers have been intimidated or threatened with violence at work. *Source:* [*Fair Wear Foundation*](https://www.fairwear.org/resource/fwf-standing-firm-2013/) *and* [*CNV Internationaal*](https://www.cnvinternationaal.nl/_Resources/Persistent/46610795dae021d92b67c15edcb896c7f3a59a0c/CNV-0037_20151012_Survey_Violence_against_women_at_the_workplace_DEF.pdf)
* Studies in Japan, Malaysia, the Philippines and South Korea show that 30 to 40 per cent of women suffer workplace sexual harassment. *Source:* [*ILO Bureau for Workers’ Activities (ACTRAV)*](http://www.ilo.org/actrav/info/pubs/WCMS_546645/lang--en/index.htm)
* In Hong-Kong, nearly 60 per cent of female employees in the service sector (particularly in property management, airlines and retail) have been sexually harassed at work. *Source:* [*Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions (HKCTU*](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cking%5CAppData%5CLocal%5CMicrosoft%5CWindows%5CINetCache%5CContent.Outlook%5CBC2KCXR3%5C%E2%80%A2%09http%3A%5Cen.hkctu.org.hk%5Chong-kong%5Cpress-release-and-statement-hk%5Cmore-than-half-of-female-employees-in-the-service-industry-have-been-sexual)*)*
* In Indonesia, in a baseline survey by Better Work Indonesia 85 per cent of female workers reported that they were concerned with sexual harassment. *Source:* [*ILO Bureau for Workers’ Activities (ACTRAV)*](http://www.ilo.org/actrav/info/pubs/WCMS_546645/lang--en/index.htm)
* In the Philippines, 85 per cent of women who had experienced domestic violence reported that the violence affected their attendance at work. In addition, 75 per cent of women who had experienced domestic violence reported that their work performance was negatively affected. *Source:* [*ITUC Asia Pacific/TUCP/FFW/SENTRO*](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cking%5CAppData%5CLocal%5CMicrosoft%5CWindows%5CINetCache%5CContent.Outlook%5CBC2KCXR3%5CJoint%20ITUC-AP%5CPhilippine%20Aliates%E2%80%99%20Report)

**Americas**

* In Canada, one in three workers has experienced domestic violence, and the violence often follows people to work, putting safety and jobs at risk. *Source:* [*Canadian Labour Congress (CLC)*](http://canadianlabour.ca/issues-research/domestic-violence-work/report)
* In Mexico, according to the National Institute for Women (INMUJERES) 46 percent of women employed in the formal economy (15 million women) suffer from some type of sexual harassment. *Source:* [*ILO Bureau for Workers’ Activities (ACTRAV)*](http://www.ilo.org/actrav/info/pubs/WCMS_546645/lang--en/index.htm)
* In Ecuador’s export-oriented flower production industry, over 55 per cent of flower workers have suffered some form of sexual harassment; and for younger workers aged 20-24 the figure is as high as 70 per cent. *Source:* [*ILO Bureau for Workers’ Activities (ACTRAV)*](http://www.ilo.org/actrav/info/pubs/WCMS_546645/lang--en/index.htm)
* In the USA:
	+ 50 per cent to 80 per cent of women experience sexual harassment at work. *Source:* [*AFL-CIO*](https://www.ituc-csi.org/ending-gender-based-violence-in)
	+ Almost 40 per cent of female farmworkers in California surveyed by the University of California, Santa Cruz, reported experiencing sexual harassment, from verbal advances to rape on the job. *Source:* [*AFL-CIO*](https://www.ituc-csi.org/ending-gender-based-violence-in)
	+ A U.S. Department of Labor study found that 88% of women in construction and extraction occupations – where women make up only 2.6 per cent of workers - reported sexual harassment at work. *Source:* [*AFL-CIO*](https://www.ituc-csi.org/ending-gender-based-violence-in)
	+ Hands Off Pants On, an investigation conducted by UNITE HERE Local 1, found that 58 per cent of hotel workers and 77 per cent of casino workers surveyed in Chicago have been sexually harassed by a guest. *Source:* [*AFL-CIO*](https://www.ituc-csi.org/ending-gender-based-violence-in)
	+ 90 per cent of female restaurant workers have experienced sexual harassment on the job. *Source:* [*The Restaurant Opportunities Centers United*](https://www.ituc-csi.org/the-glass-floor-sexual-harassment)

**Africa**

* In Uganda, in a survey carried out in over 2,910 organisations 90 per cent of women report they have been sexually harassed at work by their male seniors. *Source:* [*ILO Bureau for Workers’ Activities (ACTRAV)*](http://www.ilo.org/actrav/info/pubs/WCMS_546645/lang--en/index.htm)
* In Kenya, a study among 400 workers in tea growing and processing in Kenya revealed that more than 90 percent had experienced or observed sexual abuse at their workplace. *Source:* [*Solidarity Center*](https://www.solidaritycenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Gender.GBV_.9.16.pdf)
* In Zambia, 81 per cent of women have experienced sexual harassment at work. *Source:* [*SADC Gender Protocol Barometer (2014)*](http://genderlinks.org.za/programme-web-menu/publications/sadc-gender-protocol-2014-barometer-2014-07-25/)
* In Lesotho, 63 per cent women have experienced sexual harassment at work. *Source:* [*SADC Gender Protocol Barometer (2014)*](http://genderlinks.org.za/programme-web-menu/publications/sadc-gender-protocol-2014-barometer-2014-07-25/)

**Worker quotes**

* “With the use of zero hour contracts, agency work and unfair tipping schemes it's no surprise that sexual harassment is rife in the industry. […] They take power away from workers so that they cannot demand better conditions. […] They can't come forward about sexual harassment and win. This is why there's no avenue for waitresses to speak out, no process of accountability... This is why we need to form unions and work collectively to bring an end to sexual harassment and its normalisation." *- Nilufer Guler, waitress, UK (BBC:* <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-42252071>)
* "It’s become a very ugly environment for women. This is all caused by one man, our manager. We all know about it and it’s not a secret anymore. He has sexually harassed a lot of young women and there’s nothing we can do about it. If you are young and beautiful, you become his target. He promises young girls a better work position and also an end-of-year bonus in exchange for sex." *- Female flower worker, Tanzania* (Equal Times: <https://www.equaltimes.org/education-helps-workers-fight#.WniGh-jwZaR>)
* “They asked me to sleep with them, but I said no. […]Then they slapped me, and came to touch my breasts.” *For 34-year-old Sorphoan, harassment is just part of the job during her 12 p.m. to 1 a.m. shifts at a local karaoke room*. (Cambodia Daily: <https://www.cambodiadaily.com/news/womens-charter-aims-to-end-violence-against-women-in-cambodia-133034/> )

“We are screamed and shouted at by our supervisors, and ordered here and there even when we have a job to do. They treat us like donkeys, telling us our work is no good, controlling when we go to the bathroom and not allowing pregnant women go to medical appointments”, *woman textile worker, Peru* (openDemocracy: <https://www.opendemocracy.net/beyondslavery/industriall/crisis-of-workplace-violence-against-women>)

* “I couldn’t call my parents because I didn’t have parents, I couldn’t call authorities because we are not believed. I cry not because I have no hope but because I went on to organize with my union. […] Only by organizing can we get out of situations I faced when I was 12 and protect other domestic workers.” - *Ernestina Ochoa Lujan, a domestic worker and vice president of the International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF), began work as a domestic worker in Peru at age 11. At age 12, she was attacked by her employer.* (Solidarity Center: <https://www.solidaritycenter.org/unions-key-ending-gender-based-violence-work/>)

“Because of this system, each [worker] is made to work for two to three hours for free. If the workers don’t make the extra hours, they grab the workers by the neck and throw them out. The ‘Personal Room’ is the room for the production manager and the compliance manager. When we do something wrong, they make us stand on one foot, until they believe we have had enough punishment. We feel bad that we work hard, and yet they make us work for free and punish us when they want to. We sometimes feel hopeless. How long can we work like this?” *Female factory worker, Bangladesh*

* “He was the director of a large organisation who had just delivered a speech to my college class. I’m a soon-to-be college graduate who’s looking for a job in marketing. And he had a position available that was right up my alley. As it turned out, the job was right—but the situation was all wrong. He, a businessman more than 30 years older than me, was "attracted" to more than just the luster of my intellect, experience, and skill set*.” Job seeker – USA*
* "The man was a regular customer at our pub, and on several occasions he was kind enough to offer me a beer or two, but that day before he bought beer for me he told me that afterwards he wanted me to go out with him. He kept repeating that there was no way a woman can drink his beers and not pay for them in kind, and grabbed me by the neck and shook me violently." *Bar tender, Tanzania*

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