



# ENDING VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT AGAINST WOMEN IN THE WORLD OF WORK



## PRINCIPLES



All women, regardless of their identity or employment status and whether working in the formal or informal economy, have the right to work free from violence and harassment



Gender equality and decent work are fundamental pre-conditions for safe, healthy and dignified workplaces, and are particularly important in challenging social and cultural norms that devalue women's participation in society and at work.



Safe cities and communities are essential to foster a safe environment in public spaces, which are often work places, as well as around the workplace and in transport to and from work.

1

Laws and policies, including workplace policies, that promote gender equality, equal pay for work of equal value, women's representation in decision-making positions and women's access to decent work, are essential to changing social and cultural norms and gender stereotypes and promoting a dignified culture free from gender biases, violence and harassment against women.

2

Comprehensive national laws and policies to prevent and respond to violence and harassment against women, including in the world of work and in public spaces are important measures to clarify roles and responsibilities for public authorities, workplace actors and other stakeholders.

3

Comprehensive prevention strategies and activities in the workplace, for example, through risk prevention and training, are a core part of initiatives for wellbeing at work and occupational safety and health measures. Such strategies should be embedded into a policy stating that no form of violence and harassment will be tolerated, which is supported at the highest level of management.

4

Effective human resource policies contribute to preventing, addressing and ending violence and harassment against women. They should provide for gender-responsive complaints processes, formal and informal, that are accessible to—and trusted by—all women and accountability measures for perpetrators.

5

Workplaces can provide information and support (e.g. peer support groups and referrals to appropriate services in the community) to women experiencing violence and harassment, including assisting victims of domestic violence (e.g. through paid leave, flexible work schedules and job transfers) to safely continue their employment.

6

Training, guidance and awareness-raising for managers, supervisors and workers and their representatives enable them to build skills to effectively implement workplace policies and procedures, promote gender-responsive actions and contribute to positive and respectful work environments (e.g. through bystander empowerment).

7

Transition from the informal to the formal economy is an important step in reducing women workers' exposure to violence and harassment, providing them with opportunities for effective representation, protection and support.

8

Engaging workplace advocates, persons of confidence and workers' and employers' representatives can play an important role in providing confidential support to the affected individual, which can be a first step for victims in disclosing acts of violence and harassment.

9

Freedom of association and collective bargaining are crucial in protecting women from violence and harassment, as social dialogue facilitates relevant and appropriate company, workplace, sectoral and national policies.

10

Women have the right to live, travel and work safely in public places. Gender-responsive public services, improved infrastructure, and women's representation in planning bodies are crucial to ensure women's safety in public places and in transport.

## Emerging Good Practices

### WORKPLACE GUIDANCE AND POLICIES

- **The Vietnam Code of Conduct on Sexual Harassment in the Workplace** is a guide for preventing and addressing sexual harassment. It includes a model workplace policy drawn up by the Ministry of Labour, the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Vietnam General Confederation of Labour, with the support of the ILO.
- In Canada, the **Ontario Occupational Health & Safety Act** requires that employers draw up a policy on workplace domestic violence and inform employees of the policy, which has to be reviewed each year. One such policy was drawn up in 2011 by the **Sinai Health System**, which aims to raise awareness and capacity to provide a safe work environment for employees who are victims of domestic violence.
- Changing norms and practices to end violence against women at work is one of the priorities of the **Australian NGO Our Watch** which has created the **'Workplace Equality and Respect Standards'** for the Australian workforce. The standards aim to promote a culture of gender equality, ensuring women's career progression and leadership roles, and challenging gender stereotypes and sexism in the workplace.

### SOCIAL DIALOGUE

- In Jordan, the **ILO-IFC Better Work programme** has carried out training and awareness-raising on sexual harassment prevention at work at the enterprise level, in the garment sector. Independent research has shown the training, along with the introduction of workplace policies and complaints procedures, helped to significantly reduce workers' concerns about sexual harassment in the workplace.

### TRAINING, AWARENESS RAISING AND CAMPAIGNS

- In **South Africa**, an innovative programme **trains occupational safety and health representatives** in preventing violence and sexual harassment in farms and factories, where many women work. It has been implemented in a project supported by the **global union IUF, representatives of the Labour Ministry and some employers' organizations**.
- Protecting the rights of **home-based workers in the textile sector in Bangladesh is an objective of the Occupational Safety, Health and Environment (OSHE) Foundation**. Through the programme 'Decent Work for Home-based Workers at Textile & Garments (T&G) Supply Chain', a Violence Against Women (VAW) Committee was formed and assisted women experiencing economic violence (such as withholding of pay), as well as ensuring that women receive their pay, rather than it going directly to their husbands.

### MULTI-SECTORAL APPROACHES

- **Combating violence against women in Latin America (ComVoMujer) project in Peru led to a collaboration** between the Ministry of Women and Vulnerable Populations (MIMP), civil society and private enterprises. This led to the launch of the MIMP's 'Safe enterprise without violence and discrimination against women' certification, to encourage businesses to implement preventive measures, including companies in the water sector who ran the slogan 'Turn off the tap against violence against women'.
- In **Port Moresby, in Papua New Guinea**, the UN Women Safe City Programme led to new safety initiatives being introduced for women market traders and vendors. This helped improve the safety of women market vendors who experience multiple forms of violence, including sexual violence.