

PROPOSED ILO STANDARD: CONVENTION
AND RECOMMENDATION ON **VIOLENCE**
AND **HARASSMENT** AGAINST WOMEN
AND MEN IN THE WORLD OF WORK

Violence and harassment –especially against women—in the world of work is a **prevalent and persistent issue**, deeply rooted in unequal structural norms and practices. It is a **global issue** that affects all occupations and sectors. It is particularly widespread in the garment industry, which employs a high number of women, often in lower- paid, lower-power positions.

ILO definition of violence in the service sector: 'Any action, incident or behaviour that departs from reasonable conduct in which a person is assaulted, threatened, harmed, or injured in the course of, or as a direct result of, his or her work'

WHAT CAN BRANDS DO TO ADDRESS GBV

- **Recognise that GBV is prevalent** in all supply chains; even if you haven't heard of any cases—and **be proactive**.
- Be involved! Show your suppliers that you are **committed to working with them** to address issues. A long-term and positive relationship with your suppliers will help create transparency which can lead to lasting change.
- **Sign up for programmes** like the WEP: VHPP (in Bangladesh and India)
- Look inwards! **Production pressure** leads to workplace stress -> abuse from supervisors and management. **Low wages** makes women more vulnerable -> less likely to be able to risk losing their job when standing up to abuse. **Overtime** means women are travelling late at night (and are more likely to be assaulted)

35% 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.

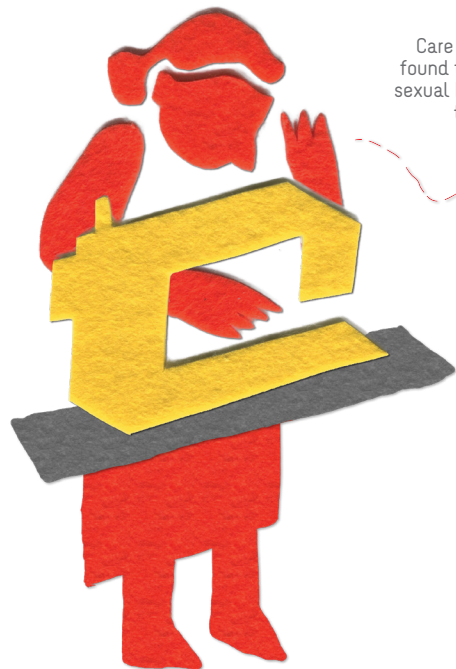


Bangladesh, over **60%** of
female garment workers
have been intimidated or
threatened with violence
at work. need some form
of violence at work



Indonesia, in a baseline
survey by Better Work, **85%**
of female workers reported
that they were concerned
with sexual harassment.





Care International in a study in Cambodia found that **1 in 3** female workers experienced sexual harassing behaviour in the workplace in the 12 months prior to the study.

REGULATIONS CAN HELP

- International and national regulations ensure workers' rights are protected
- FWF's COLP is based on **internationally recognised labour standards**
- FWF brand requirements and guidelines are formulated referencing those laws.
- There are **laws** in many countries—but they are **often not enough**.
- There is **no binding international standard** to be a foundation for better regulations
- A new Convention is being considered by the **ILO** right now.

The ILO is the UN agency dealing with labour issues. It is a tripartite organisation; representatives of governments, employers and workers set labour standards. As brands, you are represented in the ILO by your representative business association.

WHAT MEMBER BRANDS CAN DO TO SUPPORT A CONVENTION AND RECOMMENDATION

- **Share your knowledge and experiences** with your business associations encourage them to support your position. See on the next page, the sample letter you can use to promote their active endorsement of an ILO Convention and Recommendation on violence and harassment at work.
- **Write to your government** and the governments from where you source and ask them to support a binding standard. Let them know you are committed to addressing violence and harassment at work and will continue sourcing from countries who work to address it. Want more guidance? FWF local teams are knowledgeable and can assist you.
- **Talk about the issue broadly and commit publicly** to addressing GBV in your supply chains, including to your consumers—let them know that this issue is important to your company. Discuss it with your factories, partners and business associations.
- **Let FWF know** if you are interested in working together on this and we can jointly develop opportunities. feel free to reach out to gender@fairwear.org

to learn more, access our toolbox: www.fairwear.org/gender-toolkit/

Share your commitment for decent work through leadership and proactive actions. Find out more about the international movement organized by the ITUC- CSI: www.ituc-csi.org/gender-based-violence-at-work-583

Download the sample letter below:

www.fairwear.org/gbv-resources-for-members/attachment/template-letter-business-associations-fwf/

[Date]

[Name of Business Association]
[Address]

Dear [Name of Director],

On behalf of [name of your brand], I am writing to express our support for the proposed International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention on Violence and Harassment in the World of Work. [Name of your brand] calls on [Name of Business Association] to publicly support this ILO Convention on violence and harassment and urge the [Name of National Employers Association] to vote to support at the ILO Conference in June 2019.

Violence and harassment –especially against women–in the world of work is a prevalent and persistent issue, deeply rooted in unequal structural norms and practices. It is a global issue that affects all occupations and sectors. It is particularly widespread in the garment industry, which employs a high number of women, often in lower-paid, lower-power positions. International and national regulations and laws are powerful tools for ensuring the rights of workers are protected and respected, and lead to a more level playing field for brands and suppliers to operate under.

With this context in mind, there is a need for a specific international legal instrument focusing on violence and harassment, including gender-based violence (GBV), in the world of work, as no such instrument currently exists. Whilst some existing ILO instruments refer to violence and/or harassment, these instruments do not define what is understood by violence or harassment and do not provide guidance on how to address its various forms and do not cover all workers. A specific instrument would enable brands, suppliers and other stakeholders to work under a common set of rules, in order to more effectively work towards reducing violence and harassment at work.

We believe that [Name of Business Association] can play an important role in establishing a new set of ILO standards on violence and harassment in the world of work by urging [Name of National Employers Association] to support to a new ILO Standard in the form of both a Convention and Recommendation.

By taking this stance, [Name of Business Association] and [Name of Country] can help signal the importance brands place on enabling a safe working environment – free of violence and harassment, as well as contributing to Goals 5 and 8 of the UN 2030 agenda on Sustainable Development on gender equality and decent work respectively.

We welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss this matter further at a time of your convenience.

Sincerely,

List of National Employers' Associations of FWF Brands

Austria	WKÖ
Belgium	VBO
France	MEDEF
Germany	BDA
Italy	CONFINDUSTRIA
Netherlands	VNO-CNW
Portugal	CIP
Sweden	Svenskt Näringsliv
Switzerland	Schweizerischer Arbeitgeberverband For SMEs Schweizerischer Gewerbeverband sgV
UK	CBI

HOW THE ILO WORKS

The ILO is made up of three groups: **governments**, **employers** and **workers**. Each group has an **equal say** in deciding on standards and international policies. Brands are represented by their business associations.

June 2019, the **second discussion** about the proposed standard, a ILO Convention and Recommendation, will take place. The proposal will either be adopted or dismissed. Right now, **brands**, **workers** and **governments** can help support a framework that enables them to work under a common set of rules and ensure a level playing field at national and international level.

ILO STANDARD-SETTING PROCESS EXPLAINED:

