



Violence and harassment against women in the garment industry: Risks and solutions in Vietnam

Dr Jane Pillinger, May 2020

Fair Wear Foundation is an international multi-stakeholder nonprofit organisation that works with clothing companies—and their supply chains—to improve working conditions in the garment industry. By becoming a member of Fair Wear, a company commits to implementing the Fair Wear Code of Labour Practices throughout its supply chain. Currently over 130 brands have joined Fair Wear. Fair Wear strives to increase awareness about working conditions and workers' rights in textile factories.

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This report is published as part of the Strategic Partnership for Garment Supply Chain Transformation, a cooperation between Fair Wear, Mondiaal FNV, CNV Internationaal and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Center for Development and Integration (CDI), founded in August 2005, is a Vietnamese non-governmental, not-for-profit organisation that works for the rights of disadvantaged groups in pursuit of a society based on equity, social solidarity and sustainable development. CDI's priority programmes are: labour rights, good governance and inclusive growth. (www.cdivietnam.org)

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Acknowledgements

This research was conducted for Fair Wear by Dr Jane Pillinger. Dr Jane Pillinger is a global expert on gender equality, gender-based violence and the role of social dialogue in the workplace, and an advisor to Fair Wear. She designed and directed the research in Vietnam and has written widely about the problems of violence and harassment against women at work. She is the author of the recently published UN Women/ILO handbook 'Addressing Violence and Harassment against Women in the World of Work', and co-author of the book Collective Bargaining and Gender Equality (Agenda Publishing, 2019). She is currently a senior visiting fellow in gender studies at the London School of Economics and senior research fellow in the Department of Social Policy and Criminology at the Open University, UK.

Fair Wear is extremely grateful to Dr Pillinger for her hard work. In addition, Fair Wear would like to thank Viet Anh Duong Thi, country representative of Fair Wear in Vietnam. Many thanks to the team at the Center for Development and Integration (CDI) and Social Work & Community Development Research & Consultancy (SDRC) (<http://www.sdrc.org.vn/en/>) for their support in executing the survey and community work.

Special thanks also to gender expert Jo Morris and to Fair Wear's Annabel Meurs, Juliette Li, Viet Anh Duong Thi, Saskia Wishart, Andrea Spithoff, and Ellen Keith for their help in shaping the report and to buro RuSt for its design.

Glossary

CBA	Collective Bargaining Agreement
CNV	CNV International Foundation, National Confederation of Christian Trade Unions
CDI	Centre for Development and Integration (Vietnam)
FGD	Focus group discussion
FTA	Free Trade Agreement
GBV-net	NGO network on gender-based violence
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HCMC	Ho Chi Minh City
ILO	International Labour Organisation
MoLISA	Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs
Mondiaal FNV	Dutch trade union federation international
MSI	Multi-Stakeholder Initiative
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Development and Cooperation
VCCI	Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry
VGCL	Vietnam General Confederation of Labour
VITAS	Vietnam Textile and Apparel Association
UN	United Nations
UNGPs	UN Guiding Principles on business and human rights

Summary of the study's key findings

This Fair Wear study identifies the extent and different types of violence and harassment that women garment workers experience in Vietnam. This study's primary objective was to provide an evidence base on the factors that contribute to violence and harassment to enable brands, suppliers and other key stakeholders to play a decisive role in ending violence and harassment in the garment sector. This study investigated whether associations exist between violence and harassment against women garment workers and women's individual characteristics (e.g. age, education, migration status, length of the contract), working conditions and the role that factories' policies and procedures play in preventing and addressing violence and harassment.

Overall, this study found that in Vietnam's garment sector low pay, long working hours, involuntary and excessive overtime, and production pressures, are closely associated with a disrespectful working environment and the occurrence of violence and harassment in the workplace. In addition, violence and harassment against women garment workers is closely connected to social norms, values and stereotypes that foster gender inequality, unequal power relations between men and women, and a culture where violence against women is still viewed as being acceptable.

Interviews and focus group discussions were held with women garment workers in three Vietnamese provinces. Women garment workers' experiences of violence and harassment included women who had personally suffered violence and harassment and those who have witnessed violence and harassment. **43.1% of the 763 women garment workers interviewed for this study had experienced at least one form of violence and harassment in the previous 12 months.**

Of the **43.1% of women garment workers interviewed who experienced violence and harassment**, verbal harassment was the most commonly experienced, followed by physical harassment and non-verbal harassment. Of these women, 10% had received threats that their contracts would not be renewed, and a further 10% were promised a promotion in exchange for a sexual demand. Of the garment workers interviewed for this study who had left their previous employment, 10% said that they left because they had experienced violence and harassment.

In addition, **49.5% of the surveyed garment workers experienced violence and harassment in the last 12 months when travelling to and from work**. This particularly affects garment workers that work

long hours and involuntary overtime because they often then have to travel home late at night and in the dark.

Women garment workers' individual characteristics

Typically, the women garment workers interviewed for this study were young migrant women, with low skills and education attainment, often working on insecure contracts. The likelihood of garment workers experiencing violence and harassment increased for some groups of women:

- Workers aged 25 or younger are 1.5 times more likely to experience from violence and harassment than older workers;
- Workers with higher levels of education (completion of secondary education or higher) are 1.7 times more likely to experience from violence and harassment than workers with lower levels of education;
- Migrant workers are twice as likely to experience violence and harassment than non-migrant (local) workers; and
- Workers that have worked at the factory for one year or less are over twice as likely to suffer from violence and harassment.

Low pay and violence and harassment

Women garment workers noted that their low pay forced them to work longer hours (overtime and to meet production targets). The study found that violence and harassment is associated with workers earning lower pay:

- Women garment workers experiencing violence and harassment in the previous 12 months had significantly lower monthly incomes, where their incomes represented 75% of the incomes of women not experiencing violence and harassment.
- Higher proportions of garment workers who had not experienced violence and harassment in the previous 12 months earned above the average monthly income (62%), compared to 50% of women who had experienced violence and harassment who earned above the average monthly income;
- Higher proportions of garment workers who had not experienced violence and harassment in the previous 12 months earned the productivity bonus (71.2%), compared to 48.5% of women experiencing violence and harassment who earned the productivity bonus.

Overtime working and production pressures

The study found that significant amounts of overtime are being worked by women garment workers.

Notably, 20.3% of the interviewed women garment workers worked between 30 and 60 hours of overtime per month, and 41.4% worked over 60 hours of overtime per month. Half (49.5%) of the women experiencing violence and harassment said that they were unable to refuse overtime, whereas violence and harassment was lower for women who could refuse overtime, at 38.3%.

The study found a strong association between violence and harassment and production pressures and overtime:

- Violence and harassment is 3.8 times more likely to occur in the peak season than during the rest of the year;
- Violence and harassment is 2.4 times more likely to occur where workers report working overtime of 30 hours or more per month than workers work less than 30 hours overtime per month; and
- Workers that are unable to refuse overtime are 1.6 times more likely to experience violence and harassment than workers that can refuse overtime.

The impact of violence and harassment on women garment workers' physical and mental health

Violence and harassment were found to negatively impact women garment worker's physical and mental health, with consequences for their capacity to work effectively. Of the women garment workers experiencing violence and harassment in the previous 12 months:

- One-quarter (25%) said that they had experienced problems with their physical health. 68.1% stated that it negatively impacted their mental health and wellbeing (depression, fear, having negative thoughts and worried, stressed or anxious);
- Over one-third (37.7%) reported feeling angry; 20% felt traumatised; 17% were scared; 9.1% felt humiliated, and 6.7% felt degraded;
- Negative effects on productivity were also found – over one half said that this affected their ability to do their jobs effectively (to enable them to earn above the average monthly incomes for their job and reach productivity bonuses).

Policies and complaints procedures on violence and harassment in garment factories

Although a large proportion of all of the women garment workers interviewed knew that their factory had policies and procedures on violence and harassment, only 39.6% felt confident that a complaint would be dealt with seriously. Having a complaints procedure, however, is strongly associated with a lower incidence of violence and harassment. Of the garment workers experiencing violence and harassment in the previous 12 months:

- Over half (57.8%) worked in factories that did not have a complaints procedure, compared to one-quarter of the garment workers who worked in factories with complaints procedures.
- Less than one-third had made a formal complaint directly to the employer or trade union;
- Of those making complaints, there were low levels of satisfaction about how the complaint was handled.
- This study's findings indicate that violence and harassment is 4.7 times more likely to occur in factories without complaints procedures than in factories with complaints procedures.

A range of factors are associated with the likelihood that a women garment worker will report an incident of violence and harassment:

- Younger workers, workers that have completed high school education, migrant workers and workers with dependent children are more likely to report violence and harassment;
- Workers with a good level of awareness of violence and harassment are 2.4 times more likely to report an incident than those with poorer awareness;
- Workers in factories with a code of conduct on violence and harassment are 1.4 times more likely to report an incident of violence and harassment to someone in comparison to workers in factories without a code of conduct;
- Workers in factories where there is a trusted complaints procedure are 2.1 times more likely to report violence and harassment than those in factories with a complaints procedure that they do not trust; and
- Violence and harassment is four times more likely to occur in factories where there is a culture and tolerance of violence and harassment against women in the local community.

Recommendations

Based on these findings, this study makes a range of recommendations designed to provide safe and dignified work for women garment workers. It is recommended that:

- *Clothing brands and other relevant stakeholders:* address supply chain factors, such as production pressures, which result in greater vulnerabilities to violence and harassment; and to ensure that brands and suppliers implement national and international laws and standards relating to violence and harassment at work.
- *For the government and stakeholders in Vietnam:* provide strengthened provisions on violence and harassment (including sexual harassment) in the revision of the Labour Code; and ensure the ratification and full implementation of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention 190 on violence and harassment against women and men in the world of work.
- *For employers, unions and other stakeholders who can play a role in supporting social dialogue at the level of the garment sector and at supplier/factory level:* engage in social dialogue at all levels to support the development of effective violence and harassment prevention programmes, risk management, and policies and procedures that workers trust, including ensuring that worker representatives play an active role in complaints mechanisms.

Section 1. Introduction

1.1 OVERVIEW

This report details a Fair Wear Foundation (Fair Wear) study that was conducted in conjunction with Vietnamese NGO partners between 2018 and 2019. This report covers the research carried out, the methods used, the research findings and draws conclusions and recommendations for Fair Wear, brands and other stakeholders in Vietnam.¹ The findings provide important evidence of the issues that women garment workers are facing and these point to areas where clothing brands and suppliers along with Vietnamese stakeholders (including government, employers, trade unions, factories and NGOs) can affect positive changes in their operations. Of equal importance are national and international developments in strengthening legal frameworks on violence and harassment against women in the world of work. At the time of writing (March 2019), these developments included the planned revision of the Vietnamese Labour Code with strengthened provisions on sexual harassment in the workplace. In addition, on 21 June 2019, the International Labour Conference adopted the landmark International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention 190 on violence and harassment against women and men in the world of work and its accompanying recommendation.

By drawing on interviews with 763 women garment workers and focus group discussions (FGDs) with garment workers in three Vietnamese provinces, this study uncovered high levels of violence and harassment. **In the last year alone, 43.1% of the garment workers interviewed stated that they had experienced at least one form of violence and harassment.** This study has also identified the factors that are closely associated with violence and harassment in the garment sector and provides unprecedented insights into garment workers' experiences of violence and harassment in Vietnam. In particular, this study shows that low pay, long working hours, involuntary and excessive overtime, and production pressures, are closely associated with a disrespectful working environment and the occurrence of violence and harassment.

Evidence shows that violence and harassment affect productivity, competitiveness and company reputations as well as workers' dignity, health and wellbeing.^{2 3 4 5} Vietnam's garment sector is predominantly made up of women and low-paid, and women garment workers that are disproportionately affected by violence and harassment, including sexual harassment. Despite women's high labour market participation in the garment sector, workers face discrimination in recruitment and job assignments, short-term contracts, occupational segregation, fewer opportunities for training and promotion and a gender pay gap.^{6 7 8 9 10 11}

This Fair Wear study's findings are reported amidst a global shift in attitudes regarding the acceptability of sexual harassment. The unprecedented global movement to name sexual harassment, social media campaigns such as #ngungimlang (stop silence) and #MeToo, and campaigns by CARE International and other NGOs in Vietnam, have helped to give the women affected by violence and harassment a voice and broken the silence surrounding the problem. Many international actors are undertaking efforts to prevent violence and harassment. For example, CARE International's STOP project (Enhancing Women's Voice to Stop Sexual Harassment) in Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam (2017-2021) has developed workplace measures to prevent and respond to sexual harassment in the garment sector. In addition, this project has paid attention to the promotion of laws, policies and mechanisms to address sexual harassment in the workplace.¹²

The adoption of ILO Convention 190 on ending violence and harassment against women and men in the world of work,¹³ and the accompanying recommendations,¹⁴ marks many years of mobilising by governments, employers, workers and NGOs globally. The Convention is a landmark international mechanism to tackle sexual harassment, protect victims, and create the conditions for modern workplaces and a world of work free from violence and harassment. For the first time, ILO Convention 190 provides an agreed international definition of violence and harassment in the world of work: '...a range of unacceptable behaviours and practices, or threats thereof, whether a single occurrence or repeated, that aim at, result in, or are likely to result in physical, psychological, sexual or economic harm, and includes gender-based violence and harassment' (Article 1). The Convention sets out integrated and comprehensive ways that governments, employers and workers can prevent and eliminate violence and harassment. The Convention, places obligations on employers to prevent and tackle violence and harassment, for example, through risk assessments. The Convention also requires that governments implement fundamental labour principles and rights at work, including freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining. Fair Wear, amongst other organisations and stakeholders in Vietnam, will support the Vietnamese government to ratify and fully implement Convention 190.

There are limited research and official statistics on violence and harassment against women in Vietnam's garment sector. This lack of data is mirrored in audit data and inspection/remediation reports carried out by Fair Wear, ILO Better Work and other organisations involved in auditing the working conditions in the garment sector. According to an ILO Better Work impact evaluation, in Vietnam, fewer workers disclose sexual harassment than other garment-producing countries, where 97.6% of the workers interviewed said that they were not concerned by sexual harassment.¹⁵

However, Better Work believes that this seriously under-estimates the actual levels of sexual harassment.¹⁶ Social stigma, discrimination, a culture of silence and victim-blaming^{17 18 19} as well as a lack of effective systems for reporting violence and harassment²⁰ all contribute to low disclosure rates.

1.2 THE FAIR WEAR STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

An important focus of this study was to situate women garment factory workers experiences of violence and harassment at the workplace in the context of their wider working conditions, gender equality, and discriminatory conditions of work that can create a culture of violence and harassment and impact garment supply chains.

This approach is grounded in Fair Wear's Strategic Partnership for Supply Chain Transformation 2016-2020 (Dutch trade unions Mondiaal FNV and CNV International and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs).²¹ Promoting gender equality and ending gender-based violence is one of the Strategic Partnership's three main goals. The two other strategic goals are living wages and social dialogue (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: The Fair Wear Strategic Partnership's goals



Integral to the Strategic Partnership framework are two further objectives: (i) meeting labour standards relating to living wages, decent work, health and safety at work and freedom of association, and (ii) increasing the economic sustainability for brands. These are particularly important issues because they underline the need to pay significant attention to the dynamics that impact employment and workers' rights in the garment sector. This can be achieved by paying attention to social dialogue, precarious work, low pay, discrimination, and health and safety protections, as well as through targeting specific issues such as the lack of toilet breaks. Importantly

for Fair Wear, this study has the added value of providing evidence for brands' policies and actions to prevent violence and harassment and thereby enhance the brand's reputation.

1.3 RATIONALE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

It is against the background of limited data concerning the extent and causes of violence and harassment in Vietnam's garment sector that Fair Wear decided to conduct this ground-breaking study. This study not only sought to highlight the prevalence of violence and harassment against women garment workers – particularly sexual harassment – but also to provide an in-depth examination of the factors that increase vulnerability to violence and harassment in Vietnamese garment factories. This study had the following objectives:

- To identify the extent and types of violence and harassment (including sexual harassment) experienced by garment workers in the world of work (including inside and outside of the workplace) in Vietnam;
- To provide brands, suppliers and other key stakeholders with evidence about supply chain and supplier/factory-related factors that contribute to violence and harassment in Vietnam's garment sector, and to inform brands' sourcing practices and policies across the garment supply chain; and
- To inform national policy and the engagement of stakeholders in Vietnam as well as the policies of international organisations, Fair Wear and other social dialogue actors.

1.4 DEFINITIONS USED IN THE STUDY

The study used ILO's internationally agreed definition on violence and harassment against women and men in the world of work, with a specific focus on the situations where women are subjected to violence and harassment, including specifically sexual harassment.²² This definition recognises that sexual harassment creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating and offensive environment. Violence and harassment includes conduct that is physical, sexual, psychological, verbal and non-verbal. The ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations²³ defines sexual harassment in the context of the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111) as a particular form of discrimination on the basis of sex, and notes that definitions of sexual harassment often include both *quid pro quo* and *hostile environment*²⁴ as elements of sexual harassment.

In the study, women garment workers' experiences of violence and harassment covered women who had personally suffered violence and harassment and those that had witnessed it in the previous 12

months. A more detailed discussion of the definitions used in the survey can be found in the section on methodology below.

1.5 OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Box 1. Overview of this study's methodology

Interviewees with no known relationship to suppliers or Fair Wear brands were randomly selected. Fair Wear wanted to assess the industry-wide incidence of violence and harassment before providing members and other clothing brands with an evidence-based critique of these industry-wide issues. All interviews and FGDs took place in the community rather than inside factories.

Methods used: Participatory research was used to design the survey as well as the recommendations, interviews and FGDs with women garment workers.

Number of garment workers interviewed: 763.

Number of FGDs: 7.

Provinces where interviews and FGDs were held: Hai Duong, Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC) and Dong Nai.

Violence and harassment, and particularly sexual harassment, are highly complex research topics.²⁵ Gender norms, traditional cultural expectations of women's roles, a culture of 'victim-blaming' and unequal gender relations often make the issue invisible in the workplace, and women are frequently scared of speaking about violence and harassment because of the fear of reprisals at work, in their communities and from their families.^{26 27} To account for these factors, a participatory research methodology was used. The study was also carried out in an ethical manner with a focus on gender sensitivity, assurances of confidentiality, and the respect of participants.

Participatory research is a collaborative approach to research that involves the research's participants in the design and the implementation of the research as well as the formulation of recommendations. It is a research methodology based on collaboration between the researcher and participants that can use their knowledge and experiences to strengthen the study. Utilising the experiences and concerns of workers and the NGOs that work with them to frame the research questions was particularly valuable in ensuring that the women garment workers understood the language and terminology used. The participatory research approach also enabled the study to have a strong focus on empowering women workers, and for their knowledge and skills to be used in Fair Wear's wider advocacy efforts.

Participatory activities were carried out through two workshops (one before the study and one at the end) and three pre-survey FGDs with garment workers in two different sites to gain feedback on the survey tools and to pilot the questionnaire. In addition to the interviews, FGDs were held with garment workers in each of the three provinces where research activities were conducted.

Interviewers, who connected the study team to local communities where the 763 interviews were carried out, were trained in research skills and understanding of gender-based violence and gender equality issues, including the definitions used in the research.

Analytical framework

The study's analytical framework (discussed in greater detail in Appendix 1) looked at the associations between violence and harassment relating to three main groups of factors:

- **Individual factors:** whether the occurrence of violence and harassment is associated with workers' age, education, migration status, and length of time working.
- **Working conditions:** whether the occurrence of violence and harassment is associated with levels of pay, working hours, excessive overtime, and production line pressures.
- **Factory conditions:** whether the factories' policies and procedures for preventing and addressing violence and harassment, including complaints procedures and workers' trust in the procedures, had an impact on the occurrence of violence and harassment.

Appendix 1 provides a full discussion of this study's methodology and analytical framework; Appendix 2 is the survey used in the interviews with the women garment workers; Appendix 3 provides a guide to conducting FGDs; and Appendix 4 presents data tables of the primary data that was collected as part of this study and has been used to evidence this paper.

1.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

This study had several limitations. In the first instance, an analysis of gender perspective from men's and women's perspectives could not be conducted because the research was carried out specifically with women workers. In addition, different methodologies were used for the data collection in different provinces. Significantly, whereas in three provinces (Hai Duong, Dong Nai and HCMC) the interviews and FGDs were conducted outside of the factories in the local communities, the data collected for the fourth province (Thanh Hoa) was collected from inside one factory. The different data collection methodologies undermined the comparability of the data across the four regions and the data from Thanh Hoa has therefore been excluded from the data presented in this report.

This study was also unable to interview significant numbers of women working in higher-level positions (such as team line leader or line supervisors) who are more likely to have regular contact with higher levels of management. This is an area that should be addressed by future research, particularly in uncovering the sexual harassment of women in senior positions. The final limitation is that because this is a cross-sectional study which measured workers' productivity at a particular point in time a further longitudinal study is required to demonstrate the extent to which violence and harassment impact productivity over time. The research did not include information about the specific factories where the women worked or feedback from factory representatives, such as managers or union representatives. It is hoped that this can form the basis of future Fair Wear research.

1.7 ETHICAL ISSUES

NGOs that worked in partnership with Fair Wear used their networks to approach and contact women garment workers for the survey. Women garment workers were contacted through various groups and organisations in the communities where the workers live in each province. These organisations included community-based groups, trade unions, peer groups, shelter and housing providers for garment workers, and other local networks.

The interviewed workers' rights were respected and guaranteed throughout the research process, and all respondents participated voluntarily. The interviewer promoted a safe environment for carrying out the interview. The interviewer was supportive and let respondents stop if they needed a break or did not want to answer questions if they felt uncomfortable. Confidentiality and anonymity were guaranteed. No information that could identify respondents, including name, address or telephone numbers, were collected. An oral consent transcript was read to participants by the interviewer, and the oral communication of their agreement or refusal was sought. Respondents received a small payment of US\$ 2.50 in recognition of the value of their contribution and the time involved.

1.8 STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

This report has the following structure:

Section 2 sets the context and provides an overview of Vietnam's garment sector, the legal and policy framework relating to violence and harassment and gender equality, data on violence and

harassment against women and the existing evidence of vulnerabilities to violence and harassment faced by women garment workers in Vietnam and other garment-producing countries.

Section 3 discusses the study's methodology and highlights the importance of applying participatory and gender-sensitive research methods to this highly sensitive issue.

Section 4 describes the profile of the garment workers interviewed in the survey. This covers their demographic background, their employment, pay and working conditions, the sufficiency of pay, the amount of overtime worked and production pressures.

Section 5 presents the study's findings on the types and frequency of violence and harassment (including sexual harassment) experienced by garment workers. It examines the physical and mental health effects of violence and harassment and the impact that this has on workers' productivity.

Section 6 examines whether garment workers' are aware of and trust factories' policies, procedures and complaints systems as well as levels of reporting on violence and harassment, outcomes of complaints handling and reasons why complaints are not made.

Section 7 discusses the findings regarding garment workers' views on safety in the workplace, at the factory gates and when travelling to and from work.

Section 8 provides further analysis of the findings to show associations between the incidence and likelihood of violence and harassment occurring and garment workers' individual characteristics (e.g. age, migration status, amount of overtime worked, production pressures). These associations are also explored in relation to disclosure and reporting on violence and harassment.

Section 9 draws together the study's conclusions and recommendations.

Section 2. Background and context: violence, harassment and sexual harassment in Vietnam's garment sector

2.1 OVERVIEW: CREATING THE CONDITIONS FOR A VIBRANT GARMENT SECTOR FREE FROM VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT

Vietnam is a densely populated country of 96 million inhabitants with a young age profile (61.79% of the population are in the 15-54 age group and the median age is 30.5 years). It has a dynamic emerging industrial and market-based economy, with rapid economic growth and an expanding garment sector (the textile and garment industry grew 10% in 2017).²⁸ There is a high literacy rate of 94.5% among those aged 15 or older. A recent significant development is an increase in women's participation in formal waged work, which has primarily resulted from expanding employment in the garment sector, amongst other export-orientated industries. Rapid economic growth has resulted in a correspondingly high level of real wage growth between 2006 and 2017,²⁹ making Vietnam one of the 'one of the most dynamic emerging countries in East Asia region'.³⁰ Vietnam has become an investment destination for many garment and electronics companies, spurred by the government's strategy of promoting inward investment and the expansion of the export production sector. With a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of US\$ 201.3 billion and a growth rate of 6.2% in 2016,³¹ Vietnam has grown into an emerging (lower-middle income) industrial and market-based economy.

With a significant and growing global textile and apparel industry, Vietnam is currently made up of around 6,000 textile and garment manufacturing firms (84% of which are privately owned, 15% are foreign direct investment, and the remaining 1% are state-owned). The sector employs about 2 million people, more than 80% of which are women.³²

In 2016, over 80% of Vietnam's garment manufacturing industry's products were exported, resulting in a dependence on exports for the sectors earnings and foreign investments. The United States is the biggest market, followed by Japan and the European Union. In 2018, Fair Wear had 29 member

companies sourcing from approximately 155 factories in Vietnam. Most of these factories are located in or around Hanoi and HCMC and produce clothing, shoes and outdoor wear. The garment sector is predicted to continue growing as new trade agreements (including the EU-Vietnam Free Trade Agreement (FTA), signed in 2019) are implemented. Under this and other trade agreements, Vietnam has made extensive labour rights commitments, and this must pave the way for new labour legislation and the ratification of ILO Conventions on freedom of association (C.87) and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining (C.98).³³

Through building a strong reputation for treating workers with dignity and equality, international trade developments provide Vietnam with a global platform for showcasing legal, institutional and workplace level measures to end violence and harassment in its garment sector. They also provide the opportunity to create favourable conditions and bold new strategies that recognise the strong business case for gender equality and ending abuses of labour rights violations and violence and harassment in the workplace. A key factor affecting the development of market-based policies and FTAs³⁴ is the development of responsible supply chain policies and practices, including adhering to fundamental labour standards and business and human rights guidance in the implementation of FTAs.³⁵

Gender equality, including greater gender diversity in the workforce, is a key determinant of progressive and successful businesses globally. The business case for gender equality is strongly linked to responsible business practices in the supply chain and the effective implementation of business and human rights frameworks.³⁶ Of particular relevance is the implementation of due diligence frameworks and their application to gender-related issues such as gender-based violence,³⁷ which can play a critical role in identifying and acting on abuses in the workplace (discussed below).

In addition, social dialogue between employers and trade unions through collective bargaining and workplace cooperation at the sectoral and workplace levels contributes to gender equality and ending violence and harassment in the garment sector.^{38 39 40 41 42 43 44} At a very practical level, social dialogue can find solutions to pressing problems in the workplace, including effective and easy to implement measures that can prevent violence and harassment.^{45 46} Tripartite social dialogue – between the government, employers and workers organisations – can also improve workers' rights and economic growth, while also supporting the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals' ambitious goals on gender equality, decent work and ending violence against women.⁴⁷

2.2 LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

'If Vietnam is to go further and successfully into the globalisation competition, its factories have to be bolder in cutting costs and enhancing productivity. That is why the sooner the sexual harassment problem is addressed, the earlier the employers can earn benefits and Vietnam gets closer to fulfilling its global and domestic commitments on protecting basic human rights.'⁴⁸

Vietnam's current Labour Code was introduced in 2013, and at the time of writing (March 2019) a revised Labour Code was being drafted with new provisions on sexual harassment at work. The Labour Code covers labour contracts, working hours and overtime, labour outsourcing laws, internal labour rules, working conditions and the employment of foreigners. Normal daily working hours should not exceed 10 hours in one day and 48 hours in one week. Workers are not allowed to work more than 50% of the official working hours per day, 30 hours per month, or 200 hours per year as overtime.

Sexual harassment was first included in the Vietnamese Labour Code in 2013.⁴⁹ However, this has not effectively prohibited sexual harassment or protected victims, and it lacks a definition of sexual harassment as well as specific requirements for employers to implement policies and procedures to prevent sexual harassment or establish complaints procedures. Consequently, no cases of sexual harassment in the workplace have been brought before the Vietnamese courts.⁵⁰ These limitations, along with greater awareness of the widespread incidence of sexual harassment in the workplace, have led to calls for a strengthened legal framework containing clear definitions of sexual harassment at work and in public spaces, as well as obligations for employers to prevent and address sexual harassment in the workplace. In 2017, the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MoLISA) carried out a Gender Impact Assessment which identified the need to strengthen provisions to address sexual harassment at the workplace as one of key gender equality priorities. During 2018 and 2019, MoLISA carried out consultations on the revisions to the Labour Code, including several workshops with NGOs, employers and unions on provisions relating to gender equality and sexual harassment.⁵¹ NGOs in Vietnam have also campaigned for a strong Labour Code in tackling sexual harassment in the garment industry.⁵²

Without a robust legal framework, victims of violence and harassment (who are often in insecure jobs and have limited voices and agency) will remain silent about their experiences and continue to not complain because of the fear of reprisals and losing their job. According to a 2013 MoLISA/ILO study on sexual harassment:

'The majority of the victims of sexual harassment in Vietnam are women. Embarrassed and afraid of losing their job, many victims keep silent. Some confidant victims have tried to come forward and seek recompense, but at present it is unclear how to make a claim against a case of sexual harassment because it is problematic, under current laws, to assert in court which specific right has been violated.'⁵³

In addition to the importance of labour law, the Criminal Code of Vietnam (2000) contains provisions on the criminalisation of sexual assault, with rape and forcible and statutory rape being the most serious forms of sexual harassment.

Vietnam is also signatory to the following international and regional treaties and standards:

- Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women;⁵⁴
- ASEAN Regional Plan of Action to End Violence Against Women;⁵⁵ and
- ILO Convention on Discrimination (Employment and Occupation), 1958 (No. 111).⁵⁶

Other measures to reduce gender-based violence include the introduction of the 2007 Law on the Prevention and Control of Domestic Violence, and the introduction of the National Strategy on Gender Equality (2011-2020) that covers objectives to enhance women's participation in political, economic, cultural and social domains, to end gender-based violence and ensure gender equality in the family.

Concerning ILO standards, Vietnam has ratified five out of the eight ILO fundamental labour conventions (as set out in the 1998 ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work). At the time of writing (March 2019), and as discussed above in relation to the agreement of the EU-Vietnam Trade Agreement,⁵⁷ Vietnam was preparing to ratify Convention 98 on the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining, Convention 87 on Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise and Convention 105 on Abolition of Forced Labour. Ratification of these Conventions was under consideration and discussed at a workshop organised by MoLISA and ILO in November 2018.⁵⁸ Implementing fundamental labour conventions (such as those under the EU-Vietnam Trade Agreement and the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership) requires the adoption of the labour standards set out in the 1998 ILO Declaration into Vietnam's laws, institutions and practices as well as effective monitoring of these commitments. To date, NGOs in Vietnam have criticised the absence of monitoring mechanisms and the lack of sanctions for non-implementation of commitments on labour rights.

A further crucial international development, as discussed above, is the new international labour standard (Convention 190 on violence and harassment against women and men in the world of work),

which sets out an internationally agreed definition of violence and harassment in the world of work and has a strong focus on gender-based violence, including sexual harassment.

Code of Conduct on Sexual Harassment in the Workplace

At the time of writing (July 2019), the only existing policy measure aimed at promoting awareness amongst employers about sexual harassment is the Code of Conduct on Sexual Harassment in the Workplace.⁵⁹ This was drawn up in 2015 by the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI), the Vietnam General Confederation of Labour (VGCL) and the Ministry of Labour, with the support of ILO. Widely regarded as a good example of a tripartite approach,⁶⁰ the Code has been poorly implemented, and there is minimal compliance with its provisions.⁶¹

The Code of Conduct states that:

'Sexual harassment in the workplace is a form of [sexual] discrimination which negatively affects the working environment, undermines gender equality at work, creates unfair practices in employment, and adversely impacts the dignity and well-being of workers. It creates psychological anxiety and stress for victims and if ignored, can result in high costs for companies through [the] loss of productivity, low worker morale, absenteeism, and staff turnover.'⁶²

The Code provides practical guidance to employers, employers' organisations, workers and trade unions on the 'development, implementation and monitoring of a workplace policy on sexual harassment to promote safe and healthy workplaces, where all workers, irrespective of sex or status, are treated with fairness, dignity and respect.'⁶³ It covers workers in all companies in the public and private sectors and all locations where work is carried out, including work-related social activities, conferences, training sessions, business travel and business meals, as well as work-related telephone conversations and communications through electronic mail. The Code also provides an evidence-based sample workplace policy in the Appendix. Although some efforts to implement the Code of Conduct have been made, particularly in garment factories that are required by their external customers to adopt and implement a factory policy on sexual harassment, the actual implementation and awareness about the Code remain limited.

Between 2013 and 2015, over 100 enterprises participated in a training programme to ensure employers and workers had a better understanding of sexual harassment and the different forms of violence and harassment (physical, verbal and non-verbal conduct of a sexual nature) as well as how they impact workers and companies. The training also covered mechanisms to address sexual harassment, including effective complaints procedures and the importance of carrying out impartial

investigations. According to the VCCI, the training has significantly reduced the problem of sexual harassment in the workplace through bringing about the introduction of workplace policies and complaints procedures.⁶⁴ ⁶⁵ However, since then, no evaluation has been carried out on the implementation of the Code, and it is unclear how successful the pilot programme has been in practice.

2.3 VIETNAM'S RECORD ON GENDER EQUALITY

In 2017, Vietnam was 67th (out of 189 countries) in the United Nations (UN) Gender Equality Index. Positive factors contributing to gender equality in Vietnam include participation in at least some secondary education (66.2% of females, 77.7% of males) and a relatively high labour participation rate of (73.2% of females, 83.5% of males). However, violence against women remains a significant concern. A national study on violence against women revealed that 58% of women in Vietnam had experienced physical, sexual or emotional domestic abuse.⁶⁶ A UN study estimated that the costs of domestic violence in Vietnam in terms of out-of-pocket expenditures and lost earnings represented 1.41% of Vietnam's GDP in 2010.⁶⁷ The report estimated that women who are experiencing violence earn 35 percent less than those who are not, which represents another significant drain on the national economy. Consequently, it is estimated that 1.78% of GDP is lost each year as a result of domestic violence.

Vietnam has a strong track record of promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. This is highlighted by Vietnam's framework on gender equality and particularly the 2006 Law on Gender Equality and the 2007 Law on the Prevention and Control of Domestic Violence. However, UN Women, ILO and NGOs operating in Vietnam have raised concerns about the implementation of legislation and policies and identified gaps in public education and awareness-raising, reporting, gender analysis, the collection of gender-disaggregated data and monitoring.

2.4 EXISTING DATA ON VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT, INCLUDING SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Across the world, women workers and particularly migrant women, ethnic minority women and younger women, face greater vulnerability to violence and harassment when they work in precarious and insecure work.⁶⁸ ⁶⁹ When women have limited voice and agency, including representation from trade unions, they are even more vulnerable to sexual harassment. This is the case in Vietnam, where

a significant proportion of garment workers are young migrants that have left rural areas to work in garment factories in urban areas and industrial zones.

Gender norms and taboos influence how men and women speak about women's sexuality, often rendering it a silent issue.⁷⁰ In Vietnam, this is reinforced by a strong culture of 'victim-blaming'.⁷¹ This study found that victim-blaming often stops garment workers from reporting their concerns about sexual harassment because they fear that family, friends and work colleagues will ostracise them. In the workplace, many women fear recrimination and the loss of their job if they speak out. 'Women are much more likely to be victims of sexual harassment precisely because they lack power',⁷² and unequal power relations, traditional perceptions about male dominance and the lack of respect for women's rights underly acts of sexual harassment.

In Vietnam, data on violence and harassment, including sexual harassment, in the workplace, including in the garment sector, is extremely limited. In the first study of its kind in Vietnam, Khuat Thu Hong's (2004) research into sexual harassment in Hanoi and HCMC concluded that sexual harassment was a taboo subject and that women rarely spoke about the problems that they experienced because they were scared that they would be held responsible for what happened.⁷³ Although silence often surrounds the issue, recent reports and anecdotal evidence from Fair Wear's auditors in Vietnam, suggest that sexual harassment is widespread in the workplace.^{74 75 76 77} MoLISA/ILO noted that the culture and fear of losing jobs prevented many women from reporting instances of sexual harassment.⁷⁸ Linked to this are the high levels of sexual harassment in public spaces.^{79 80} A UN Women report that reviewed several countries (including Vietnam) shows that social norms and gender biases are powerful factors that prevent women from reporting rape and that women who reported rape are rarely trusted.⁸¹ This 'victim-blaming' culture remains prevalent in Vietnam and frequently stops women from disclosing instances of sexual harassment because it can cause relationships to break-up as well as isolation from family members and the wider community. This issue is closely connected to social norms, values and stereotypes that foster gender inequalities, unequal power relations between men and women, and a culture that still views violence against women as acceptable. A poll conducted in eight countries, including in Vietnam, as part of the #ThisIsNotWorking campaign, found that significant numbers of men believe that it is acceptable to sexually harass and abuse women at work.⁸² In addition, gender discrimination, particularly when it intersects with factors such as race, social origin, migration status, disability, motherhood, family responsibilities, sexual orientation and gender identity, also impact women's vulnerability to violence and harassment.

2.5 WOMEN GARMENT WORKERS VULNERABILITIES TO VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT

A review of the evidence of factors that increase garment workers' vulnerability to violence and harassment helped inform this study's conceptual framework and to establish the extent to which violence and harassment is associated with women's low pay, productivity incentives, production pressures, long working hours and the implementation of policies and procedures as well as trusted complaints systems.

Vietnam's garment sector is predominantly low paid, low status and highly feminised, and the pressures of production targets and piece work increase workers' vulnerability to violence and harassment. This not only affects workers' wellbeing and dignity; it also impacts productivity, the retention of workers, and ultimately, brands' reputations.^{83 84} Concerns about sexual harassment in the garment sector tend to be an under-estimation of the true extent of the problem,⁸⁵ and low wages, insecurity at work and poor working conditions have been established to increase the risks of violence and harassment occurring in the workplace.^{86 87 88 89 90}

There is substantial global evidence of the negative effects of violence and harassment at work on workers' physical and mental health.^{91 92 93} This affects workers' capacity to work effectively and outside of work, it affects their relationships with family and friends. It is not only devastating for the workers affected, but also results in significant losses in productivity which arise from reduced attachment to the workplace, low job satisfaction, reduced concentration on work, higher levels of sick leave and absenteeism and disruption to teams.⁹⁴

2.5.1 Low pay and the gender pay gap

This study shows that when garment workers are paid a low wage, they have little choice but to work overtime, which increases workers' vulnerability to violence and harassment. An important aspect of this study was the identification of the links between workers' vulnerability to violence and harassment at work, with low pay and specifically the expressed need of workers to carry out overtime to bolster their pay. Through the Fair Wear Strategic Partnership, Fair Wear's work on living wages is inextricably linked to measures to end violence and harassment at work.

In Vietnam, minimum wages have been rising steadily in recent years; however, the levels set – based on four regional minimum wages levels⁹⁵ – fail to meet living wage benchmarks.⁹⁶ This is despite the provisions in the Labour Code, which state that the minimum wages should cover the basic living

expenses of a worker and their family.⁹⁷ According to ILO Vietnam, compared to other countries in the region, Vietnam's minimum wage is relatively low as a percentage of typical wages in the garment sector, and women in the garment industry are more likely than men to be paid below the minimum wage.⁹⁸ A recent promising development has been the establishment of the tripartite National Wage Council which, since 2013, has taken into account minimum living needs, alongside economic and productivity growth. The law specifies that the payment of wages is based on time (hourly, daily, or monthly), piecework or the completion of a task, and an employer must notify workers at least 10 days prior to any change in the form of payment.

Vietnamese women face in-work poverty and limited access to training, higher education and good quality employment opportunities, while discriminatory attitudes and behaviours affect their full and equal participation in the world of work. Gender discrimination in job assignments, pay, promotions, working hours, and training and promotion opportunities exacerbate the low pay in Vietnam's garment sector.⁹⁹ ¹⁰⁰ Despite the high labour force participation of women and above average level of wage growth,¹⁰¹ a wide gender pay gap remains (representing between 80 and 87% of men's wages), and in the foreign investment sector women's earnings are 70% those of men's.¹⁰² According to ILO's 2018 Global Wage Report, the mean factor weighted gender pay gap in Vietnam stood at 12.5% in 2018.¹⁰³

Determinants of women's monthly pay in Vietnam are strongly associated with having a tertiary education, the number of years' experience working in a factory, whether or not the worker has received training, and whether a worker is paid by the hour or a piece-rate system.¹⁰⁴ Moreover, unexplained factors, including discrimination, account for 60% of the gender pay gap in Vietnam, a level that is higher than in most other South-East Asian countries.¹⁰⁵ Furthermore, women wage earners in Vietnam's garment sector are twice as likely to earn low pay than men.¹⁰⁶ Significantly, differences in women and men's skills, experience, education and training do not sufficiently explain the gender pay gap and particularly the 'unexplained' element.¹⁰⁷ Working in a highly feminised industry and occupations (such as in the garment sector) and the incidence of motherhood, are two of the most significant factors underlying Vietnam's gender pay gap.¹⁰⁸ ¹⁰⁹ In many developing countries, lifting minimum wages has reduced the gender pay gap and helped tackle women's low pay. However, in Vietnam, low minimum wages and low pay continue to be major problems for garment workers, leading to a dependence on overtime to increase earnings.

2.5.2 Production targets, supervisors' incentives and production pressures

One of the main factors that increase violence and harassment in the garment sector is the system of production targets and bonuses, which are linked to worker's and supervisor's final pay. This is

important in relation to Fair Wear's work on living wages^{110 111} and highlights how garment factories' pay and bonus structure can amplify the risk of violence and harassment occurring.

Similarly, ILO Better Work found that sexual harassment was more likely to take place when pay and incentives were linked to production targets and the awarding of bonuses. This increased the likelihood that workers would be expected to give sexual favours or be forced to tolerate sexual harassment so as not to jeopardise their bonus payments.¹¹² In particular, this applies to piece-rate systems, whereby '...supervisors responsible for output reporting may extract some portion of the piece-rate incentive from workers in the form of sexual favour.'¹¹³ Where workers are reliant on 'partial piece rate' pay, as is the case in Vietnam's garment sector, there is an increased likelihood that workers will experience sexual harassment as well as verbal abuse, physical and mental health impacts and lower life satisfaction.¹¹⁴

Managers and supervisors' use of power is inextricably linked to production targets and bonuses, which in turn increases the safety risks for women workers and negatively affects their working environment. In several garment-producing countries, including Vietnam, workers frequently work to daily production targets, which increases the likelihood that concerns about sexual harassment will be reported. This impacts negatively on job satisfaction, and individuals' physical and psychological health, including distress and trauma, which affects performance at work and causes productivity losses.¹¹⁵

Unrealistic production deadlines result in heightened stress amongst supervisors and are closely associated with workers facing greater levels of verbal abuse and sexual harassment.¹¹⁶ In particular, Better Work suggests that 'High-pressured sourcing practices can increase the likelihood that workers experience abusive treatment.'¹¹⁷ Supervisors' stress levels are associated with increased levels of verbal abuse and sexual harassment, and supervisors' stress levels increase significantly when there are late delivery penalties, technical or social compliance requirements change and there is uncertainty over orders.

Better working conditions and pay are closely linked to higher productivity levels. Evidence from Better Work factories in Vietnam shows that when working conditions improve, workers are able to reach their daily production targets 40 minutes faster than factories with poorer working conditions.¹¹⁸ In addition, verbal abuse is closely connected to workers' productivity levels—on average, when workers experienced verbal abuse they had to work an additional hour per day (based on a 10-hour working day) to reach the production target, compared to workers who did not experience verbal abuse.¹¹⁹ Another factor that leads to better productivity is the training of

supervisors in implementing improvements in work organisation and production lines, which results in the reduced turnover of supervisors and workers. In Vietnam, it was found that rush orders, uncertain orders and late penalties were strongly associated with higher rates of non-compliance with working hours (as defined in the Labour Code).¹²⁰

2.5.3 Long working hours, and excessive/involuntary overtime

Long working hours and involuntary overtime increase workers' vulnerability to violence and harassment. In the Vietnamese garment sector, there is substantial evidence of non-compliance with legal limits on daily and weekly working hours.^{121 122} Better Work notes that in Vietnam more than 70% of factories do not meet legal requirements on overtime limits and 50% do not provide at least four days rest per month as set out in the Labour Code.¹²³ Fair Wear audits regularly identify excessive overtime as one of the most prominent violations of workers' rights; while reliance on overtime and not receiving the correct overtime premiums severely impacts workers' monthly pay. Accordingly, one of the most significant challenges facing brands and suppliers is reducing excessive overtime. Excessive overtime is linked to what Better Work describes as a 'cascade' of 'overtime inducing strategies' that are implemented to deal with erratic orders, the pressure to deliver orders on time and last-minute changes in technical specifications or products.¹²⁴ Better Work identified the widespread use of 'a low base pay strategy to push workers to work overtime',¹²⁵ and this includes threatening the non-renewal of contracts or dismissal, the withholding of information about actual pay and hours, and the failure to pay the proper rate for overtime. The effect of this is that overtime is frequently involuntary.

Fair Wear has highlighted that reducing the amount of overtime worked contributed to better productivity, quality of work and the retention of workers. Best practices show that reductions in excessive working hours can be achieved through effective scheduling of orders and reduced production pressures during the peak season. Two best practice examples from Deuter and Vaude are given below.

Box 2. Best practice examples from Fair Wear brands

Following an audit of their factories that revealed excessive overtime (that rose to almost 92 hours per week during the peak season), Fair Wear outdoor and sportswear member brand Deuter took steps to reduce unpredictable and long working hours at its suppliers in Vietnam. The company began by planning ahead, with longer lead-in times that enabled the supplier to become more efficient and productive. At the same time, the quality of work improved. Retention of workers also increased and workers, particularly

women with childcare responsibilities, said that these measures have particularly benefited them. This example also shows the importance of building a trusting relationship with the supplier over time and finding win-win solutions.

Another Fair Wear member, the outdoor and sportswear brand VAUDE, identified long working hours as one of the biggest challenges in their supply chain. In 2015, a company wage and overtime analysis was carried out to identify the root causes of long working hours. Based on the analysis, VAUDE improved the planning process and introduced measures to reduce pressure during peak periods of production. This gave suppliers a forecast of expected orders and enabled VAUDE to discuss capacities with them, which enabled them to balance out peak season orders and non-peak season production. VAUDE says that the measures have made economic sense, with a positive outcome on working conditions and in reducing overtime. The company has also taken steps towards improving awareness of labour rights and improved worker-management communications in its supply chain.¹²⁶

2.5.4 Policies, procedures and complaints systems

A further issue explored in this study is the role of policies, procedures and complaints systems. Evidence shows positive outcomes from the implementation of policies on the prevention of violence and harassment and training managers, supervisors and workers on these provisions.^{127 128 129 130} When factory policies and procedures exist, are known about and trusted by workers, and where there are good labour management skills and communication, sexual harassment is reduced. However, the opposite effect takes place when companies protect 'high-value employees' such as managers or where they solely seek to avoid litigation. Workers in many companies across the world speak of the lack of effective implementation of policies and procedures, a lack of trusted systems and concerns about retaliation – such as the non-renewal of contracts, being given more difficult tasks, isolation or further harassment – when complaints are made.¹³¹ In addition, when there are good relations between supervisors and workers, and where workers feel comfortable in discussing concerns with their supervisors, verbal abuse and sexual harassment decline.¹³²

2.6 THE BUSINESS CASE FOR TACKLING VIOLENCE, HARASSMENT AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE GARMENT SECTOR

Gender equality and ending violence and harassment at work are central components of profitability and competitiveness. Globally, companies with the highest levels of gender diversity on their executive teams are 21% more likely to experience above-average profitability¹³³ and improving gender parity can have significant 'economic dividends'. Aside from the benefits to individual

companies, the achievement of full gender parity in the labour market would result in US\$ 12 trillion being added to the global economy by 2025.¹³⁴

Violence and harassment have significant costs for suppliers in the garment sector – violence and harassment affect workers' productivity, the retention of workers and ultimately business profitability.¹³⁵ On production lines, verbal abuse, harassment and sexual harassment, makes it harder to reach daily production targets.^{136 137} Research by CARE International¹³⁸ estimated that the productivity cost of sexual harassment in Cambodia's garment industry was US\$ 89 million per annum. This study shows that the productivity costs associated with violence and harassment are probably similar in Vietnam's garment sector.

The evidence from this study supports a strong business case for implementing measures to address violence and harassment in the workplace, including measures that can reduce production pressures, excessive overtime as well as the implementation of effective workplace policies and trusted complaints procedures. Not only do verbal abuse, harassment and sexual harassment negatively impact on profits, they also affect companies' reputations and the ability of companies to attract and retain the best staff.¹³⁹ For example, garment factories in Jordan and Vietnam show a strong negative correlation 'between the average profits reported by managers and the average level of concern with sexual harassment reported in the workplace'.¹⁴⁰ In Vietnam, garment factories with lower levels of verbal abuse and sexual harassment are more profitable than those with higher levels.¹⁴¹ In addition, in Vietnam the productivity increases in Better Work factories were found to be closely associated with better working conditions, higher pay and lower hours, and the increased labour costs associated with higher wages were offset by increased productivity and improved sourcing terms.¹⁴²

'Victims of violence and harassment often experience damaging psychological and physical effects. This can also have a negative effect on workplace communications and the working environment, and in turn, on a factories' productivity. For workers, it can result in stress, demotivation, decreased job satisfaction, lower productivity, compromised teamwork and job losses. What hurts employees, ultimately hurts businesses and communities. For companies and factories, there are clear business benefits if they prevent and address violence and harassment.'¹⁴³

2.6.1 Human rights due diligence

An important element of the business case for eliminating violence and harassment is its linkage to responsible business practices and the effective implementation of human rights frameworks and international labour standards. Business and human rights principles¹⁴⁴ have evolved out of a concern about human rights abuses in the supply chain operations of multinational corporations. The need for

businesses to adhere to and monitor labour standards has led to calls for a binding UN treaty with strengthened due diligence frameworks.¹⁴⁵

In particular, the UN Guiding Principles on business and human rights (UNGPs) highlight the importance of human rights due diligence as it applies to the principles of 'prevention, mitigation and remedy'.¹⁴⁶ Of particular relevance is the implementation of due diligence frameworks and their application to gender-related issues such as gender-based violence.¹⁴⁷ This means that companies would need to mitigate the potential risks of an adverse impact on women workers by bringing women workers' rights and representation to the heart of 'prevention, mitigation and remedy' strategies. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD's) guidance on due diligence for the garment and footwear sector sets out specific guidance on sexual harassment and gender-based violence in the workplace under three headings: embedding responsible business conduct in enterprise policy and management systems; identifying potential and actual harms in the enterprise's own operations and in its supply chain; and preventing or mitigating harm in the enterprise's own operations and in its supply chain. This approach is reinforced in OECD's recent guidance on human rights due diligence, which states that 'Applying a gender perspective to due diligence means thinking through how real or potential adverse impacts may differ for or may be specific to women.'¹⁴⁸

2.7 PROMOTING SOCIAL DIALOGUE IN VIETNAM

'With effective collective bargaining, workers are able to have [a] fairer share of economic growth and productivity gains. This is significant, because growing inequalities are at the heart of political instability in many countries.'¹⁴⁹

As one of the three pillars of the Fair Wear Strategic Partnership, social dialogue is critical to improving workers' rights and ending violence and harassment throughout the garment supply chain. There is a strong business case for social dialogue, including freedom of association, collective bargaining and effective forms of workplace cooperation.¹⁵⁰ Social dialogue can make a substantive contribution to gender equality and ending violence and harassment in the world of work.^{151 152 153 154} Social dialogue not only makes an important contribution to good governance in the workplace, it also contributes to economic growth and to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals' ambitious targets on gender equality, decent work and ending violence against women.¹⁵⁶

ILO's tripartite constituents have highlighted the vital role that social dialogue plays in 'setting wages and working conditions, promoting decent work, gender equality and non-discrimination, social

protection and occupational safety and health, supporting skills development, reducing inequalities, and anticipating and managing change'.¹⁵⁷ The importance of social dialogue (including collective bargaining) in preventing violence and harassment and in agreeing on effective workplace policies, is recognised in ILO Convention 190 on violence and harassment against women in the world of work, and in the accompanying ILO Recommendation 206 on eliminating violence and harassment.

In addition, workplace cooperation (at the company or workplace level) is a form of social dialogue that involves information sharing, consultations and the development of workplace policies and joint initiatives. Workplace cooperation includes the prevention gender-specific safety and health risks, and it is an important entry point to finding joint solutions on specific gender-related issues in the working environment (e.g. verbal abuse, sexual harassment, access to toilets and measures to promote women's reproductive and sexual health).

In Vietnam, as noted above, there are promising signs that ILO Conventions on freedom of association and collective bargaining will be ratified. These have been the most 'challenging area[s] in terms of labour rights for Vietnam'.¹⁵⁸ This is primarily because factory-based unions are tied to management, making it difficult, if not impossible, for unions to independently represent workers in negotiations with employers or to represent workers complaining about violence and harassment. However, through social dialogue, trade unions and employers have the potential to play a critical role in preventing violence and harassment, particularly in situations where women face greater risks of violence and harassment. Furthermore, social dialogue is essential in ensuring effective supply chain management to tackle violence and harassment.¹⁵⁹

Improving women's representation in social dialogue bodies can help to empower women garment workers to express their interests in the workplace better. Social dialogue is also associated with higher wages and reduced concerns about verbal abuse and sexual harassment.¹⁶⁰ When women participate in factory level social dialogue committees in proportion to their numbers in the workforce, there are further significant improvements, including a reduction in workers' concerns about verbal abuse and sexual harassment. In particular, collective bargaining agreements (CBAs) reduce the levels of verbal abuse and sexual harassment, leading to better worker satisfaction.^{161 162}

Section 3. Profile of garment workers interviewed and their employment, pay and working conditions

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This section details the profile of the garment workers interviewed for this study, based on their: i) demographic profile and living situation; ii) current and previous employment; and iii) pay, working hours, overtime and other working conditions. Section 7 provides further analysis of these individual characteristics and work-related factors to outline how they are associated with heightened levels of violence and harassment.

Seven hundred and sixty-three female garment workers were interviewed in three Vietnamese provinces (254 in Hai Duong, 253 in HCMC and 256 in Dong Nai). Seven FGDs were held (three in Hai Duong, two in HCMC and two in Dong Nai).

Box 3. Summary demographic and work profile of women garment workers interviewed

Mean age: 30 years.

Education: Nearly half had achieved at least a secondary school education (up to age 15).

Marital status: 70% were married.

Dependent children: 70% had dependent children. Of those with dependent children, less than 50% lived with their children.

Migration status: 82% migrated from rural areas to work in urban areas and industrial zones.

Remittances: Almost 40% send regular remittances home.

Occupation: 68.5% worked as sewing machinists (one of the lowest paid grades of workers).

Length of time working for current employer: 31.5% of the women workers interviewed had been working for their current employer for under one year.

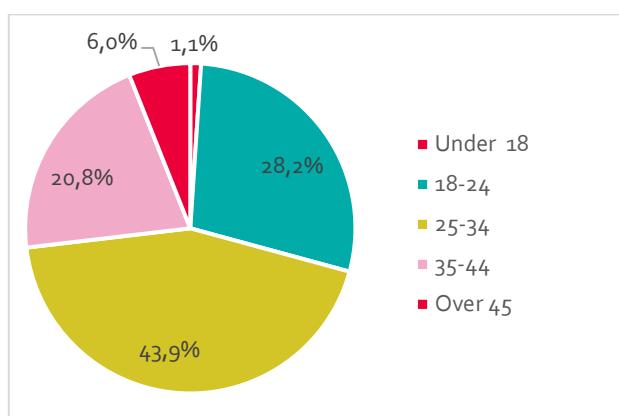
Contract of employment: 90.2% had a contract of employment, of which only 2.6% had indefinite contracts.

3.2 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE AND LIVING SITUATION

3.2.1 Age

Overall, the women garment workers interviewed had a mean age of 30 years. As Chart 1 shows, the majority of respondents were young women in the 18-24-year-old age group (28.2%) and the 25-34-year-old age group (43.9%). Smaller numbers were in the 35-44-year-old age group (20.8%) and the over 45 years age group (6.0%) and the under 18 years age group (1.1%). The age profiles are typical of employment in Vietnam's garment sector. Although there were no significant variations in Hai Duong and HCMC, in Dong Nai the age profile was younger than the other two provinces. Respondents in Dong Nai province also reported higher levels of violence and harassment, which may be explained by their younger age profile.

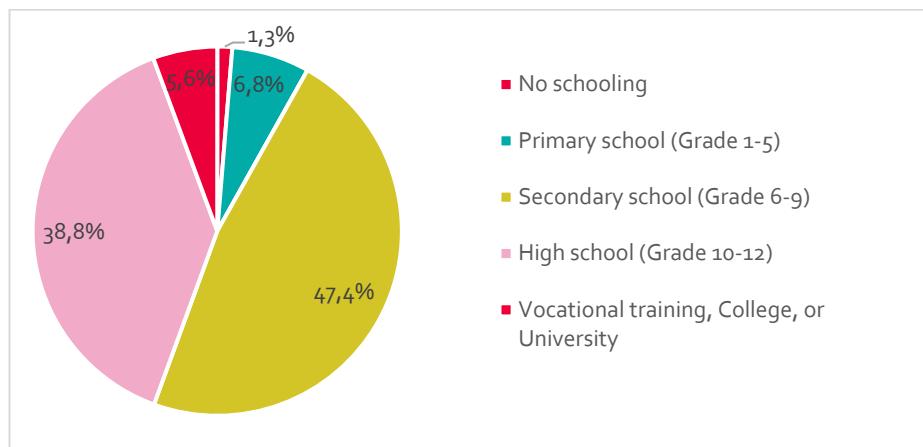
Chart 1: Distribution of sample size by age group (N=763)



3.2.2 Education levels

Vietnamese garment workers typically have lower educational levels than other workers in the formal sector. As Chart 2 outlines, 47.4% of respondents achieved just a secondary school education (47.4%), and 38.8% went on to also achieve a high school level education. Interestingly, women that attained higher levels of education were more likely to recognise, identify and report sexual harassment (see Section 7).

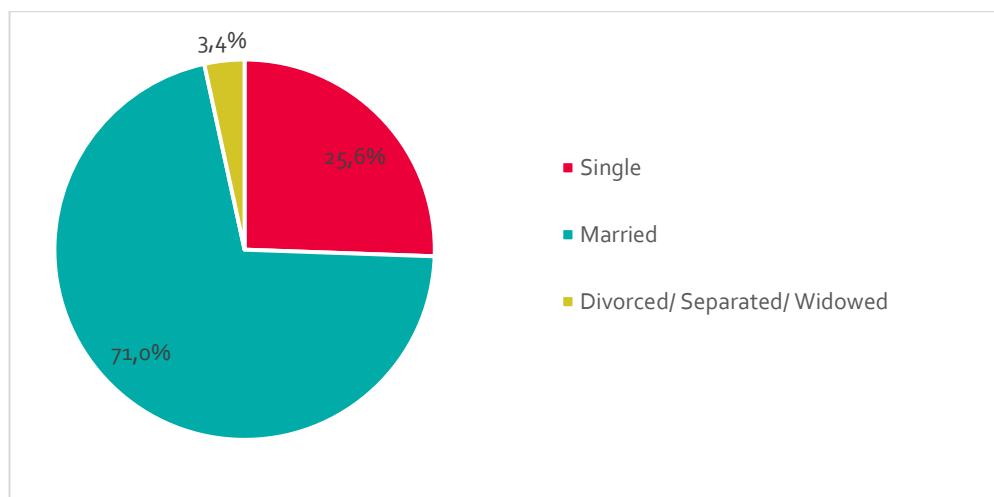
Chart 2: Distribution of sample size by educational attainment level (N=763)



3.2.3 Marital status and dependent children

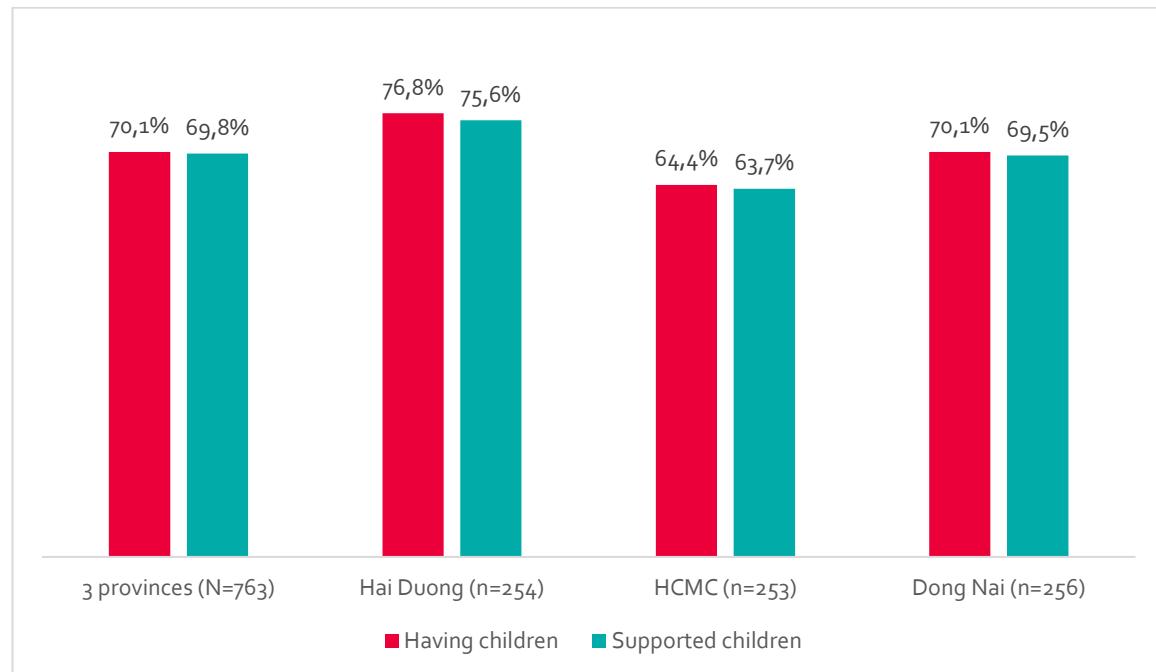
Chart 3 shows that just over 70% of respondents were married, a pattern that is consistent across the three provinces covered in the study. The issue of marital status is important in the context of previous research in Vietnam, which shows that married women garment workers rarely disclosed violence and harassment because of the stigma and shame associated with it – the disclosure of sexual harassment frequently results in the break-up of a marriage.¹⁶³ This study did not reveal significant differences between married and non-married women's reporting of violence and harassment; however, slightly more married women reported violence and harassment than non-married women, suggesting a change in perceptions about reporting the issue since Khuat Thu Hong's 2004 study.

Chart 3: Distribution of sample size by marital status (N=763)



This study showed that women garment workers with dependent children mostly had responsibility for supporting their children. Chart 4 illustrates the percentage of workers with dependent children who also provide support for them. Overall, 70.1% of respondents had dependent children, and 69.8% of respondents support their children. There are similar proportions across the three provinces.

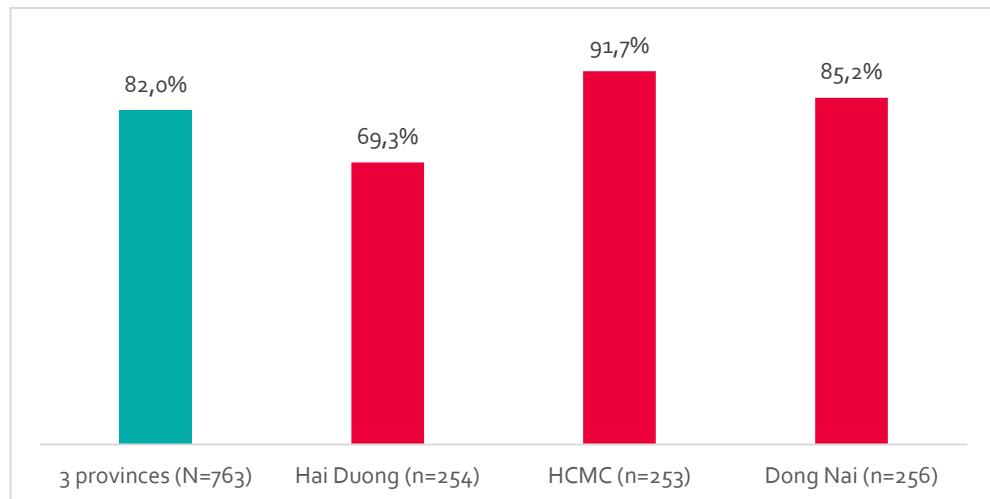
Chart 4: Distribution of sample size by their self-reporting on dependent children and children who are supported by them (N=763)



3.2.4 Migration status

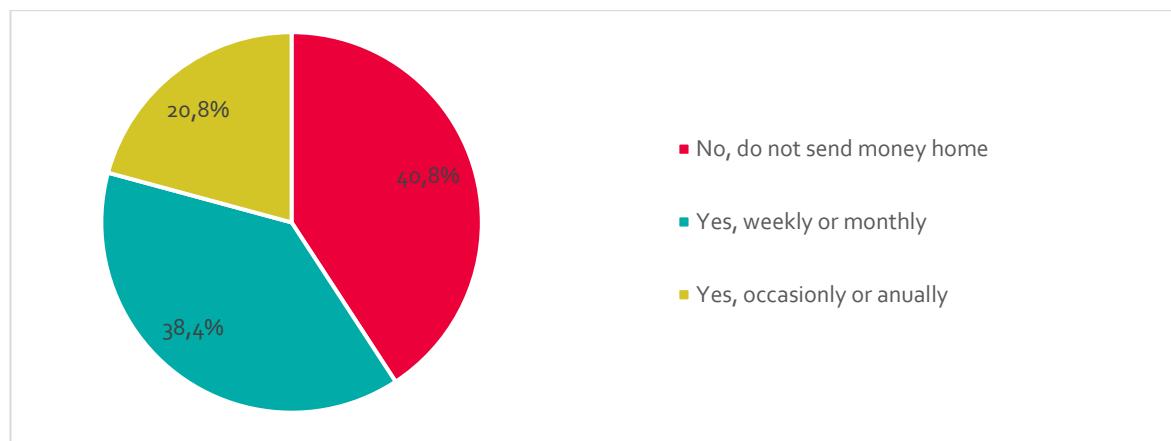
Chart 5 shows that 82% of the workers interviewed for this study migrated from other Vietnamese provinces. Across the three provinces, the highest proportions of migrant workers found in HCMC (91.7%), followed by Dong Nai (85.2%) and Hai Duong (69.3%). The majority of the workers interviewed for this study belonged to the Kinh ethnic group, which is the largest ethnic minority group in Vietnam. This study shows that migrant women garment workers have unique experiences of discrimination and heightened levels of violence and harassment (see Section 7).

Chart 5: Distribution of sample size by migration status and province (N=763)



A noteworthy finding from this study is that a significant number of migrant women garment workers send money home to support their children and other family members. As Chart 6 on remittances highlights, 40.8% of workers frequently send money home for children and family members, while 38.4% send money home occasionally or annually. Some garment workers saved earnings over the year to take home during the annual leave, which for many migrant women is the only time when they can return to their children and families.

Chart 6: Distribution of sample size by remittances (N=763)



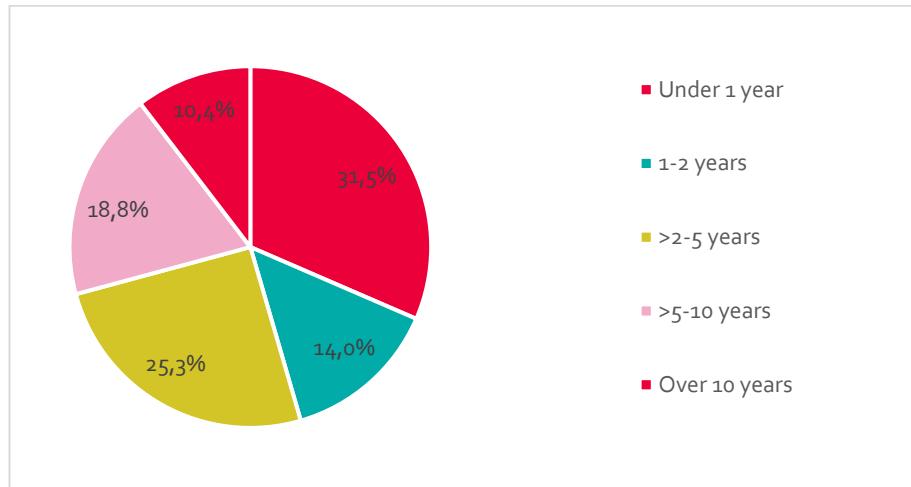
3.3 CURRENT AND PREVIOUS EMPLOYMENT

Most respondents were currently working in jobs as sewing machinists (68.5%). This reflects the predominance of women carrying out sewing work and occupational segregation by gender in Vietnam's garment sector.

3.3.1 Length of time working for current employer

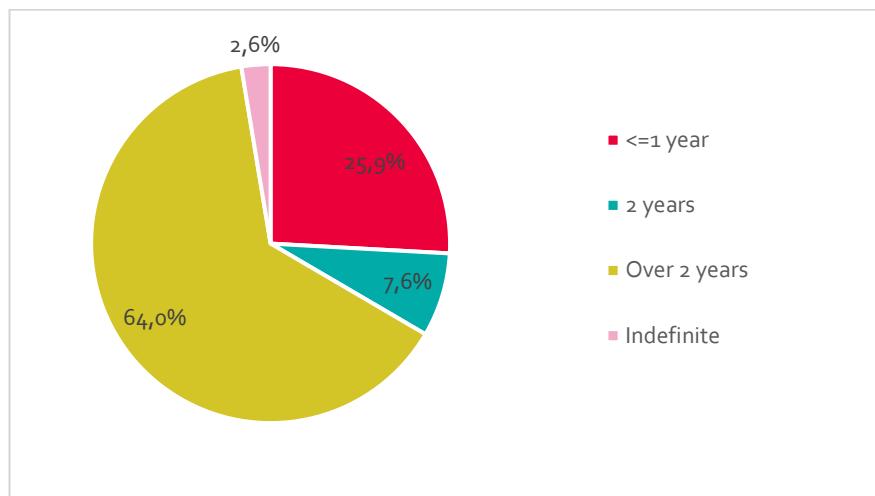
Most women garment workers had been working for their current employer for a relatively short period. Chart 7 details that 31.5% of respondents had been working for their current employer for under one year, with lower numbers working for 1-2 years (14%), 2-5 years (25.3%), 5-10 years (18.8%) and over 10 years (10.4%).

Chart 7: Distribution of sample size by length of time working for their current employer (N=763)



A related finding is that although 90.2% of respondents said that they had a contract of employment, most were short-term and very few had indefinite contracts. As illustrated in Chart 8, only 2.6% of garment workers said that their contract was indefinite, while 25.9% had a one-year contract, 7.6% had a two-year contract and 64% had a contract of over two years. This data is particularly relevant in terms of vulnerability to violence and harassment, as this study's results show that the shorter the time working for an employer, the greater the chance of the worker experiencing violence and harassment (see Section 8).

Chart 8: Length of contract of employment (among the women garment workers that have contracts with their current company, N=688)



Box 4. Case study 1

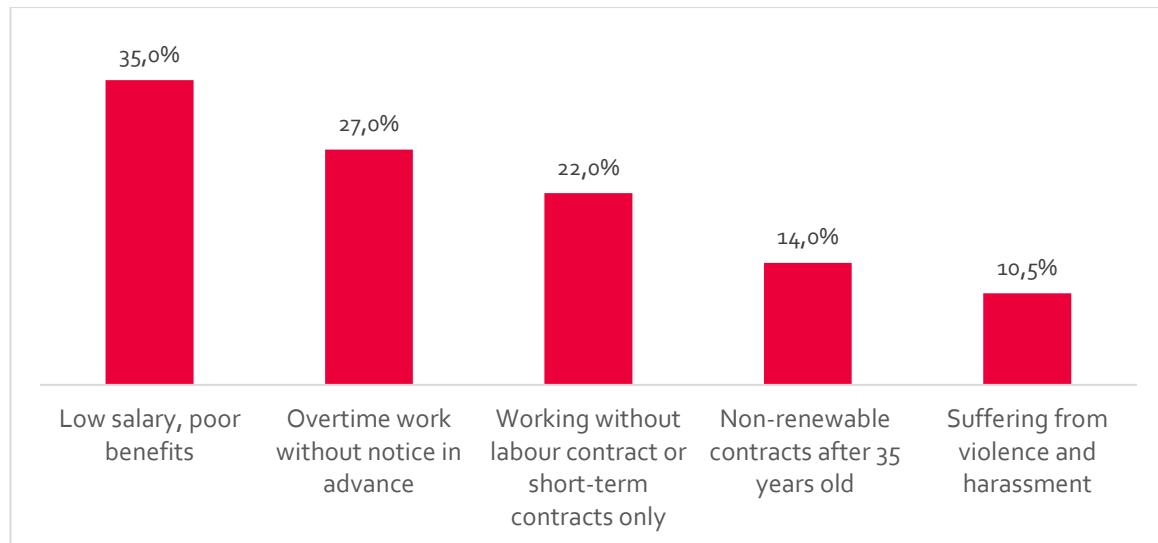
Tham is an 18-year-old garment worker in a factory in Hai Duong province, who comes from a remote region of North-Eastern Vietnam. She has been in her current job as a sewer for nine months. Before Tham was given a contract of employment, she had to complete a basic skills training programme. During the training, her male coach started deliberately touching her and showing her pornographic movies on his phone. This unwanted attention scared Tham and, one time when she protested, he cursed her and threatened not to sign her contract. On another occasion, the coach said: 'if you just follow what I want, I can help you become a full-time employee with a contract of employment'. Tham did not dare to talk to anyone about what had happened and was unable to sleep or eat. As Tham did not have a contract of employment, she was reluctant to complain, and she did not know whom she could talk to. Tham kept her distance from the trainer, and after the training, she signed a contract and became a full-time employee. Tham said that she still sometimes thinks about reporting the sexual harassment that she experienced; however, she is afraid as she is still a new employee and does not want to lose her job. Tham also thinks that nobody would believe her and that it would be embarrassing for her to make a complaint.

3.3.2 Turnover and retention

The interviews with the women garment workers highlighted the high staff turnover in the garment sector. In areas where there is significant competition for workers, workers often change jobs regularly as they seek better pay and conditions of employment. High turnover has costs for companies, especially when it is necessary to recruit and train new staff. To build a picture of the reasons for high staff turnover, respondents were asked to give the reasons for leaving their previous employment.

As Chart 9 illustrates, low pay and benefits were the primary reasons why respondents left their previous job, and 35% of respondents mentioned this. The second most cited reason was having to work overtime without notice (27%), followed by working without a contract, or on a short-term contract (22%), not having their contract renewed (14%) and because they suffered violence and harassment (10.5%).

Chart 9: Reasons for leaving previous employment among respondents who had previously worked in another garment factory (N=248)



3.4 PAY, WORKING TIME, OVERTIME AND WORKING CONDITIONS

This study investigated the circumstances in which pay, working hours and working conditions may contribute to a culture of violence and harassment at work.

3.4.1 Workers' pay and how pay is made up

As chart 10 highlights, the average monthly income of the garment workers interviewed was 6.2 million VND (approx. €233.5) per month (2018), and this varied across the three provinces. As noted in Section 2, the different average income levels partly reflect the four different regional minimum pay levels across Vietnam as well as the different bonuses, allowances and overtime pay that garment workers' earned to supplement their basic pay.

Chart 10: Monthly average income of interviewed workers in the last year (N=763)

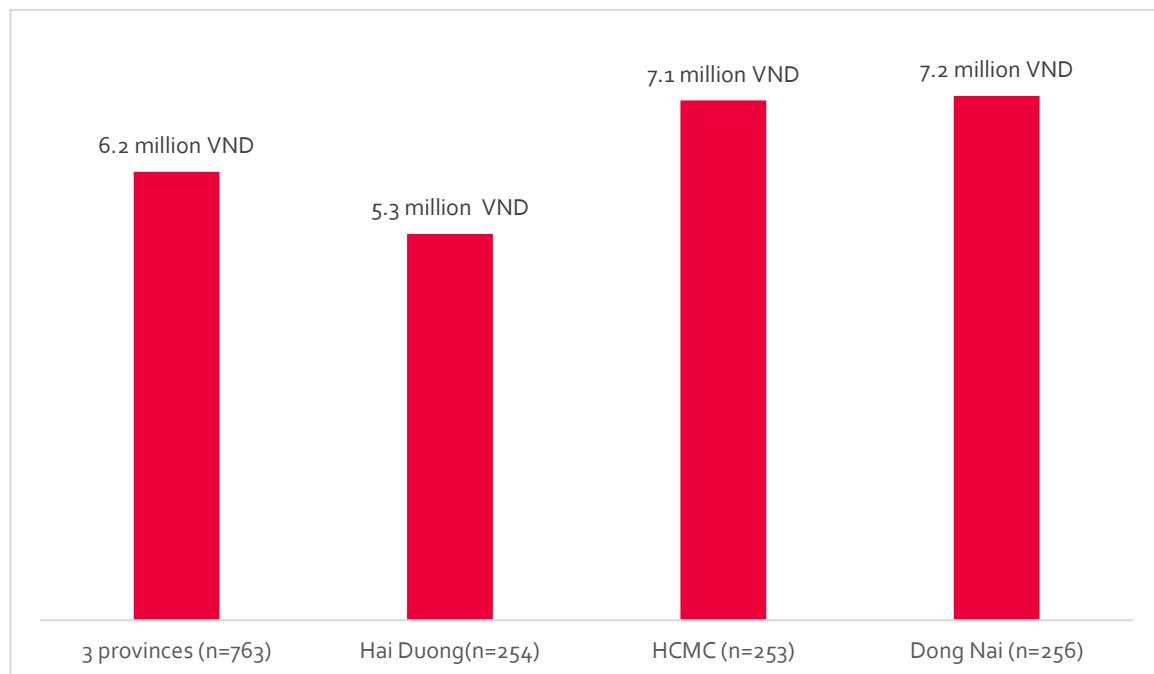
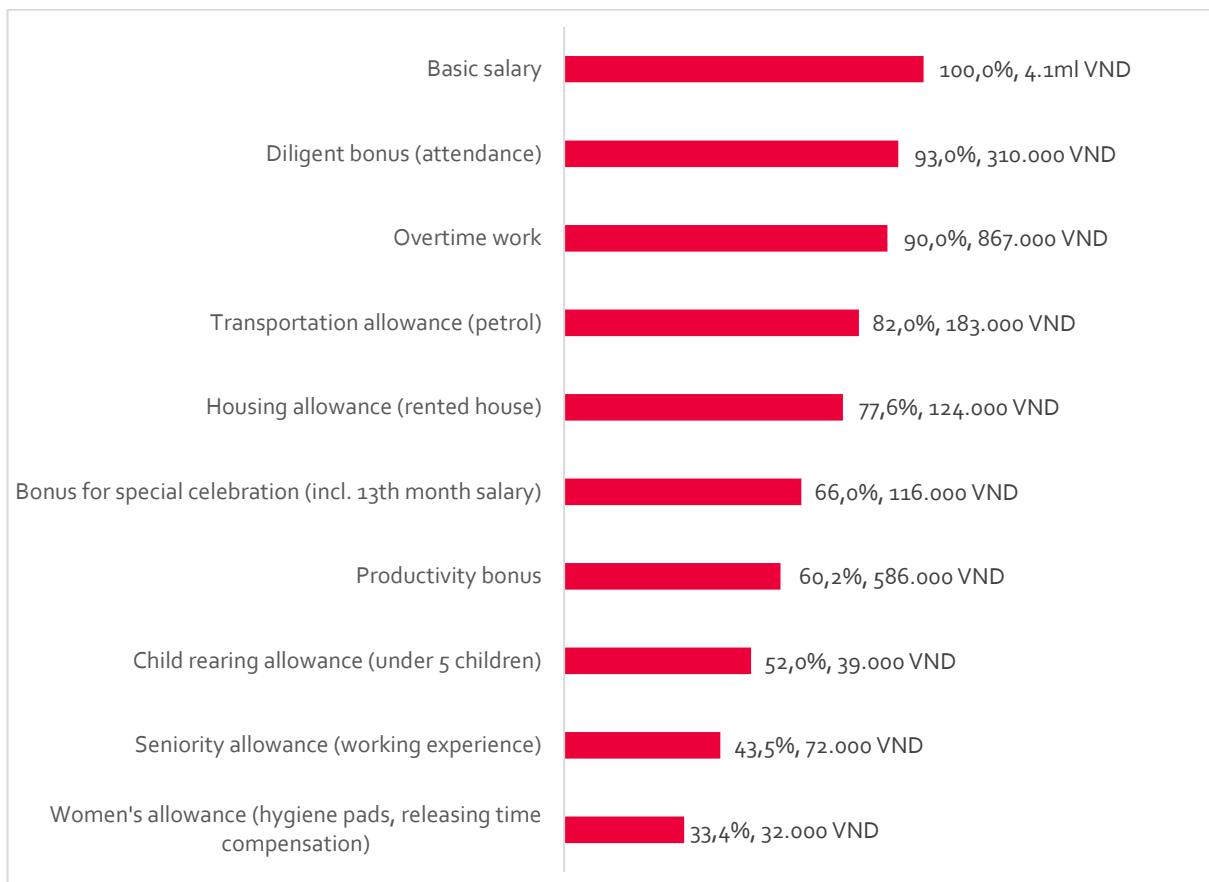


Chart 11 summarises the different elements of the overall pay that the interviewed garment workers reported. These are based on the different elements of basic pay, allowances and bonuses that make up women garment workers overall monthly incomes. Chart 11 shows the income source, the percentage of the income source received and the amount of each income source. On average, workers received a basic monthly pay of 4.1 million VND, 93% of workers received the diligence bonus (awarded for attendance) at 310,000 VND and 90% received overtime payments at an average of 867,000 VND per month. Just 60.2% of workers received the productivity bonus averaged at 586,000 VND per month.

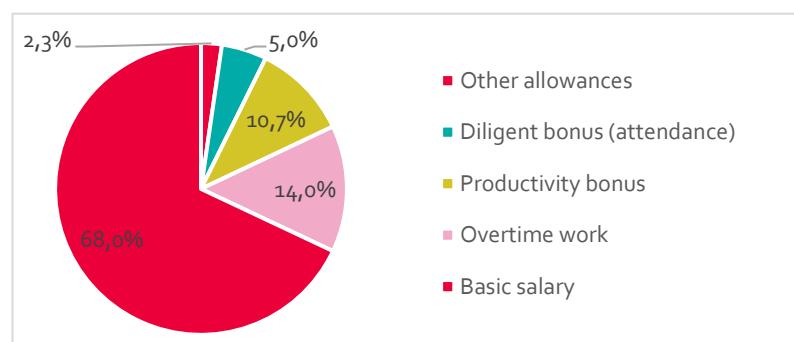
This shows that in addition to basic pay (which is set by minimum wages) there is a wide range of benefits, allowances and bonuses that form an integral part of garment workers' final pay package. The most important amongst which are overtime payments and productivity bonuses. Consequently, for the vast majority of workers, bonuses and other benefits, including productivity payments and overtime, are crucial elements of their final monthly pay.

Chart 11: Breakdown of workers' average monthly income sources based on what they received in the last year (N=763)



The three most important elements of total monthly income are basic pay, followed by overtime payment and productivity bonus. Chart 12 identifies all of the sources of monthly income as a proportion of the women garment workers' total income. The three most important elements of final monthly pay are basic pay, which makes up 68% of final pay, followed by overtime (14%), and the productivity bonus (10.7%). Overall, 24.7% of final pay is made up of overtime and the productivity bonus.

Chart 12: Major sources of income as a proportion of total income (N=763)



Social protection, which includes pension entitlements and health insurance, is also important. Workers that work between one and three months in a given year are not entitled by law to social protection contributions (social insurance and health insurance). In the interviews, 6.7% of women garment workers said that they did not have access to social and health insurance because they were on a short-term contract. Significantly, some of the garment workers interviewed stated that there is a revolving door with some companies regularly not issuing or renewing contracts for workers to avoid paying social and health insurance contributions.

3.4.2 Sufficiency of pay to meet living expenses

Even when overtime and bonuses are considered, evidence from the interviews and FGDs shows that women garment workers' overall monthly pay fails to reach a living wage. This is particularly the case for migrant workers and workers with dependent children. The responses given in the interviews show that garment workers' pay is generally insufficient to meet daily living requirements. As Chart 13 highlights, 54.8% of respondents had an income that was *only* sufficient to cover *basic* living expenses. A higher number of the women interviewed reported on the sufficiency of monthly incomes to meet *only* daily living expenses in Hai Duong, compared to HCMC and Dong Nai.

Chart 13: Percentage of workers that reported that current income is ONLY sufficient to cover basic expenditure for daily living activities (N=763)

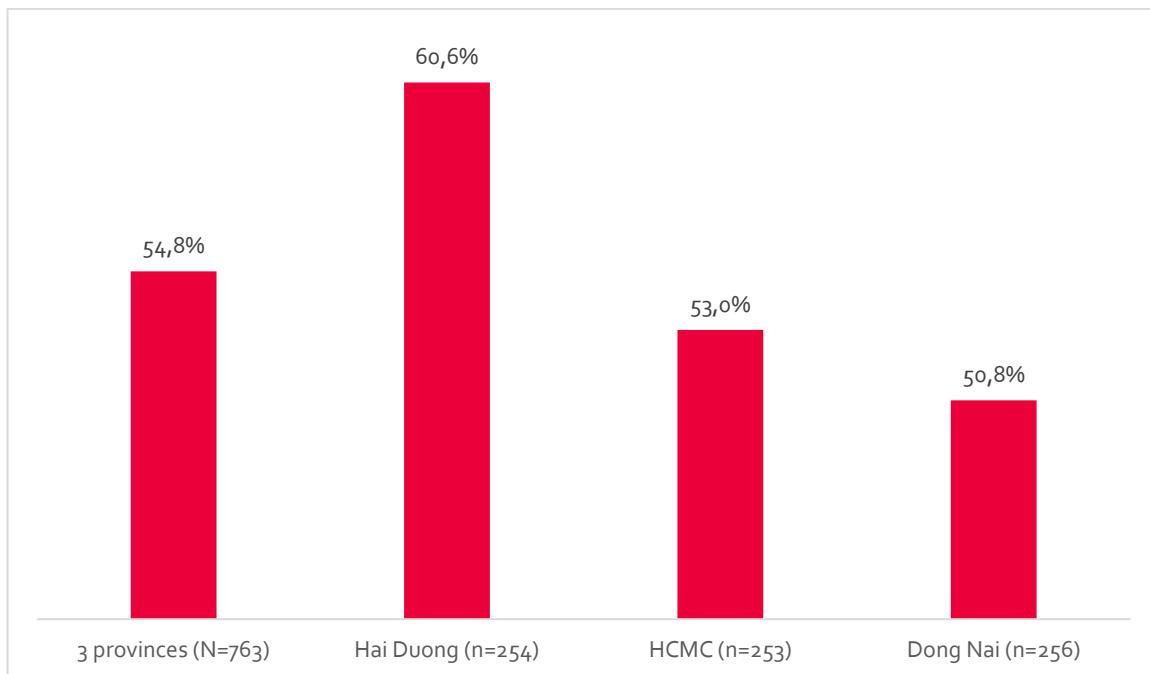


Table 1 goes a step further and identifies the different elements of expenditure required to cover daily living needs and shows respondents' views about the sufficiency of income to cover each of these daily living needs. Respondents were asked to rank on a scale from one to five whether their current income covers a range of living needs. Table 1 shows the number and percentage of workers who agreed (a score of three or higher) that their current income covers each of these living needs. With overtime, bonuses linked to productivity and attendance and allowances included in the workers' final pay, more than half of respondents stated that their income was only sufficient to cover *basic* expenditure for daily living needs, without sufficient resources to meet other needs such as special occasions, holidays, support to family members or savings.

Table 1: sufficiency of current income to cover living needs (1 - lowest level and 5 - highest level) (N=763)

Indicators	Number of workers who agreed that their current income is able to cover the following needs (a score of three or higher)	Percentage of workers who agreed that their current income is able to cover the following needs (a score of three or higher)	Workers' self-reported scores on sufficiency (Mean)
To live in safe accommodation that meets your needs (and those of your children)	619	83.2%	Mean: 3.6
To afford transport for yourself (and your children)	577	77.6%	Mean: 3.6
To buy enough food to enable you (and your children) to eat a balanced and wholesome diet	611	80.4%	Mean: 3.4
To pay for your (and your children's) medicines and health care	466	62.2%	Mean: 3.1
To buy sufficient clothing and shoes to meet your (and your children's) needs	407	53.6%	Mean: 2.9
To pay for education and education related expenses for your children	274	52.4%	Mean: 2.9

To have sufficient money to support other family members, such as parents or siblings	247	34.5%	Mean: 2.3
To be able to pay for social activities and entertainment in you (and your children's) spare time	210	28.6%	Mean: 2.2
To be able to save for holidays and special celebrations	130	17.4%	Mean: 1.9

Low pay creating the necessity to work overtime

In the FGDs, women garment workers regularly referred to their low basic pay, and how they were dependent on working overtime and earning the productivity bonus to supplement their low pay. Many respondents viewed both reaching the productivity bonus and carrying out overtime work as being essential. Regarding overtime, several women said that it was essential as basic pay is so low:

'Without overtime work, my salary is only VND 5 million. I have two kids; I am not sure if that salary is sufficient for us. When working overtime, I have more money.' (Dong Nai, FGD1)
 'If there is no overtime work, then my salary is too low to live off' (Dong Nai, FGD1).

As one woman said, urgent orders requiring overtime usually led to a higher salary, even though workers were not happy about having to work overtime:

'If you do not like urgent orders, you cannot have a high salary. But I do not like it, I mean I do not like it, but I have to still work [overtime].' (Dong Nai FGD 2)

'We are paid based on the number of products, we finish more, we are paid more, but many people do not want to work overtime.' (HCMC, FGD1)

Some migrant workers wanted to work as many hours as possible to build up resources for their families and children. This was particularly the case for women garment workers supporting their children and/or family members at a distance:

'My kids live in my home village with my mum, and I get to see them every six months, all I want to do is to work as many hours as I can so that I can send money home. It takes 10 hours on the bus to get there, and I only get one day off a week, so I do not see them very often.' (Hai Duong, FGD3)

How productivity targets impact women garment workers' final pay

Garment workers also used the FGDs to raise the problem that their final pay would be low if productivity targets were not reached:

'In a line, there are plenty of products finished every day, if we cannot finish a certain number, there is no bonus. Therefore, senior managers have to put pressure on line leaders, and line leaders push us. If you have a bonus, our salary will be higher.' (HCMC, FGD1)

'If you are in the line and your productivity is low, then your income will be reduced.' (Hai Duong, FGD1)

Insufficiency of other allowances and bonuses

Several workers spoke about not receiving allowances or benefits related to travel or their children, and that when allowances were paid, they were often too low to make a difference to final pay. For example, one respondent raised this concerning the children's allowance paid in her factory:

'This company has too few benefits for mothers having young babies... VND 2,000/month. What can we do for the baby with VND 2,000/month? What can we buy with that money, a snack, or a cheap lollipop.' (Hai Duong, FGD2)

The importance of a stable income

A key issue raised by many workers was not having a stable and regular income, as their pay (and overtime) was frequently determined by the level and volume of orders which differed during the peak season and the rest of the year. Variations in overtime and the implementation of production targets (piece-work) added to these uncertainties. The following quotes provide a sample of the responses given by garment workers in the FGDs:

'There are one or two months with fluctuated salary when there is more work to do, but when there is no work to do we get lower pay...we are paid based on [the number of] products finished.' (HCMC, FGD1)

'We are paid based on the number of products, if there are too few products to do, then there is no overtime work, and that is what we worry about.' (HCMC, FGD1)

Tactics companies to avoid paying women/unpaid leave

One of the consequences of uneven production cycles is that workers are laid off outside of the peak season when there are fewer orders, and workers are often forced to take unpaid leave. During the peak season, workers are often put under intense pressure to work long overtime hours. In the FGDs, some women workers stated that during the non-peak season employers expected them to take leave, even though it may not be the time when the worker chooses to take leave, sometimes without pay.

'Usually, they will force us to take leave if there is no work to do, or they force us to voluntarily take leave without pay.' (Hai Duong, FGD1)

'In my company, there is not much work to do, so they force us to take leave, they do not pay for unused annual leave. Since last year, we had five annual leave days, the company did not pay but required us to take leave. At the beginning of the following year when the workload is low, the company arranges for workers' annual leave' (Hai Duong, FGD2).

'If there is not much work to do, the company arranges for workers to take leave, which is not our intention and to come back. When it does not have orders, then the company forces us to take leave.' (Hai Duong, FGD2)

Some workers spoke of the tactics used by companies to avoid paying workers when orders were low, such as forcing workers to take unpaid leave or finding reasons to terminate them. A respondent stated that:

'If there is no order, then the company shall think of something to make us frustrated and quit. So, having product orders to maintain the job is the thing I like most.' (Dong Nai FGD2)

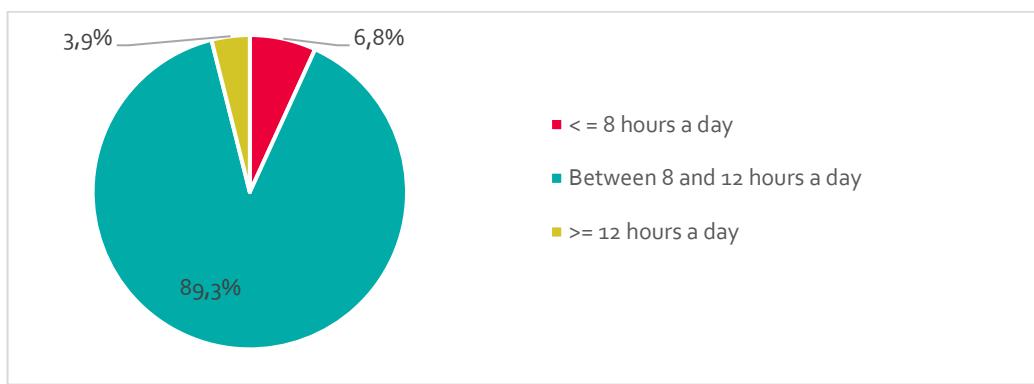
Problems with salaries and other work-related problems were often hidden, with no opportunity to raise these matters.

'Clients used to come, they called each person to interview, and yet, in general, we only talked about good things. All the problems like annual leave, remuneration, policies for young children were not mentioned. Actually, there is money as an allowance, but that money is in fact only VND 20,000 a year, VND 2,000 per month, as a way of putting a tick on the list to say that there is a benefit.' (Hai Duong, FGD2)

3.4.3 Working hours and overtime

This study shows that overtime, particularly involuntary overtime, is closely connected to the increased occurrence of violence and harassment in Vietnam's garment sector (Section 8 describes these associations in detail). The interviews asked respondents to report on the average daily working hours, overtime worked during the non-peak) and peak seasons, and whether overtime is compulsory or if workers have a right to turn down overtime. Chart 14 shows that 89.3% of respondents worked on average between 8 and 12 hours a day, with just 3.9% of respondents stating that they worked more than 12 hours a day.

Chart 14: Women garment workers' average daily working hours (N=763)



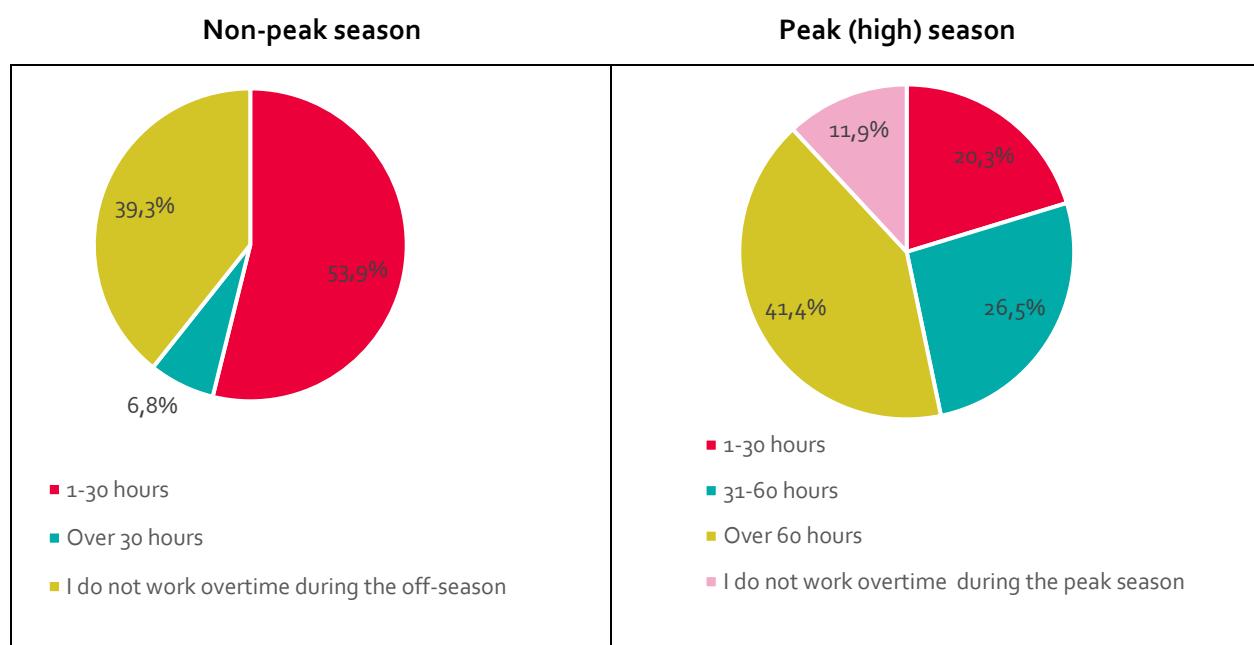
However, as Chart 15 details, there are significant variations in working hours and overtime according to the peak and non-peak seasons. During the non-peak season, 53.9% of respondents worked

between one and 30 hours overtime per month, just 6.8% worked over 30 hours of overtime per month and 39.3% did not work any overtime. One woman explained when overtime was most likely:

'[During the peak season] we work from 8:30 a.m. until 9 p.m., that is from March to the end of June. Last year, and recently, there was lots of overtime work. There is more overtime work at the end of the year and in the first month of the lunar calendar. Last year, near the Tet holiday, we worked until 9 p.m.' (Hai Duong, FGD1)

Many of the women garment workers interviewed said that during the peak season they worked overtime hours that were significantly above the 30 hours of overtime per week permitted the Labour Code. 26.5% of the respondents worked between 31 and 60 hours of overtime per month, and 41.42% worked over 60 hours of overtime per month. In addition, only 20.3% worked between one and 30 hours overtime (within the limit set by the Labour Code). Excessive overtime at these levels potentially has significant impacts to health and wellbeing, worker satisfaction and productivity. As Section 8 details, excessive overtime – usually related to tight production deadlines and pressures – is closely connected to a higher incidence of violence and harassment.

Chart 15: Women garment workers' average working hours in the peak and non-peak seasons (N=763)



Paid and unpaid overtime

In the FGDs, women garment workers frequently stated that long working hours and overtime were closely connected to production pressures. Many respondents spoke of intense working pressures that resulted from unscheduled or late orders and led to significant pressure being placed on them to

work overtime, often at very short notice. Garment workers spoke about being expected to stay behind after work to reach their production target and doing unpaid overtime. This unfair 'partial piece work' system is closely linked to excessive overtime working and seriously disadvantages women.

Unpaid overtime

Many women garment workers said that production targets were set too high and were difficult to reach, often resulting in women having to stay and work overtime (normally without pay). The following quotes are a selection of comments from workers about unpaid overtime that they are pressurised into carrying out to meet production targets:

'In the case of overtime work, we may have to stay till 7:30 p.m. without being paid for overtime work. Even on Sunday, they can request/force workers to work overtime for the whole day, and if we do not come to work on Sunday, then we would be moved to another position where we have to stand for the whole day outside the line.' (Dong Nai, FGD1)

'If in eight hours I do not finish overlocking two packs of trouser pockets, then I have to stay to work overtime.' (Dong Nai, FGD 1)

'We have to work overtime to meet the production line target, but we are not paid for it. The target is always too high.' (Hai Duong, FGD3)

'If you cannot finish by the end of the day because your tasks are difficult, then you have to work overtime [without pay] until you finish.' (Hai Duong, FGD1)

'If you do not finish, then even on Sunday, you still have to come and work.' (Dong Nai, FGD1)

Although many workers stated that overtime is voluntary, it is difficult for workers to refuse overtime because it inevitably leads to reprisals.

'You probably can [refuse overtime]. Yet the manager will scold, and it will also affect your next day's productivity.' (Hai Duong, FGD1)

'You cannot say no; it is obligated. How can I say no? I just obey, unless I have an urgent matter [sick]...usually, we cannot reject a request for overtime work.' (Hai Duong, FGD2)

'We work in a line, if one person is off, and if they cannot arrange cover, then it is not easy.' (Hai Duong, FGD1)

There are frequent abuses of the limits on the amount of overtime that can be worked and the payment of rates of pay, as set out in the 2012 Labour Code. For example, in one factory workers had to clock out of work before they started overtime so that their overtime hours of work were not recorded:

'Fingerprinting [for clocking on and off] has been introduced in some factories to control excessive hours. However, it is abused in some factories. This means that workers often do not get paid over the maximum of 12 hours a day under the Labour Code. They clock off after

a 12-hour day, but then they are expected to work more hours without pay [which is not recorded].’ (Hai Duong, FGD3)

3.4.4 Production pressures

In the FGDs, production pressures were one of the most frequently discussed concerns faced by garment workers – production pressures lead to stress and pressure from supervisors and managers, which often results in violence and harassment. The respondents repeatedly said that they were under pressure to work harder and harder all the time. Many said that production targets were set too high so that they were never able to reach the targets set, which often resulted in them having to work involuntary overtime. This also impacted their salaries as they were not always able to achieve full production bonuses. Women garment workers commonly reported that verbal threats were frequently associated with productivity pressures. The following set of quotes from garment workers in the FGDs concern production pressures:

‘More pressure. Pressure everywhere, every factory, all the same. For example, in an hour, if they request to finish a certain number of products, we have to finish that number as requested.’ (Hai Duong, FGD1).

‘He said “if today you do not finish all, you cannot leave”.’ (Hai Duong, FGD1)

‘If we do not have work pressure, then we feel comfortable. But if there is work pressure, then the work environment is not comfortable.’ (HCMC, FGD2)

‘There is a lot of pressure and even [when we reach targets] they assign us with harder tasks, so we are under constant pressure.’ (HCMC, FGD2)

‘High pressure, it is very, very terrible, I understand that the supervisor and line manager also have high pressure, but always they are increasing the production target, it is not because we are lazy, and even when we try our best we cannot do what they ask us.’ (Hai Duong, FGD3)

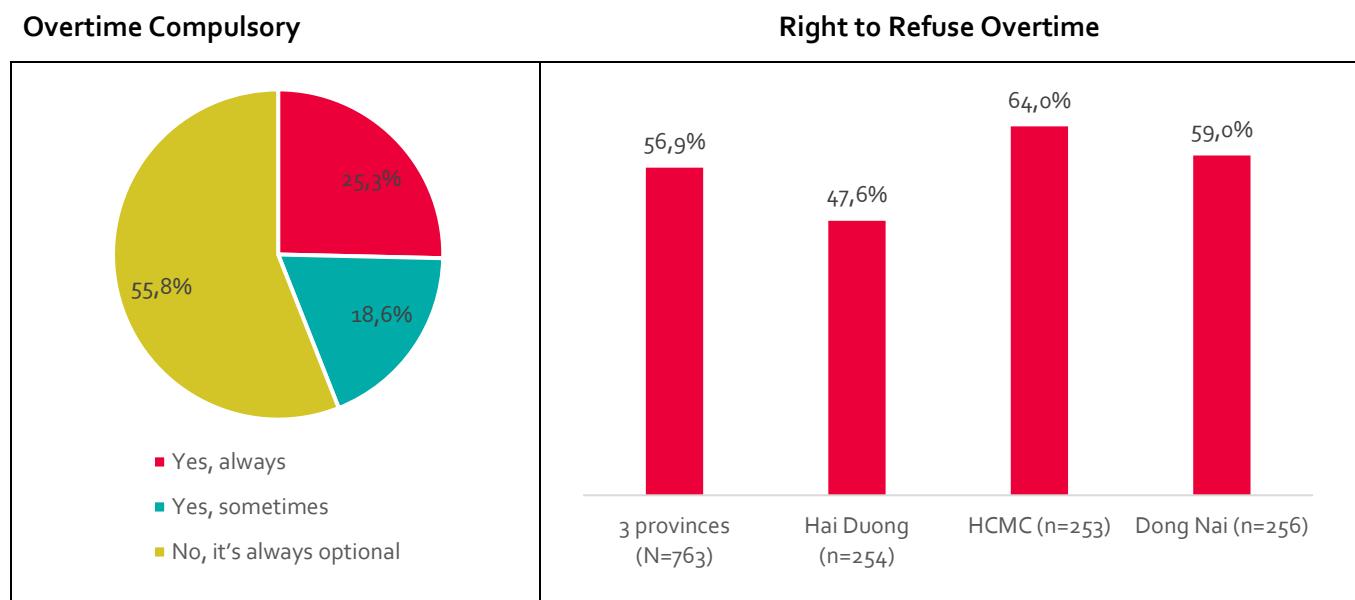
With regard to excessive overtime, in one FGD workers spoke about the intense pressure that they faced during the peak season, which resulted in long hours. As one participant said:

‘It is terrible, terrible, terrible, the pressure we are put under, we are expected to work long hours, and we only have some spare time to get some sleep.’ (Hai Duong, FGD3)

Voluntary and involuntary overtime

In the interviews, women garment workers were asked to comment on whether overtime was compulsory in the factory where they worked. As the pie chart in Chart 16 illustrates, 25.3% of workers said that overtime was always compulsory, 18.6% said it was sometimes compulsory, and 55.8% said that it was always optional. In the bar chart, 56.9% stated that they had the right to refuse overtime without it impacting their job security. Higher numbers of women garment workers said that this was the case in HCMC, followed by Dong Nai and Hai Duong.

Chart 16: Compulsory overtime and the right to refuse working overtime (N=763)



However, significantly, in the FGDs, some workers that had stated that overtime was sometimes compulsory or optional also said that refusal to carry out overtime could impact on their future employment status. Several women stated that they could not refuse to work overtime, even though the company policy was that overtime was voluntary. Refusing overtime has consequences for workers and particularly affected women with dependent children:

'It is ok to refuse, yet the managers are not happy, or on the next day, they will arrange for me to work with difficult tasks.' (HCMC, FGD1)

'I only ask for leave (not to work overtime) when it is unavoidable because after that they supervise me more and find more mistakes in my work, and then I would have to do [the task] again (sew again).' (Dong Nai, FGD2)

Unscheduled overtime

In addition, in the FGDs, almost all of the participants confirmed that they 'received some prior notice on overtime'. However, this was often at very short notice. Some workers were given as little as 15 minutes notice while others said that they were informed just as they were about to leave work that they had to stay behind.

'...they inform us in advance. Tomorrow I have to work overtime, but they just inform me late this afternoon. That is prior notice. There are also ad hoc cases, e.g. my shift ends at 4:30 p.m., yet they requested me to work overtime – that was no prior notice at all.' (Hai Duong, FGD2)

'It is difficult to take annual leave – annual leave should be our right. One time I was about to go home to my family, and I had to work overtime at short notice. I had to delay my leave.' (Hai Duong, FGD3)

This lack of notice affected morale and led to significant problems for mothers who needed to return home to feed and care for their children.

3.4.5 Working conditions

Overall, workers interviewed for this study were not satisfied with working conditions. For many of the respondents, this long hours and low pay exacerbated this. Respondents were asked to report on areas of concern and where they would like to see improvements in their working conditions and this covered areas such as pay, occupational safety and health, work pressure/stress, working hours, planning for overtime, fair policies for pregnant women, social protection, being treated with respect, job security, being protected by a trade union and social dialogue.

Table 2 reflects the views of workers about their working conditions and what improvements they would like to see. This study shows that the highest level of dissatisfaction with working conditions is closely connected to low pay. The most important improvement identified was to raise wages, followed by improving social protection and family benefits, and being treated respectfully. The lowest priority was shorter working hours. This reflects the acceptance of long working hours and overtime to have sufficient earnings to live off. Even though working hours are long and workers face pressures in meeting production bonuses, the key priority for most garment workers is to work overtime to bolster their low basic pay. It is, therefore, not surprising that improving basic pay scored the highest. Also of relevance is that improving occupational safety and health and being represented by a trade union received high scores.

Table 2: Importance of changing/improving women garment workers' current company's working conditions (1 - lowest level and 5 - highest level) (N=763)

Working conditions	Number of workers that agreed that it is essential to improve the following working conditions in the factory (a score of three or higher)	Percentage of workers that agreed that it is essential to improve the following working conditions in the factory (a score of three or higher)	Self-reported scores on essentiality of improvement working conditions (Mean)
Raised wages so that workers can afford their basic needs	603	79.9%	3.3
Improved social protection (e.g. social security, child benefits, etc.)	453	60.2%	2.7
Being treated with respect	384	51.4%	2.5

Improved working conditions to ensure the occupational safety and health of workers	368	48.7%	2.4
Being protected by a workers' organisation/trade union	354	46.6%	2.4
Less pressure and stress at work	362	48.0%	2.3
Better communication/dialogue with management in the factory (social dialogue)	349	45.9%	2.3
The factory needs to implement fair policies for pregnant women	260	37.7%	2.2
Job security	236	31.8%	2
The factory needs to plan working hours/no overtime without notice	233	31.4%	1.9
Shorter working hours	211	28.1%	1.8

3.4.6 Discrimination

Most instances of discrimination experienced by women garment workers related to age or migrant status. One reason for the young age profile, revealed in more detail in the FGDs, is the overall practice in garment factories of not renewing contracts after a woman reaches around 35 years of age. This is partially explained by suppliers not wanting to employ 'older' women who may have health, manual dexterity or other physical problems that reduce productivity. Some garment workers over the age of 35 years spoke of the cumulative effect of many years of intense sewing machine work on their health and manual dexterity, which make it difficult for them to continue working at a fast pace (discussed further in Section 8). The following two garment workers explained what they considered to be a discriminatory practice:

'If at the time of recruitment, it is difficult, there are less workers to recruit, then they open the floor to women over 35 years old. But when there are many workers to select, then the maximum age range is 30.' (Dong Nai, FGD2)

'I have a one-year contract, and then it becomes a permanent contract – well at least until you are 35 years old. But the factory has the right to stop the contract any time, so it is not permanent.' (Hai Duong, FGD3)

Migrant workers asserted that they are treated unequally by supervisors and managers compared to local workers. Women migrant workers felt discriminated against, particularly as managers were often from the local areas. Migrant women also spoke of being charged higher rents for their accommodation as well being given more difficult tasks to complete, which impacted their

productivity bonus and final pay. Migrant workers in Hai Duong province gave examples of the discrimination that they faced:

'Ethnic minority women get shouted at more than local women – we are discriminated against and get the worst tasks in the factory.' (Hai Duong, FGD3)

'We are charged more for our rent than local women, so our costs are higher.' (Hai Duong, FGD3)

'For example, in the work arrangement, locals are arranged in better stages in a line, with high productivity, more financial bonuses. I am arranged at a difficult stage, with low productivity, if I cannot fulfil my assigned tasks, I will be disciplined, my allowance will be cut, and I am also threatened.' (Hai Duong, FGD1)

'My products are inspected more carefully. I receive more reminders for product quality. For example, if part of the work is difficult and when the products are not beautiful, I have to repair them, and I am stormed at. This leads to lower outputs than assigned, especially for the orders with tight deadlines, which mean that I have to work overtime. It is very difficult.' (Hai Duong, FGD1)

Some women spoke of the instances of discrimination that they faced in previous factories, particularly instances relating to the loss of a job because of pregnancy. For example:

'In the factory I worked the manager found out that I was two months pregnant and I lost my job.' (Hai Duong, FGD3)

'If she is pregnant, then no [a pregnant woman will not be recruited]. But yes for a woman with a baby.' (Dong Nai, FGD2)

Section 4. Women garment workers' experiences of violence and harassment in the workplace

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This section presents the study's findings relating to women garment workers' experiences of violence and harassment in the workplace, which includes verbal, non-verbal and physical forms of violence and harassment as well as sexual harassment. This section also outlines the impact of violence and harassment on workers' health and wellbeing, and the probable effect of violence and harassment on productivity.

Box 5. Women garment workers' experiences of violence and harassment in the workplace in the previous 12 months, based on interviews with 763 women garment workers

43.1% of the garment workers interviewed experienced at least one form of violence and harassment in the workplace in the previous 12 months.

Of the 43.1% of garment workers who experienced violence and harassment in the previous 12 months, verbal abuse and harassment were the most commonly reported, followed by physical harassment and non-verbal harassment:

Of the garment workers experiencing violence and harassment, 87.8% experienced unwelcome **verbal abuse and harassment**. *Commonly reported forms were inappropriate or offensive comments about their or someone else's body or sexual activities, and offensive sexual remarks or jokes.*

Of the garment workers experiencing violence and harassment, 34.3% experienced **unwelcome forms of physical harassment**. *Commonly reported forms were unwanted contact such as kissing or touching parts of a woman's body, hitting, punching or leaning over a person. Seven women garment workers said that in the previous 12 months, they or one of their colleagues had been sexually assaulted/forced to have sex by a colleague, supervisor or manager.*

Of the garment workers experiencing violence and harassment, 28.9% experienced **unwelcome non-verbal forms of harassment**. *Commonly reported forms were obscene sexual gestures, sounds or stares, offensive emails, text messages, and behaviour that impacted workers' personal safety (e.g. being followed home).*

In addition, of the garment workers experiencing violence and harassment in the last year, 10% received threats that their contracts would not be renewed. Smaller numbers said they had received threats that their pay would be withheld if they spoke out or did not submit to the violence or harassment. A further 10% of garment workers were promised promotion at work in exchange of a sexual demand.

49.5% of all interviewed the garment workers experienced violence and harassment when travelling to and from work in the previous 12 months (see Section 5 below).

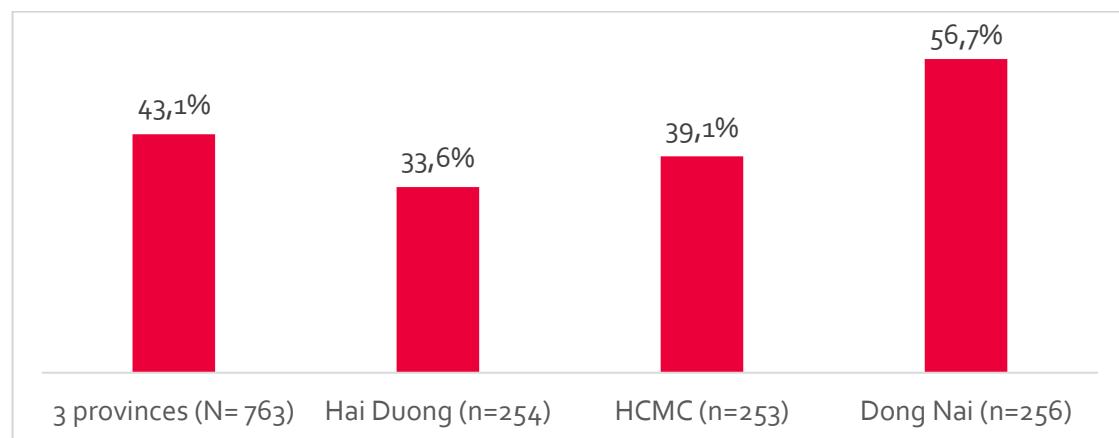
4.2 INCIDENCE OF AND TYPES OF VIOLENCE, HARASSMENT AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The interviews asked women garment workers about their experiences of verbal, non-verbal and physical forms of violence and harassment, including sexual harassment in the workplace.

4.2.1 Overall incidence of violence and harassment

Extremely high levels of violence and harassment were reported in the interviews. Chart 17 summarises the overall incidence of violence and harassment (experienced at least once in the 12 months before the interview). **Overall, 43.1% of garment workers experienced violence and harassment across the three provinces.** The highest levels of which occurred in Dong Nai province, where 56.7% of the workers interviewed reported that they had experienced violence and harassment in the previous 12 months. One factor explaining the higher incidence in Dong Nai compared to the two other provinces is that there is a higher proportion of younger workers in Dong Nai and, as this study shows, younger workers experience higher levels of violence and harassment (discussed further below).

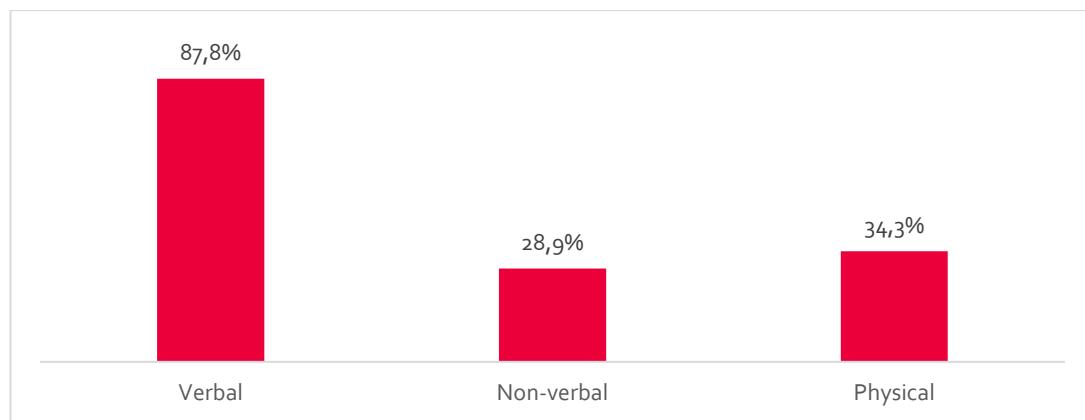
Chart 17: Percentage of women garment workers experiencing at least one Incidence of violence and harassment/inappropriate behaviour in previous 12 months (N=763)



4.2.2 Type of violence and harassment: verbal, non-verbal and physical

This study sought to identify the types of violence and harassment garment workers' experience and whether these forms of violence and harassment were verbal, non-verbal or physical. Chart 18 illustrates the different types of violence and harassment (verbal, non-verbal and physical). Verbal forms of abuse and sexual harassment are the most commonly experienced types of violence and harassment reported by garment workers. Of the garment workers experiencing at least one form of violence and harassment in the past 12 months, 87.8% experienced verbal harassment, followed by 34.3% who experienced physical harassment and 28.9% who experienced non-verbal harassment. The highest levels of all types of violence and harassment were again found in Dong Nai province.

Chart 18: Types of violence and harassment as reported by women garment workers experiencing at least one incidence of violence and harassment in the previous 12 months (N=329)



The interviews asked respondents to comment on the particular forms of verbal, non-verbal and physical forms of violence and harassment that they experienced. The identification of these different forms of violence and harassment were discussed during the participatory research workshop that was held before the fieldwork commenced. This helped to provide a more detailed picture of the different types of violence and harassment experienced by garment workers in Vietnam.

4.2.3 Verbal forms of abuse and sexual harassment

Regarding the types of verbal abuse and sexual harassment, Table 3 shows that the most common form of verbal abuse and sexual harassment experienced was 'inappropriate or offensive comments about your or someone else's body, appearance or sexual activities'. This was experienced by 56.4%

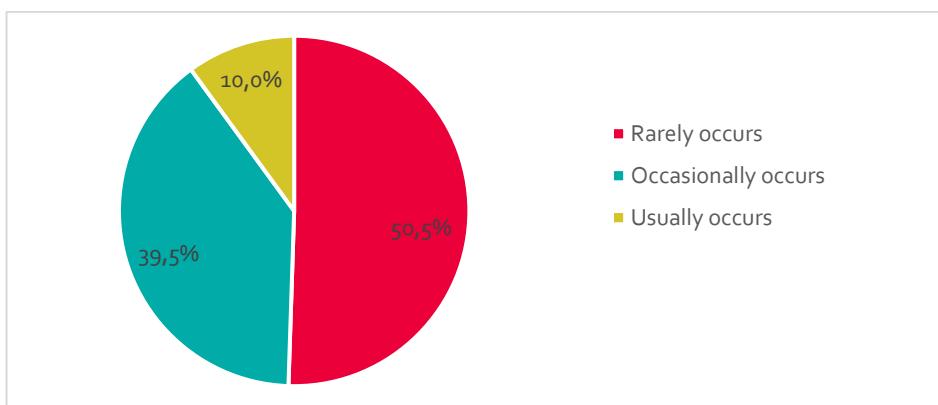
of the workers that reported experiencing verbal abuse and sexual harassment in the previous 12 months, followed by sexual remarks and jokes or stories that were insulting or offensive (47.4%).

Table 3: Types of verbal abuse and sexual harassment experienced by the women garment workers experiencing at least one form of verbal harassment in the previous 12 months (N=289)

Verbal forms of abuse and sexual harassment	3 provinces	Hai Duong	HCMC	Dong Nai
	n=289	n=67	n=90	n=132
Sexual remarks/jokes/stories that were insulting or offensive	137	30	42	65
	47.4%	44.8%	46.7%	49.2%
Made insulting remarks about you or a family member (not sexual)	92	21	28	43
	31.8%	31.3%	31.1%	32.6%
Inappropriate or offensive comments about your or someone else's body, appearance or sexual activities	163	21	63	79
	56.4%	31.3%	70.0%	59.8%
Referred to you (or a colleague) in a sexist or degrading term?	123	18	41	64
	42.6%	26.9%	45.6%	48.5%
Said crude or gross sexual things or tried to get you (or a colleague) to talk about sexual matters	81	13	26	42
	28.0%	19.4%	28.9%	31.8%
Badgered you (or a colleague) to go out with you/them after work	31	9	11	11
	10.7%	13.4%	12.2%	8.3%
Asked you (or a colleague) inappropriate questions of a sexual nature, e.g. personal questions about personal relationships or sex life	83	13	24	46
	28.7%	19.4%	26.7%	34.8%
Asked you (or a colleague) inappropriate questions about other personal issues, for example, religious beliefs, social activities or your political beliefs, etc.	106	25	35	46
	36.7%	37.3%	38.9%	34.8%
Had rumours of a sexual nature spread about you (or a colleague) at work	36	11	9	16
	12.5%	16.4%	10.00%	12.1%

Verbal forms of abuse and sexual harassment are a regular occurrence for a significant number of women garment workers in Vietnam. Chart 19 shows that 39.5% of the workers that reported that they had experienced verbal forms of abuse and sexual harassment stated that it occasionally occurred during the previous 12 months. Verbal forms of abuse and harassment were a regular occurrence for 10% of the workers experiencing verbal harassment, and 50.5% of the workers experiencing verbal forms of abuse and sexual harassment said it rarely occurred.

Chart 19: Frequency of verbal forms of abuse and sexual harassment reported by women garment workers experiencing verbal harassment in the previous 12 months (N=289)



In the FGDs, the comments made by the women garment workers point to a workplace culture where verbal abuse and harassment from supervisors and managers is common, particularly when there are production pressures. The following is a selection of comments from the FGDs.

Several women garment workers stated that violence and harassment were worse in the peak season:

'In peak season, we are scolded more. Repeatedly, a lot.' (Hai Duong, FGD1)

'We are all workers, but they [the supervisors] talk about me in such a [bad] way, that is obviously disrespectful.' (Hai Duong, FGD1)

'Often, they [supervisors] are swearing, scolding and using filthy words.' (Hai Duong, FGD1)
'My [supervisor] is very rude. Generally, he is rude even in his jokes. I feel that I am being disrespected.' (Hai Duong, FGD1)

'When there was something I did not know, I asked him, but he shouted at me and threatened me also. It is one thing I do not like.' (Hai Duong, FGD1)

Mostly the verbal abuse and harassment were associated with trying to get workers to work faster and harder:

'[The verbal abuse and harassment] is unavoidable. If we cannot meet the assigned [target], they [managers] scream/scold.' (HCMC, FGD1)

'They scream/scold for us to speed up. If we have higher productivity, we have a bonus.' (HCMC, FGD1)

In some cases, verbal abuse and harassment were used to force women garment workers to stay at work and work overtime to meet a late order, making it difficult for women to refuse overtime:

'When asking not to work overtime, usually we are verbally abused.' (HCMC, FGD2)

'When it was about time to finish work, he forced us to stay...Actually, he had to work overtime too, and he forced us to work...If not, the manager would scream and heap abuse on us the following day.' (Hai Duong, FGD1)

Women garment workers spoke of how verbal abuse and harassment made it harder for them to concentrate on work tasks:

'When they shout at us and scold us...that just makes it worse.' (Hai Duong, FGD3)

4.2.4 Non-verbal forms of abuse and sexual harassment

Non-verbal forms of abuse and sexual harassment can take many forms. In the interviews, participants were asked about the types of non-verbal abuse and sexual harassment that they have experienced. As with the other forms of violence and harassment, this study shows that non-verbal forms of abuse and sexual harassment are exacerbated by production pressures and heightened stress in the working environment to meet an order on time.

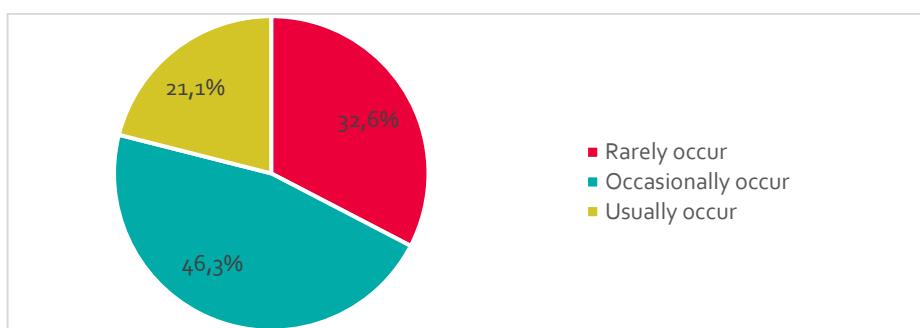
Table 4 shows that 82.1% of the women garment workers experiencing non-verbal forms of abuse and sexual harassment said that they experienced obscene sexual gestures, sounds or stares. In addition, 34.7% experienced offensive emails, texts, tweets, phone calls or instant messages containing offensive sexual remarks, jokes, stories, pictures or videos, and 20% experienced behaviour that impacted on their personal safety, such as being stalked or followed home.

Table 4: Forms of non-verbal sexual harassment as reported by women garment workers experiencing at least one incident of non-verbal abuse/sexual harassment in the previous 12 months (N=95)

	3 provinces n=95	Hai Duong n=30	HCMC n=27	Dong Nai n=38
Non-verbal forms of sexual harassment				
Obscene sexual gestures, sounds or stares	78 82.1%	27 90.0%	21 77.8%	30 78.9%
Received emails, texts, tweets, phone calls, or instant messages containing offensive sexual remarks, jokes, stories, pictures or videos to you or a colleague (non-verbal)	33 34.7%	3 10.0%	13 48.1%	17 44.7%
Followed you home, showed up somewhere or waited for you/or a colleague when you did not/they did not want that person to be there in a way that made you/them afraid for your/their personal safety	19 20.0%	9 30.0%	4 14.8%	6 15.8%

As with the other forms of violence and harassment, non-verbal forms of abuse and sexual harassment are a frequent occurrence in the lives of women garment workers in Vietnam. Chart 20 details garment workers' experiences of non-verbal abuse/sexual harassment. 21.1% said that it had occurred regularly, 46.3% said that it had occurred occasionally and 32.6% said that it had rarely occurred in the last year.

Chart 20: Frequency of non-verbal abuse/sexual harassment reported by garment workers experiencing at least one incident of non-verbal abuse/sexual harassment in the previous 12 months (N=95)



4.2.5. Physical abuse and violence

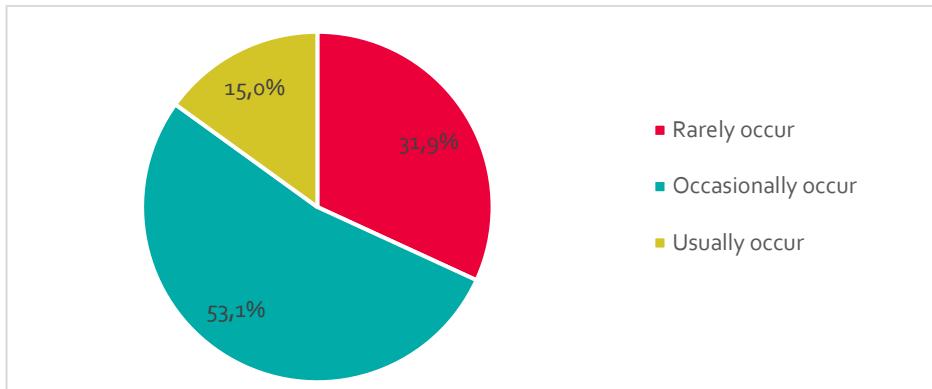
Women garment workers in Vietnam experience physical abuse and violence slightly more frequently than non-verbal abuse/sexual harassment. There is a pattern of physical abuse and unwanted and highly sexualised forms of physical contact and sexual abuse that frequently distress garment workers. As Table 5 shows, of the garment workers experiencing physical abuse and violence in the previous 12 months, 67.3% said that this had involved unwanted kissing or sexual touching, and 62.8% said that it had involved hitting, hair pulling, standing too close or other unwanted physical contact. In addition, 6.2% of the garment workers that had experienced physical abuse and violence in the previous 12 months had experienced sexual assault or had been forced to have sex by a colleague or superior related to work. This reflects a broader societal problem in Vietnam of a continued high incidence of rape and sexual assault of women and lack of reporting on the problem.¹⁶⁴

Table 5: Forms of physical abuse and violence as reported by women garment workers experiencing at least one incident of physical abuse or violence in the previous 12 months (N=95)

Physical abuse and violence	3 provinces	Hai Duong	HCMC	Dong Nai
	n=113	n=25	n=37	n=51
Unwanted physical contact with you/a colleague involving kissing or other sexual touching (e.g. touching your arms, legs, breasts or bottom)	76	18	23	35
	67.3%	72.0%	62.2%	68.6%
Unwanted physical contact with you/a colleague, such as hitting, pulling hair, punching, standing too close to you, leaning over you, or other unwanted physical contact	71	18	25	28
	62.8%	72.0%	67.6%	54.9%
Sexually assaulted or forced you/a colleague) to have sex with them	7	3	2	2
	6.2%	12.0%	5.4%	3.9%

Chart 21 shows that 53.1% of the women garment workers that reported physical forms of abuse/sexual harassment (including sexual assault), reported that it had occurred occasionally, while 15% stated that it had occurred regularly, and 31.9% stated that it had occurred rarely.

Chart 21: Frequency of physical abuse and violence as reported by women garment workers experiencing physical forms of abuse/sexual harassment in the previous 12 months (N=113)



In the FGDs, one woman garment worker spoke of having an unwanted pregnancy as a result of unwanted sexual violence (rape) that was perpetrated against her at work. Another woman detailed the regular physical violence that occurs in her factory when there are intense production pressures:

'The pressure – my supervisor hits me and beats my hands with a stick – he threw things at me.' (Hai Duong, FGD3)

In the interviews and FGDs, many women garment workers were embarrassed or reluctant to reveal their experiences of sexual harassment and sexual assault, even when they had said that they had been a victim of violence or harassment. In both the interviews and FGDs, many garment workers said that they knew that violence and harassment took place or that they knew of other women that had been victims but did not specify in what form. Those that referred to sexual harassment often laughed it off as a 'joke', or as inappropriate behaviour that they ignored:

'In the company, they whistle, but we just ignore.' (Hai Duong, FGD1)

Box 6. Case study 2

Trang is 26 years old and comes from Tien Giang province in Southern Vietnam. She has been working as a sewing machine worker for 10 years in Dong Nai province. Trang left her previous job because of sexual harassment, which she said was quite common in the factory. At her former company, Trang was promoted to a supervisor, which meant she often had to work with her direct manager in private spaces such as his office. The manager made her uncomfortable with sexual text messages. One day, he deliberately hugged and kissed her in his office and promised to promote her to an office role with

better work and a higher salary, which she refused. After that, he deducted her production bonus, and slandered her, blaming her for stealing. Trang was then forced to leave and find a new job in another factory.

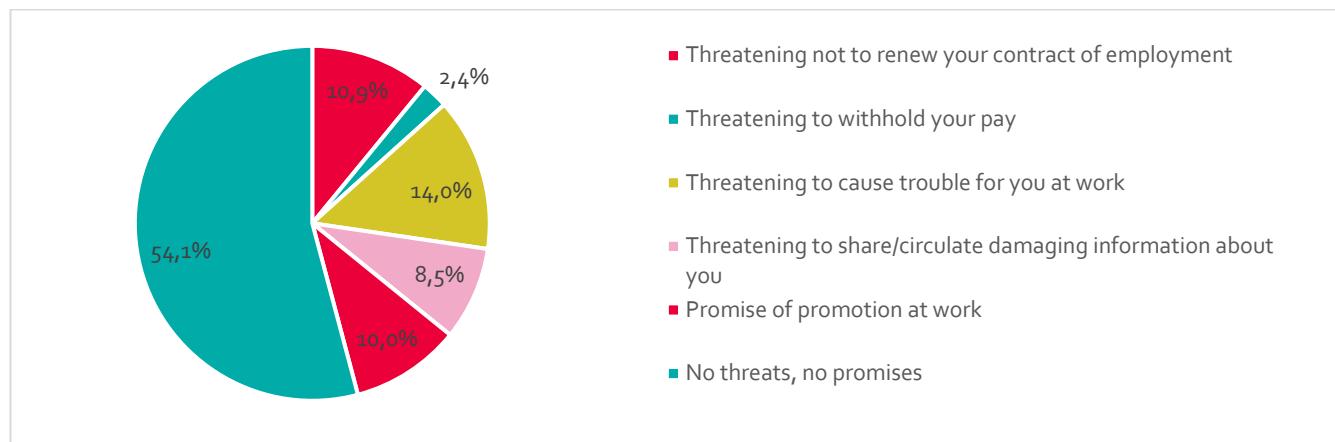
Trang started working in her current factory a year ago and works as the team leader of a sewing line. There is a lot of joking and teasing, which is mostly for fun and helps to release stress at work. However, the maintenance engineer who fixes broken sewing machines frequently shouts and sexually harasses the women workers. Trang said that at first 'I thought it was a joke, so I did not take it seriously, but he is like this all the time, he pats the butt and shoulders of the women workers; he hugs them and presses his body on their breasts'. Many workers feel bad and scared, and in the end, Trang told her manager about the harassment. However, nothing was done because her manager was not the man's direct manager, and there was no mechanism in place for making a complaint or to hold him accountable for his behaviour. Trang said that 'the only thing I could do was to tell the workers in my team to stay away from him, and that when he comes to fix a machine, they can go outside temporarily'.

4.2.6 Threats and promises

A further issue revealed by this study is that violence and harassment is often associated with threats or promises of rewards ('quid-pro-quo' sexual harassment) and behaviour that can result in a 'hostile work environment' if a victim of sexual harassment does not comply with the behaviour. The interviews asked women garment workers about their experiences of threats and promises and any behaviour leading to a hostile work environment.

Chart 22 highlights that of the garment workers who reported that they had experienced violence and harassment in the previous 12 months, 10.9% had received threats that they would not have their contracts renewed and 2.1% reported that threats were made to withhold their pay. Additional threats such as causing trouble for the worker at work and sharing/circulating damaging information about the workers were experienced by 14% and 8.5% of garment workers, respectively. Furthermore, 10.9% of workers experiencing violence and harassment were promised a promotion at work. 57.1% of the workers experiencing violence and harassment did not receive any threats or promises.

Chart 22: Threats or promises of rewards as reported by garment workers experiencing at least one incident of violence and harassment in the previous 12 months (N=329)



A small number of examples were given of sexual abuse occurring because women garment workers were expected to provide sexual favours:

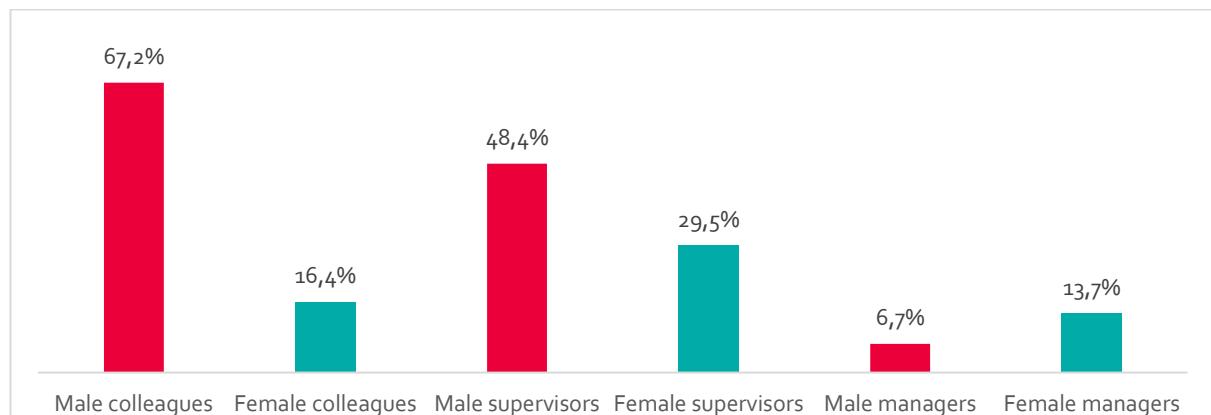
'We hear of cases where women were asked for sexual favours, but not me. We know it happens.' (Hai Duong, FGD3)

'There is a beauty contest in our factory and the women who win get taken away for a night in a hotel with the managers for a treat. We know that they are maybe expected to give sexual favours. If a woman does not, she is sacked when she comes back to the factory.' (Hai Duong, FGD3)

4.2.7 Perpetrators of violence and harassment

Regarding the perpetrators of violence and harassment in the workplace, Chart 23 shows that the largest group of perpetrators were male colleagues (67.2 %) followed by male supervisors (48.4%). Interestingly, verbal abuse was most likely to have been perpetrated by women colleagues, supervisors and managers, who are often pressured by their superiors to meet orders on time. Conversely, non-verbal and physical forms of violence and harassment were more likely to be perpetrated by male colleagues, supervisors and managers.

Chart 23: Perpetrators of violence and harassment as reported by women garment workers experiencing at least one incident of violence and harassment in the previous 12 months (N=329)



4.3 THE PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH IMPACTS OF VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT, AND THE EFFECT ON PRODUCTIVITY

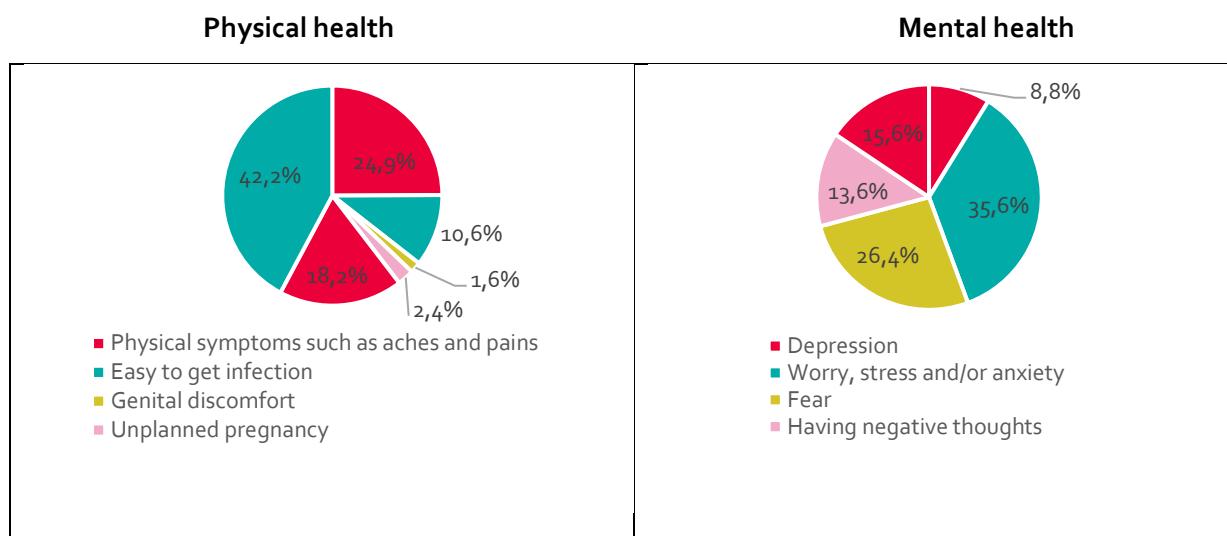
In addition to reduced productivity, suppliers and companies in the garment sector incur substantial costs from violence and harassment in the workplace as a result of problems retaining staff and higher worker turnover. In the garment sector, dealing with unpredictable overtime and production pressures creates intense stress and anxiety amongst workers and supervisors. Violence and harassment, which often occur during the most pressured times of production, exacerbate this further.

4.3.1 Impact of violence and harassment on women garment workers' physical and mental health

Violence and harassment had a significant negative impact on the physical and mental health and wellbeing of the garment workers interviewed for this study. As Chart 24 highlights, 24.9% of garment workers experiencing violence and harassment said that it led to physical problems such as aches and pains, 18.2% said that they experienced insomnia and 10.6% said that they had become more susceptible to infections. A small number of workers said that they experienced genital discomfort or an unplanned pregnancy as a result of the violence, which indicates that they had been subjected to physical violence, sexual assault or rape. 47.1% of the workers experiencing violence and harassment said that it had no physical effect on them.

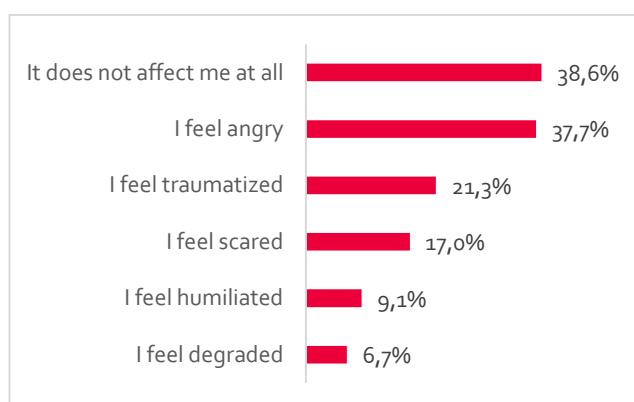
The mental health of the garment workers experiencing violence and harassment was also severely affected by violence and harassment. As Chart 24 shows, of the workers experiencing violence and harassment, 35.6% were worried, stressed or experienced anxiety as a result of the violence and harassment. Furthermore, 26.4% stated that they were scared, 13.6% said that the violence and harassment led them to have negative thoughts and 8.8% said that they experienced depression.

Chart 24: The effect of violence and harassment on workers' physical and mental health as reported by the women garment workers experiencing violence and harassment in the previous 12 months (N=329)



In addition, as illustrated in Chart 25, 37.7% of the women garment workers experiencing violence and harassment reported feeling angry, 21.3% felt traumatised, 17% were scared, 9.1% felt humiliated and 6.7% felt degraded. These physical and mental health effects of violence and harassment can have devastating consequences for a woman's self-esteem, confidence and capacity to work.

Chart 25: How violence and harassment made the women garment workers who experienced violence and harassment in the previous 12 months feel (N=329)



4.3.2 Women garment workers' health problems as reported in the FGDs

In the FGDs, the garment workers spoke about the effect of production pressures, long working hours and overtime on their productivity, health and wellbeing. Fatigue and not being able to effectively carry out work tasks were commonly cited problems. The following quotes are a selection of the comments made in the FGDs. One woman stated that:

'It is too much pressure; I am not comfortable. I cannot do my job properly.' (Hai Duong, FGD1)

Some women garment workers spoke about muscular-skeletal problems which placed a strain on their bodies as a result of the pressure from high targets and not being able to go to the toilet:

'High targets affect our health, there is a problem with my back, and a problem with the stomach, not being able to go to the toilet is a problem.' (Hai Duong, FGD3)

Another woman said that sitting for long periods and carrying out repetitive movements while often very tense affects muscular-skeletal and digestive health:

'It affects our health sitting hunched over a sewing machine for hours at a time, our internal digestion is affected, our hands, shoulders, arms and back hurt.' (Hai Duong, FGD3)

Fatigue was a regular problem for many of the garment workers, particularly when they worked excessive hours and worked on tasks that require high levels of concentration:

'[There is] a lot of overtime work, and work pressure, output pressure, and fatigue.' (Dong Nai, FGD1)

'Workers usually work 12 hours... mostly workers work from 6 a.m. till 6 p.m. After working for four more hours, I am tired, as I stand throughout my shift, and I am highly focused on my tasks.' (Dong Nai, FGD1)

'Sometimes when we are under pressure, we are exhausted and only have spare time to sleep as our hours are so long.' (Hai Duong, FGD3)

4.3.3 Toilet breaks and women garment workers' reproductive and sexual health

In the FGDs, the women garment workers frequently raised the issue of limited access to toilets and toilet breaks because of production pressures and not wanting to hold up the production line.

Notably, the respondents spoke of strategies, such as not drinking water during their shift, to avoid having to go to the toilet. The health and reproductive consequences of this can be significant, making it a noteworthy form of violence and harassment against women.¹⁶⁵ One of the problems is that garment workers typically work in production lines, where if one worker leave the line, the whole line's productivity is impacted.

Some of the respondents stated that they did not go to the toilet to avoid receiving verbal abuse from supervisors:

'Women are scolded if they are not on the line. If he [the supervisor] does not see your face on the line, he will look for you immediately.' (Hai Duong, FGD1)

'If there is too much work to do, then I cannot leave my station [to go to the toilet]. If there are many products waiting for me, stockpiled there, I do not dare to leave the station. If I go out for the toilet for just more than five minutes, then products will be stockpiled in my station.' (Hai Duong, FGD1)

Avoiding drinking water is one tactic used to avoid going to the toilet:

'If you are gone for too long, more than 10 minutes, then after you come back, he will shout at you and scold you. [He uses] the loudspeaker to call your name. When your station is far from toilets, it is worse; you even dare not to drink water.' (Hai Duong, FGD1)

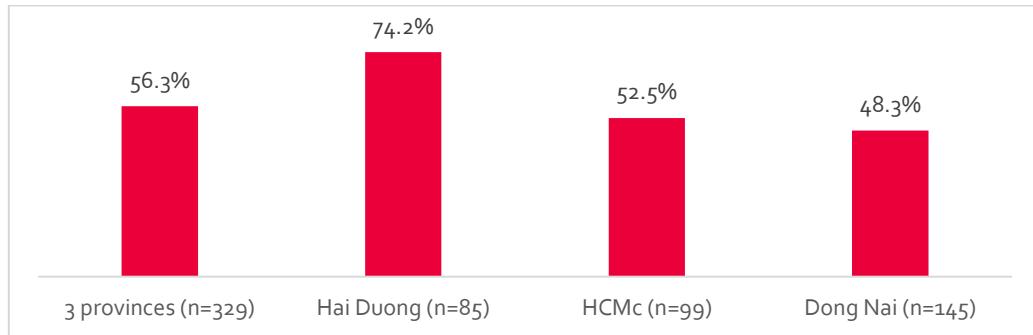
A further problem is that women feel that they are being monitored when they go to the toilet:

'They monitor the time spent in the toilet. The supervisor stands outside the toilet and marks the time when a woman goes in and out.' (Hai Duong, FGD3)

4.4 IMPACT OF VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT ON PRODUCTIVITY

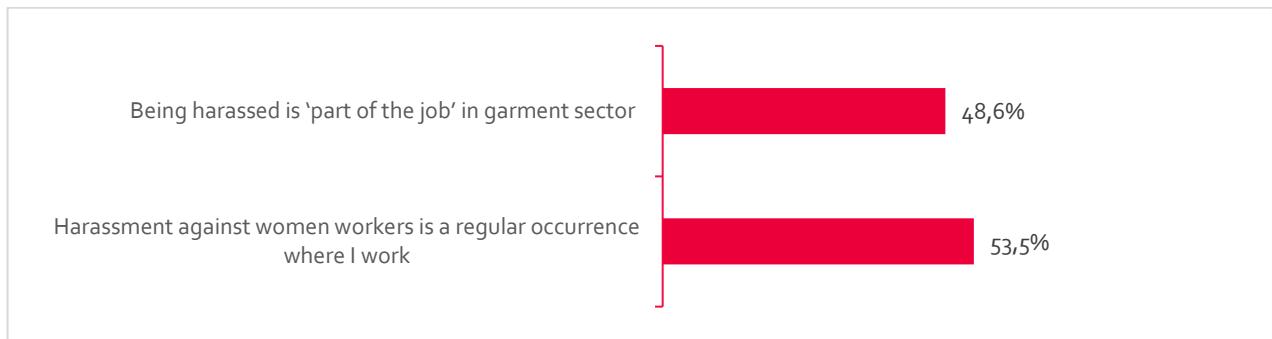
This study's results show that the physical and mental health effects of violence and harassment significantly impact productivity in the workplace. Chart 26 illustrates how violence and harassment impacted productivity, according to whether respondents were able to do their job effectively. Of the women garment workers experiencing violence and harassment, 56.3% said that it impacted their ability to do their job properly. This was highest in Hai Duong province where it was reported by 74.2% of garment workers, compared to 52.5% in HCMC and 48.3% in Dong Nai province.

Chart 26: The effect of violence and harassment on women garment workers' ability to do their jobs effectively according to all respondents experiencing violence and harassment in the previous 12 months (N=329)



Furthermore, 48.6% of all the women garment workers interviewed believed that violence and harassment was 'part of the job' in the garment factory where they worked, and 53.5% stated that violence and harassment was a regular occurrence in the workplace (Chart 27). These responses provide further evidence of the extent of violence and harassment in Vietnam's garment sector and the impact that it has on garment workers' wellbeing, the working environment and, ultimately, on productivity.

Chart 27: Women garment workers' perceptions on violence and harassment as part of the working culture in garment and textile factories (N=763)



4.4.1 Impact of violence and harassment on women garment workers' income levels and earning the productivity bonus

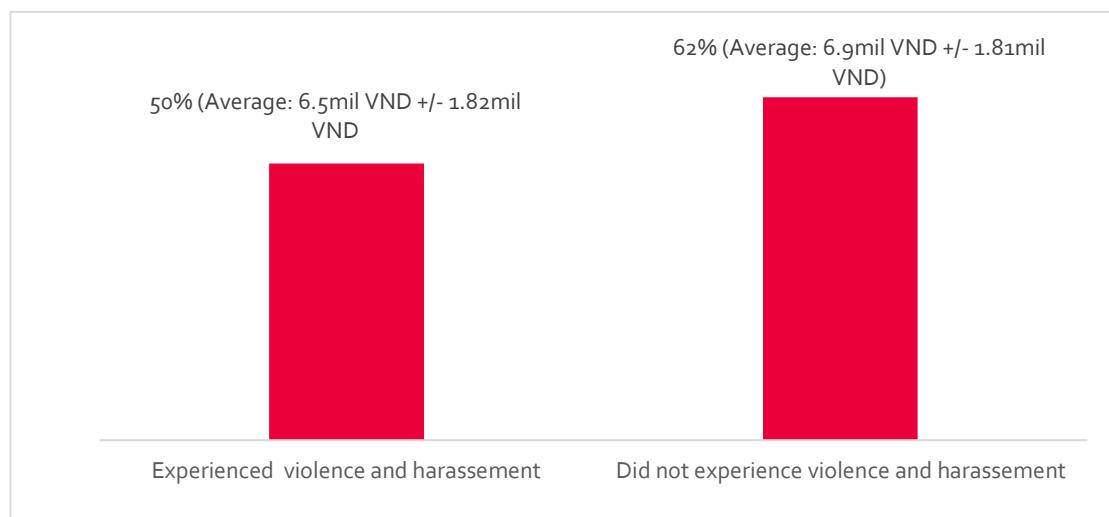
Using the data from the interviews, logical regression¹⁶⁶ was carried out on the impacts of violence and harassment on the women garment worker's health and labour productivity using cause-effects models that were based on two variables: general monthly income and the productivity bonus. For the analysis of general monthly income, the study examined the reported monthly average income of workers who stated that they had experienced violence and harassment in the previous 12

months. This showed that the garment workers experiencing violence and harassment had significantly lower monthly incomes, representing 75% of the incomes of garment workers that did not experience violence and harassment. This is important evidence, which shows a clear link between low wages and violence and harassment.

Furthermore, the difference in the percentage of workers whose income was higher than the average income (6.1 million VND per month) of the women garment workers interviewed was calculated to establish if there is an association between lower incomes and violence and harassment. The garment workers interviewed for this study who had not experienced violence and harassment had higher earnings and productivity bonuses than those who had experienced violence and harassment. This indicates a link between violence and harassment and overall levels of pay and productivity. This is particularly important because productivity bonuses represent a high proportion of garment workers' final pay.

Chart 28 shows that a higher proportion of women garment workers that had not experienced violence and harassment in the previous 12 months earned above the average monthly factory income (62%), compared to just 50% of women who had experienced violence and harassment and earned above the average monthly income.

Chart 28: Comparison of the income levels of the women garment workers who experienced/did not experience violence and harassment at least once in the previous 12 months (N=329)

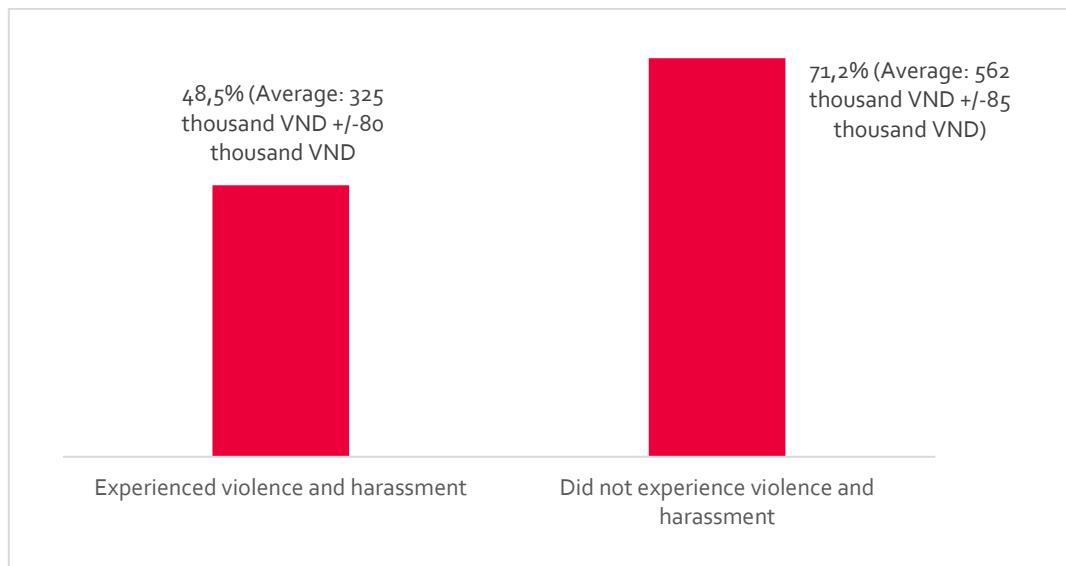


This study also looked at the indicator of workers' productivity based on the amount of the monthly productivity bonus that women garment workers received in the previous 12 months. Chart 29 highlights that 71.2% of the garment workers who had not experienced violence and harassment in the previous 12 months earned the productivity bonus compared to 48.5% who had experienced

violence and harassment and earned the productivity bonus. This indicates that violence and harassment is strongly associated with the lower capacity of workers' to earn the productivity bonus as a result of reduced performance, which, in turn, impacts on companies' profits.

Overall, the average productivity bonus of the garment workers that did not suffer violence and harassment in the previous 12 months (VND 562,000) is considerably more than the average productivity bonus reported by workers experiencing violence and harassment (VND 325,000).

Chart 29: Frequency that women garment workers received the productivity bonus based on whether they experienced violence and harassment in the previous 12 months (N=763)



Overall, the average productivity bonus of workers not suffering violence and harassment is nearly twice more than the bonus reported by workers suffering violence and harassment.

Section 5. Policies, procedures, reporting and making complaints about violence and harassment

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Factory policies and procedures, including effective and trusted reporting and complaints systems, are critically important to preventing violence and harassment. However, for them to effectively prevent and address violence and harassment, they need to be available to and trusted by garment workers.

This study shows that women garment workers experience lower levels of violence and harassment in factories that have policies and procedures on violence and harassment, and especially when workers know that the policies and procedures exist and trust them. Although an increasing number of suppliers have adopted policies and procedures on violence and harassment (including codes of conduct) and have integrated these into their grievance systems, this study highlights that a significant number of workers were not aware or did not trust the system.

This study shows that when factories implement policies and procedures that workers know and trust, there are substantially lower reported levels of violence and harassment in the workplace. A problem highlighted by this study is that workers often lack the necessary knowledge of relevant policies and procedures and how to make a complaint. In addition, they are often unable to benefit from the support or advice from a trade union or workers' representative when considering whether to make a complaint.

5.2 AWARENESS OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES IN THE WORKPLACE

Chart 30 identifies women garment workers' awareness of policies and procedures on violence and harassment and how to make a complaint. Overall, 60% of respondents were aware that their factory had a policy and a code of conduct on violence and harassment, and 61.6% knew that the company had a complaints procedure. Furthermore, 56.2% of respondents said that they knew whom they could make a complaint to. **Despite this knowledge, fewer respondents said that they felt confident in making a complaint. Significantly, only 39.4% of respondents said that they were**

confident that a complaint would be dealt with seriously and 44.8% said that they would report the case if they or one of their colleagues experienced violence and harassment.

Box 7: Case study 3

Mien is a 36-year-old garment worker, who is currently working as a sewing machinist in HCMC. On average, she works 10 hours a day, and during the peak season, she works between 12 and 13 hours a day. When there is insufficient work, Mien is expected to take unpaid leave. Often the factory only announces that they want workers to stay behind and do overtime about 30 minutes before the end of the working day, and on some days when the workers are about to go home the loudspeaker announces that they have to continue working. Mien does not dare to refuse to work the extra hours, and she finds it difficult to take leave as her manager can be difficult. Mien said that the manager often shouts and curses at the workers and threatens to sack them. During the FGDs, Mien reported several different forms of violence and harassment. These included, 'if someone talks, their head is banged against the sewing machine table; in some areas workers have to stand for hours; sometimes if you are tired and stop working for a short break, the manager screams like thunder; and if you arrive just a little bit late it gets recorded [and you lose your attendance bonus], or if there is something wrong with the product, you get hit with a bunch of products on your face'. Mien went on to say that 'During the peak time it is [even] more horrible, I do not even dare to go to the toilet, and if we go to toilet too much, this is also recorded for attendance and our pay is deducted'.

Workers in Mien's factory are mostly old or very young; young people have many opportunities, so they only work for a short while and go to other factories where there are better conditions. Mien noted that the conditions were much better in her previous company, except that workers over 35 years old had their contracts ended. Mien said she was lucky to get a job at her age in her current company although 'it is a bit harsh, but it was better than no job'. There is no one to complain to, and Mien believes that she would be sacked if she complained. Mien also said that her previous company had a good policy in place and that there were no such acts of violence, and the director, who met and talked directly with workers and trade unions, cared about the workers' lives.

Chart 30: Women garment workers' awareness of policies, procedures and how to make complaints (N=763)

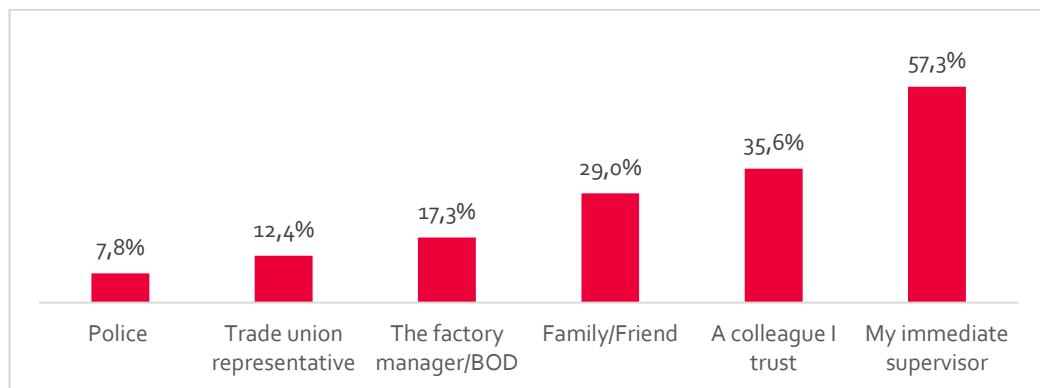


5.3 SEEKING HELP OR ADVICE AND REPORTING VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT

5.3.1 Seeking help or advice

Women garment workers were asked whom they would turn to if they needed help or advice. Chart 31 highlights that 57.3% of workers would seek help or advice from their immediate supervisor and that 35.6% would seek help or advice from a trusted colleague. Reporting to a family member or friend scored lower at just 29%, which suggests that women often do not report incidents of violence and harassment to their families and friends because of the repercussions that this could have for their relationships and friendships. In addition, particularly low numbers of respondents would seek help and support from the factory manager or Board of Directors (17.3%), a trade union representative (12.4%) and the police (7.8%).

Chart 31: Who women garment workers would seek help or advice from in making a complaint about violence and harassment (N=763)



5.3.2 Disclosing/reporting violence and harassment to someone

This study's results show that there is a relatively low level of disclosure of violence and harassment in Vietnam's garment sector. As Chart 32 highlights, only 31.9% of the workers experiencing violence and harassment in the previous 12 months reported an incidence of violence and harassment to someone. The highest level of reporting was in Hai Duong province, where 45.7% of respondents disclosed the incident to someone.

Chart 32: Percentage of the women garment workers experiencing violence and harassment in the previous 12 months who reported an experience of violence and harassment in the previous 12 months (N=329)

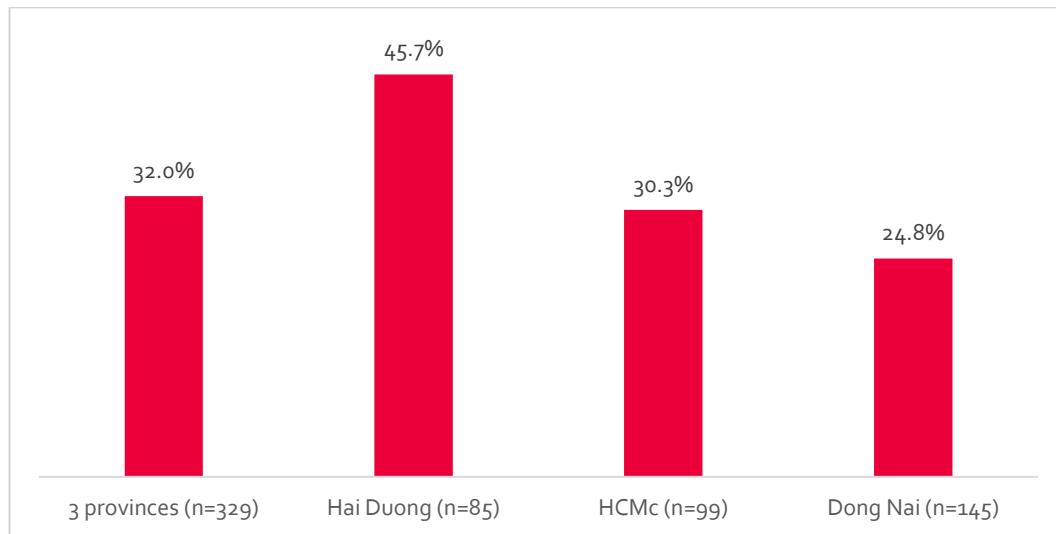
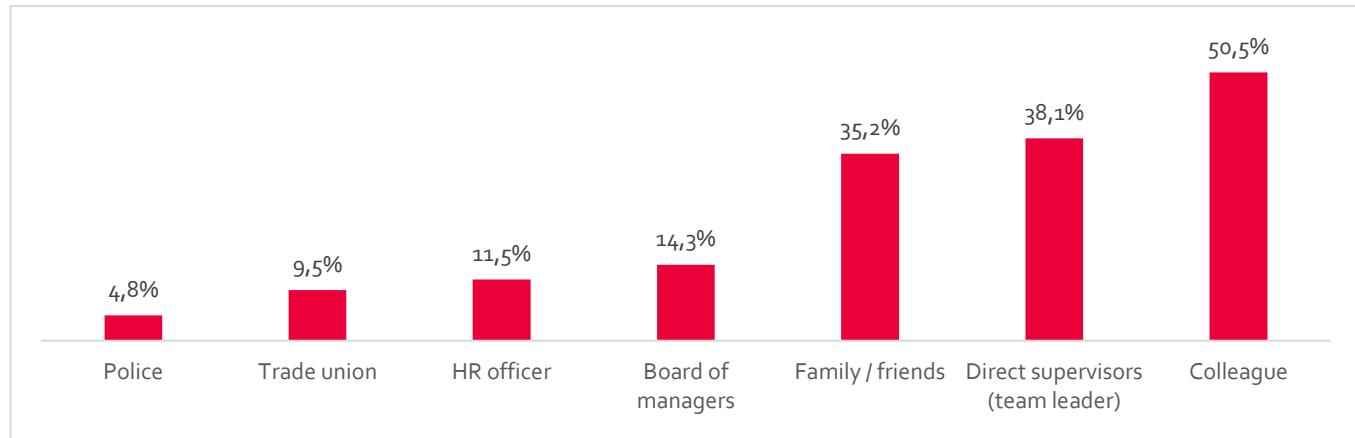


Chart 33 indicates whom the 105 interviewed workers who reported that they had experienced violence and harassment in the previous 12 months reported an incident of violence and harassment to. 50.5% of workers that reported an incident of violence and harassment disclosed the incident to a

colleague, and 38% disclosed an incident to their immediate supervisor/team leader. In addition, 35.2% disclosed the incident to family and/or friends, 15% to the Board of managers, just 11.5% to the HR office and only 9.5% to their trade union.

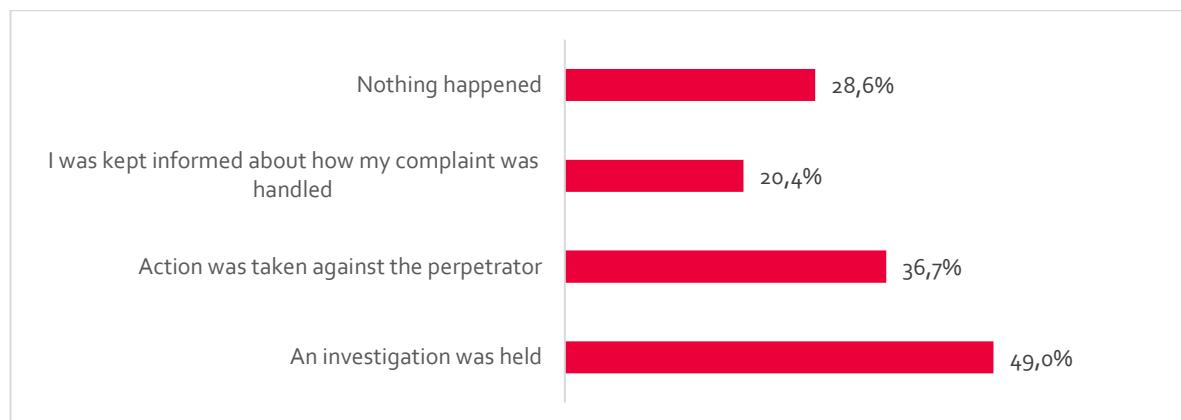
Chart 33: Who women garment workers reported an incident of violence and harassment to in the previous 12 months. (N=105)



5.3.3 Making complaints to a manager or trade union

Less than one-third of the women garment workers who had experienced violence and harassment in the previous 12 months made a complaint directly to their employer or a trade union representative. Regarding the outcome of the complaints that were made to either the garment workers' employer or trade union, Chart 34 highlights that nothing happened as a result of the complaint in 28.6% of cases. An investigation was held for 49% of the complaints made; however, in Hai Duong province just led to an investigation. In 36.7% of cases reported action was taken against a perpetrator, and in only 20.4% cases were respondents kept informed about how the complaint was handled.

Chart 34: Outcome of the complaints made to either an employer or trade union (N=49)



This study revealed low levels of overall satisfaction among women garment workers with how complaints are handled. In the interviews, based on a ranking system of one (lowest) to five (highest) on their level of satisfaction with how complaints are handled, on average garment workers ranked their level of satisfaction as being only 1.8.

In the FGDs, a variety of different comments were made regarding reporting incidents of violence and harassment to trade union representatives, with some positive and negative outcomes. Some of the comments show a relatively low level of trust of trade union representatives:

'In this company, in general, those in the trade union all receive [their] salary from the company, so who should the trade union protect: [the] company or workers? We raised our voice to request something, we told trade union staff, and that is all, nothing happened. No improvements. [The] trade union is never on [the] workers' side.' (Hai Duong, FGD2).

'Even in dialogues with the province's trade union, for example, we workers never dare to raise our experiences, as the trade union directed us on what to say...we were unable to say what we really wanted.' (Hai Duong, FGD2).

However, some women garment workers also highlighted some positive outcomes of reporting violence and harassment to a trade union:

'The young boys joked and slapped an older worker's butt once. She got angry and told her husband, who was a workshop manager. He reported it to the trade union. These boys got some reduction in their scores.' (Dong Nai, FGD1).

'The youth kept teasing a young girl. They even said that "Do you believe that I squeeze your breast?" She responded, "I dare you!" Then he did it for real. She reported to the group leader and director. Then the trade union got involved. These boys were under review, they received warnings, and their salary was deducted.' (Dong Nai, FGD1)

Reasons for not making a complaint

Women garment workers gave a wide variety of reasons for not making a complaint about an incident of violence and harassment. As Chart 35 shows, of the garment workers who experienced violence and harassment in the previous 12 months but did not report it, 70% said that they did not think that what they experienced was serious enough to report. This response accords with other studies that show that women have been conditioned to accept sexual harassment, which results in low awareness of the seriousness of the incident or that what they are experiencing is sexual harassment.¹⁶⁷

In addition, of the women garment workers who experienced violence and harassment but did not report it, 46.4% said that they did not report or make a complaint because they did not think that they would be believed. This suggests that the issue is poorly understood, that there is a silence around the problem and that cases are often not tackled effectively. This is particularly relevant as

34.3% of the garment workers who experienced violence and harassment but did not report it, said that they knew of similar cases where the issue had not been dealt with effectively. Furthermore, 24.1% of respondents said that they feared negative consequences if they reported an incident of violence and harassment and 21% did not report because a previous complaint that they had made had not been dealt with. In addition, of the garment workers who experienced violence and harassment but did not report it, 32.1% did not know how to make a complaint, which indicates that more needs to be done to raise awareness about complaints systems. The culture of silence around violence and harassment against women in Vietnam's garment sector is highlighted by the fact that 16.1% of garment workers reported that they feel embarrassed or ashamed when they are the victim of violence and harassment and that they thought it would be too emotionally difficult to report or make a complaint.

Chart 35: Reasons for not disclosing an incident of violence and harassment among the women garment workers experiencing violence and harassment in the previous 12 months but did NOT Report (N=224)



In the interviews in Dong Nai province, two respondents shared their personal experiences of sexual harassment that took place through social media and email and, they did not report to anyone because they believed that no one would believe them. The respondents also said that they thought that if they reported the sexual harassment that it would result in more rumours being spread about them and that the company would not be able to solve the problem.

These factors help to explain why the Vietnamese Code of Conduct on sexual harassment, which factories are expected to voluntarily adopt and implement, has been so poorly implemented. These

findings from this study point to the importance of building trusted and robust complaints procedures, having independent and impartial investigations of complaints, and ensuring the effective resolution of complaints. The low level of help and advice sought from a manager or trade union representative, the limited reporting to a manager or trade union representative, and the low level of trust in and satisfaction with complaints handling highlights the importance of strengthening social dialogue initiatives at the factory level to prevent violence and harassment and to build trusted complaints systems. These findings also have important implications for trade union representation and awareness-raising about violence and harassment. These include ensuring that workers can turn to someone, for example, a trade union representative in the workplace that they trust will provide confidential help and advice in making a complaint.

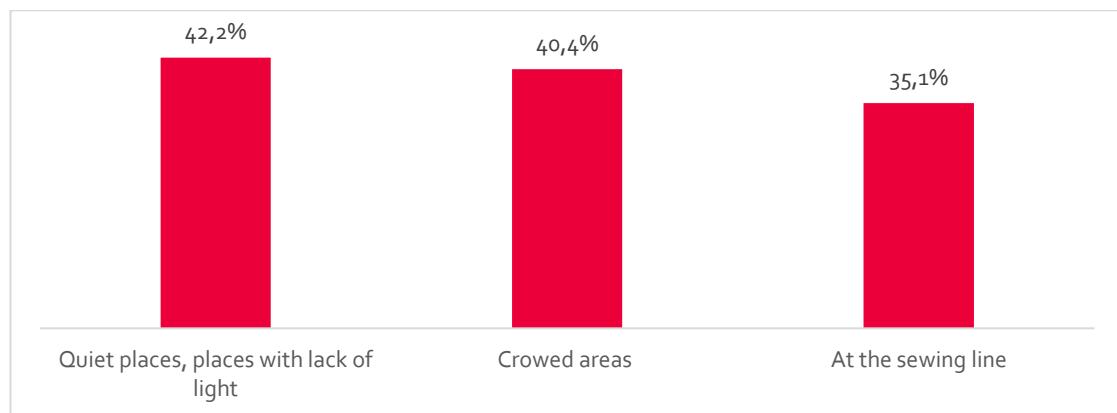
Section 6. Women garment workers' safety in the factory, at the factory gates and outside the factory

6.1 SAFETY IN THE FACTORY AND AT THE FACTORY GATES

The interviews asked the women garment workers about the areas of the factory where they may feel unsafe to pinpoint locations where violence and harassment is more likely to occur and where physical improvements could be made.

Chart 36 illustrates the three main factory locations where garment workers reported the greatest risk of violence and harassment occurring. Quiet places or areas with low lighting were viewed as particularly risky, with 42.2% of all respondents identifying these as locations where it is more likely that violence and harassment would occur. A further 40.4% of the garment workers interviewed identified crowded spaces as locations where violence and harassment would be more likely to occur. In addition, 35.1% of workers said that violence and harassment could also occur on the factory floor in the production/sewing lines. In Hai Duong province the location of greatest risk was identified as quiet places or places with a lack of light (70.5%), whereas in Dong Nai province crowded places were viewed as the areas of greatest risk (42.6%). In all three provinces, similar numbers of respondents identified production lines as locations of risk.

Chart 36: Places and locations where violence and harassment is most likely to occur inside the factory (N=763)



Respondents were also asked to rank the locations in the factory that are unsafe and require improvements in order of importance. These rankings identified toilets, followed by workstations, canteen areas, poorly lit areas, corridors and the parking lot as the most unsafe areas that need to be improved. The quotes below highlight some of the issues identified:

'If the men are curious, they could climb on the [toilet] wall to peep. If the booth is totally covered, they cannot peep...There are cameras, but who knows. I still feel unsafe.' (Dong Nai, FGD 2)

'In our yarn warehouse, it is also dangerous. [In one area] there are shelves creating many hidden corners. So far, there have been no problems, but still, we should warn those working the night shift.' (Dong Nai FGD 2)

One of the most frequently reported safety issues at the factory was around the factory gates. In the FGDs, several workers highlighted this concern:

'At the gate when we enter the company and exit, after exiting the gate to go home, that's outside the company gate.' (Dong Nai, FGD1)

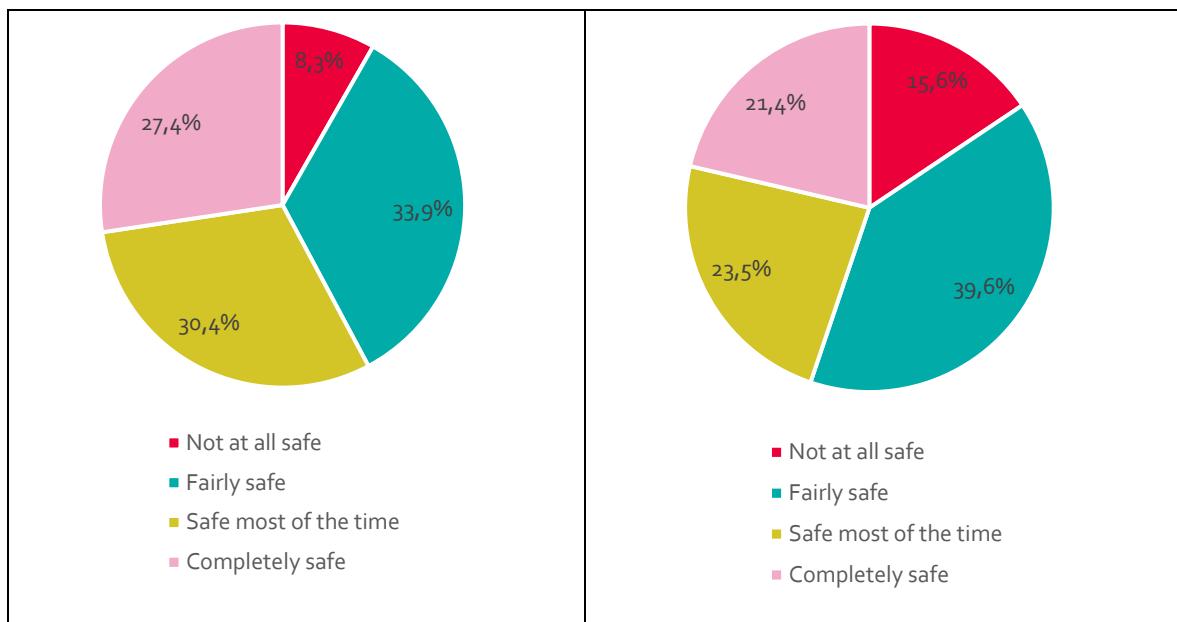
'At that time, 'I was pregnant and waiting for my husband at the gate. One guy came and asked me: "Do you know where gate 10 is?" I said, "I do not know". The other guy unzipped his trousers and pointed at that and said: "here is gate ten". The security man came and said: "you even did this with a pregnant woman?" They were that sick. I am still scared now.' (Dong Nai, FGD1)

6.2 SAFETY OUTSIDE THE FACTORY

This study also uncovered women garment workers' concerns about how they were vulnerable to violence and harassment in the wider world of work. In particular, they noted their vulnerability travelling to and from work, in their accommodation and public spaces. The respondents did not give any examples of safety issues in their accommodation, although several women highlighted domestic violence and abuse from husbands and intimate partners, which may also have an impact on their productivity at work.

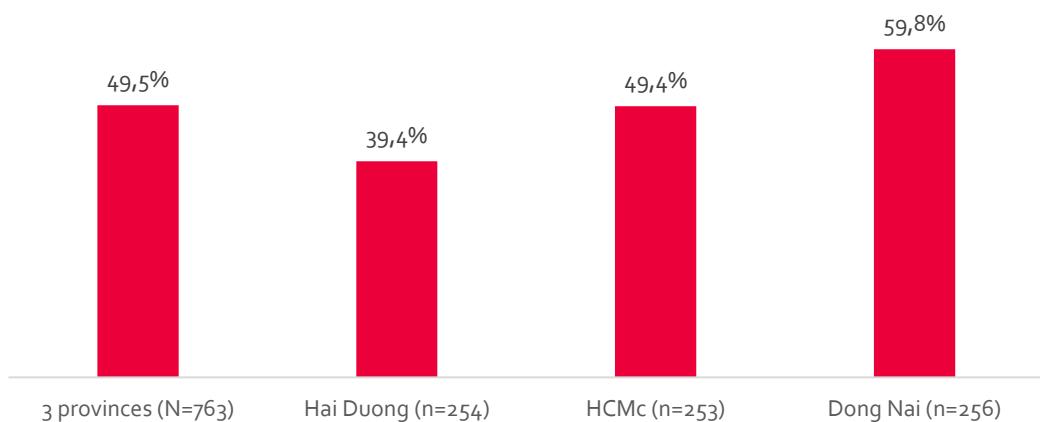
The interviews asked the women garment workers to comment on how safe they felt travelling to and from work. Chart 37 shows that just 27.4% of the garment workers felt completely safe all of the time. In addition, 33.9% said that they felt fairly safe, 30.4% that they felt safe most of the time and 8.3% that they did not feel at all safe. In addition, when it is dark and late travelling to and from work is particularly risky. Travelling at this time is often necessary when garment workers work late or if they are forced to do involuntary overtime. This is also illustrated in Chart 37, which shows that garment workers generally feel less safe travelling to and from work during this time.

Chart 37: How safe women garment workers felt travelling to and from work and to and from work late and in the dark (N=763)



Of all the interviewed women garment workers that had experienced violence or harassment in the previous 12 months, 49.5% experienced violence or harassment while travelling to and from work. As illustrated in chart 38, the highest levels of which were reported in Dong Nai province (59.8%).

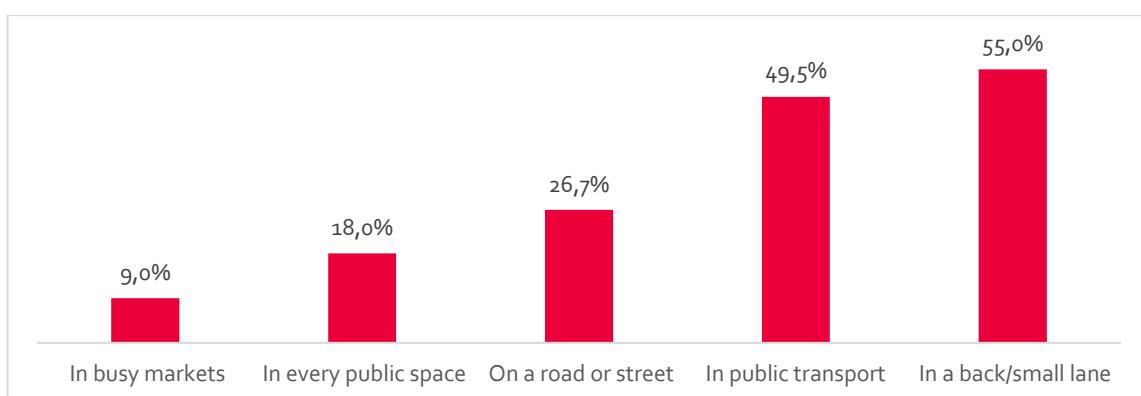
Chart 38: Percentage of women garment workers experiencing at least one incident of violence and harassment travelling to and from work in the previous 12 months (N=763)



The most frequent type of violence or harassment experienced by the women garment workers when they travelled to and from work in the previous 12 months were non-verbal behaviour such as

staring/leering (26.7%), whistling (26.2%) and winking (20.8%). In addition, 12.3% of all the women garment workers that stated that they had received sexually explicit remarks, had also been physically assaulted (touching or groping breasts or other parts of women's bodies) and 9.7% stated that they been followed or stalked. Of particular concern is that twenty-four of the garment workers said that that they had been sexually assaulted travelling to and from work in the previous 12 months. Chart 39 shows the most common places where violence and harassment were experienced by women garment workers experiencing violence and harassment on their way to or from work in the previous 12 months. Notably, by far the most frequent place where violence and harassment occurred was in back lanes (55%), followed by public transport (49.5%) and on the road (26.7%). Lower levels of violence and harassment were reported in busy markets (8.9%), while 18% reported that violence and harassment occurred in all public spaces.

Chart 39: Places where violence and harassment occurred as reported by the women garment workers experiencing violence and harassment to and from work at least once in the previous 12 months (N=378)



In the FGDs, women garment workers talked about some of their experiences of violence and harassment while travelling to and from work, and particularly the risks that they faced at night.

Several women spoke of their fear of travelling to and from work in the dark:

'I am scared. Coming home late, I am afraid.' (HCMC, FGD2)

'For those living far away, or in the long small paths, or near a riverbank, they may feel scared. In the past, they snatched/robbed on the road. I heard about cases of jewellery snatching. And also motorbike robbery, for those who travel far, or travel along the riverbank.' (HCMC, FGD1)

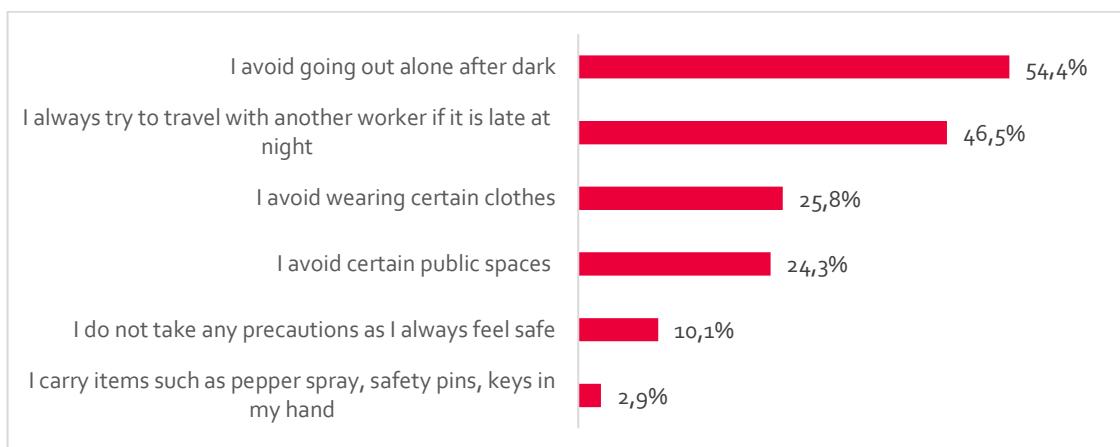
One woman spoke of her experience of being assaulted as she walked down a narrow lane in the dark:

'There are lots of narrow dark lanes around the factory – the factory is not far away, and we walk to work – there was one time I was on a late shift, and a man attacked me in the dark'

lane, it was scary and...I hit him on the head with my shoe and managed to run away.' (Hai Duong, FGD3)

In the interviews, women garment workers also spoke of the precautionary safety measures that they had taken to ensure their safety in public spaces and when travelling to and from work. 89.9% of the garment workers took precautionary measures to ensure their safety. As Chart 40 shows, 54.4% avoided going out alone after dark, 46.5% said that they always tried to travel with other workers when they travel home from work late at night and 25.8% said that they avoided wearing certain clothes. In addition, 24.3% said that they avoided certain public spaces, the highest proportions of which were reported in Hai Duong (31.1%).

Chart 40: Precautionary safety measures taken by workers garment workers (N=763)



In the FGDs, the women garment workers also spoke about the precautionary measures that they take:

'When leaving, we leave in a group of three to four people; I dare not to go alone – it is so scary.' (HCMC, FGD2)

'I always try to travel with a friend now as it is not safe.' (Hai Duong, FGD3)

Section 7. Factors associated with vulnerability to violence and harassment

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This section takes a detailed look at the factors associated with the increased vulnerability of women garment workers in Vietnam to violence and harassment. The multivariate logistic regression model used¹⁶⁸ revealed significant differences in the incidence of violence and harassment and the probability of violence and harassment occurring according to a range of factors.

7.2 FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE INCIDENCE VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT

The following confounding factors show strong associations between an increased incidence of violence and harassment against women garment workers in Vietnam and the probability of it occurring in the future:

- Workers' individual characteristics;
- Production pressures and overtime;
- The working culture in garment factories;
- The availability or not of complaints procedures; and
- A culture of violence against women in the community.

7.2.1 Workers' individual characteristics

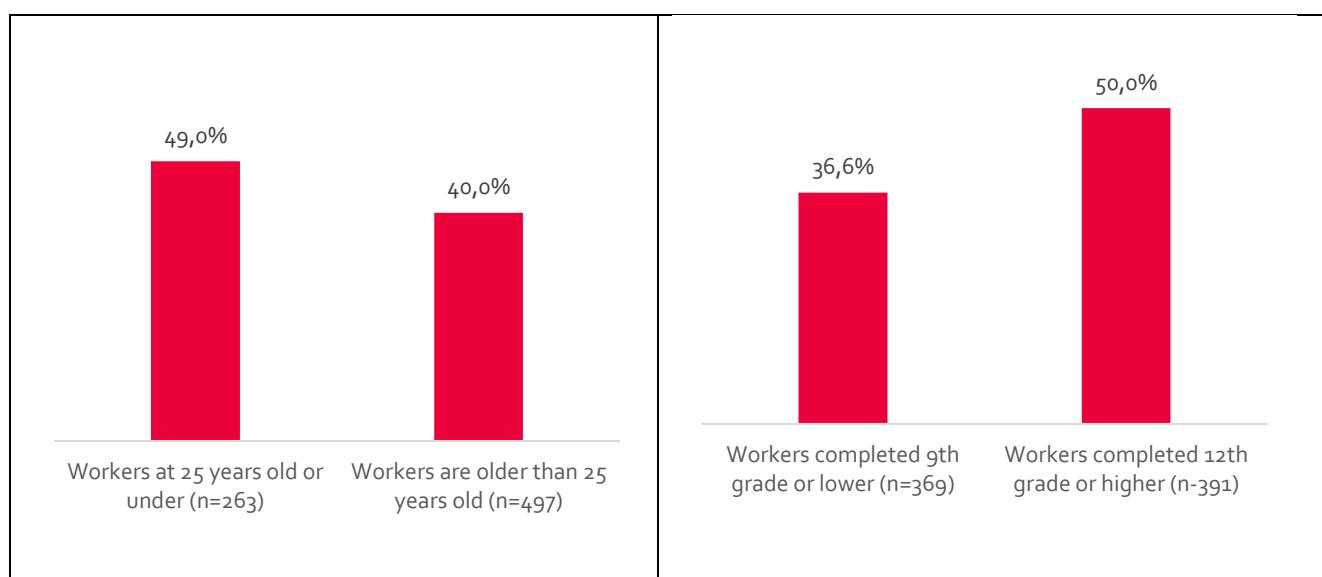
Regression results identified the workers' individual factors that are associated with experiencing at least one incident of violence and harassment in the previous 12 months. Chart 41 highlights the most notable individual factors (age, education, migrant status and work experience in the factory). No correlation was found in factors related to marital status. Chart 41 shows the following:

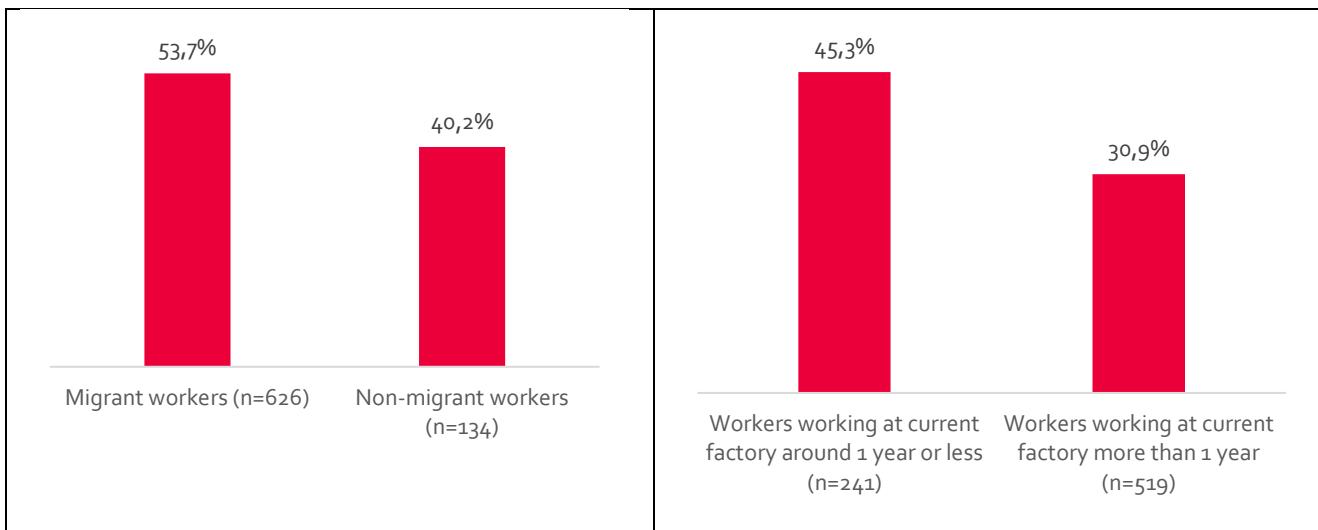
- Younger garment workers are disproportionately affected by violence and harassment. Notably, while 49% of workers aged 25 years or under experienced violence and harassment in the previous 12 months, this dropped to 40% for workers aged 26 years or older.
- Women garment workers that attained higher levels education are more likely to experience violence and harassment than those with lower educational attainment. Notably, 50.1% of garment workers with educational attainment at the 12th grade (last year of high school) or

higher experienced violence and harassment in the previous 12 months, compared to 36.6% of garment workers with an educational attainment at the 9th grade (first year of high school) or lower. This difference may be partially explained by the fact that women with higher levels of educational attainment were more able to articulate an experience of violence and harassment and because they were generally in a younger age cohort.

- Migrant workers are disproportionately affected by violence and harassment; with 53.7% of the migrant workers interviewed for this study stating that they had experienced violence and harassment in the previous 12 months, compared to 40.2% of local workers.
- Limited work experience and violence and harassment are closely associated. Overall, 45.3% of the women garment workers who had been working for the company for less than one year experienced violence and harassment in the previous 12 months, compared to 30.9% of the garment workers that had worked at the company for more than one year. This is partially explained by the fact that garment workers that had been working for the company for less than one year were likely to be younger women.

Chart 41: Incidence of violence and harassment in the previous 12 months based on women garment workers' individual characteristics (N=763)





Box 8. Likelihood of women garment workers experiencing violence and harassment in the previous 12 months: workers' individual characteristics

- Women garment workers aged 25 years or younger are 1.5 times more likely to experience violence and harassment than workers aged 26 years or older;
- Women garment workers with higher levels of education (completion of 12th grade, i.e. secondary school or higher) are 1.7 times more likely to experience violence and harassment than workers with lower educational attainment (9th grade or lower);
- Women garment workers that had migrated to work in a garment factory are twice as likely to experience violence and harassment than non-migrant workers (local workers); and
- Women garment workers that have worked at the factory for one year or less are 2.1 times more likely to experience violence and harassment.

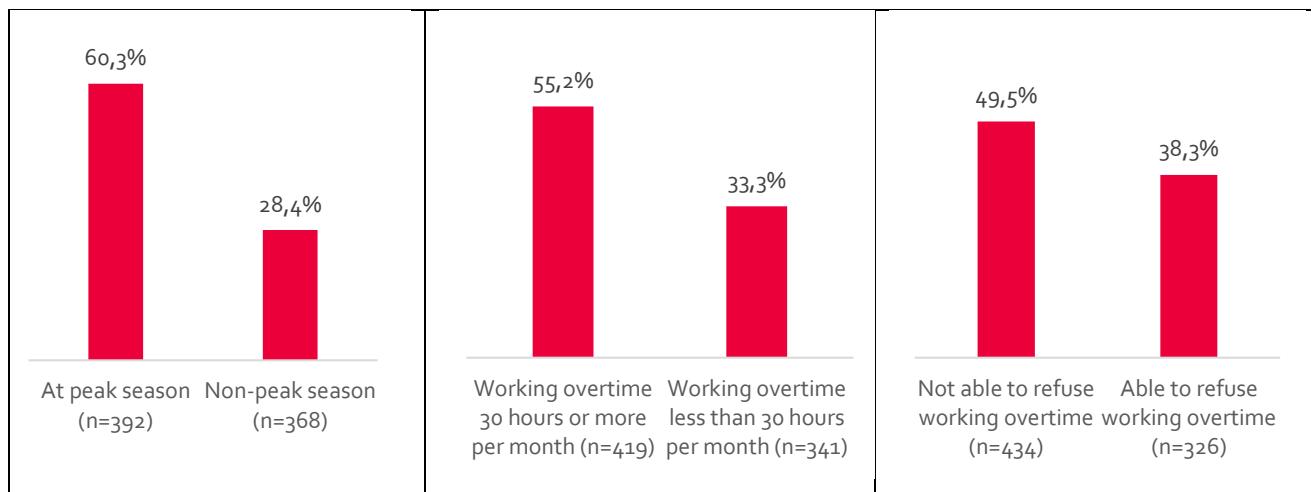
7.2.2 Incidence of violence and harassment: production pressures and overtime

This study's results indicate that there is a strong association between the incidence of violence and harassment and several indicators that are connected to working overtime. Chart 42 shows that:

- There is a higher incidence of violence and harassment during the peak season when there are often intense production pressures and excessive overtime is worked. Significantly, 60.2% of women garment workers experiencing violence and harassment in the previous 12 months stated that it occurred in the peak season, compared to 28.4% in the non-peak season.
- Working substantial amounts of overtime is strongly associated with an increased incidence of violence and harassment. 55.2% of the women garment workers interviewed who worked over 30 hours overtime per month stated that they had experienced violence and harassment in the previous 12 months, compared to the 33.3% of workers who worked less than 30 hours overtime per month.

- Not being allowed to refuse overtime or knowing that refusal of overtime would lead to repercussions at work is also associated with violence and harassment. 49.5% of the respondents experiencing violence and harassment in the previous 12 months were unable to refuse overtime, compared to 38.3% who could refuse overtime.

Chart 42: Incidence of violence and harassment in the previous 12 months: indicators on working overtime (N=760)



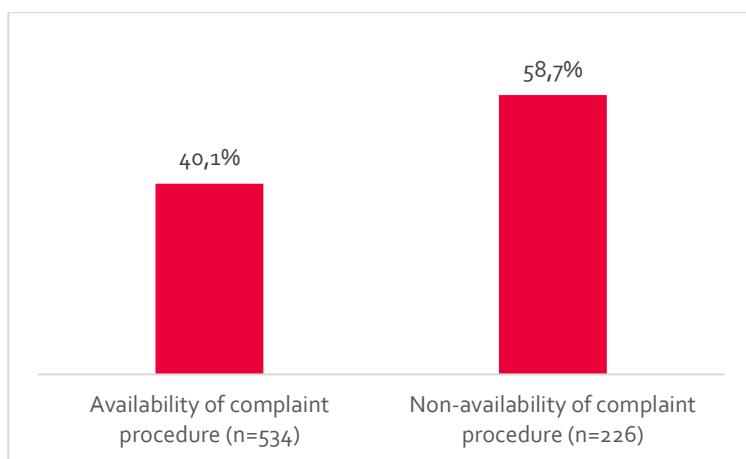
Box 9. Likelihood of women garment workers suffering violence and harassment: the effect of working lots of overtime

- Violence and harassment is 3.8 times more likely to occur in the peak season than during the non-peak season;
- Violence and harassment is 2.4 times more likely to occur when workers report working 30 hours or more of overtime per month than when workers work less than 30 hours overtime per month; and
- Violence and harassment is 1.6 times more likely to occur when workers are unable to refuse overtime than when workers can refuse overtime.

7.2.3 Incidence of violence and harassment: availability of a complaints procedure

The existence of a complaints procedure within a factory is strongly associated with a reduced incidence of violence and harassment. As Chart 43 shows, women garment workers that work in factories with a complaints procedure reported an overall incidence of violence and harassment in the previous 12 months of 40.1%, whereas the incidence of violence and harassment was 58.7% in the factories without a complaints procedure.

Chart 43: Incidence of violence and harassment experienced by women garment workers in the previous 12 months, according to whether or not a complaints procedure is available in their factory (N=760)



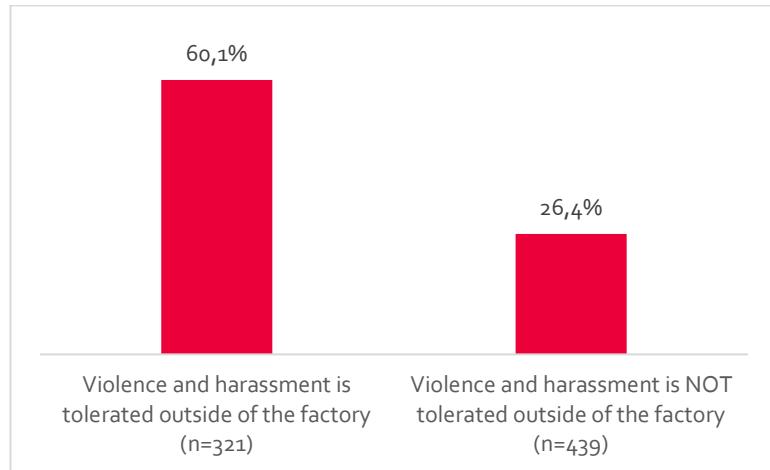
Box 10. The likelihood of violence and harassment occurring in factories without complaints procedures

Violence and harassment is 4.7 times more likely to occur in factories without a complaints procedure compared to factories that have a complaints procedure.

7.2.4 Incidence of violence and harassment: culture of tolerance of violence against women in the community

This study has highlighted that the culture of violence and harassment outside of the factory impacts the likelihood of violence and harassment occurring inside the factory. This data shows the inter-connections between a culture that tolerates violence against women in the family, community and the wider society, with a culture of violence and harassment in garment factories. Chart 44 details that where social norms and a culture of tolerance towards violence and harassment was reported in the community and public places this is replicated in the workplace and 60.1% of the women garment workers in these areas experienced violence and harassment in the previous 12 months. Conversely, where violence and harassment is not tolerated in the local community and public places, just 26.4% of the garment workers reported experiencing violence and harassment in the factory in the previous 12 months.

Chart 44: Incidence of violence and harassment experienced by women garment workers in the previous 12 months differentiated according to whether violence and harassment is tolerated outside of the factory (N=760)



Box 11. Likelihood of women garment workers suffering violence and harassment in the previous 12 months: the effect of a culture of tolerance to violence and harassment outside of the factory

Violence and harassment is 4 times more likely to occur in factories where violence and harassment is tolerated outside of the factory.

This is an important finding, which points to the importance of implementing interventions both inside and outside of the factory in reducing violence and harassment in garment factories.

Integrated strategies to end violence and harassment against women in the workplace, family, community and at an institutional and policy level are, therefore, vital to ending violence and harassment in the workplace.

7.3 FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH REPORTING AND MAKING COMPLAINTS OF VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT

This study looked at a range of factors associated with the incidence of violence and harassment related to workers' reporting of violence and harassment. The regression results show that a wide variety of factors increase the likelihood that women garment workers will report violence and harassment. The following confounding factors are strongly associated with the reporting of violence and harassment against garment workers and the probability of violence and harassment occurring in the future:

- Workers' individual characteristics;
- Workers' pay and benefits package;
- Workers' awareness of violence and harassment;
- Work culture in garment factories;
- Availability of a policy and procedure (Code of Conduct);
- Availability of a complaints procedure; and
- Effectiveness of the complaints procedure.

7.3.1 Women garment workers' individual characteristics and reporting on violence and harassment

The data illustrated in Chart 45 shows significant variations in violence and harassment reporting practices among different groups of workers based on their individual characteristics. Indicators concerning the women garment workers' age, education, migrant status and whether they have children are particularly strongly associated with whether they would report an incidence of violence and harassment. Like with the incidence of violence and harassment, there was no association between marital status and the reporting of violence and harassment.

The level of reporting on violence and harassment is higher for younger workers than older workers. Of the women garment workers experiencing violence and harassment in the previous 12 months, 43% of the workers aged 35 years and younger reported violence and harassment to someone in the previous 12 months, compared to 30% of workers aged 35 years and over. This is partially explained by the fact that younger women are more likely to be aware of violence and harassment, while older women may be reluctant to report violence and harassment because they are worried that their contracts will be terminated. This relates to the evidence in this study that garment workers aged 35 and older frequently have their contracts terminated or not renewed because of their reduced productivity as a result of the perceived limitations on their physical and dexterity capacities. As one respondent put it:

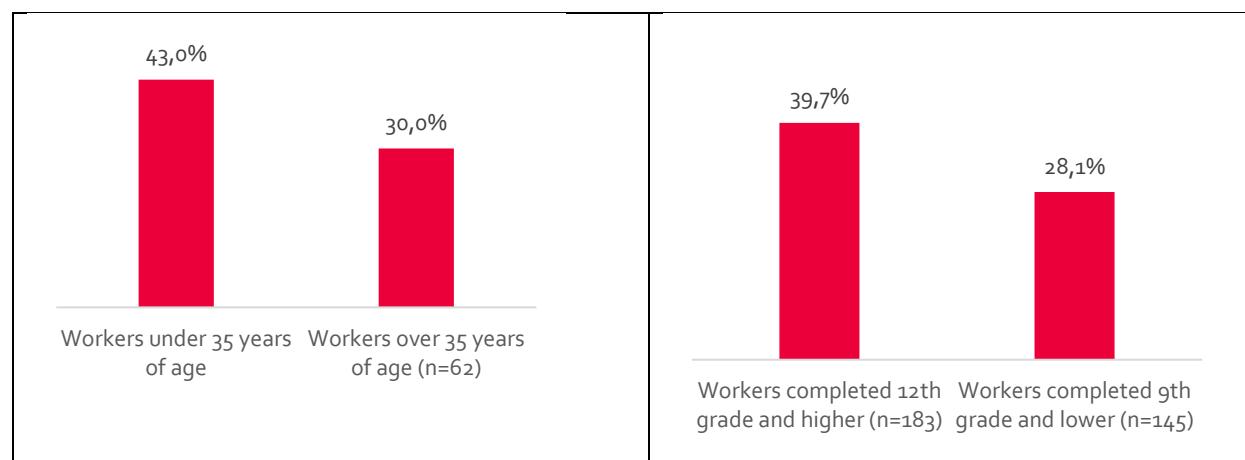
‘We have to finish working when we are 35 years, by then, many women’s bodies are worn out, so not as productive.’ (Hai Duong, FGD3).

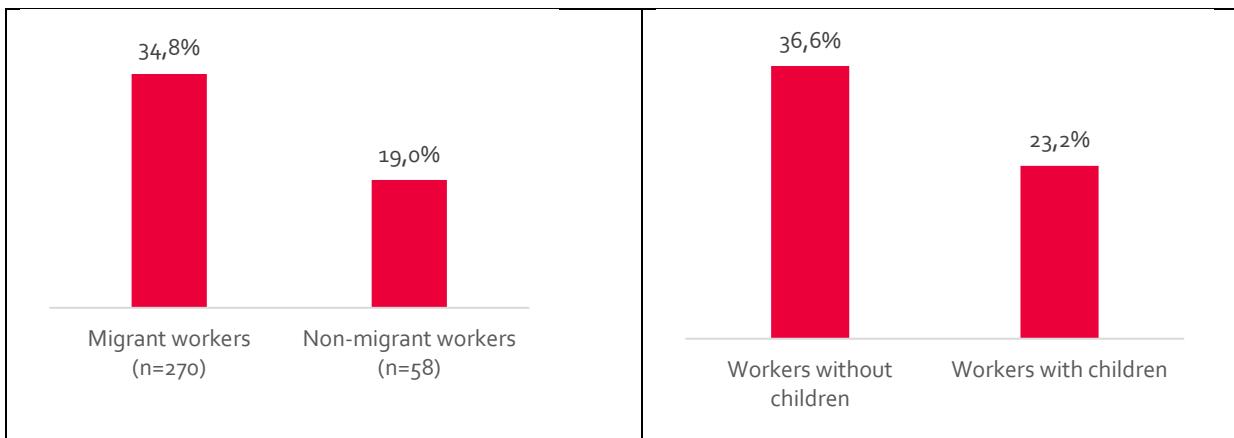
The education levels of the women garment workers experiencing violence and harassment in the previous 12 months also impacted whether they reported the violence and harassment. This study shows that of the garment workers experiencing violence and harassment in the previous 12 months,

39.7% of garment workers with educational attainment at high school level (12th grade) or higher reported violence harassment in the previous 12 months, compared to 28.1% of garment workers with educational attainment at secondary school level (9th grade) and lower. This difference is partially explained by the fact that women with higher levels of educational attainment are better at articulating an incidence of violence and harassment.

Migrant workers are more likely to report violence and harassment than local workers. Of the women garment workers experiencing violence and harassment in the previous 12 months, 34% of migrant workers reported an incident, compared to 19% of local workers. This is explained in part by the fact that local workers are more likely to be affected by the stigma, taboos and victim-blaming that often occurs to the victims of violence and harassment from their families and the local community. Different levels of reporting also occurred amongst women garment workers with and without dependent children. Of the garment workers experiencing violence and harassment in the previous 12 months, 36.6% of those that reported an incident of violence and harassment had children, compared to 23.2% who did not have children. However, no association was found between garment workers' marital status and reporting violence and harassment.

Chart 45: Reporting behaviour amongst each worker group of the women garment workers experiencing violence and harassment in the previous 12 months differentiated by individual characteristics





Box 12. Likelihood of women garment workers reporting violence and harassment: workers' individual characteristics

- Workers aged 35 years and under are 1.3 times more likely to report an incident of violence and harassment, compared to workers aged 36 years or older;
- Workers with higher educational attainment (completed 12th grade or higher) are 1.7 times more likely to report violence and harassment than those with lower educational attainment (completed 9th grade and lower);
- Migrant workers are 3.5 times more likely to report violence and harassment than local workers; and
- Workers with dependent children are 3.2 times more likely to report violence and harassment than those without dependent children.

7.3.2 Awareness of violence and harassment

This study explored whether women garment workers' awareness of violence and harassment correlated with their reporting behaviour. This was based on their awareness of violence and harassment and workers' perceptions of different types of violence and harassment and the working culture in the garment factories where they worked. The results shown in Chart 46, indicate higher level of reporting (47%) amongst workers that displayed a good awareness of and do not accept violence and harassment in their workplace, compared to 30% of workers that did not display a good understanding of violence and harassment and accept it as part of the working culture.

One significant reason for not reporting violence and harassment is that many workers do not know that what they are experiencing is unacceptable behaviour and these workers often remain silent about an incident or brush off a problem as a 'joke'. The #MeToo campaign has shown the extent to which women have kept silent about the issue, and NGOs working with garment workers in Vietnam assert that the silence around violence and harassment and the culture of victim-blaming are particularly significant in Vietnam. This finding has important implications for increasing the

awareness of violence and harassment at multiple levels, including in the wider society and community, the workplace and amongst policymakers, employers' organisations and workers' organisations. Raising awareness through worker education programmes, training and the provision of accessible information are all important for this.

Box 13. Likelihood of women garment workers reporting violence and harassment: workers' awareness of violence and harassment

Workers with good levels of awareness of violence and harassment are 2.4 times more likely to report violence and harassment than those with poor levels of awareness.

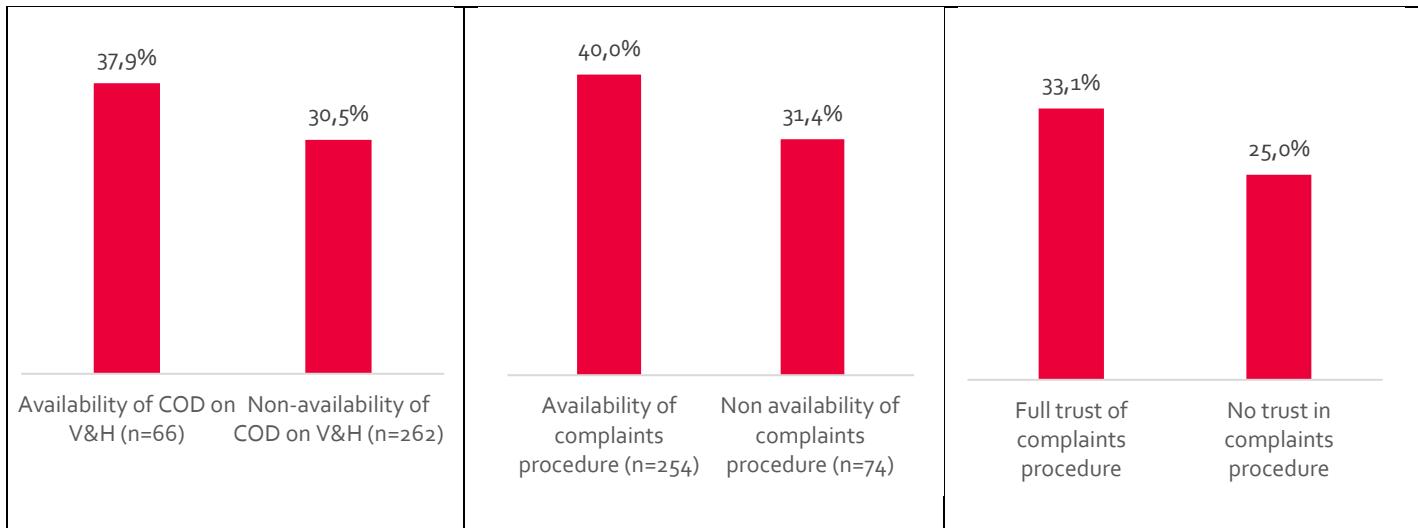
7.3.3 Reporting violence and harassment: the availability of policies and procedures (Code of Conduct)

To better understand how complaints systems could increase workers' willingness to report violence and harassment three indicators were explored: the availability of policies and procedures (code of conduct) on violence and harassment; the availability of a complaints procedure and the complaints procedure's effectiveness (illustrated in Chart 46). As was expected, incidents of violence and harassment are more likely to be reported if a policy and procedure (code of conduct) is in place. As Chart 46 indicates, where a code of conduct was in place, 37.9% of the women garment workers experiencing violence and harassment in the previous 12 months reported violence and harassment to someone, compared to 30.5% where a policy did not exist. In addition, as this study has already shown (Section 5), rates of reporting on violence and harassment are generally low, and women mostly reported incidents to a friend, work colleague or family member, rather than a manager or trade union official.

Box 14. Likelihood of women garment workers reporting violence and harassment: the effect of a factory Code of Conduct

Women garment workers that work in a factory with a Code of Conduct on violence and harassment are 1.4 times more likely to report violence and harassment to someone, compared to those in factories without a Code of Conduct.

Chart 46: Incidence of reporting violence and harassment according to the availability of a code of conduct, complaints procedure and women garment workers' trust in this procedure (N=328)



7.3.4 Availability or not of a complaints procedure

The availability of a complaints procedure was strongly associated with reporting violence and harassment to someone. Of the women garment workers experiencing violence and harassment in the previous 12 months, 40% reported an incident of violence and harassment when the company they worked for had a complaints procedure, compared to 31.4% when there was no complaints procedure in place.

The effectiveness of the complaints procedure was measured by looking at workers' trust in the complaints procedure and whether a worker reports an incident to someone. Of the women garment workers experiencing violence and harassment in the previous 12 months and worked in factories with complaints procedures, only 25% reported violence and harassment when they also expressed a lack of trust in the complaints procedure, compared to 33.1% when they trusted the procedure.

Box 15. Likelihood of women garment workers reporting violence and harassment: factory complaints procedure

Workers in factories where there is a complaints procedure are 2.3 times more likely to report violence and harassment to someone, compared to workers in factories without a complaints procedure; and

Workers in factories where the workers trust the complaints procedure are 2.1 times more likely to report violence and harassment to someone, compared to workers in factories with a complaints procedure that they do not trust.

Section 8. Conclusions and recommendations

8.1 CONCLUSIONS

This report has provided evidence of significant levels of violence and harassment, particularly verbal abuse and sexual harassment, in garment factories and the wider world of work in Vietnam. Based on interviews with 763 women garment workers and FGDs with garment workers in three provinces, the study has uncovered some of the factors that are associated with violence and harassment. These include factors in the garment supply chain, at the factory level and concerning social norms, gender inequalities as well as in the broader context of workplace and societal cultures that continue to tolerate violence against women and a culture of victim-blaming.

This study has used evidence that it generated to highlight areas where changes can be implemented by clothing brands and other stakeholders in Vietnam. Low wages and dependence on overtime and productivity bonus payments – both for workers and supervisors – are critical issues that need to be tackled by clothing brands, suppliers and other stakeholders as part of their efforts to create a safe working environment absent of violence and harassment.

Strategies to end excessive overtime, involuntary and unscheduled overtime and production pressures are key to creating a dignified and harassment-free working environment. Clothing brands can influence this through negotiations and contract pricing with suppliers, and by implementing predictable ordering and production timeframes and schedules that help reduce production pressures and excessive overtime. This, in turn, will provide garment workers with the additional agency to advocate for better working conditions, including asserting their right to refuse excessive overtime, which has the potential to reduce levels of violence and harassment. Improving the working environment would also help to reduce violence and harassment in the garment sector. The women garment workers consulted as part of this study asserted the need to improve a wide range of aspects related to the working environment. The key areas that they believed required addressing included, pay and benefits, creating a respectful working environment, less pressure and stress at work, occupational safety and health and being represented by a trade union.

This study's findings point to the need for clothing brands and suppliers to act upon the negative impacts that unrealistic productivity expectations are having on violence and harassment. Ending unrealistic production targets will help to foster a culture of respect, as well as reduced levels of

violence and harassment. In addition, violence and harassment against women garment workers have important implications for the retention of workers. The fact that one in 10 workers attributed violence and harassment as the reason why they left their previous employment suggests that business strategies designed to increase reduce worker turnover need to target preventing violence and harassment. Strategies to reduce the turnover of workers should also focus on better wages, more predictable scheduling of overtime, better employment security through the ending of short-term contracts and the discriminatory non-renewal of contracts for women over 35 years of age. This study has shown that women garment workers experience lower levels of violence and harassment in factories that have policies and procedures on violence and harassment, and especially when workers know that these policies and procedures exist and trust them. Significantly, although many suppliers have integrated policies and procedures on violence and harassment (including codes of conduct) into their grievance systems, lots of the workers interviewed were unaware of them or did not trust the complaints system.

More needs to be done to develop sensitive, trusted and effective complaints systems, including enabling women to make confidential complaints. This study's findings highlight the critical importance of clothing brands working closely with suppliers to implement effective policies and complaints procedures that workers trust. A robust legal framework is required with obligations on employers to implement prevention programmes in the workplace, along with effective policies and complaints procedures that enable workers to make complaints safely. More worker studies would be extremely helpful in establishing exactly what is needed to implement an effective complaints procedure.

Social dialogue can also play a vital role in prevention programmes in the workplace that are linked to occupational safety and health measures and in the development, implementation, and monitoring of factory policies and procedures. This should also include providing support and training to trade unions to ensure that they are able to provide the victims of violence and harassment the help, advice, and representation required. Social dialogue and workplace cooperation can encourage women to speak out and make complaints, help to ensure the establishment of procedures for remediating their complaints and promote learning opportunities from workers' complaints.

In addition to documenting women garment workers' experiences of violence and harassment, this study has also highlighted their safety concerns inside garment factories, at the factory gates and in the wider world of work, particularly when travelling to and from work when it is late and dark. This highlights the importance of implementing integrated strategies and interventions that not only

prevent violence and harassment in factories but recognise the importance of preventing violence and harassment when workers travel to and from work, in public spaces and in the local community.

This study also provides insights into what lies beneath workers' vulnerabilities to violence and harassment in Vietnamese garment factories. Specifically, it shows that incidents of violence and harassment are more likely to occur in situations where there is:

- Discrimination/unfair treatment of a woman worker based on her individual characteristics, such as being younger or older, a migrant worker or working on a short-term contract;
- Significant production pressures, involuntary or excessive overtime and long working hours, which create a disrespectful working environment and a culture of verbal abuse and sexual harassment that is directed towards women workers;
- A lack of knowledge/trust in policies and procedures and complaints systems that address cases of violence and harassment and prevent future cases from arising;
- Societal and community tolerance of violence and harassment against women is low, where attitudes/behaviours towards women reflect a culture of sexism/sexual harassment, which affects behaviour in the workplace, at the factory gates, and in public spaces.

In addition, a key finding from this Fair Wear study – as well as other research highlighted in this study – is the importance of situating the problem of violence and harassment, and particularly sexual harassment, as a gender equality issue. As the UN's recently published policy on sexual harassment notes: 'Sexual harassment results from a culture of discrimination and privilege, based on unequal gender relations and power dynamics.'¹⁶⁹ Sexual harassment is connected to social norms, gender roles and relations, vertical and occupational segregation, the wider gender pay gap in the garment sector compared to the economy overall, the disadvantages faced by mothers (and the motherhood pay gap), and the effect of working in a highly feminised, low paid sector, amongst others. It is, therefore, essential that strategies designed to end violence and harassment against women address these broader structural inequalities as they affect women in the workplace.

In summary, ending violence and harassment against women in Vietnam's garment sector requires a multi-stakeholder and multi-dimensional approach that addresses legal, institutional, workplace and societal dynamics. Key dimensions of this include:

- Supply chain factors and brands' purchasing practices, planning and the building of long-term business relations that can play a role in reducing the risks of violence and harassment that are associated with production pressures;
- Implementing core labour standards and living wages to reduce workers' vulnerability and encourage retention and skill acquisition;

- Training of managers, supervisors and workers to raise awareness about appropriate behaviour in the workplace, the harmful effects of violence and harassment, and how to prevent it;
- Ensuring improved capacity, knowledge and access to relevant information and gender-disaggregated data, HR systems and tools, and training to effectively prevent and monitor violence and harassment;
- Legal provisions with obligations on employers to implement policies and procedures to prevent and respond to incidents of violence and harassment, protect victims and hold perpetrators accountable;
- Effective systems for enforcing and monitoring the implementation of laws and policies, including strengthened labour inspection systems;¹⁷⁰
- Support social dialogue between workers' and employers' organisations and at the factory level to prevent violence and harassment, improve the workers' and ensure that safety and health measures are implemented;
- Alliances between NGOs and women's organisations in preventing and addressing violence and harassment against women in the world of work and the community.

Box 16: What women garment workers believe needs to change in factories to end violence and harassment (quotes from the FGDs)

'Management should be trained about how to [respectfully] interact with the workers and how to have better behaviour.'

'They [the managers] should have been trained on how to manage workers on conduct and behaviour towards workers.'

'Managers and supervisors should be treating us with respect. There should be respect for the worker.'

'Supervisors should not discriminate against us workers – they should be trained to reduce discrimination.'

'The supervisor is also under pressure from the manager, this needs to change as well, as it gets passed on to us workers.'

'It is important to reduce production pressures; this needs to be based on real targets. There should be a better calculation of what is a reasonable target – this needs to be looked at as we do not know how this calculation is made.'

'I want to be treated with respect.'

'We can never reach our targets – I want to have a target we can reach.'

'No discrimination...Respect, respect, respect.'

'No shouting and less pressure.'

8.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Several recommendations have been formulated based on this study's findings. These recommendations point to areas where change can take place through brand and supply chain policies, factory level policies and procedures, social dialogue initiatives and projects, legal and institutional changes. Successfully implementing these policies and delivering sustainable change to the garment workers' lives cannot be done by one company or Fair Wear member brand alone. Instead, it requires a holistic approach, that involves the government (MoLISA), international organisations (e.g. ILO, Better Work), multi-stakeholder initiatives (MSIs) such as Fair Wear, employers (VCCI), unions (VGCL and enterprise unions), and NGOs and advocacy organisations currently operating in Vietnam.

The recommendations outlined below aim to build a long-term partnership between Fair Wear and other key stakeholders in Vietnam, for example, in sharing knowledge about workplace issues and initiatives to ending violence and harassment. In addition, the recommendations aim to build on existing strategies and advocacy initiatives for strong legal and policy provisions and implement supply chain and factory level changes, while also helping brands to identify supply chain problems connected to violence and harassment and to find practical solutions. An important issue embedded in the Fair Wear Strategic Partnership is how violence and harassment against women can be included in future factory level social dialogue and sectoral level collective bargaining.

1 Implement business and human rights principles to address violence and harassment in the garment sector

This Fair Wear study's findings point to the positive role that clothing brands can play in mitigating the negative productivity and retention effects of violence and harassment. In building a strong reputation for treating workers with dignity and equality, international trade developments and the EU-Vietnam FTA, give Vietnam a global international platform for showcasing legal, institutional and workplace level measures to end violence and harassment in Vietnam's garment sector.

The strong business case for ending violence and harassment is inextricably linked to these developments in global competition and trade, and in attracting further suppliers to locate in Vietnam. At the factory level, fostering a workforce that promotes gender equality and is committed to ending violence and harassment in this sector that predominantly employs women, will only help to attract the best workers. Furthermore, it can enhance organisational performance, reduce the cost of staff turnover, improve access to target markets, minimise legal risks and enhance suppliers and brands' reputations.

Stakeholders in Vietnam (e.g. MoLISA, VCCI and VGCL) and clothing bands (including Fair Wear's member brands) are encouraged to implement measures to end violence and harassment in the garment sector and to promote the business case for gender equality amongst the garment sectors' employers.

Emerging frameworks on due diligence on gender equality/ending violence and harassment against women are also important for Vietnam's garment sector, and clothing brands could utilise these in their supply chain operations. These frameworks could form an essential component of the future implementation and monitoring of the sections of the EU-Vietnam FTA and other FTAs that concern the garment sector.

Recommended actions to implement business and human rights principles for ending violence and harassment in Vietnam's garment sector:

For Clothing brands, MoLISA, VCCI, Vietnam Textile and Apparel Association (VITAS) and VGCL

- a. Clothing brands, including Fair Wear brands, and stakeholders in Vietnam, should play an active role and work closely with suppliers and the VCCI to raise awareness and set out the business benefits (e.g. improving productivity and worker retention) of preventing and addressing violence and harassment.
- b. Draw up practical measures and guidance to demonstrate how relevant business and human rights principles and due-diligence frameworks (e.g. OECD guidelines, ILO Multinational Enterprises Declaration, and the UNGPs and the related gender-responsive due diligence framework) can be used to assess and mitigate the risks associated with violence and harassment against women garment workers.
- c. Increase practical awareness amongst brands, for example, through drawing on guidance from UNGP and OECD on implementing a gender-responsive framework on due-diligence to address violence and harassment in the garment sector.
- d. Ensure that this framework includes the collection and assessment of gender-disaggregated data to highlight the differentiated impacts of violence and harassment on women and men; support the implementation of actions designed to mitigate violence and harassment; identify high risk situations where garment workers are most vulnerable to violence and harassment; and provide support for social dialogue and women's participation in negotiations for prevention programmes, policies and procedures.¹⁷¹

- 2** Implement practical tools and guidance with clothing brands to prevent violence and harassment in garment factories

Many clothing brands have significant leverage in changing practices, policies and procedures in their contracting systems. This can add value to a brands' commercial reputation at a time when there is heightened international media attention and public concern about violence and harassment and especially sexual harassment. Clothing brands can also play a role in promoting effective occupational safety and health measures and prevention programmes (e.g. risk assessments and risk management programmes), and in monitoring remediation to prevent violence and harassment.

Central to this is that clothing brands receive practical advice and guidance on the steps to take to ensure the effective implementation of best practice approaches to preventing and addressing violence and harassment. This includes advice and guidance on clothing brands' role in supporting the ratification and implementation of ILO Convention 190 on violence and harassment against women and men in the world of work.

Recommended actions to build awareness and practical tools for clothing brands:

For MSIs such as Fair Wear that work with clothing brands, clothing brands and relevant stakeholders in Vietnam:

- a. Brands should conduct a root-cause analysis of excessive overtime and identify strategies to address the causes. This should include examining brands' production planning systems and practices that may contribute to putting additional pressure on factories' production planning.
- b. Brands must implement mechanisms to prevent excessive overtime and have strategies to mitigate overtime when delays in production occur.
- c. Brands' must also ensure that contracting/supplier arrangements include specific clauses on the prevention of violence and harassment. These arrangements should include the requirement for occupational safety and health measures to prevent violence and harassment, measures to reduce involuntary overtime and production pressures, and for the implementation and monitoring of workplace policies and complaints procedures. The implementation of these measures should be monitored.
- d. Draw up guidance on and a template for negotiating and drawing up contracts; this could be drafted and piloted collaboratively by MSIs in the garment sector and with specific clothing brands. The guidance should set out the practical steps to change contracting and purchasing practices to identify the warning signs of violence and harassment and alleviate pressures and stress resulting from unrealistic production deadlines.
- e. Through brochures and web-based materials, provide practical and informative guidance for clothing brands on how to prevent and address violence and harassment in garment factories, including guidance on:

- Basic steps for brands to take to prevent and address violence and harassment in the supply chain process and how to give practical support to suppliers;
- The relationship between preventing violence and harassment and improved retention, skill development and increased productivity;
- Financial and other incentives for brands to support factory training programmes (for managers, supervisors and workers) in partnership with suppliers;
- The collection of gender-disaggregated data for relevant HR records, including records of complaints made;
- Publicity and public awareness-raising on what clothing brands, NGOs and other stakeholders are doing to prevent violence and harassment against women in garment factories.

3 Work with the government of Vietnam (MoLISA) to ensure the revised Labour Code addresses issues raised in this research

This study has pointed to the urgent need for effective policies and provisions that put a duty on employers to effectively prevent and address violence and harassment (including sexual harassment) in garment factories. Therefore, Vietnam must adopt a strong Labour Code. The new Labour Code needs to include a clear definition of sexual harassment (that is in line with internationally agreed definitions and standards), which places an obligation on employers to raise awareness about the unacceptability of violence and harassment. It is also necessary that the new Labour Code ensures that processes are in place for victims to make confidential complaints and gain remedies. A key issue will be to ensure that the provisions in the revised Labour Code will be effectively implemented and monitored, including through social dialogue and collective bargaining.

Recommended actions for the revision and implementation of the Labour Code:

- a. The Labour Code's definitions should be broadly in line with the internationally agreed definition in ILO Convention 190 on violence and harassment against women and men in the world of work. This would have the added benefit of helping to facilitate an environment that is conducive to the future ratification of ILO Convention 190 by the government of Vietnam.
- b. Stress the vital importance of including social dialogue at sectoral and enterprise/factory/supplier level as a tool for effective implementation and monitoring of the Labour Code in preventing and addressing violence and harassment in the world of work.
- c. Set out obligations on employers (the enterprise/factory/supplier level) to implement policies and procedures or Codes of Conduct to prevent and address violence and

harassment. These should be in line with the policy and procedures set out in Vietnam's Code of Conduct on sexual harassment and take account of ILO Convention 190 on violence and harassment against women and men in the world of work. The policy/procedure should set out following obligations on employers to:

- Carry out risk assessments and prevention measures;
- Draw up effective and confidential complaints procedures, including independent investigations;
- Put in place a system for anonymous complaints to be made on violence and harassment;
- Implement remedies and support for victims;
- Ensure that there is no retaliation against victims, witnesses or whistle blowers reporting violence and harassment;
- Carry out training and awareness-raising sessions for managers, supervisors and workers;
- Promote social dialogue in the drafting, implementation and monitoring of the policies, procedures and complaints mechanisms designed to address violence and harassment;
- Include workers' representatives on relevant complaints committees and ensure that they receive appropriate training to carry out their role;
- Implement gender-disaggregated record-keeping for relevant HR records, including in the records of complaints made.

d. Ensure that the revised Labour Code is implemented and monitored, for example, through social dialogue processes, involving women rights organisations/NGOs and a strengthened labour inspectorate.

e. In partnership with all relevant stakeholders (e.g. ILO, Better Work, MoLISA, VCCI, VITAS and VGCL), provide detailed best practice guidance. This should draw on models developed by ILO172 to effectively integrate gender equality and the prevention of violence and harassment against women into factory safety measures, for example, in occupational safety and health and labour inspection processes. This best practice guidance should include:

- Gender-responsive factory safety audits to pinpoint the areas that have the greatest risk of violence and harassment occurring (e.g. unlit corridors, factory gates, crowded areas, toilets and rest areas);
- Enhance the voice of women workers through their participation in factory safety walks, participatory research and FGDs, art workshops and other creative mechanisms;
- Integrate the best practice guidance into occupational safety and health measures, risk management procedures, risk assessments and prevention plans;

- Include the detection and prevention of violence and harassment in factory inspection systems, including gender-responsive training and guidance for factory inspectors and other public officials.
- f. Ensure that garment workers are aware of their rights under Vietnam's revised Labour Code, for example, through the provision of accessible information and posters, and awareness-raising and training at the factory level for workers.

4 Promote sectoral social dialogue on violence and harassment in the world of work

Although sectoral dialogue is in the early stages of development in Vietnam, clothing brands are in a strong position to play an active role in promoting sectoral social dialogue in Vietnam. This can be done by working with union leaders, employers and the government to address the need for prevention programmes, the integration of risk assessments into occupational safety and health, awareness-raising and training for workers and managers, and the implementation of effective workplace policies and complaints systems. There is a unique opportunity for a sectoral agreement to set out these obligations, and this should be aligned with the future revised Labour Code and ILO Convention 190 and Recommendation 206.

Furthermore, violence and harassment is an issue that most parties agree needs to be addressed. This makes violence and harassment a good entry point for commencing sectoral social dialogue, particularly given the precedent set by the voluntary tripartite Code of Conduct on sexual harassment. Promoting social dialogue is especially relevant in the context of the commitments that the government of Vietnam made under the EU-Vietnam FTA to ratify ILO Convention No.87 (Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise) and ILO Convention No.98 (Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining).

Social dialogue and remediation initiatives should directly address the need for workplace violence and harassment prevention programmes, including how remediation can be used to identify solutions to the factors that this study identified as increasing the occurrence of violence and harassment.

Recommended actions to promote sectoral social dialogue on violence and harassment in the world of work:

For Fair Wear, CNV, VCCI and VGCL:

- a) Working together Fair Wear, CNV, VCCI and VGCL, are in a strong position to draft a model sector-wide CBA on preventing and addressing violence and harassment in the garment sector. This should include guidelines on how it can be adopted at the enterprise/factory/supplier level. In addition, this should draw on the existing Code of Conduct on sexual harassment and other

resources developed in Vietnam on preventing and addressing violence and harassment in the world of work.

- b) The model sector-wide CBA should set out the objectives and actions to be undertaken by all of the parties to the agreement, a plan and timeframes for the agreement's implementation, joint systems for monitoring and reviewing the agreement, and timeframes for renegotiation. It should also set out the structures that are applicable at the enterprise/factory/supplier level (e.g. training sessions, prevention programmes embedded in occupational safety and health committees, workplace harassment complaints committees and confidential complaints procedures).
- c) The model CBA should use the language and definitions contained in ILO Convention 190 (Article 5) on violence and harassment against women and men in the world of work, with recognition of the fundamental principles and rights at work. These include the important role of freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining to prevent and eliminate violence and harassment. In particular, the language and definitions of the model CBA should account for the role of collective bargaining in implementing occupational safety and health and other measures to prevent and end violence and harassment (Article 12).

5 Promote enterprise-level social dialogue as an effective tool to end violence and harassment

At the workplace level, social dialogue is crucial for ensuring that women workers' voices are heard on issues such as working conditions and pay as well as the factors that increase their vulnerability to violence and harassment (e.g. long working hours and excessive overtime, and production pressures). Giving a voice to women's experiences of the impact of violence and harassment on health and wellbeing at work highlights the impact that the absence of trusted workplace policies and complaints systems to deal with violence and harassment at work has. The union representatives and factory managers/HR personnel that work inside garment factories can play an active role in fostering social dialogue and promoting workplace cooperation, finding joint solutions to factory-based problems, and undertaking negotiations for CBAs and workplace policies designed to prevent and address violence and harassment at the factory level.

This Fair Wear study shows that women garment workers currently have a low level of trust in trade union representatives providing support and advice to workers experiencing violence and harassment. However, if equipped with training and guidance, best practices from across the world show that trade union representatives can help to ensure the effective implementation of trusted workplace policies and successfully represent and support women workers affected by violence and harassment.

Recommended actions to promote enterprise-level social dialogue as an effective tool to

eliminate violence and harassment:

For Fair Wear, CNV, VCCI and VGCL:

- a. Based on recommendation four, Fair Wear, CNV, VCCI and VGCL, should promote the negotiation and implementation of enterprise/factory/supplier level CBAs that set out the responsibilities of parties to the agreement. Furthermore, they should promote the negotiation and implementation of a workplace Code of Conduct/comprehensive model workplace policy that is annexed to the CBA. This could be carried out in cooperation with NGOs working on the issue in the garment sector and with reference to Vietnam's Code of Conduct on sexual harassment.
- b. Include training on social dialogue for workplace negotiators so that they can agree on a best practice policy and programme for implementation. This should be included in existing training programmes such as the Fair Wear Workplace Education Programme training module for Fair Wear supplier factories as well as other training sessions run by NGOs, VCCI, VGCL and ILO Better Work. These training sessions should cover:
 - Measures to reduce stress and prevent violence and harassment at the enterprise/factory/supplier level;
 - Development of occupational safety and health measures that can contribute to the prevention of violence and harassment;
 - Development and implementation of effective workplace policies and confidential complaints systems that workers trust;
 - Support for victims of violence and harassment;
 - Guidance on how to establish independent and confidential support and representation for workers that make complaints regarding violence and harassment.
- c. Implement factory-based social dialogue projects amongst relevant stakeholders to help factory managers and union representatives to implement effective policies and procedures for preventing/addressing violence and harassment. The social dialogue projects could help to demonstrate a practical step-by-step approach that other factories/suppliers could adopt as a basis for increasing factory level social dialogue on the issue. Specifically, factory based social dialogue would benefit from:
 - Integrating the social dialogue projects with the existing Fair Wear/CNV Multi-Company CBA project in Vietnam, and partnering with VCCI and VGCL;
 - Providing a joint training programme for trade union and worker committee members on violence and harassment, through a partnership with VCI, VCGL, Fair Wear, ILO Better Work and other key relevant stakeholders;
 - Implementing specific measures to encourage the involvement and representation of women garment workers in the project;

- Considering the implementation of factory level harassment contact persons as part of a 'women's advocacy programme' designed to provide confidential advice and support for victims of violence and harassment;
- Including a training programme for workplace representatives and workers to provide this role.¹⁷³

6 Ensure better systems for identifying violence and harassment in audits carried out in garment factories

Evidence shows that audit systems (e.g. those carried out by Better Work, Fair Wear, other MSIs and clothing brands), rarely detect violence and harassment, and particularly sexual harassment. In Vietnam, social norms and a culture of 'victim-blaming' means that violence and harassment is a highly sensitive topic, which helps to explain why women rarely speak out about the problem and often do not respond to audit questions on sexual harassment. In addition, auditors may lack the necessary training on how to sensitively ask questions about violence and harassment.

Recommended actions on clothing brands' audit systems and auditing companies and organisations in Vietnam:

- a. Implement a well-designed and specific training programme on violence and harassment for audit team members. This will help to ensure that auditors know what violence and harassment is and the many forms that it can take. It can also build understanding of why women workers may not report violence and harassment, and to learn skills in handing the issue sensitively during the audits. At a practical level, this training could build knowledge of the steps that can be taken to prevent violence and harassment when it appears in auditors' reports and in framing recommendations for factories following an audit.
- b. Implement a range of methodologies and training for audit teams in framing appropriate questions in a sensitive and non-judgemental way, including how workers can be encouraged to report their experiences anonymously.
- c. Draw up a participatory methodology for consultations with workers, which could complement the audit process, for example, through periodic participatory workshops/FGDs with women garment workers outside of the factory.

7 Specific recommendations for Fair Wear, Fair Wear brands and suppliers/factories, and Fair Wear's role in multi-stakeholder working

This study highlights several actions for Fair Wear, Fair Wear brands and suppliers and factories, which are relevant for all clothing brands, in establishing an evidence-based approach to preventing and addressing violence and harassment.

Recommended actions for Fair Wear in its work with Fair Wear brands and suppliers:

- a. Build capacity and develop practical tools for Fair Wear country coordinators and staff to have effective engagement and dialogue with Fair Wear brands and suppliers about the implementation of factory programmes and initiatives to prevent violence and harassment in the workplace. These should be linked with ILO Better Work programmes and initiatives from VCCI, VGCL, Centre for Development and Integration (CDI), NGOs and other relevant stakeholders.
- b. Ensure that future Fair Wear living wage projects and initiatives explicitly link the high level of overtime/low pay and the incidence of violence and harassment.
- c. Update the Fair Wear Code of Labour Practices to include ILO Convention 109 as a separate stand-alone standard and build monitoring of the ratification and implementation of the Convention and its provisions into Fair Wear audits.
- d. Carry out projects and mapping of Fair Wear suppliers/factories to promote the collection of disaggregated data on workers' complaints and concerns as well as the strengthening and/or implementation of policies and procedures, effective and trusted complaints systems, and actions to reduce the risk factors that lead to violence and harassment at the enterprise/factory/supplier level.
- e. Build on Fair Wear's Memorandum of Understanding with ILO Better Work to draw up joint information and training resources; and encourage the participation of Fair Wear member brands' and suppliers in ILO Better Work training programmes on ending sexual harassment at work.
- f. Work closely with organisations that are advocating for the revision of Vietnam's Labour Code (e.g. GBV-Net and other advocacy groups and NGOs, including CDI, Action Aid Vietnam).
- g. Ensure that Fair Wear's research and practical understanding of violence and harassment in garment supply chains is shared with other relevant European and global civil society organisations.

Appendix 1: Research methodology

Timeframe for research tasks carried out

The main research activities and timeframe for each research activity are presented below.

Research activity	Timeframe
Two-day participatory research training workshop (Hanoi)	2-3 April 2018
Development of the research tools (questionnaire and FGD questions and guide)	May 2018
Pre-survey FGDs, including pilot (questionnaire and FGDs)	July 2018
Training of interviewers	July-August 2018
Face to face interviews	July – December 2018
FGDs (2-3 in each province)	October - December 2018
Analysis of headline data	January 2019
Participatory research workshop (Hanoi) to present outline data and formulate recommendations	15 January 2019
Launch and dissemination of the research	April 2019

Participatory research workshop, Hanoi, 2-3 April 2018

A two-day participatory research workshop, attended by 20 participants from NGOs working on gender empowerment and with garment workers, was held in Hanoi on 2-3 April 2018. The workshop used a participatory and interactive approach, which enabled participants to learn core research and interview skills and apply these skills to the design of this study to:

- Define violence and harassment in the world of work: unpacking gender-based violence, sexual harassment and finding appropriate terminology to use in the survey and FGDs;
- Introduce the Fair Wear research and familiarise participants with the research objectives and participatory research methodology, using role-play and other interactive tasks;
- Implement a train the trainers approach whereby participants developed participatory research skills, including an understanding of confidentiality and consent, development of their interview

- and research skills, and how to make interviews accessible to and sensitive of garment workers' backgrounds and experiences; and
- Frame the questionnaire and FGD questions and terminology to ensure their relevance to garment workers.

Participants stated that the workshop empowered them to participate in the Fair Wear research and welcomed the development of their skills and understanding of violence and harassment and participatory research. Key issues that were raised by the participants included, ensuring that the research interviews took place at a time and in venues that were suitable for garment workers, ensuring that the interviewer was sensitive and flexible to create a friendly and relaxed atmosphere, the importance of being neutral/objective and non-judgemental and following the research code of ethics, and the necessity of building trust so that the interviewees feel safe to open up about difficult issues.

The participants also provided extremely useful guidance about the range and scope of questions to ask, how best to define the behaviours related to violence, harassment and sexual harassment, ways to ensure sensitivity to women workers' specific experiences and to account for the situations that they work in that lead to vulnerability.

The following behaviours relating to violence and harassment were identified as being prevalent/typical in Vietnam.

Physical:

- Touching/holding shoulders and hands;
- Inappropriate physical contact;
- Shaking hands in a spooky way/scratching fingers in a handshake;
- Hair touching/pulling;
- Pinching (arms, hips, bums, cheeks);
- Touching women's 'boobs';
- Touching the name tag and then fondling breasts;
- Pushing his body up against the woman against the wall or in a queue;
- Body searching/inappropriate touching during a search;
- Deliberately pushing his face against a girl's face;

- Pushing genitals close to a woman;
- Around the workplace and in public spaces: whistling/lewd and obscene laughing;
- The worst forms of physical violence are rape and sexual assault.

Verbal:

- Repeated suggestion to go for a coffee – not in a public café but a closed space;
- Interview for a job ends with inappropriate questions 'do you have a boyfriend/husband?' 'Am I qualified to be your boyfriend?';
- Blowing kisses/whistling and then saying 'hey you do you want to go out with me?';
- Teasing/lewd comments;
- When walking from the factory to home – sexualised chants; they sing a song that has words like 'hey be my wife or lover';
- Wanting to share the same motorbike or bus ride;
- Repeatedly asking for a ride/lift;
- Following a woman when she leaves the factory;
- Telling stories in a rude way;
- Provocative words/dirty talk;
- Comments about a woman's body parts (e.g. 'boobs', 'bum');
- Inappropriate suggestions such as 'do you want to go to the hotel with me?';
- Telling jokes with sensitive content.

Non-verbal:

- Staring at your face or body parts (breasts, hips or bum);
- Whistling;
- Appearing out of nowhere and then blocking your vehicle on your way home;
- Rude texting/video clips;
- Honking – aim to shock the victim;
- Being followed;

- Sending links to porn sites/watching porn;
- Showing sexual movies;
- Excluding a woman from a group – making sure she is not welcome in a team or a game;
- Fishing/baiting.

Face-to-face interviews

The questionnaire for the face-to-face interviews was designed to identify a range of factors that lead to violence and harassment, including sexual harassment, in Vietnam's garment sector. **The questionnaire used in the face-to-face interviews is available in Appendix 2.**

Following a pilot in one province, 1,010 face-to-face interviews were carried out using this questionnaire with women garment workers in four provinces. However, the analysis of the data contained in this report covers 763 garment workers from three provinces (the rationale for this is presented under the limitations below). The questionnaire was administered via i-pads, which on the whole worked effectively, although in some interviews, there were technical problems that delayed the interviews. Each interview lasted for between 45 minutes and one hour. The team of interviewees in each region that administered the questionnaire received specific training on gender-based violence and how it can impact women garment workers.

The convenient sampling method was used by approaching the local community and garment factories in the areas where garment workers live. Convenient sampling, a method of non-probability sampling, is based on data collection from members of the local population who are in a convenient proximity to participate in the survey. Local guides were employed to communicate with garment workers about the survey and to organise times and places for interviews that would be convenient for the garment workers, either in their homes, a local community centre or a café. Most interviews were held on a Sunday, as this was the only day when workers had free time. Respondents were given the opportunity to see the questionnaire in advance and interviewers aimed to build the women's trust to help ensure that they are comfortable sharing information. Some respondents were unwilling to share their stories and experiences about violence and harassment. In some cases, when interviews were carried out in the respondents' home, their husbands were present, which led to some women being reluctant or hesitant to answer questions about sexual harassment.

The research questions examined the context of women factory workers' conditions of work and pay, including the issues that garment workers perceived to be important to their job satisfaction and wellbeing, and discriminatory conditions that they believe contribute to violence and harassment in the workplace. Specific focus was given to:

- Working conditions, pay, working hours, and health and safety at work, and how they are linked to the risk of violence and harassment;
- The main factors leading to violence and harassment in garment factories (and in the garment supply chain) in Vietnam;
- Awareness and effectiveness of workplace policies and procedures, the community and other forms of support;
- Changes that garment workers would like to see implemented in their workplace.

Focus group discussions

Two FGDs were held in each province (three in Hai Duong). The FGDs explored in greater detail women garment workers' experiences of violence and harassment. FGD questions were tested in a participatory workshop with garment workers, and an FGD guide was produced for facilitators. FGDs lasted between one and one-and-a-half hours and were digitally recorded and transcribed. **The FGD guide is contained in Appendix 3.**

Participatory research workshop, Hanoi, 15 January 2019

The second participatory research workshop was held after the fieldwork was completed, and an initial analysis was conducted of the data collected. This workshop was attended by 21 representatives from research/academia, NGOs, employers (VCCI), MoLISA, VITAS, GBV-NET and CNV. Following the presentation of research findings, feedback and suggestions were given for further data analysis, and the research was widely welcomed because it is one of the most comprehensive studies of violence and harassment in Vietnam. Following the presentation of the data, four working groups gave specific feedback on recommendations across the following four themes:

- How to reduce production pressures, unpredictable and excessive overtime, and low wages?
- How to implement factory policies and complaints procedures that are effective and trusted by workers?
- What can be done to increase workers' awareness of violence and harassment, including sexual harassment (and ways to tackle it)?

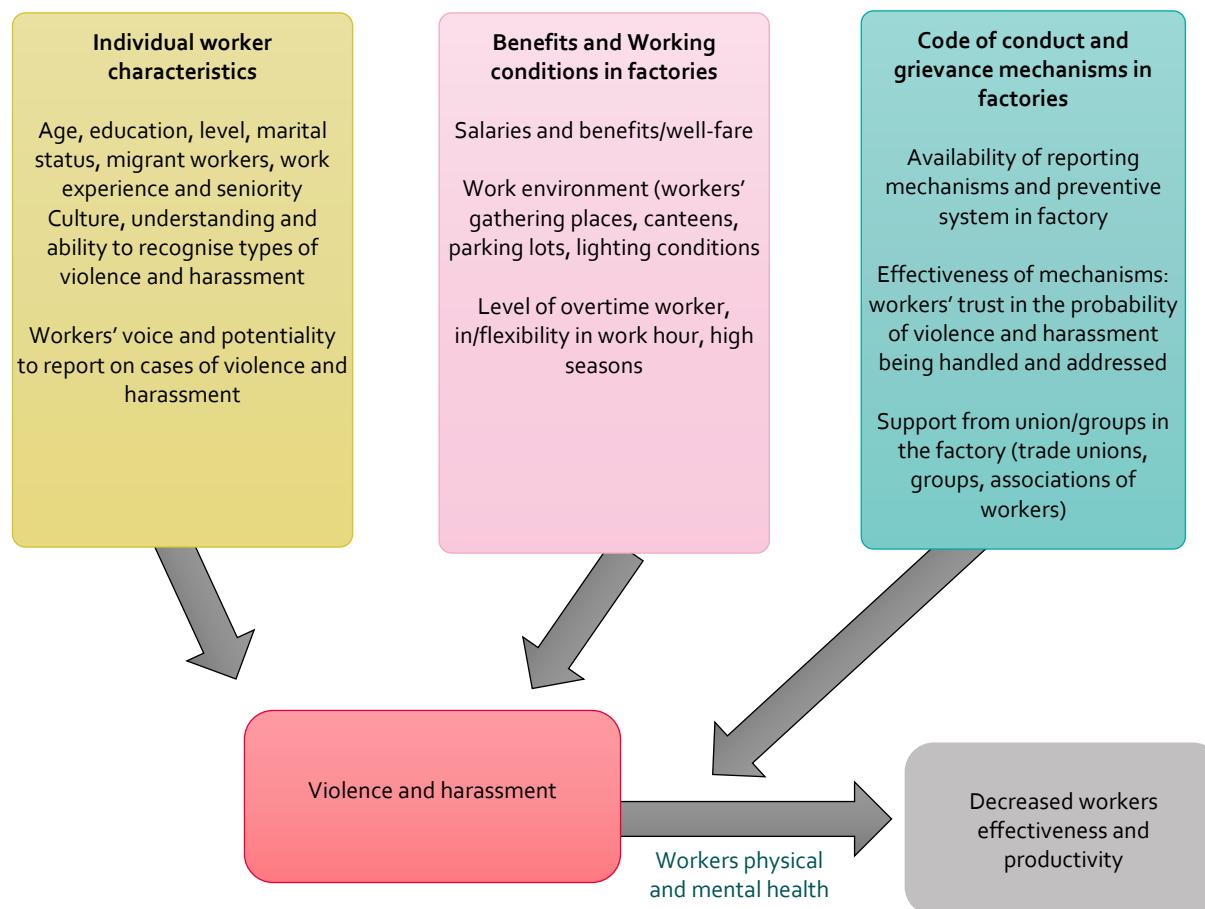
- How to address discrimination and the poor working conditions faced by the women who experience the greatest risks of violence, harassment and sexual harassment?

The participatory research approach proved extremely fruitful in generating debate and discussion about recommendations that can be made to different groups of stakeholders.

Analytical framework and data analysis

This study was informed by an analytical framework that was developed at the beginning of the study, and this guided the whole research process. The analytical framework developed for this study linked garment workers' experiences of violence and harassment to a series of underlying factors grouped together under three headings: 'individual factors', 'benefits and working conditions as workplace factors' and 'code of conduct and complaints procedure at the workplace'.^{174 175} This aimed to determine the prevalence of violence and harassment, together with an understanding of the key underlying factors that drive violence and harassment to inform future interventions to prevent and address violence and harassment.

Figure 1: Analytical framework



Electronic data was transferred to SPSS format, and SPSS was used for data processing. All data was coded, punched, cleaned and validated before being analysed. Frequencies and Crosstabs were used to produce the tables presented in the report on the estimation on the frequency of indicators. All significance testing was conducted using univariate analysis of variance (UNIANOVA). For the 'segmentation' analysis that was used to identify the factors related to violence and harassment as well as incident reporting behaviour, a combination of Exploratory Factor Analysis, reliability testing (Cronbach's alpha coefficient at cut point: 0.70), multivariate logistic regression and UNIANOVA was conducted, using study design variables as controls.

Specifically, multivariate logistic regression was employed to identify the factors contributing to women garment workers' increased vulnerability to violence and harassment by projecting/predicting the likelihood of violence and harassment occurring in association with these factors. The regression model accounted for confounding/controlling factors including workers' individual characteristics (age, education, marital status, motherhood, migration status and work experience) and their salary and benefits package. The regression models were built based on several assumptions such as ordinal dependent variables (violence and harassment; incident report behaviour), and no multi-collinearity among the independent variables (e.g. individual worker characteristic variables) that were tested before putting each variable in the model.¹⁷⁶

The regression output is odds ratio (OR) and adjusted (OR_A), which was used to compare the odds of violence and harassment occurrence between the group of exposed and non-exposed vulnerable factors (or reference group). The report presents significant OR results (or OR_A) within a 95% confidence interval. In interpreting this study's results, please note that the ORs are not the equivalent to the relative risk (which cannot be definitively calculated in a cross-sectional study design such as this)—and should not be confused as such.

Appendix 2: Questionnaire (for interviews with garment workers)

Interview ID.....

Name of interviewer.....

Date of interview:.../...../.....

Research site [tick one]

- HCM city
- Dong Nai
- Thanh Hoa
- Hai Duong

CONSENT

Note to interviewer: Please show the interviewee the written consent form, which has information about the research and consent. Ask them to read it/or you can read it to them.

Ask the interviewee: Do you consent to participating in this research study? You only need to say yes/no. Please note that all information you provide will be treated with confidentiality.

- Yes
- No

Note to interviewer: If no, do not proceed with the interview

Are there any questions you would like to ask before we start the interview?

Some information about yourself

1. What age range do you fit into? [tick one box]

- Under 18 years
- 18 – 25 years
- 26 - 35 years
- 36 – 45 years
- 46 – 55 years
- 55 and over

2. What is your gender? (tick one box)

- Male
- Female
- Other

3. What is the highest grade achieved in school?

- Under primary school
- Completed primary school
- Completed secondary school
- Completed high school
- Completed vocational school
- Completed university
- Higher than university

4. Do you come from the local area where you work?

- Yes
- No

5. If no, please tell us which province did you move from?

6. Do you remit/send money home to support family members?

- Yes, weekly
- Yes, monthly
- Yes, once a year
- No => *Skip to Q.8*

7. On average in the previous 12 months, how much do you send home (remit) each month?
(thousand VND)

8. What is your job? [tick one box]

- Sewing machinist
- Printing
- Embroidery
- Weaving
- Knitting
- Cutting
- Pressing/ironing
- Packing
- Factory floor supervisor
- Manager
- Other (specify):

9. Which factory do you work in? [this is optional]

10. How long have you worked for your current employer? [tick one box]

- Under 1 year
- 1-2 years
- 2-5 years
- 5-10 years
- Over 10 years

11. Did you work in another garment factory before this job? [tick one box]

- Yes
- No [if no, go to Q.16]

12. If yes, for how long? [tick one box]

- Under 1 year
- 1-2 years
- 2-5 years
- 5-10 years
- Over 10 years

13. What was your reason for leaving your previous employer? [tick as many boxes as relevant]

- Contract/job ended
- Bad safety and health conditions in the factory
- Long hours/unpredictable hours
- Pay was bad
- Other (specify).....

14. If your contract/job ended, please tell us why?.....

15. In your current job, do you have a contract of employment?

- Yes
- I am on probation so I do not have a contract yet [go to Q12]
- No, I have never received a contract [go to Q12]

16. If yes, for how long is your contract of employment? [tick one box]

- Under 6 months
- 1 year
- 2 years
- Indefinite
- Do not remember

17. Do you have dependent children?

- Yes. If yes, please tell us how many dependent children.....
- No => Skip to Q19

18. If yes, which of the below is applicable to you? [tick one box]

- My children live with me all the time [skip to Q.19]
- My children live in my home town/village
- I have more than one child and they live with me and in my home town/village

19. If you have children living in your home town/village, how often do you see them?

- Every weekend
- Once a month
- Between 2 and 3 months
- Between 4 and 6 months
- Between 7 and 12 months
- Once a year
- I do not have any contact with my children

20. Which of the following best describes your relationship status? [tick one box]

- I am single
- I am a single parent
- I am married
- I have a boyfriend/partner

21. Which of the following best describes your living situation? [tick one box]

- I live in my own house
- I live in the house of my parents or close relative
- I live in private rented accommodation
- I live in a boarding house/lodging with other workers
- I live in a dormitory or boarding house provided by my employer
- Other (specify):

22. How do you usually commute/travel to work? [tick one box]

- Public transport/bus
- Bus provided by employer
- Motorbike
- Bike/electric bike
- Car
- Walking
- Stay at the factory
- Other (specify):

Working conditions, safety and well-being in the factory

23. Please could you tell us about your working conditions that you would like to see improvements in. [tick relevant boxes, one tick for each row]

[Note to interviewers: please explain these themes in more detail if necessary. *Safety and health conditions: there are many different things affecting the safety and health of workers e.g. fire safety, protecting pregnant women from having to lift heavy objects, being able to have a toilet break, etc.]

	Not very important	Fairly important	Important	Very important
Earn a living wage				
Having better safety and health at work (see definition*)				
Less pressure and stress at work				

Shorter working hours				
Being able to plan working hours/no overtime without notice				
Treating pregnant women fairly (including being able to return to work after having a baby)				
Improved social protection (e.g. social security, child benefits, etc.)				
Being treated with respect				
Job security				
Being protected by a workers' organisation/trade union				
Better communication/dialogue with management in the factory (social dialogue)				
Other (specify):				

24. Please could you tell us your average basic wage per month:.....

[note to interviewer: please explain that this is the basic wage, including regular allowances or bonuses paid to the worker, but excluding overtime or one-off bonuses].

25. Do you consider your current wage to be a living wage (i.e. providing you with sufficient resources to meet all of your daily needs, living expenses and to make savings)? *[tick one box, and give a further definition of living wage if not understood i.e. different from minimum wage]*

- Yes
- Partially
- No
- I'd rather not answer

26. Regarding your current wage, please could you tell us whether it is sufficient for all your daily living requirements, including having enough: *[tick one box in each row]*

	Yes	Partially	No
To buy enough food to enable you (and your children) to eat a balanced and wholesome diet			
To live in safe accommodation that meets your needs (and those of your children)			
To afford transport for yourself (and your children)			
To buy sufficient clothing and shoes to meet your needs (and those of your children)			

To pay for medicines and health care for yourself (and your children)			
To pay for education and education related expenses for your children			
To have sufficient money to support other family members, such as parents or siblings			
To be able to pay for social activities and entertainment in spare time.			
To be able to save for holidays and special celebrations.			
To be able to save for retirement			
Other (specify):			

27. Regarding your working hours, could you tell us what your average daily working hours are, including overtime: *[tick one box]*

- Under 8 hours a day
- Between 8 and 10 hours a day
- Over 10 hours a day
- Other
- I would prefer not to answer

28. Could you tell us how many days a week you normally work? *[tick one box]*

- 4 days a week
- 5 days a week
- 6 days a week
- 7 days a week
- I do not have regular days per week
- Other (specify):
- I would prefer not to say

29. How often do you have to work overtime? *[tick one box]*

- Every day
- Every week
- Once a month
- Less than once a month
- I do not work overtime
- I would prefer not to answer

30. On average, how many hours a month do you work overtime:.....

31. Is overtime compulsory in your factory? *[tick one box]*

- Yes, always
- Yes, sometimes
- No

I would prefer not to answer

32. Do you have the right to refuse overtime, without any consequences for your job or job security?

Yes
 No
 I would prefer not to answer

33. In your factory, do women and men do different jobs?

Yes
 No

34. If yes, please explain further about the jobs women do and the jobs men do....

Inappropriate behaviour and harassment in the workplace

[Note to interviewer: At this point in the interview, please check that the interviewee is ok to continue with the interview. You might use this as a moment to help the person feel comfortable and prepared for the questions that follow. Also give a short introduction to the issues that follow and explain that we want to know more about inappropriate behaviour in the workplace, so that we can make changes to ensure that women garment workers are treated with respect. Also, it is important to say to the interviewee that if she wants to take a short break or move on from a question that makes her feel uncomfortable, this is ok as well].

35. From your own experience (or from what you have witnessed) has a colleague, supervisor, manager, or someone else associated with the factory carried out any of the following: [tick yes or no]

[Note to interviewer – these are under three main headings verbal, non-verbal and physical. Please encourage interviewees to identify any other inappropriate behaviours and note them in the last box].

	Yes	No
Verbal:		
Made sexual remarks/told jokes or stories that were insulting or offensive?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Made remarks about you or a family member (not sexual) that were insulting?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Made inappropriate or offensive comments about your or someone else's body, appearance or sexual activities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Referred to you (or a colleague) in sexist or degrading terms?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Said crude or gross sexual things or tried to get you (or a colleague) to talk about sexual matters?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Badgering you (or a colleague) to go out with you/them after work?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asked you (or a colleague) inappropriate questions of a sexual nature, e.g. personal questions about personal relationships or sex life?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asked you (or a colleague) inappropriate questions about other personal issues e.g. religious beliefs, social activities, your political beliefs, etc.?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Had rumours of a sexual spread about you (or that you witnessed of a colleague) at work?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Non-verbal:		
Made obscene sexual gestures, sounds or stares?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Emailed, texted, tweeted, phoned, or instant messaged offensive sexual remarks, jokes, stories, pictures or videos to you or a colleague? (non-verbal)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Followed you home, showed up somewhere or waited for you/ a colleague when you did not/they did not want that person to be there in a way that made you/them afraid for personal safety?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Physical:		
Had contact with you/your colleague involving kissing or other sexual touching (e.g. touching your arms, legs, breasts or bottom)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Had unwanted physical contact with you/a colleague, such as hitting, pulling hair, punching, standing too close to you, leaning over you, or other unwanted physical contact?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexually assaulted or forced you (or a colleague) to have sex with them?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Refused to let you (or a colleague) take a toilet break?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please tell us any other behaviour that you found inappropriate or that made you feel uncomfortable)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

[If no answered on all the above, skip to Q.50]

36. If yes, (to any of the above) did they threaten you or offer you promises of rewards such that you felt you had to comply? [tick one box]

- Threatened not to renew your contract of employment
- Threatened to withhold your pay
- Threatened to cause trouble for you at work
- Promise of promotion at work
- Threatened to share/circulate damaging information about you
- Threatened to post damaging information about you online
- Other (specify):

37. In the 12 months how many times did one or more of these happen to you? [tick one box]

- 0 times
- 1 time
- 2 times
- 3-5 times
- 6-9 times
- 10 or more times

38. Overall, in your experience - or from what you have witnessed - who is/are the main perpetrator(s): [tick no more than three boxes]

- Male colleagues
- Female colleagues
- Male supervisors
- Female supervisors
- Male managers
- Female managers
- Other (specify).....

39. Have any of the behaviours listed above made you think about changing jobs or moving factory? [tick one box]

- Yes
- Sometimes
- No
- I would prefer not to answer

40. Were any of these behaviours a reason for changing a previous job? [tick one box]

- Yes

- No
- I would prefer not to answer

41. Did any of these behaviours affected your ability to do your job effectively? [tick one box]

- Yes
- Partially
- No
- I would prefer not to answer

42. Did any of these behaviours affected your physical health in any of the following ways:

- Physical symptoms such as aches and pains
- Greater susceptibility to viruses
- Insomnia
- Other (specify).....
- I would prefer not to answer

43. Did any of these behaviours affected your mental health and well-being in any of the following ways:

- Depression
- Worry, stress and/or anxiety
- Fear
- Other (specify).....
- I would prefer not to answer

44. Overall, how did the behaviour make you feel? [tick as many boxes as relevant]

- I felt humiliated
- I felt angry
- I felt degraded
- I felt scared
- I felt traumatised
- It does not affect me at all
- Other (specify): ...

45. If you experienced any of the behaviours listed above, did you report what happened to you? [tick one box]

- Yes
- No => *Skip to Q.51*

46. If yes, to who? [tick as many boxes as relevant]

- Colleague
- Employer
- Trade union
- Police
- Family/friends
- Other (specify): ...

47. If you made a complaint to your employer or trade union, please tell us what happened after you made the complaint:

- An investigation was held
- Action was taken against the perpetrator
- I was kept informed about how my complaint was handled
- Nothing happened
- Other (specify).....

48. In general, were you satisfied with the response you received?

[Note to interviewer: please tick relevant boxes]

Colleague:

- Yes
- Partially
- No

Employer:

- Yes
- Partially
- No

Trade union:

- Yes
- Partially
- No

Police:

- Yes
- Partially
- No

Family/friends:

- Yes
- Partially
- No

49. Did your complaint result in a safer workplace? [tick one box]

- Yes
- No

50. If you did not report what happened, why? [tick one box]

- I did not think that I would be believed
- I knew of other similar cases that were not properly dealt with
- Fear of negative consequences for me
- Lack of support
- I did not have know how to make a complaint
- I felt embarrassed and I though it would be too emotionally difficult
- I did not think it was serious enough to report
- Other (specify):

51. If you need help or advice who could you turn to in the factory for help?

- A colleague I trust
- My immediate supervisor
- The factory manager
- Trade union representative
- There is no-one I could turn to
- Other (specify):

52. Do you agree/disagree with the following statements about the factory where you work: [tick the relevant answer in each row]

	Agree	Not sure	Disagree
Harassment against women workers is a regular occurrence where I work			
Being harassed is 'part of the job'			

53. Do you agree/disagree with any of the following statements about making a complaint. [tick the relevant answer in each row]

	Agree	Do not know	Disagree
In my factory there is a policy on violence and harassment at work			
In my factory there is a complaints procedure			
In the factory where I work I know who I can make a complaint to			
If you or one of your colleagues experiences harassment or violence in the future, would you use the complaints procedure?			
I feel confident that a complaint would be dealt with seriously			

54. Could you tell us if there are parts of the factory that are unsafe/put you in a vulnerable situation (and that could be made safer), for example: [tick one box]

	Yes	Partially	No
Workstations/work areas are very cramped			
Crowded areas in the factory such as clock-in, factory gates or canteen			
Some parts of the factory are poorly lit			
Some of the corridors or routes through the factory mean that women have to walk past male workers			
Restroom			

55. Please tell us about other areas of the factory that pose a potential risks for women workers?
[Note to interviewer, please add comments in the box below, if possible digitally record what is said. If necessary, ask the interviewee to take a mental walk through and around the factory and its facilities. Give the interviewee plenty of time to reflect on and answer this question].

56. Please tell us – based on your perception – how commonplace do you think harassment is in your factory? [tick one box]

[note to interviewer, if necessary, give a brief description again of definitions of harassment and violence, including sexual harassment based on the unwanted behaviours listed above].

- Not at all common
- A little common
- Somewhat common
- Very common
- Extremely common
- I do not know
- I would prefer not to answer

57. Could you tell us whether harassment (such as shouting, verbal abuse, name calling, hitting, etc.) occurs in the factory during the peak season when there is pressure to complete orders in time? [tick one box]

- Yes, supervisors put us under pressure to work faster
- This occurs occasionally
- No, we are treated the same regardless of the status of the order
- I would prefer not to answer

58. We would like to know more about the violence and harassment that you have experienced or that you have witnessed in the factory, including what happened, whether you reported it and how it was dealt with.

[Note to Interviewer: please complete the text box – if possible digitally record what is said. Please stress that this is confidential and that it will not be possible to identify what the interviewee tells us – if she feels unsure reassure her about confidentiality. It is important that we have some detailed information about women workers' experiences of violence and harassment, what happened, how it made the woman feel, how she reacted and, if she made a complaint, how it was dealt with].

Violence and harassment outside of the workplace (transport, in accommodation or on the streets)

59. How safe do you feel travelling to and from work every day? [tick one box]

- Not at all safe
- Fairly safe
- Safe most of the time
- Completely safe

60. How safe do you feel returning home from work if it is dark and late? [tick one box]

- Not at all safe
- Fairly safe
- Safe most of the time
- Completely safe

61. As far as you are aware are incidents of violence and harassment, including verbal harassment or sexual harassment, common in the city, town or place where you live? [tick one box]

- Yes, these incidents are extremely common
- Yes, these incidents are common
- Yes, but there are only a few incidents
- I am not sure/I do not know
- Not really, these incidents are very rare
- Not at all, my city, town or place where I live is safe

62. When you travel to and from work, based on your experiences or what you have witnessed, please tell us whether the following forms of harassment are rare, common or very common.

	Rare	Common	Very Common
Staring/leering	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Following/stalking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Whistling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Touching/groping breasts, bottom or other parts of women's bodies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Passing lewd/sexually explicit remarks about looks/body	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Singing an explicit or inviting song	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kissing sound/action	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Winking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pinching/poking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Snicker/laugh disrespectfully	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Touching/itching his private parts publicly with an intention to make uncomfortable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pushing against you in public transport/rubbing body	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Masturbating in public	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual assault	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (specify):	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

63. Where do acts of violence and harassment, including verbal harassment and sexual harassment, occur the most often? [tick one box]

- In public transport
- On a road or street

- In a back/small lane
- In busy markets
- In every public space
- Not prevalent in my city/town
- I do not know
- Other (specify): ...

64. Could you say how many times you have either experienced or witnessed harassment in the last year in the city, town or place where you live? [tick one box]

- On more than 5 occasions
- On about 4 - 5 occasions
- On about 2 - 3 occasions
- On 1 occasion
- Never

65. Do you take any precautionary measures to ensure your safety? [tick one box]

- I avoid certain public spaces
- I avoid going out alone after dark
- I avoid wearing certain clothes
- I always try to travel with another worker if it is late at night
- I carry items such as pepper spray, safety pins, keys in my hand
- I do not take any precautions as I always feel safe
- Other (specify): ...

66. Regarding your accommodation, do you feel safe in the accommodation where you live? [tick one box]

- Yes
- Partially
- No

67. Have you experienced violence or harassment from anyone while you were in your accommodation? [tick one box]

- Yes
- No
- I would rather not answer

68. Was this violence or harassment perpetrated by: [tick one box]

- Partner/boyfriend/husband
- A work colleague
- A work supervisor or manager
- Someone you did not know
- I would rather not answer
- Other (specify): ...

69. How does harassment on the street, when you travel to and from work or in your accommodation make you feel? [tick as many boxes as relevant]

- I feel humiliated
- I feel angry
- I feel degraded
- I feel scared
- I feel traumatised
- It does not affect me at all
- Other (specify): ...

70. Is there anything else you would like to tell us? This could be about your experiences in the factory or in public spaces, or you may like to make suggestions about changes that need to take place to improve women garment workers' safety and well-being.

[Note to interviewer: give the interviewee some time to think about this and reflect. You may wish to encourage her to give you more information about something she raised earlier. Try and encourage her to make suggestions for what needs to change to improve women's safety and well-being in the factory, on the streets, in transport, etc.].

Thank you for participating in the survey.

Comment box for the interviewer. Please make your comments on the interview and any specific issues or feedback that you think is particularly important or relevant to the study.

Appendix 3: Focus group discussion guide

As part of research on women's safety and well-being in the garment sector, focus group discussions (FGDs) will be held with women garment workers.

The FGDs have the following objectives:

- To discuss with women garment workers what they consider to be their most serious concerns at work;
- To encourage women to discuss their experiences (or those of their colleagues) of being treated unfairly, including violence and harassment; and
- To discuss with women garment workers what they think needs to be done to address their most serious concerns and to create a dignified and violent free workplace.

FGD questions

- What do you like most, and what do you like least about working in a garment factory?
- What issues concern you most in the factory where you work?
- Tell us about any ways that you think you (or other women) have been treated unfairly (this can be in your current factory or a previous factory)?
- What are the main ways that women in garment factories experience violence and harassment?
- What do you think could be done in your factory (or in other garment factories) to make sure that women are treated with dignity and to stop violence and harassment in/and around the factory?

A separate guide to holding the FGDs has been drawn up for facilitators, with the use of coloured cards to write and draw experiences, carrying out discussions in non-judgemental ways, and how to make women feel relaxed and comfortable in answering the questions.

Appendix 4: Results tables

Table 1: Demographic indicators of the women garment workers interviewed

Demographics	Total (3 provinces)	Hai Duong	HCMC	Dong Nai
	N=763	n=254	n=253	n=256
Age	Mean: 30	Mean: 31	Mean: 30	Mean: 29
	SD: 8	SD: 9	SD: 8	SD: 7
Age groups				
Under 18	8	3	5	-
	1.05%	1.18%	1.98%	
18-24	215	66	69	80
	28.18%	25.98%	27.27%	31.25%
25-34	335	103	104	128
	43.91%	40.55%	41.11%	50.00%
35-44	159	58	62	39
	20.84%	22.83%	24.51%	15.23%
Over 45	46	24	13	9
	6.03%	9.45%	5.14%	3.52%
Education level				
No schooling	10	5	0	5
	1.31%	1.97%	0.00%	1.95%
Primary school (Grade 1-5)	52	6	25	21
	6.82%	2.36%	9.88%	8.20%
Secondary school (Grade 6-9)	362	102	144	116
	47.44%	40.16%	56.92%	45.31%
High school (Grade 10-12)	296	118	73	105
	38.79%	46.46%	28.85%	41.02%
Vocational training, College, or University	43	23	11	9
	5.64%	9.06%	4.35%	3.52%
Marital status				
Single	195	54	77	64
	25.56%	21.26%	30.43%	25.00%
Married	542	186	175	181
	71.04%	73.23%	69.17%	70.70%
Divorced/Separated/Widowed	26	14	1	11

Demographics	Total (3 provinces)	Hai Duong	HCMC	Dong Nai
	N=763	n=254	n=253	n=256
	3.41%	5.51%	0.40%	4.30%
Having children	533	192	163	178
	70.10%	76.80%	64.43%	70.16%
Having dependent children	533	192	163	178
	69.86%	75.59%	63.70%	69.53%
Migration status	626	176	232	218
	82.04%	69.29%	91.70%	85.16%
Remittance (sending money to home)				
No, not send money to home	310	118	106	86
	40.8%	47.2%	41.4%	33.9%
Yes, very often, by weekly or monthly	292	104	85	103
	38.4%	41.6%	33.2%	40.6%
Yes, but not often, by occasion or annually or monthly	158	28	65	65
	20.8%	11.2%	25.4%	25.6%
Currently living with anyone (appendix)				
Alone	65	31	15	19
	8.52%	12.20%	5.93%	7.42%
Husband	461	136	160	165
	60.42%	53.54%	63.24%	64.45%
Children	360	89	131	140
	47.18%	35.04%	51.78%	54.69%
Relatives (parents, brothers, sisters. cousins)	196	58	75	63
	25.69%	22.83%	29.64%	24.61%
Friends, female colleagues	91	38	29	24
	11.93%	14.96%	11.46%	9.38%

Table 2: Breakdown of women garment workers' income (basic pay and bonuses/benefits)

Income	3 provinces			Hai Duong	HCMC	Dong Nai
	N	%	Mean (thousand VND)	Mean (thousand VND)	Mean (thousand VND)	Mean (thousand VND)
	763	100%	Mean: 6177	Mean: 5320	Mean: 7156	Mean: 7220

Income	3 provinces			Hai Duong	HCMC	Dong Nai
	N	%	Mean (thousand VND)	Mean (thousand VND)	Mean (thousand VND)	Mean (thousand VND)
Average income per month working for this company (thousand VND)			SD: 1780	SD: 1841	SD: 1602	SD: 1312
Income sources						
Women's allowance (hygiene pads, releasing time compensation)	255	33.4%	32	33	35	28
Seniority allowance (working experience)	332	43.5%	72	58	67	91
Child rearing allowance (under 5 children)	397	52.0%	39	38	47	32
Productivity bonus	459	60.2%	586	569	646	543
Bonus for special celebration (incl. 13th month salary)	504	66.0%	116	87	167	94
Housing allowance (rented house)	592	77.6%	124	58	135	179
Transportation allowance (petrol)	626	82.0%	183	204	157	188
Overtime work	687	90.0%	867	869	919	813
Diligent bonus (attendance)	710	93.0%	310	312	318	300
Basic salary	763	100.0%	4879	4519	4876	5242

Table 3: Sufficiency of women garment workers' income for daily living requirements

Indicators	3 provinces		Hai Duong	HCMC	Dong Nai
	N=763	n=254	n=253	n=256	
Self-reporting on whether current income covers expenditures					
Current income is NOT able to cover basic expenditures for daily activities	126	51	33	42	
	16.51%	20.08%	13.04%	16.41%	
Current income is able to cover basic expenditures for daily activities ONLY	418	154	134	130	
	54.78%	60.63%	52.96%	50.78%	

Indicators	3 provinces	Hai Duong	HCMC	Dong Nai
	N=763	n=254	n=253	n=256
Current income is able to cover basic expenditures for daily activities and partly other needs (children's schooling, safe housing/clothes for them and their children, health care, entertainment, travel, and saving)	220	49	87	84
	28.83%	19.29%	34.39%	32.81%

Table 4: Women garment workers usual working hours (peak/non-peak season) in the previous 12 months

Indicators	3 provinces	Hai Duong	HCMC	Dong Nai
	N=763	n=254	n=253	n=256
Average daily working hours (including overtime)				
< = 8 hours a day	52	23	11	18
	6.82%	9.06%	4.35%	7.03%
Between 8 and 12 hours a day	681	215	235	231
	89.25%	84.65%	92.89%	90.23%
>= 12 hours a day	30	16	7	7
	3.93%	6.30%	2.77%	2.73%
Non-peak season: Average amount of overtime worked				
1-30 hours	411	147	132	132
	53.87%	57.87%	52.17%	51.56%
Over 30 hours	52	27	13	12
	6.82%	10.63%	5.14%	4.69%
I do not work overtime during the off-season	300	80	108	112
	39.32%	31.50%	42.69%	43.75%
Peak-season: Average amount of overtime worked				
1-30 hours	155	37	58	60
	20.31%	14.57%	22.92%	23.44%
31-60 hours	202	68	73	61
	26.47%	26.77%	28.85%	23.83%
Over 60 hours	316	112	99	105
	41.42%	44.09%	39.13%	41.02%
I do not work overtime during the peak season	91	38	23	30
	11.93%	14.96%	9.09%	11.72%

Table 5: Compulsory overtime and the right to refuse

Indicators	3 provinces N=763	Hai Duong	HCMC	Dong Nai
		n=254	n=253	n=256
Overtime compulsory in the factory				
Yes, always	193	77	51	65
	25.29%	30.31%	20.16%	25.39%
Yes, sometimes	142	56	42	44
	18.61%	22.05%	16.60%	17.19%
No, it's always optional	426	120	159	147
	55.83%	47.24%	62.85%	57.42%
Right to refuse overtime, without any consequences for your job or job security				
Yes	434	121	162	151
	56.88%	47.64%	64.03%	58.98%
No	329	133	91	105
	43.12%	52.36%	35.97%	41.02%

Table 6: Types of violence and harassment experienced by women garment workers in the previous 12 months

Indicators	3 provinces N=763	Hai Duong	HCMC	Dong Nai
		n=254	n=253	n=256
At least verbal behaviour occurred in the past 12 months	289	67	90	132
	37.88%	26.38%	35.57%	51.56%
At least non-verbal behaviour occurred in the past 12 months	95	30	27	38
	12.45%	11.81%	10.67%	14.84%
At least physical behaviour occurred in the past 12 months	113	25	37	51
	14.81%	9.84%	14.62%	19.92%

Table 7: Types and frequency of verbal harassment experienced by women garment workers experiencing at least one incidence of verbal harassment in the previous 12 months

Type of verbal harassment	3 provinces	Hai Duong	HCMC	Dong Nai
	n=289	n=67	n=90	n=132
Made sexual remarks/told jokes or stories that were insulting or offensive	137	30	42	65
	47.40%	44.78%	46.67%	49.24%
Made remarks about you or a family member (not sexual) that were insulting	92	21	28	43
	31.83%	31.34%	31.11%	32.58%
Made inappropriate or offensive comments about your or someone else's body, appearance or sexual activities	163	21	63	79
	56.40%	31.34%	70.00%	59.85%
Referred to you (or a colleague) in sexist or degrading terms	123	18	41	64
	42.56%	26.87%	45.56%	48.48%
Said crude or gross sexual things or tried to get you (or a colleague) to talk about sexual matters	81	13	26	42
	28.03%	19.40%	28.89%	31.82%
Badgering you (or a colleague) to go out with you/them after work	31	9	11	11
	10.73%	13.43%	12.22%	8.33%
Asked you (or a colleague) inappropriate questions of a sexual nature, e.g. personal questions about personal relationships or sex life	83	13	24	46
	28.72%	19.40%	26.67%	34.85%
Asked you (or a colleague) inappropriate questions about other personal issues e.g. religious beliefs, social activities, your political beliefs, etc.	106	25	35	46
	36.68%	37.31%	38.89%	34.85%
Had rumours of a sexual nature spread about you (or that you witnessed of a colleague) at work	36	11	9	16
	12.46%	16.42%	10.00%	12.12%
How frequently did the verbal behaviour occur in the previous 12 months				
Rarely occurs	146	27	47	72
	50.52%	40.30%	52.22%	54.55%
Occasionally occurs	114	31	40	43
	39.45%	46.27%	44.44%	32.58%
Usually occurs	29	9	3	17
	10.03%	13.43%	3.33%	12.88%

Table 8: Types and frequency of non-verbal harassment experienced by women garment workers experiencing at least one incidence of non-verbal harassment in the previous 12 months

Indicators	3 provinces	Hai Duong	HCMC	Dong Nai
	n=95	n=30	n=27	n=38
Made obscene sexual gestures, sounds or stares	78	27	21	30
	82.1%	90.00%	77.78%	78.95%
Emailed, texted, tweeted, phoned, or instant messaged offensive sexual remarks, jokes, stories, pictures or videos to you or a colleague (non-verbal)	33	3	13	17
	34.7%	10.00%	48.15%	44.74%
Followed you home, showed up somewhere or waited for you/or a colleague when you did not/they did not want that person to be there in a way that made you/them afraid for personal safety	19	9	4	6
	20.0%	30.00%	14.81%	15.79%
How Frequently did the non-verbal behaviour occur in the previous 12 months				
Rarely occurs	31	9	7	15
	32.63%	30.00%	25.93%	39.47%
Occasionally occurs	44	18	11	15
	46.32%	60.00%	40.74%	39.47%
Usually occurs	20	3	9	8
	21.05%	10.00%	33.33%	21.05%

Table 9: Types and frequency of physical harassment experienced by women garment workers experiencing at least one incidence of physical harassment in the previous 12 months

Indicators	3 provinces	Hai Duong	HCMC	Dong Nai
	n=113	n=25	n=37	n=51
Had contact with you/your colleague involving kissing or other sexual touching (e.g. touching your arms, legs, breasts or bottom)	76	18	23	35
	67.26%	72.00%	62.16%	68.63%
Had unwanted physical contact with you/your colleague, such as hitting, pulling hair, punching, standing too close to you, leaning over you, or other unwanted physical contact	71	18	25	28
	62.83%	72.00%	67.57%	54.90%
	7	3	2	2

Sexually assaulted or forced you (or a colleague) to have sex with them	6.19%	12.00%	5.41%	3.92%
How frequently did the physical behaviour occur in the previous 12 months				
Rarely occurs	36	6	9	21
	31.86%	24.00%	24.32%	41.18%
Occasionally occurs	60	15	20	25
	53.10%	60.00%	54.05%	49.02%
Usually occurs	17	4	8	5
	15.04%	16.00%	21.62%	9.80%

Table 10: Threats or promises of rewards self-reported by the women garment workers experiencing at least one incidence of violence and harassment in the previous 12 months

Indicators	3 provinces	Hai Duong	HCMC	Dong Nai
	n=329	n=85	n=99	n=145
Threatened not to renew your contract of employment	36	11	11	14
	10.94%	12.94%	11.11%	9.66%
Threatened to withhold your pay	7	2	2	3
	2.13%	2.35%	2.02%	2.07%
Threatened to cause trouble for you at work	46	11	18	17
	13.98%	12.94%	18.18%	11.72%
Threatened to share/circulate damaging information about you	28	9	8	11
	8.51%	10.59%	8.08%	7.59%
Promised a promotion at work	33	11	13	9
	10.03%	12.94%	13.13%	6.21%
No threats, no promises	188	65	57	66
	57.14%	76.47%	57.58%	45.52%

Table 11: Perpetrators of violence and harassment as self-reported by the women garment workers experiencing at least one incidence of violence and harassment in the previous 12 months

Who is/are the perpetrator(s)?	3 provinces	Hai Duong	HCMC	Dong Nai
	n=329	n=85	n=99	n=145
Male colleagues	221	43	74	104
	67.17%	50.38%	74.81%	71.65%
Female colleagues	54	21	16	17

	16.41%	24.61%	16.17%	11.71%
Male supervisors	107	19	37	51
	48.4%	44.2%	50.0%	49.0%
Female supervisors	97	31	29	37
	29.47%	36.32%	29.32%	25.49%
Male managers	22	6	9	7
	6.68%	7.03%	9.10%	4.82%
Female managers	45	15	6	24
	13.67%	17.58%	6.07%	16.53%

Table 12: Effect of violence and harassment: physical and mental health as self-reported by the women garment workers experiencing at least one incidence of violence and harassment in the previous 12 months

	3 provinces	Hai Duong	HCMC	Dong Nai
	n=329	n=85	n=99	n=145
Did these behaviours affect your physical health in any of the following ways				
Physical symptoms such as aches and pains	82	46	12	24
	24.92%	53.90%	12.13%	16.53%
Easy to get infection	35	10	14	11
	10.63%	11.72%	14.15%	7.58%
Genital discomfort	3	3	0	0
	0.91%	3.52%	0.00%	0.00%
Unplanned pregnancy	8	7	1	0
	2.43%	8.20%	1.01%	0.00%
Insomnia	60	26	12	22
	18.23%	30.46%	12.13%	15.16%
No effect at all	155	13	54	88
	47.10%	15.23%	54.59%	60.63%
Did these behaviours affect your mental health and well-being in any of the following ways				
Depression	29	14	6	9
	8.81%	16.40%	6.07%	6.20%
Worry, stress and/or anxiety	150	53	34	63
	45.58%	62.10%	34.37%	43.40%
Fear	87	45	16	26
	26.44%	52.73%	16.17%	17.91%
Having negative thoughts	48	24	5	19

	14.58%	28.12%	5.05%	13.09%
No effect at all	105	8	43	54
	31.90%	9.37%	43.47%	37.20%

Table 13: Effect of violence and harassment: how the violence and harassment made the women garment workers feel as self-reported by the women garment workers experiencing at least one incidence of violence and harassment in the previous 12 months

How did the behaviour made you feel	3 provinces	Hai Duong	HCMC	Dong Nai
	n=329	n=85	n=99	n=145
I felt humiliated	30	12	7	11
	9.12%	14.06%	7.08%	7.58%
I felt angry	124	38	34	52
	37.68%	44.53%	34.37%	35.82%
I felt degraded	22	7	8	7
	6.68%	8.20%	8.09%	4.82%
I felt scared	56	31	8	17
	17.02%	36.32%	8.09%	11.71%
I felt traumatised	70	29	14	27
	21.27%	33.98%	14.15%	18.60%
It did not affect me at all	127	20	46	61
	38.59%	23.43%	46.50%	42.02%

Table 14: Who the women garment workers who experienced violence and harassment in the previous 12 months reported violence and harassment to

Recipients of complaints	3 provinces	Hai Duong	HCMC	Dong Nai
	n=105	n=39	n=30	n=36
Board of managers	15	6	6	3
	14.29%	15.38%	20.00%	8.33%
Trade union	10	5	3	2
	9.52%	12.82%	10.00%	5.56%
Direct supervisors (team leader)	40	17	10	13
	38.10%	43.59%	33.33%	36.11%
Colleague	53	22	19	12
	50.48%	56.41%	63.33%	33.33%

Recipients of complaints	3 provinces	Hai Duong	HCMC	Dong Nai
	n=105	n=39	n=30	n=36
HR officer	10	5	4	1
	9.52%	12.82%	13.33%	2.78%
Police	5	2	1	2
	4.8%	5.1%	3.3%	5.6%
Family/friends	37	15	14	8
	35.2%	38.5%	46.7%	22.2%

Table 15: Women garment workers level of satisfaction with how complaints were handled

	3 provinces	Hai Duong	HCMC	Dong Nai
	n=49	n=18	n=18	n=13
If you made a complaint to your employer or trade union, please tell us what happened after you made the complaint				
An investigation was held	24	13	6	5
	48.98%	72.22%	33.33%	38.46%
Action was taken against the perpetrator	18	11	2	5
	36.73%	61.11%	11.11%	38.46%
I was kept informed about how my complaint was handled	10	5	3	2
	20.41%	27.78%	16.67%	15.38%
Nothing happened	14	5	3	6
	28.57%	27.78%	16.67%	46.15%
Rate from 1 to 5 your level of satisfaction on how the complaints were handled (1-lowest level, 5-highest level)	1.8	1.5	2.1	1.8

Table 16: Reasons for not reporting/complaining among the women garment workers experiencing at least one incidence of violence and harassment in the previous 12 months but did NOT report it

	3 provinces	Hai Duong	HCMC	Dong Nai
	n=225	n=45	n=70	n=109
I did not think that people would believe me	104	21	31	52
	46.4%	45.3%	45.0%	47.6%
I knew other similar cases that were not properly dealt with	77	14	23	40
	34.36%	30.21%	33.37%	36.65%
Fear of negative consequences	54	11	17	26

	24.10%	23.74%	24.67%	23.82%
I used to report but nothing happened after reporting so that I have not reported anymore	47	12	14	21
	20.97%	25.89%	20.31%	19.24%
I did not know how to make a complaint	72	15	23	34
	32.13%	32.37%	33.37%	31.15%
I felt embarrassed, ashamed and I thought it would be too emotionally difficult	36	8	10	18
	16.06%	17.26%	14.51%	16.49%
I did not think it was serious enough to report	155	27	50	78
	69.16%	58.26%	72.54%	71.46%

Table 17: Parts of the factory that are unsafe

	3 provinces	Hai Duong	HCMC	Dong Nai
	N=763	n=254	n=253	n=256
Which locations would it be more possible for those behaviours to take place				
Quiet places or places with a lack of light e.g. warehouse, toilets, rest houses of female workers	322	179	69	74
	42.20%	70.47%	27.27%	28.91%
Overcrowded places incl. canteens, parking lots, gates, narrow stairs	308	98	101	109
	40.37%	38.58%	39.92%	42.58%
At the sewing lines	268	83	96	89
	35.12%	32.68%	37.94%	34.77%

Table 18: Women garment workers' views on their Safety travelling to and from work and Safety returning from work when dark/late

	3 provinces	Hai Duong	HCMC	Dong Nai
	N=763	n=254	n=253	n=256
How safe do you feel travelling to and from work every day?				
Not at all safe	63	23	19	21
	8.26%	9.06%	7.51%	8.20%
Fairly safe	259	90	77	92
	33.94%	35.43%	30.43%	35.94%
Safe most of the time	232	59	83	90
	30.41%	23.23%	32.81%	35.16%
Completely safe	209	82	74	53
	27.39%	32.28%	29.25%	20.70%

How safe do you feel returning home from work if it is dark and late?				
Not at all safe	119	65	15	39
	15.60%	25.59%	5.93%	15.23%
Fairly safe	302	81	101	120
	39.58%	31.89%	39.92%	46.88%
Safe most of the time	179	52	72	55
	23.46%	20.47%	28.46%	21.48%
Completely safe	163	56	65	42
	21.36%	22.05%	25.69%	16.41%

Table 19: Types of harassment that all women garment workers experienced when travelling to and from work in the previous 12 months

	3 provinces	Hai Duong	HCMC	Dong Nai
	N=763	n=254	n=253	n=256
Based on your experiences or what you have witnessed, please tell us whether the following forms of harassment happen when you travel to and from work,?				
Staring/leering	204	59	69	76
	26.74%	23.23%	27.27%	29.69%
Following/stalking	74	24	14	36
	9.70%	9.45%	5.53%	14.06%
Whistling	200	47	75	78
	26.21%	18.50%	29.64%	30.47%
Touching/groping breasts, bottom or other parts of women's bodies	85	29	24	32
	11.14%	11.42%	9.49%	12.50%
Passing lewd/sexually explicit remarks about looks/body	94	21	32	41
	12.32%	8.27%	12.65%	16.02%
Singing an explicit or inviting song	81	21	26	34
	10.62%	8.27%	10.28%	13.28%
Kissing sound/action	80	11	33	36
	10.48%	4.33%	13.04%	14.06%
Winking	157	42	55	60
	20.58%	16.54%	21.74%	23.44%
Pinching/poking	66	20	24	22
	8.65%	7.87%	9.49%	8.59%
Snicker/laugh disrespectfully	168	42	55	71

	3 provinces	Hai Duong	HCMC	Dong Nai
	N=763	n=254	n=253	n=256
	22.02%	16.54%	21.74%	27.73%
Touching/itching his private parts publicly with an intention to make comfortable	93	19	23	51
	12.19%	7.48%	9.09%	19.92%
Pushing against you in public transport/rubbing body	50	16	18	16
	6.55%	6.30%	7.11%	6.25%
Masturbating in public	65	12	16	37
	8.52%	4.72%	6.32%	14.45%
Sexual assault	24	10	2	12
	3.15%	3.94%	0.79%	4.69%

Table 20: Most common place where acts of violence and harassment occur, self-reported by the women garment workers experiencing at least one incidence of violence and harassment in the previous 12 months

	3 provinces	Hai Duong	HCMC	Dong Nai
	n=378	n=100	n=125	n=153
In public transport	187	95	46	46
	49.47%	95.00%	36.80%	30.07%
On a road or street	101	20	25	56
	26.72%	20.00%	20.00%	36.60%
In a back/small lane	208	50	76	82
	55.03%	50.00%	60.80%	53.59%
In busy markets	34	10	14	10
	8.99%	10.00%	11.20%	6.54%
In every public space	68	23	18	27
	17.99%	23.00%	14.40%	17.65%

Table 21: Precautionary safety measures taken by all of the women garment workers interviewed

	3 provinces	Hai Duong	HCMC	Dong Nai
	N=763	n=254	n=253	n=256
I avoid certain public spaces	185	79	50	56
	24.25%	31.10%	19.76%	21.88%
I avoid going out alone after dark	415	148	131	136

	54.39%	58.27%	51.78%	53.13%
I avoid wearing certain clothes	197	52	79	66
	25.8%	20.5%	31.2%	25.8%
I always try to travel with another worker if it is late at night	355	112	130	113
	46.53%	44.09%	51.38%	44.14%
I carry items such as pepper spray, safety pins, keys in my hand	22	11	6	5
	2.88%	4.33%	2.37%	1.95%
I do not take any precautions as I always feel safe	77	25	26	26
	10.09%	9.84%	10.28%	10.16%

Endnotes

¹ A summary of this report is available at: <https://www.fairwear.org>

² ILO/UN Women (2019) Handbook Addressing violence and harassment against women in the world of work. New York & Geneva, UN Women & ILO.

³ CARE International (2018a) What Works? Preventing & Responding to Sexual Harassment in the Workplace: A Rapid Review of Evidence. CARE International.

⁴ Better Work (2018a) Gender Equality at the Workplace Baseline Findings from Better Work Vietnam. Research Brief. Geneva, ILO Better Work.

⁵ Better Work (2018b) Global gender strategy 2018-2022. Geneva, ILO Better Work.

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⁷ Morris, J., and Pillinger, J. (2016) Gender-based violence in global supply chains: Resource Kit. Turin, ITC-ILO / Amsterdam, Fair Wear.

⁸ ILO (2018a) The Global Wage Report 2018/19: Analysing the gender pay gap. Geneva, ILO.

⁹ Beghini, V., Cattaneo, U., and Pozzan, E. (2019) A Quantum Leap for Gender Equality : For a better future of work for all. Geneva, ILO.

¹⁰ Borino F (2018) Piece rate pay and working conditions in the export garment sector Better Work Discussion Paper No. 28. Geneva, ILO/Better Work.

¹¹ ILO/UN Women (2019) op cit.

¹² CARE International's work with employers across Vietnam, Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia is supporting the introduction of workplace policies and complaints mechanisms through conducting training and mentoring for managers. A Training Toolkit 'Sexual Harassment Stops Here' contains interactive training materials, such as videos and games, with the key message of 'listen, support, report'. In Vietnam, CARE's work with employers in the garment sector is currently taking place across six factories. For further information see: Enhancing Women's Voice to Stop Sexual Harassment (STOP) Project see: www.care.org/stop and https://www.care.org/vn/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/STOP Regional-profile_Eng_Vietnam_3.2018.pdf

¹³ See Convention 190: https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C190

¹⁴ See Recommendation 206: https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO:12100:P12100_INSTRUMENT_ID:4000085:NO

¹⁵ Better Work (2016) Progress and Potential: How Better Work is improving garment workers' lives and boosting factory competitiveness. A summary of an independent assessment of the Better Work Programme. Geneva, ILO Better Work.

¹⁶ Interview with Truong Thi Phuong Tu (Enterprise Advisor) an Hoang Thi Thanh Nga (Enterprise Advisor, Team Leader), Better Work, Ho Chi Mihn City, 17 January 2019.

¹⁷ Khuat Thu Hong (2004) Sexual Harassment in Vietnam: A New Term for an Old Phenomenon. In Drummond and Rydstrøem, *Gender practices in contemporary Vietnam*. Singapore: Singapore University Press.

¹⁸ Fair Wear Foundation (Fair Wear) (2018a) Violence and harassment against women and men in the global garment supply chain. A Fair Wear contribution to the standard setting discussions at the 107th International Labour Conference on ending violence and harassment against women and men in the world of work. Amsterdam, Fair Wear Foundation.

¹⁹ ILO/UN Women (2019) op cit.

²⁰ Better Work (2018b) Global gender strategy 2018-2022. Geneva, ILO Better Work.

²¹ For further information about the Strategic Partnership for Supply Chain Transformation: <https://www.fairwear.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/SP-One-Pager.pdf>

²² For a more detailed discussion of definitions see: ILO/UN Women (2019) op cit. and ILO (2018a) op. cit.

²³ ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations reference: 2003. Report of the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations, Report III (Part 1A), International Labour Conference, 91st Session (Geneva).

²⁴ *Quid pro quo* involves: 'any physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct of a sexual nature and other conduct based on sex affecting the dignity of women and men, which is unwelcome, unreasonable, and offensive to the recipient'; and 'a person's rejection of, or submission to, such conduct is used explicitly or implicitly as a basis for a decision which affects that person's job'. *Hostile work environment* involves 'conduct that creates an intimidating, hostile or humiliating working environment for the recipient'.

²⁵ Fair Wear Foundation (Fair Wear) (2018a) op cit.

²⁶ Khuat Thu Hong (2004) Sexual Harassment in Vietnam: A New Term for an Old Phenomenon. In Drummond and Rydstrøem, *Gender practices in contemporary Vietnam*. Singapore: Singapore University Press.

²⁷ Fair Wear Foundation (Fair Wear) (2018a) op cit.

²⁸ Shira, D (2018) Vietnam's Textile and Garment Exports Continue to Grow, *Vietnam Briefing*. Available at: <https://www.vietnam-briefing.com/news/vietnams-textile-garment-exports-continue-grow.html/>

²⁹ ILO (2018a) op. cit.

³⁰ World Bank (2019a) The World Bank in Vietnam. Available at: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/vietnam>

³¹ World Bank (2019b) Vietnam GDP per capita growth (annual%). Available at:

<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG?locations=VN>

³² Better Work (2018a) op. cit.

³³ ILO Convention No.87 Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise and ILO Convention No.98 Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining. The 'Business and Human Rights in Trade Relations and Global Supply Chains in Vietnam' (BHRTR) project is an example of an approach to ensuring the implementation and monitoring of the sustainability chapter of the EU-Vietnam Free Trade Agreement, particularly relating to workers' rights, freedom of association and collective bargaining.

³⁴ Vietnam has six regional FTAs signed as a member of ASEAN, including ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA), five FTAs with China, Japan, South Korea, India, Australia and New Zealand, and four bilateral FTAs with Chile, Japan, South Korea and the Eurasia Economic Union (EAU). The EU is also one of the most important trading partners of Vietnam under the EU-Vietnam FTA.

³⁵ Do Quynh Chi (2016) Vietnam country study: Labour Standards in the Garment Supply Chain. Research Center for Employment Relations (ERC), CNV International.

³⁶ The OECD's Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises (OECD 1996), UN Global Compact (established 1999), and ILO Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy (1997), and the UN Guiding Principles for Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) (2011)

³⁷ OECD (2018) OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Business Conduct. Paris, OECD.

³⁸ ILO/OECD Global Deal (2019) Social Dialogue and gender equality. Paris and Geneva, OECD & ILO.

³⁹ ILO (2018b) Resolution concerning the second recurrent discussion on social dialogue and tripartism. 107th Session of the International Labour Conference. Geneva. ILO.

⁴⁰ Better Work (2018b) op. cit.

⁴¹ Beghini, V., Cattaneo, U., and Pozzan, E. (2019) A Quantum Leap for Gender Equality: For a better future of work for all. Geneva, ILO.

⁴² Pillinger, J., and Wintour, N (2019) Collective bargaining and gender equality. Newcastle, Agenda Publishing.

⁴³ Pillinger, J. (2017) op. cit.

⁴⁴ Pillinger, J., Schmidt, V., and Wintour, N. (2016) Negotiating for gender equality, Issue Brief N° 4, Labour relations and collective bargaining, Geneva, ILO.

⁴⁵ Fair Wear Foundation (Fair Wear) (2018a) op cit.

⁴⁶ Pillinger, J. (2017) op. cit.

⁴⁷ SDG Goal 5 'Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls' and SDG Goal 8 'Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities and equal pay for work of equal value' by 2030.

⁴⁸ CARE International (2018b) Delays in tackling sexual harassment can cost garment industry billions.

<https://www.care.org.vn/delays-tackling-sexual-harassment-can-cost-garment-industry-billions/>

⁴⁹ The Vietnam Labour Code, adopted by the National Assembly on 18 June 2012, includes four articles on sexual harassment. Article 8 strictly prohibits 'maltreating a worker, committing sexual harassment at the workplace'; Article 37 provides that an employee, who is maltreated, or sexually harassed, shall have the right of unilateral termination of their labor contract; Article 182 states that a domestic worker shall have an obligation to 'report to the authoritative agency if his/her employer commits acts of sexual harassment'; and Article 183 strictly prohibits the employer to mistreat, sexually harass his/her domestic workers. Available at: Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MoLISA) and ILO (2013) Sexual harassment in the workplace in Vietnam: An overview of the legal framework. Hanoi & Bangkok: MoLISA/ILO.

⁵⁰ An attempt by MoLISA in 2013 to enact fines of VND50-75 million (US\$ 2,290.00-3,436.00) for acts of sexual harassment, was not approved because existing regulations were too general and lacked an adequate legal definition of what constitutes sexual harassment.

⁵¹ Workshops on gender equality were held, with the Australian Government and UN Women, on 28 April 2018

<http://www.molisa.gov.vn/en/Pages/Detail-news.aspx?IDNews=2785> and 20 October 2018

<https://vneconomictimes.com/article/vietnam-today/workshop-held-to-promote-gender-equality-in-labour-code-revision>.

Five priorities for revising the Labour Code are set out in a video by the Australian Government and UN Women in Vietnam. Strengthening sexual harassment and gender-based violence provisions is one priority, the others concern harmonising the retirement age between women and men, strengthening equal pay and work of equal value, addressing gender stereotypes, and improving work-life balance through sharing of family responsibilities. See: <https://vimeo.com/245853265/0b2cc29007>

⁵² See for example: <https://www.care.org.vn/delays-tackling-sexual-harassment-can-cost-garment-industry-billions/>

⁵³ Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MoLISA) and ILO (2013) Sexual harassment in the workplace in Vietnam: An overview of the legal framework. Hanoi & Bangkok: MoLISA/ILO, p. 7.

⁵⁴ Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, General recommendation 19, article 18 defines sexual harassment as: 'such unwelcome sexually determined behaviour as physical contact and advances, sexually coloured remarks, showing pornography and sexual demands, whether by words or actions. Such conduct can be humiliating and may constitute a health and safety problem; it is discriminatory when the woman has reasonable ground to believe that her objection would disadvantage her in connection with her employment, including recruitment or promotion, or when it creates a hostile working environment' (Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, 11th session 1992).

⁵⁵ This includes sexual harassment as a form of violence against women 'Violence against women encompasses but is not limited to the following...physical, sexual, and psychological violence occurring within the general community, such as rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere, trafficking in women and forced prostitution'

⁵⁶ ILO Convention 111 on Discrimination on employment and occupation (C111) defines discrimination as 'any distinction, exclusion or preference made on the basis of race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction or social origin, which has the effect of nullifying or impairing equality of opportunity or treatment in employment or occupation'. The ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations defines sexual harassment in the context of Convention No. 111 as a particular form of discrimination on the basis of sex, and notes that definitions of sexual harassment often include both quid pro quo and hostile environment as elements of sexual harassment. Available at: ILO (2003) Report of the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations, Report 111 (Part 1A). Geneva, ILO.

⁵⁷ For further information see Guide to the EU-Vietnam Trade Agreement, p.58:

http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2016/june/tradoc_154622.pdf, and Fact Sheet:

http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2018/october/tradoc_157446.pdf

⁵⁸ See ILO news report as part of the project 'Promoting ILO Fundamental Conventions towards ratification of Conventions 87, 98, 105, and actions to eliminate discrimination and forced labour in Vietnam':

https://www.ilo.org/hanoi/Informationresources/Publicinformation/newsitems/WCMS_649406/lang--en/index.htm

⁵⁹ Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Vietnam General Confederation of Labour, and Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs. 2015. Code of Conduct on sexual harassment in the workplace. Hanoi, ILO.

⁶⁰ ILO/UN Women (2019) op cit.

⁶¹ CARE International (2018b) Delays in tackling sexual harassment can cost garment industry billions.

<https://www.care.org.vn/delays-tackling-sexual-harassment-can-cost-garment-industry-billions/>

⁶² Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry et al., op cit. p.2.

⁶³ ibid. p.3.

⁶⁴ ILO/UN Women (2019) op cit.

⁶⁵ This is based on information provided Mai Thi Dieu Huyen, Head of the Vietnam Women's Enterprise Council, (Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry) in an interview held in Hanoi in April 2018.

⁶⁶ General Statistics Office, Ministry of Planning and Investment, United Nations in Vietnam and World Health Organization (2010), 'Keeping silent is dying': Results from the National Study on Domestic Violence against Women in Vietnam. General Statistics Office, Ha Noi.

⁶⁷ Duvvury, N., and Carney, P. (2012) Estimating the Cost of Domestic Violence Against Women in Vietnam. New York, UN Women.

⁶⁸ ILO/UN Women (2019) op cit.

⁶⁹ CARE International (2018b) Delays in tackling sexual harassment can cost garment industry billions.

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⁷⁰ Khuat Thu Hong., Le Bach Duong., & Nguyen Ngoc Huong. (2009) Sexuality in Contemporary Vietnam. Easy to Joke About, but hard to talk about. Hanoi: Knowledge Publishing House.

⁷¹ Khuat Thu Hong (2004) Sexual Harassment in Vietnam: A New Term for an Old Phenomenon. In Drummond and Rydstrøm, *Gender practices in contemporary Vietnam*. Singapore: Singapore University Press.

⁷² Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MoLISA) and ILO (2013) Sexual harassment in the workplace in Vietnam: An overview of the legal framework. Hanoi & Bangkok: MoLISA/ILO, p. 25.

⁷³ Khuat Thu Hong (2004) Sexual Harassment in Vietnam: A New Term for an Old Phenomenon. In Drummond and Rydstrøm, *Gender practices in contemporary Vietnam*. Singapore: Singapore University Press.

⁷⁴ Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MoLISA) and ILO (2013) Sexual harassment in the workplace in Vietnam: An overview of the legal framework. Hanoi & Bangkok: MoLISA/ILO.

⁷⁵ Better Work (2018b) Global gender strategy 2018-2022. Geneva, ILO Better Work.

⁷⁶ CARE International (2018a) What Works? Preventing & Responding to Sexual Harassment in the Workplace: A Rapid Review of Evidence. CARE International. https://www.care.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/STOP_What-works-to-address-workplace-sexual-harassment_Rapid-Review-of-evidence.pdf

⁷⁷ See also examples of recent media reports from Vietnam News such as: <http://vietnamnews.vn/society/372701/seeing-sexual-harassment-for-what-it-is.html>; <http://vietnamnews.vn/society/405878/sexual-harassment-on-buses-all-too-common.html#z7YJv6D6Vrv7fbpR.97>; <http://vietnamnews.vn/opinion/op-ed/405894/me-too-stop-the-blame-shame-the-victim-game.html#vV6MCYLQUGf8zb65.97>

⁷⁸ Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MoLISA) and ILO (2013) Sexual harassment in the workplace in Vietnam: An overview of the legal framework. Hanoi & Bangkok: MoLISA/ILO.

⁷⁹ Action Aid (2014) Safe cities for Women and Girls. Can Dreams Come True. Policy Brief. Hanoi, Action Aid Vietnam.

⁸⁰ Department of Gender Equality (GED), Research Centre for Gender, Family and Environment in Development (CGFED) and ActionAid Vietnam (2016) Improve the efficiency of public expenditure for a Safe city for Women and girls. Hanoi, GED, CGFED and ActionAid Vietnam.

⁸¹ Skinnider, E., Montgomery, R., Garrett, S. (2017) The trial of rape: Understanding the criminal justice system response to sexual violence in Thailand and Viet Nam. Bangkok, UN Women, UNODC and UNDP.

⁸² CARE International (2018c) New Global Poll: Significant Share of Men Believe Expecting Intimate Interactions, Sex from Employees is OK. Available at: <http://www.care.org/newsroom/press/press-releases/new-global-poll-significant-share-men-believe-expecting-intimate>

⁸³ Do Quynh Chi (2016) Vietnam country study: Labour Standards in the Garment Supply Chain. Research Center for Employment Relations (ERC), CNV International.

⁸⁴ Better Work (2019) An Impact Evaluation of Better Work from a Gender Perspective. Discussion Paper 30. Geneva, ILO. <https://betterwork.org/blog/portfolio/discussion-paper-30-an-impact-evaluation-of-better-work-from-a-gender-perspective/>

⁸⁵ Brown, D., Dehejia, R., Rappaport A. et al. (2016) The Impact of Better Work. Tufts University.

⁸⁶ Better Work (2016) Progress and Potential: How Better Work is improving garment workers' lives and boosting factory competitiveness. A summary of an independent assessment of the Better Work Programme. Geneva, ILO Better Work.

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⁹⁶ Minimum wages continue to lag far behind living wage benchmarks established by the Asia Floor Wage, Fair Wage Network and VGCL's estimates of workers' minimum living needs of workers. Available at: Do Quynh Chi (2016) Vietnam country study: Labour Standards in the Garment Supply Chain. Research Center for Employment Relations (ERC), CNV International. For further information on Fair Wear's work on living wages see: <https://www.fairwear.org/living-wage-portal-obstacles/living-wages-101>

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