

# This Is Not Working



**Stopping sexual harassment in  
workplaces across our region**



**It starts with equal**

A large garment factory with many workers at sewing machines. The workers are mostly women, some wearing headscarves, and they are focused on their work. The factory is filled with sewing machines, fabric, and finished garments. The lighting is bright, and the atmosphere is busy.

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# Foreword



As you look around your Australian workplace, consider this: at least one in four women, and in some cases probably as high as one in two, has been sexually harassed while at work. Men too have been subjected to unwanted and uninvited sexual behaviour while trying to earn a living. Gender-based violence remains one of the most tolerated violations of workers' human rights. Yet we know abuse isn't in anyone's job description. This is not working.

Everyone, everywhere has the right to work free from sexual harassment and the fear of sexual violence. It's down to all of us to be part of the fight to stop workplace harassment. We cannot be complacent bystanders and expect our workplace cultures to change themselves.

For decades, governments and workplaces around the world have developed laws and policies aimed at stamping out gender-based violence. Australia's Sex Discrimination Act commenced in 1984 and for over 30 years has made it clear: sexual harassment is against the law. However, it remains a serious and under-reported problem in our workplaces, causing considerable personal and economic costs.

No workplace is immune. In the aid sector, non-government agencies have been committed to ensuring that our work and values are deeply in sync.

For too long, abusers, harassers and bullies have been getting away with it. Sexual harassment at work and in our communities is still too common a reality, but it does not have to be in the future.

At CARE Australia, we know from our work in communities around the world that poor women living in or near poverty are even more vulnerable to abuse. They are working in some of the most exploitative and under-paid sectors of the economy with little protection by the law.

The #MeToo movement has put sexual harassment on the global agenda but CARE's research shows how little this form of abuse is understood. Let's be clear - sexual harassment, wherever it occurs, and to whomever it happens, makes us all poorer. It embeds unequal power relations in our workplaces, and then none of us are as productive or as safe and secure as we have a right to be.

More can be done by employers both here and overseas to tackle the problem. Through CARE's work in garment factories, tea plantations and beer gardens in some of the most impoverished communities around the world, we help women claim decent work conditions, greater equality and respect. We support workers to understand their rights, and engage with their employers to ensure clear policies are put into practice.

Addressing the prevalence of workplace sexual harassment and abuse requires stronger laws and better accountability. It's sad to say it, but basic decency needs to be enshrined in law.

The #MeToo momentum has brought us here. Now is the time to harness it, and make workplaces safe and respectful for all.

**Sally Moyle,**  
**Chief Executive, CARE Australia**  
**April 2018**

If you have experienced sexual harassment in the workplace, or you have observed sexual harassment and want to do something about it, the Australian Human Rights Commission can investigate and resolve complaints of discrimination, harassment and bullying. Visit [www.humanrights.gov.au](http://www.humanrights.gov.au) for more information.

If you, a child, or another person is in immediate danger of assault call 000

For sexual assault, domestic and family violence counselling services call 1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732) for 24/7 phone services or visit [www.1800respect.org.au](http://www.1800respect.org.au)

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# The scale of the problem

**Globally, 600 million women are living in countries where domestic violence is not against the law<sup>1</sup>.**

**50% of the world's working women are in vulnerable employment, often unprotected by labour legislation<sup>2</sup>.**

## United Kingdom:

More than half of women say they have been sexually harassed at work and most (79%) admit to not reporting it<sup>3</sup>.

## Australia:

1 in 4 women and 1 in 6 men report being sexually harassed in the workplace<sup>9</sup>.

## Egypt:

62% of men think it's sometimes or always acceptable for an employer to expect an employee to have intimate interactions with them, a family member or friend<sup>4</sup>.

## Ecuador:

Women in rural areas work on average 23 hours longer per week than men do<sup>10</sup>.

## Singapore:

Sexual harassment has been experienced by 54% of workers<sup>5</sup>.

## Asia:

80% of women are employed in vulnerable jobs without labour law protections<sup>11</sup>.

## USA:

One third of young women (18-34) say they have been sexually harassed at work<sup>6</sup>.

## Vietnam:

45% of women say they would not feel comfortable telling a colleague their behaviour is a form of sexual harassment<sup>12</sup>.

## Kenya:

90% of women working in the cut flower industry say sexual harassment is the most difficult problem in their workplaces<sup>7</sup>.

## India:

More than one third of men (39%) say it is sometimes or always acceptable to wolf-whistle or catcall a colleague<sup>13</sup>.

## South Africa:

77% of women experience sexual harassment at some point in their career<sup>8</sup>.

## Introduction

# Abuse isn't in anyone's job description

Why do we work? For many, the need for a wage keeps us returning to workplaces – providing labour, skills, and know-how in return for income and other benefits. Our work can influence how we engage with the community, learn new skills, and develop our sense of self. For many labour is how we are measured – how often have you met someone new, and the first question asked is “so what do you do?”

Women work at desks, in hospitals, shops, beer gardens, farms, factories and construction sites. And no one goes to work to be subjected to sexual harassment or violence. Yet in Australia, one in two women and 25% of all men have experienced sexual harassment in their lifetime<sup>14</sup>, and at least one in four women and one in six men report being sexually harassed in the workplace<sup>15</sup>. Within the Asia region that number is as high as 80%<sup>16</sup>. This is not working.

**Sexual violence and harassment is a prominent aspect of workers' lives – particularly women workers – around the world, and sexual harassment is the most reported form<sup>17</sup>.**

Globally, 40-50% of women experience unwanted sexual advances, physical contact or other forms of sexual harassment at work. Women are over-represented in precarious, low-income and informal work where the mechanisms to prevent violence and exploitation are often absent. In South Asia, over 80% of women in non-agricultural jobs are in informal employment, and in sub-Saharan Africa it's 74%. Women are far more likely to be in vulnerable employment<sup>18</sup>. In our region (South-East Asia and the Pacific) over half of employed women are in vulnerable employment<sup>19</sup>. In many rural areas across the globe women work in small-scale farming, usually informal and often unpaid. The most recent UN Commission on the Status of Women noted women and girls living in rural and remote areas can be particularly vulnerable to violence due to poverty, alongside limited access to justice and health services<sup>20</sup>.

Given the ongoing global prevalence of sexual harassment in the workplace, it is clear efforts to prevent these violations are not working. In many cases the only approach women have available to escape violence in the workplace is to leave. When your family relies on your income to survive, this isn't realistic.

**“Sometimes, of course I think about not going to work anymore because of this [sexual harassment]. But then I think about my family condition and I know I cannot quit.”**

- Female garment factory worker, Cambodia<sup>21</sup>.

The approach to dealing with violence and harassment in the world of work at both an international and domestic level is often fragmented and limited in scope. So CARE International is urging governments around the world to support the International Labour Organization (ILO) to create a convention against workplace sexual harassment. This would push countries, employers, and trade unions and other worker representatives to place greater priority on recognising, tackling and remedying violence and harassment at work. Australia can take the lead and help shape this new ILO Convention that could make a huge difference to ending violence against women at work.





# What is sexual harassment in the workplace?

The Australian law is clear on what constitutes sexual harassment in the workplace: any unwelcome sexual behaviour, where a reasonable person would have anticipated the possibility the person being harassed would be offended, humiliated or intimidated.

Australia's Sex Discrimination Act defines sexual harassment as any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favours or conduct of a sexual nature in relation to the person harassed in circumstances where a reasonable person would have anticipated the possibility the person harassed would be offended, humiliated or intimidated.

Examples include:

- unwelcome physical touching
- staring or leering
- suggestive comments or jokes
- unwanted requests to go out on dates
- requests for sex
- emailing pornography or rude jokes
- sending sexually explicit texts, messages or emails
- intrusive questions about your private life or body
- displaying posters, magazines or screen savers of a sexual nature.

All work-related activities, including applying for a job, being in a workplace, or at a training course or conference, and interaction with customers are included when considering sexual harassment in the workplace.

However, these clear definitions and legal protections are not replicated across the region. Perceptions of what constitutes sexual harassment vary dramatically within countries, across borders, between generations, and by men and women.

While extreme forms of violence are easily recognised, other seemingly less extreme forms of intimidation and harassment can have equally devastating effects. Behaviours giving rise to psychological hazards can affect the dignity, security, health and wellbeing of workers, just as violence does.

In January 2018, CARE International commissioned a survey, conducted online by The Harris Poll, of 9,408 adults across eight countries spanning six continents<sup>22</sup>. The research shows there is division on what is considered acceptable behaviour at work. For example, when asked whether it is acceptable to ask a subordinate on a date, 49% of adults globally say it is either always acceptable or sometimes acceptable while the remaining (51%) say this is never acceptable.

Even after recent high-profile cases around the world, there are vast disparities in global understanding of what acceptable behaviour and sexual harassment looks like in the workplace.

More than a quarter of 18-24 year-olds in Australia (27%) think it is sometimes or always acceptable for an employer to ask or expect their employee to have intimate interactions, such as a relationship or to engage in sexual favours, with them or one of their friends or family. Similarly, 26% of 18-24 year olds in Vietnam and 36% of 18-24 year olds in India think these types of interactions requested by an employer are sometimes or always acceptable. Coercion to have sexual relations is clearly sexual harassment but, without clear definitions and support, women may continue to be subjected to these abuses.

In Australia, 10% of 18-24 year olds think it is 'always acceptable' to pinch a colleague's bottom as a joke or wolf-whistle/catcall at a colleague. In India it was 10% of all adults that found these behaviours always acceptable. However, for older Australians, aged 45+, just 1% think such behaviours are always acceptable.

Across all countries, there is a sizeable gap between what men and women find acceptable in the workplace. For example, in the US, 36% of men think telling a risqué joke to a colleague is sometimes or always okay, compared to 20% of women. In Australia, 21% of men believe pinching a colleague on the bottom as a joke is sometimes or always acceptable while only 10% of women do. It is likely that unspoken rules and accepted norms of behaviour are putting women at risk. There is a long way to go to change attitudes and laws across the world.

# What drives sexual harassment in the workplace?

Sexual harassment perpetuates and is perpetuated by gender inequality. Gender inequality exists when women and men do not have equal power, resources or opportunities, and their voices, ideas and work are not valued equally by society.

## Power imbalances lie at the heart of cultures of abuse<sup>23</sup>.

This inequality is often enshrined in laws or policies constraining the rights and opportunities of women, and is reinforced and maintained through social and cultural norms (the dominant ideas about men and women in a society). When women are considered to have less value and fewer rights than men, and are barred from accessing resources and opportunities, they are more vulnerable to experiencing sexual harassment.

Violence against women affects their participation in education, employment, social life, and politics. It impacts their access and control over resources like land and business ownership. Gender-based violence remains one of the most tolerated violations of workers' human rights.

## What is the impact?

In addition to well-recognised major effects on the health and wellbeing of those subjected to sexual harassment, it also comes at a high cost to workplaces including:

- absenteeism (employees not coming to work)
- presenteeism (employees coming to work sick and/or having their productivity impacted)
- staff turnover (employees leaving their jobs)
- decreased productivity
- decreased job satisfaction and staff morale.

Sexual harassment is not just a human rights issue, it is an economic one. In 2016, the global cost of violence against women was estimated to be USD\$ 1.5 trillion, equivalent to 2% of the world's gross domestic product (GDP)<sup>24</sup>.

Sexual harassment and gender-based violence costs workplaces money through exploited workers and reduced productivity.

Sexual harassment is one of the systemic issues keeping women out of the workforce. In Italy, sexual harassment forced women out of the workforce at twice the rate of men<sup>25</sup>.

Most women may never seek help, and then suffer in silence. The cost of sexual harassment and violence at work is never counted for them. Seeking treatment and responding to violence results in 'direct costs' including medical and health supports, legal advice and action along with fines for perpetrators. For the state and businesses, direct costs include lost productivity due to absenteeism.

Indirect costs are those that follow on from an act of violence against a woman. These include lost opportunity costs incurred when a person can't participate fully in the workforce and the ongoing impact on a worker's mental and physical health.

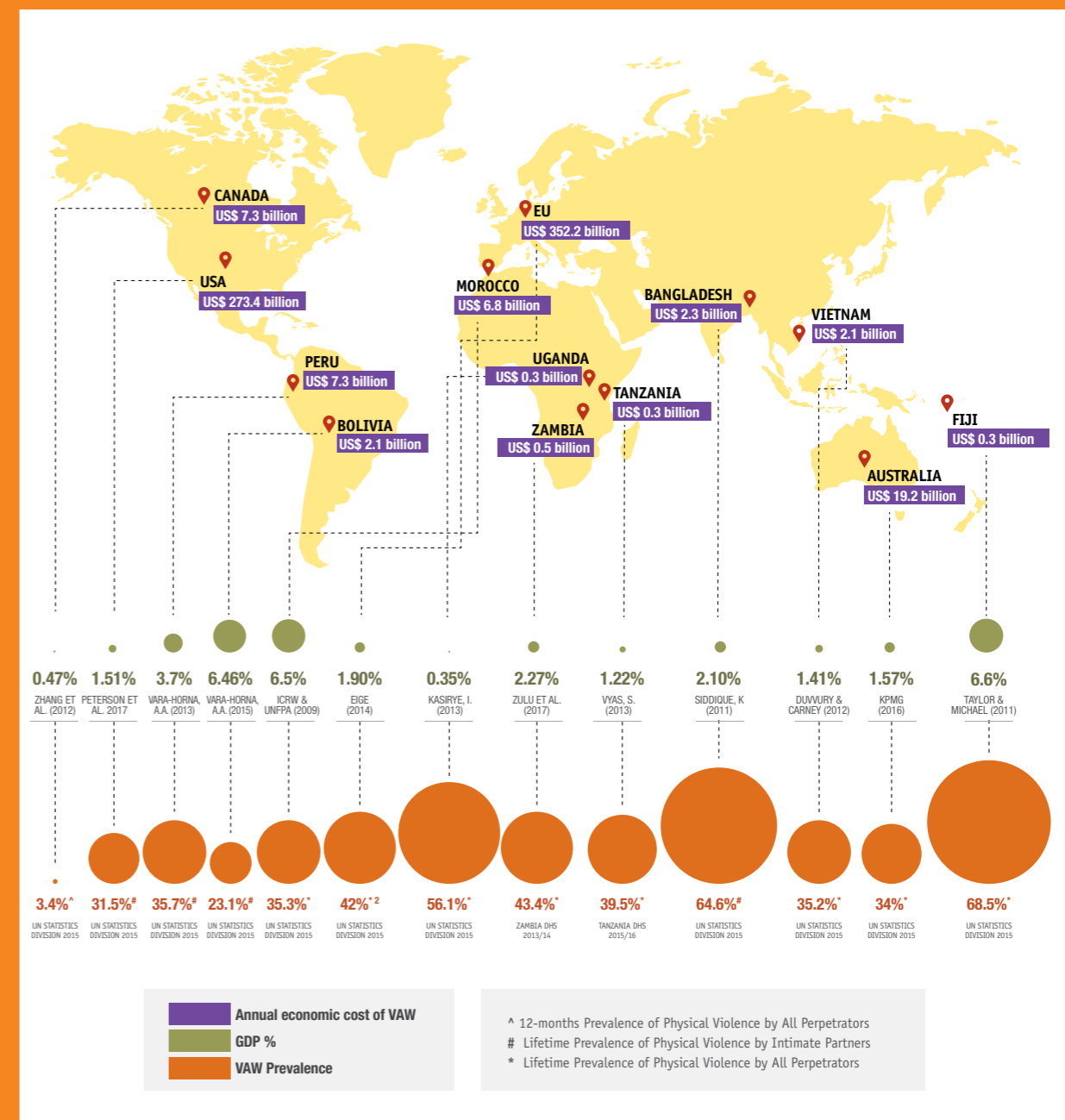
In Cambodia, the garment sector employs approximately 600,000 people, up to 85% of whom are women. Since the mid-1990s the total annual output of the garment sector has grown from an estimated USD\$ 20 Million to over USD\$ 5 Billion turnover, accounting for nearly a third of national GDP<sup>26</sup>.

Recent research by CARE found nearly one in three female garment workers experience sexual harassment in their workplaces, at a significant financial cost to employers – almost USD\$ 89 Million per annum, the equivalent of 0.52% of the country's GDP<sup>27</sup>.

Less than half of the world's working age women are in the labour force, compared to 75% of men<sup>28</sup>. Yet studies have found if women were to play an identical role to men in labour markets, as much as USD\$ 28 Trillion could be added to global GDP by 2025<sup>29</sup>.

# How much does violence against women cost the global community?

This graphic shows the range of estimates on how much violence against women costs the national economy. We show figures in US\$ Billions from 13 studies ranging from 2009 - 2017 both in terms of the % of GDP that violence against women costs the country, and in terms of the prevalence of violence against women.



# Preventing and responding to sexual harassment in the workplace

There is a day-to-day tolerance for sexual harassment, it is pervasive in our workplaces. We need to challenge ourselves and our communities to commit to the principle that all women have a right to be free from violence, including sexual harassment in the workplace.

Harmful business practices, worker repression, ineffective public policies and social protections, and entrenched gender norms cannot be tackled effectively in individual workplaces or factory by factory. Changing power relations and achieving sustainable change means supporting collective action and allowing workers to set the agenda for change.

**CARE's experience shows we need to build the power of individual workers with improved knowledge, skills and confidence. And, through encouraging social dialogue and collective action, we can change power relations between women workers, their employers and their families.**

Stereotyped constrictions of masculinity and peer relationships that emphasize aggression and disrespect are drivers of all forms of violence against women. We seek to challenge behaviour and attitudes of men and women that condone violence against women, while also promoting women's independence and decision-making in private and public life.

We also need to transform society's structures by challenging social norms and harmful business practices, and securing legal and social protections for workers.

**“We need to talk about the problem and work to change attitudes around violence and harassment. It is heartening to see the many men speaking out. However, we can't solely rely on the beneficence of ‘fathers of daughters’ to step up and voluntarily change the shape of a world that is, and has always been, moulded so intricately and comprehensively to accommodate and uphold men's sense of entitlement. We need a transformation in social norms towards what we all agree is acceptable in our communities, workplaces and homes.”**

— Helen Pankhurst, CARE International UK's Special Adviser on Gender Equality and granddaughter of suffragette Sylvia Pankhurst<sup>30</sup>.



# It's not ok, anywhere, anytime

## Definitions

**Informal Work** is done beyond the reach of formal laws and enforcement mechanisms and is of low productivity, insecure, poorly remunerated and lacking social protection.

**Decent work** is productive work for women and men in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity. Decent work involves opportunities for work that:

- is productive and delivers a fair income
- provides security in the workplace and social protection for workers and their families
- offers prospects for personal development and encourages social integration
- gives people the freedom to express their concerns, to organise and to participate in decisions that affect their lives and
- guarantees equal opportunities and equal treatment for all.

**Dignified work** is connected to decent work, but focuses on women having access to, and control over, decent work and its reward. CARE International defines dignified work as:

'Women gaining respect and recognition through earning a living wage, exercising greater agency (the knowledge and ability to make choices) and experiencing equitable relations at work and in the home and benefiting from structures that respond to the needs of women and men equally and with dignity.'

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted by all countries at the United Nations, call for:

- the elimination of all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation (SDG Target 5.2)
- achieving full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men (SDG Target 8.5)
- protecting labour rights and promoting safe and secure working environments for all workers (SDG Target 8.8).

A recent report by the United Nations High-Level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment outlines a range of measures to progress the realisation of dignified work:

- actions to eliminate violence against women (at home and in the workplace)
- sharing the burden of unpaid care work
- ensuring women's access to financial services and new technology
- increasing women's access to justice
- changing culture and practices in employment, procurement and other practices of both the public and the private sector
- ratifying key international agreements for protecting the rights of women workers, especially women in the informal sector and domestic workers<sup>31</sup>.

CARE International runs specific projects around the world to improve women's livelihoods and workplace productivity. For example, CARE's partnership with GAP Inc. through the PACE project (Personal Advancement and Career Enhancement) has helped garment factory workers across Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Myanmar and Vietnam. Women and men have been supported to strengthen knowledge and skills in literacy and financial literacy, learn about physical and mental health, and practice effective communication along with analysing gender roles.

The Enhancing Women's Voice to STOP Sexual Harassment project began in 2017 and operates in Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam. Working with female garment factory workers, and factory owners and managers, the STOP project:

- supports garment factories to develop effective workplace mechanisms to respond to sexual harassment
- supports workers to feel safe to report sexual harassment, and to do so without negative consequences
- strengthens the regulatory environment through the promotion of new laws, policies and mechanisms to address sexual harassment in the workplace<sup>32</sup>.

CARE's previous work in garment factories in Cambodia increased employee retention rates by as much as 66%, saw an increase of 54% of women who valued their work skills and saw a 133% increase in women feeling highly capable of reprimanding a man's inappropriate behaviour on the street<sup>33</sup>.

# Women we're helping

CARE supports women to earn an income, secure a job and get new opportunities to improve their lives. We know from our work throughout the developing world that women in poor communities are amongst the most vulnerable to abuse and have some of the most inadequate legal protections.

We work closely with employers to ensure women are protected in their workplaces, and with community leaders to challenge social norms and promote changes to policies and laws.

CARE supports women to advocate for workplace rights for themselves and others. From domestic workers in Ecuador to garment factory workers in Cambodia, we are helping women fight for safety and respect.

## **Mao Bun, Assistant Administrator in a garment factory - Cambodia**

"Last year, the factory had sexual harassment trainings. I'm very glad such training exists in my factory. I think it has helped prevent a lot of sexual harassment, inappropriate touching and talk.

CARE came to the factory. After joining the training, the workers knew about sexual harassment. They would spread the knowledge. Sometimes, men ask, 'Hey, where are you going?' but they also try to touch you... Or when I had to leave my unit to help the other units, they would ask where I was going and also touch me.

I think this action was sexual harassment because they were not women but they were grabbing my hand.

We'd report this to the Sexual Harassment Committee. If they couldn't solve it, we would go to the management team. After talking with the committee, that person was called in.

The committee could tell him what he had done wrong so that he could change. I accept that because after the meeting, that person promised not to do it to anyone again.

Everyone is glad to have joined the sexual harassment training in this factory. There's no such thing [as harassment] since the training. I don't know of any sexual harassment anymore.

Since the training, I see a huge decrease in inappropriate teasing, now that they understand more about sexual harassment. You know, in the past, sometimes they were joking but it made others feel harassed. I've felt safe ever since the training."

## **Anonymous, Operator in a garment factory - Bangladesh**

"I was proposed to by my floor supervisor. I refused since I knew he had been married earlier and I did not like him as a person. The refusal made him angry and he threatened that I would lose my job. It was not easy to sack me since I was a good operator. The supervisor resorted to verbally abusing me and gave me extra workload. As a member of the Community Workers Association, I learned to protest against harassment. I complained in detail to the Production Manager, who then made the supervisor apologise and to promise no further harassment in the future."



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# A worldwide response

In a time of international corporations and global networks, governments still have an important role to play. We vote for our governments, we ask them to lead, to write laws to protect and empower our community. Australia has been a leader for equality between men and women, but it feels like we are slipping. Changing how society operates is hard – current laws don't go far enough in supporting businesses and workers to stamp out discrimination and violence.

**The very act of prohibition by law acts as a symbolic statement that certain conduct is harmful and not to be tolerated<sup>34</sup>.**

The approach to dealing with violence and harassment in the world of work at both international and domestic levels is often fragmented and limited in scope. Current approaches provide some protections for some workers, however:

- Even where legislation on workplace violence and harassment does exist, its implementation may not be effective
- Specific groups reporting greater exposure to violence (such as workers in the informal economy) are often not able to access dispute mechanisms or other labour protections
- Criminal proceedings are normally not sufficient, in that they require a higher burden of proof, and usually focus on sexual assault, rather than the full range of behaviors considered to be harassment.

Large-scale, transformative change cannot happen in individual workplaces, or factory by factory. We need to transform inequitable structures and secure legal and social protections for workers.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) is the global body tasked with protecting workers all over the world. Governments, employers and workers representatives from across the globe come together to adopt its Conventions, and form basic standards for workplace practices that become legally binding in each country that ratifies the Conventions.

A new ILO Convention on ending violence and harassment in the workplace would require ratifying governments to pursue an integrated approach to address violence

and harassment in the world of work. It would delineate clear responsibilities for governments, public and private employers, workers and their respective organisations, and for joint strategies and collaboration. An integrated approach is necessary not only for prevention, but also for protection, rehabilitation, compensation and other remedial action.

There is no internationally agreed definition of the term 'violence and harassment in the world of work'. Whilst several ILO instruments refer to violence and/or harassment, none of these instruments address violence and harassment as their primary aim. None defines what is meant by violence and harassment, nor do they indicate the steps governments, employers and workers' organisations should take to prevent, address and redress violence and harassment in the world of work. These instruments tend to refer only to certain forms of violence or harassment and only cover specific groups or categories of workers.

**On a global level more than one third of countries do not yet have any laws prohibiting sexual harassment at work, leaving nearly 235 million women vulnerable each day at work, many of them in our region<sup>35</sup>.**

In our region gender-based violence remains a largely hidden issue yet women perceive this is a regular and daily risk. The risk is exacerbated through power differences between a mostly female workforce and majority male management, and deep rooted social norms and practices that devalue women.

Even though the evidence shows stamping out sexual harassment has benefits for workers and the economy, historically women have borne the brunt of harassment, and have been devalued in workplaces.



McDonald (2014) notes that “the conceptual framing of sexual harassment as an individual problem, rather than one with causes and consequences at a systemic level has limited the development of effective organizational responses.”<sup>36</sup>

A Convention signals, without any ambiguity, that violence and harassment is unacceptable and the antithesis of decent work.

Any government ratifying an ILO Convention is committing itself to applying the Convention in national law and practice and reporting on its application at regular intervals. In addition, complaints can be made against countries for violations of a Convention they have ratified.

A new Convention will push countries, employers and indeed trade unions and other worker representatives to place greater priority on recognising, tackling and remedying violence and harassment at work.

This is particularly important in countries where there isn't currently a legal framework in place, as it can shed light on the extent of the problem, and give women in impoverished communities the legal grounds on which to stand against harassment.

**A progressive new ILO Convention and Recommendation are needed.**

To truly make a difference for women around the world, the Convention must include:

- A definition of 'violence and harassment at work' that includes not just physical, but also psychological and sexual aspects
- Practical protections against work-related violence and harassment to reach all workers, including those working in private homes, in the informal economy, and in small and medium-sized enterprises
- Recognition that the world of work is considered to cover not only the traditional physical workplace, but also commuting to and from work, public spaces to include informal workers such as street vendors, and the home, to include homeworkers and domestic workers.

And the Convention must be binding. Governments and businesses have left it far too long to make real change for women around the world. A binding Convention is the catalyst needed to ensure women can access legal protections against violence and harassment in the workplace.



Up to 50% of women globally experience sexual harassment at work



1 in 3 women in Cambodia garment factories experienced sexual harassment in the last year



80% of Asian women work in jobs that have no legal protection from harassment



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# Show your support

**We are calling for a new international convention to protect women in the workplace.**

**Support a new global agreement to address workplace sexual harassment.**

Australia can take the lead in helping to shape this standard. The Australian Government, working with the Australian Council of Trade Unions and Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, can make a huge impact and influence real and lasting change.

We therefore ask the Minister for Jobs and Innovation to:

- Represent Australia on the global stage, at the International Labour Organization in May 2018
- Support stronger global laws for women in the workplace via a binding Convention, and gather support from other nations
- Ensure the Convention benefits all working women, including those in informal workplaces such as garment factories, hospitality and entertainment and domestic work.

Visit [www.caretoact.org.au](http://www.caretoact.org.au) to see stories of workers around the world, and to add your voice to the discussion.

## #ThisIsNotWorking

# Statement from CARE International

As an organisation championing the rights of women and girls, CARE recognises the particular responsibility we have to protect people we work with from sexual abuse and exploitation. Such abuse, of anyone by any of our staff, is totally unacceptable. We accept that no organisation is immune from a minority of individuals who abuse their position. Therefore, we have clear policies to investigate allegations, support victims and discipline perpetrators. In February 2018 CARE International issued the following statement:

‘CARE International works around the globe to save lives, defeat poverty and achieve social justice. Because of our mission and our focus on women and girls, we are deeply committed to building a world where violence, harassment and abuse against anyone is not tolerated.

Our ability to fulfil our relief and development mission is wholly reliant on the high standards of integrity and conduct of our staff working at all levels in the organisation, from those in head office to those working in the communities we serve.

In 2017, CARE had more than 9,000 staff in more than 90 countries. We collected figures in two separate categories: (1) sexual abuse and exploitation of community members and (2) sexual harassment within the organization.

CARE received 13 sexual abuse or exploitation reports in 2017, of which eight were substantiated. Seven of those eight staff were dismissed as a result and one resigned.


In the second category, CARE received reports of 15 cases of sexual harassment within the organization, of which eight were substantiated. Of those eight staff members, four were dismissed as a result, two contracts were not renewed, and the remaining two staff members received a warning and one no longer works for CARE.

We have researched and taken each case before us very seriously, but we also recognise that complex systems like ours are fallible. We are encouraging people inside and outside of CARE to share historical information with us.

Our global policy on Protection from Exploitation and Abuse and Child Protection explicitly outlines unacceptable behaviour, and what we will do to investigate allegations, support victims and discipline perpetrators, including referring them to the relevant authorities. We will continue to build upon this policy as we, along with others in the sector, reflect and evolve.

We have mechanisms in place to report abuse or harassment of any kind, either through management or human resource structures, or through a hotline (known as the CARE Line). We also are now rolling out plans to strengthen our complaint mechanisms for our program participants to raise concerns or allegations of sexual harassment, exploitation or abuse. This includes our ability to track these issues across the confederation.

We will continue to focus on improving our reporting mechanisms at all levels of the organisation. At CARE, we have an uncompromising commitment to integrity and humility, which means we remain accountable to the people and partners we serve.’



## Thank you

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> UNFPA “International day for the elimination of Violence against Women” statement 2013
- <sup>2</sup> ILO *Global Employment Trends for Women* 2012
- <sup>3</sup> Trades Union *Congress Still just a bit of banter? Sexual harassment in the workplace in 2016*, 2016
- <sup>4</sup> CARE International commissioned survey by The Harris Poll, 2018
- <sup>5</sup> AWARE, Research study on workplace sexual harassment 2008
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