

# VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN WORKPLACE SETTINGS



## WOMEN EXPERIENCE SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND OTHER FORMAS OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE ACROSS WORK SETTINGS

A global study on women working in the **technology sector** found that **44 percent of woman founders** had experienced some form of harassment at work in 2020, of which **41 percent of women** experienced sexual harassment.<sup>1</sup>

A study in 50 African countries with **women parliamentarians** found that **40 percent** had been sexually harassed.<sup>2</sup>

In the United States, **80 percent of women farmworkers** said that they have experienced some form of sexual violence on the job.<sup>3</sup>



## DID YOU KNOW?

The **global cost of violence against women** (public, private and social) is estimated at approximately 2 percent of global gross domestic product (GDP), or USD\$1.5 trillion. It is estimated that by advancing gender equality across public, private and social spheres, \$12 trillion could be added to global GDP by 2025.

Studies on **domestic violence**<sup>4</sup> have shown that it contributes to lost economic output and productivity, increased sick leave, and lost jobs. It can result in anxiety, depression and feelings of powerlessness, humiliation, and loss of self-esteem, work motivation, performance and ultimately attachment to the workplace among women.

## PRINCIPLES



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



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



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

## FEAR AND EXPERIENCE OF VIOLENCE IMPACTS WOMEN'S RIGHT TO THE CITY

**Freedom of Movement**



**Livelihoods**



**Access to Services**



## ADDRESSING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE CAN ASSIST COMPANIES TO:

- Contribute to the health and well-being of workers, with increased productivity.
- Strengthen their effective implementation of policies and legislation.
- Retain and attract women workers and consumers.
- Unlock opportunities for women's economic empowerment, and investments in communities.
- Strengthen implementation of principles in certifications related to labour conditions and worker's rights.
- Enhance performance/ productivity and reduce sick leaves and absenteeism of staff and workers.

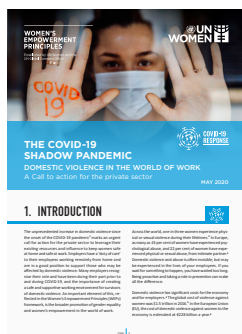
<sup>1</sup> Women Who Tech (2020). The State of Women in Tech and Startups. Available at: <https://womenwhotech.org/data-and-resources/state-women-tech-and-startups>

<sup>2</sup> Inter-Parliamentary Union & African Parliamentary Union (2021) *Sexism, harassment and violence against women in parliaments in Africa*. Available at: <https://www.ipu.org/resources/publications/issue-briefs/2021-11/sexism-harassment-and-violence-against-women-in-parliaments-in-africa>

<sup>3</sup> Waugh (2010) *Examining the Sexual Harassment Experiences of Mexican Immigrant Farmworking Women*. Violence against women. Vol 16 (3)

<sup>4</sup> See for example: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (2003). *Costs of Intimate Partner Violence Against Women in the United States*; Vodafone (2019). *International research shows workplace impacts of domestic abuse*.

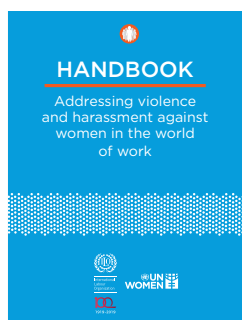
# LINKS TO GLOBAL TOOLS AND PRACTICES TO HELP GUIDE ACTION



This [policy brief](#) highlights concrete ways companies are responding to domestic violence during the COVID-19 pandemic, and provides recommendations on measures which could be taken. For example: carrying out prevention, risk assessments and safety planning; offering support; ensuring that managers recognize signs of violence; creating a workplace culture where survivors can disclose violence and stay safely in their jobs; and engaging in wider corporate awareness raising.



This [resource](#) analyzes what makes training against sexual harassment both effective and transformative. Adequate training dislodges entrenched and discriminatory ideas on gender—fundamental to promote cultural change to end sexual harassment. Evidence has shown that current training on sexual harassment is largely ineffective and sometimes appears to prompt resistance in some (male and female) trainees.



The [handbook](#) covers a broad spectrum of issues related to violence and harassment in different workplace contexts. It highlights relevant international and regional frameworks, provides guidance on the role of state and non-state actors, and includes practical information on how to prevent and respond to violence and harassment in workplaces.

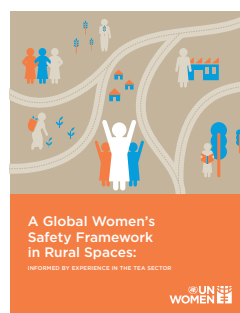


This [brief](#) summarizes ten actions for employers to consider in preventing and addressing violence in the world of work and in communities, including examples of emerging good practices.



This [tool](#) focuses on cultural change needed to end sexual harassment including a focus on:

- Training to dislodge entrenched and discriminatory ideas on gender;
- Survivor-focused work, where victim and survivors lead;
- Rational reporting in order to remove judgment, retaliation, ensure survivor safety and consequences for abusers; and
- Collective ownership of the need to change culture and attitudes and to establish common values, including the need for bystanders to intervene.



This [global framework](#), accompanied by a practical guide can assist producers in a range of commodity sectors (e.g. tea, coffee, cotton, flowers, etc.) working on women's safety to:

- Better understand what violence against women and girls (VAWG) is, the factors that contribute to and protect against it, and how it impacts women, communities and businesses;
- Learn about the four framework action areas and the key principles that underline effective women's and girls' safety action in these areas;
- Identify different contributions that producers; governments and women, youth and community groups can make to end VAWG; and
- Access resources and tools to address VAWG that are tailored to the local and country contexts.



This [guidance](#) offers advice and support to strengthen efforts to end discrimination against women in the promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities.