Protecting the labour rights of young workers: support an international standard on workplace violence and harassment
hey dude, why do you look so glum?

Work is rough, yo. This guy at the factory is so verbally abusive and physically gets up in my face. Also, my friend told me he has sexually assaulted her and continues to harass her.

Geez, that’s hectic. Have y’all reported it?

Ah, he’s friends with all the bosses. I don’t have the energy, just wan’a quit but can’t afford to.

Geez, I’m so over patriarchy! Gender based violence happens everywhere - at home, at school, on the streets, on the way to work and at work!

yeah and it’s so much worse being a young women. Imagine our friends in the informal sector too?

yeah OMG! Imagine how terrible it is for our friends who are queer or trans?

whoa! Yeah!

I’m googleing... the figures are shocking dude - wow! In Zambia, 81% of women have experienced sexual harassment at work.

Studies in Japan, Malaysia, the Philippines and South Korea show that 33 to 40% of women suffer workplace sexual harassment.

More than 35% of LGBT people in the UK have been harassed or bullied at work.

In Denmark, 20-35% of young workers witnessed or personally experienced sexual harassment by customers.

In Ecuador’s export-oriented flower production industry, over 70% of young workers aged 18-24 workers have suffered some form of sexual harassment.

Violence against migrant domestic workers in Lebanon is resulting in an average of two deaths per week.

In Australia, 38% of indigenous workers, 34% of disabled workers and 30% of young workers have reported experiencing bullying and harassment at work.
I heard something recently about the new International Labour Organization’s Convention on Violence and Harassment at Work. It is a binding treaty, that once ratified by member States, contains basic rights and principles and sets out the minimum steps that dutybearers must take to address GBV at work.

That’s cool! Because we can’t just “recommend” or advise governments, employers and trade unions, we need the full might of the law to tackle GBV urgently!

The Decent Work Agenda - It sums up the aspirations of people in their working lives. One pillar is job creation and the right to work 2) rights at work 3) social protection and 4) collective bargaining and social dialogue, with gender equality cutting across all 4 pillars.

What an amazing agenda! No decent work with GBV at work!

Exactly, we won’t achieve our right to decent work or advance the Decent Work Agenda without tackling GBV at work.

What agenda?

Tell friends and co-workers, mobilise comrades and connect with allies to support the International Trade Union Confederation’s campaign to get the ILO’s Convention adopted and ratified. Scan the QR code below with your camera and check out their site for more info!

GBV is not part of the job!

So what now? How do we get involved?
**Protecting young people’s rights at work: time for an international Convention**

There is currently no internationally agreed law that deals with the many different forms of gender-based violence (GBV) at work. The ILO’s International Labour Conference in June 2019 will give governments an opportunity to demonstrate their political will to address GBV at work by ratifying a new legally binding International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention and Recommendation on Violence and Harassment in the World of Work. If signed, such a convention will contribute significantly to helping young workers in defending their labour rights across all sectors and in all regions.¹

Strengthening legal protections against GBV at work is particularly important for young workers, 77% of whom are in informal employment². In addition to a number of occupational health and safety risks, young workers are more targeted for violence and harassment at work because of a combination of different factors, including conditions of work, type of work, employment in the informal sector, precarious, short term work, and low bargaining power.³

Informal sector workers are subjected to violence from a diverse range of actors, such as public officials, police, fellow workers, household members, customers, criminals or employers.⁴ Further victimisation of informal workers occurs because of the criminalisation of informal work. WIEGO, a global movement of women informal workers notes that “often, the urban working poor are perceived as the cause of violence but ignored as the victims of violence.”⁵

Young workers and Gender Based Violence at Work

- Young women working in economic processing zones are particularly vulnerable to violence and sexual abuse in factories, in company accommodation or when travelling to work.⁶
- Globally, women make up 83% of domestic workers and one in 25 women workers is a domestic worker. In 2008, 12% of 15-17 year old girls in employment were domestic workers.⁷ ITUC (International Trade Union Confederation) describes abuse and exploitation of domestic workers as systematic.
- Violence in the health and social care sector is widespread and constitutes at least 25% of all GBV at work.⁸
- In Kenya, a study among 400 workers in tea growing and processing revealed that more than 90% had experienced or observed sexual abuse at their workplace.⁹
- In Ecuador’s export-oriented flower production industry, over 55% of workers have suffered some form of sexual harassment, and for younger workers aged 20-24 the figure is as high as 70%.
- In Bangladesh, over 60% of female garment workers have been intimidated or threatened with violence at work.¹⁰
- In a 2013 study amongst men, women and transgender sex workers in South Africa, 50% reported having experienced violence by police or clients including murder, assault, rape and arrest.¹¹
- In Iceland, a study found the majority of workers who had experienced sexual harassment were below the age of 24.¹²
- In Australia, 38% of indigenous workers, 34% of disabled workers and 30% of young workers have reported experiencing bullying and harassment at work.¹³
- More than one in three (36%) of LGBT people in the UK have been harassed or bullied at work.¹⁴

Source: ITUC-CSI Factsheet on Gender Based Violence in the World of Work https://www.ituc-csi.org/gbv-factsheet
Violence is not part of the Job!

Join the campaign for an international Convention on Violence and Harassment in the World of Work

Through the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) led global campaign, “Stop Gender Based Violence at Work”, trade unions and allied social movements, including women’s rights organisations are lobbying their governments to support a new legally binding international convention that will be comprehensive enough to address the full range of GBV at work.

Rallying support for an ILO Convention and Recommendation is a great opportunity to heighten awareness on GBV, expose its harmful impacts, collectively empower young workers and end impunity for GBV at work.

The Stop GBV at Work Campaign is demanding an international legally binding set of instruments on Violence and Harassment at Work that will include:

- A broad definition of violence and harassment in the world of work in its diverse and multiple forms, including physical abuse and assault, sexual violence, including rape and sexual assault; verbal abuse; bullying; psychological abuse and intimidation; sexual harassment; and threats of violence and stalking;
- A strong focus on gender-based violence and harassment in the world of work;
- Provisions to prevent violence and harassment in the world of work;
- Measures to protect and support workers affected by violence and harassment in the world of work, without discrimination as to race, ethnicity, language, religion, political or other opinion, gender identity, sexual orientation, HIV/AIDS status, migrant or refugee status, age or disability, or place of work – whether in the formal or informal economy;
- A description of the workers disproportionately affected by violence and harassment in the world of work such as women, LGBTI workers, indigenous workers, migrant workers, racialised workers, workers living with HIV/AIDS and disabilities, workers in the informal economy and people trapped in forced and child labour;
- Inclusion of jobseekers and applicants, volunteers, laid-off and suspended workers, interns and apprentices;
- Measures to address the impact of domestic violence in the world of work;
- A broad definition of the “world of work”, which could include, for example, public and private spaces where they are a place of work; the commute to and from work; and work-related travel, training or social events;
- Provision of various employment and social security rights for complainants, including the right to reduce or reorganise working hours; and
- Specific provision for the appropriate and sensitive treatment of complainants of violence and harassment, including protection from reprisals or penalties for making the complaint.

Source: Campaign Toolkit: Stop gender-based violence at work - support an ILO Convention
No decent work with GBV at work

Decent work involves opportunities for work that is productive and delivers a fair income; security in the workplace and social protection for families; better prospects for personal development and social integration; freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives; and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men, including protection from and redress against gender based violence at work. The importance of decent work in achieving sustainable development is highlighted by SDG 8 which aims to “promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all”.

How can young people get involved?

“It is crucial now, more than ever, for young people to be at the forefront of activism and social transformation. It is our mission to create fair societies and safe and healthy environments for all – in our workplaces, schools, universities, homes and communities. If we all play our part, the change will be enormous.”

Young people can make a difference by learning about the ITUC Campaign Toolkit and Briefing Paper which seek to (1) build critical support for the adoption of an ILO Convention, accompanied by a Recommendation, and (2) mobilise and strengthen trade union action in eradicating GBV from the world of work.

The Campaign Toolkit provides a set of actions you can take, including:

1. Know about the ILO’s:
   - yellow report and proposed conclusions
   - the law and practice report (white report)
   - the report of the ILO Tripartite Meeting of Experts

These contain valuable arguments on why an international instrument(s) is needed and what such an instrument(s) could cover:

2. Signing up to the campaign and sharing information about your campaign work by sending an email to equality@ituc-csi.org, or post it on the campaign Facebook page https://www.facebook.com/StopGBVatWork/

3. Explaining to your youth networks how these ILO standards could help them in their work to organise around this issue;

4. Asking potential allies to support your campaign and joining local trade union action;

5. Engaging your government and employer on the Convention using the strategies recommended in the ITUC Campaign Toolkit.

6. Join the campaign online: #StopGBVatWork #SafeSpaces4Youth #PSI4Youth #HearMeToo #ILOEndGBV

Protecting the Labour Rights of Young Workers
(Endnotes)
