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Fighting Gender-Based Violence in the World of Work

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Introduction

Gender-based violence (GBV) and harassment are widespread and persistent issues that impact individuals across all areas of life, including workplaces, homes, and public spaces. The consequences of GBV are far-reaching, affecting not only those directly targeted but also their families, communities, and broader societal structures. As we work towards more inclusive and equitable environments, addressing GBV becomes a central priority for social businesses and other stakeholders committed to creating safe and respectful spaces.

Developed as part of the SEGIE project co-funded by the European Commission, this handbook seeks to clarify and strengthen the role social businesses play in combating GBV. It delves into the complexities of GBV, examining its root causes, various forms, societal impact, and the key legislation at global, European, and national levels that address the issue.

The handbook underscores the unique position of social businesses in driving change and fostering a culture of zero tolerance for GBV. It includes practical recommendations for developing robust policies, creating inclusive workplace cultures, and implementing training and awareness programmes designed to advance gender equality and establish safe working environments. It also emphasises the importance of collaborative efforts, advocating for a multi-stakeholder approach that brings together social businesses, industry associations, trade unions, government agencies, and non-governmental organisations to combat GBV collectively. In addition to exploring the underlying causes and legal frameworks surrounding GBV, this handbook outlines actionable strategies to promote gender equality and address violence and harassment in the workplace. By adopting a holistic approach and leveraging the guidance provided, social businesses can play a pivotal role in driving systemic change and promoting environments where safety and respect are paramount.

Combating gender-based violence is a collective responsibility that requires sustained commitment, innovative strategies, and collaboration across various sectors. This handbook is designed to serve as a resource and catalyst for action, guiding social businesses and stakeholders in implementing effective solutions to address GBV. Through the combined efforts of social businesses, policymakers, and civil society organisations, we can build workplaces and societies that are truly inclusive and free from gender-based violence. By embracing the recommendations and approaches outlined in this handbook, we can move closer to a future where GBV is no longer tolerated, and all individuals have the opportunity to live and work in safety and dignity.

About SEGIE

In recent years, numerous reports have highlighted the need for better integration of women and gender minorities into the social economy, particularly as social entrepreneurs. However, there is little data on the interconnections between the social economy and gender equality as a whole, and on the sector's impact on the economic empowerment of women and gender minorities. This is why the SEGIE project (*For a Social Economy that reduces Gender Inequalities in Europe*) was born. While the social economy is booming in Europe, bringing new solutions to major social and environmental challenges, it also has a responsibility to foster positive change for all, not at the expense of women and other minorities. There is therefore a clear need to investigate this topic, raise awareness and develop hands-on tools in order to harness the power of the European social economy ecosystem to reduce gender inequality.

Against this background, SEGIE intends to pursue the following objectives:

- » **Develop new data on and investigate the impact of the social economy on gender equality** in order to identify areas of improvement and to make stakeholders in the social economy more aware and knowledgeable about gender equality.
- » **Develop hands-on pedagogical contents to help European social enterprises push for more gender-equal practices** and develop fairer and more women-inclusive business models.
- » **Contribute to the emergence of 30 women-inclusive businesses in France, Italy and Portugal** to generate a wider ripple effect on women's economic empowerment and shed light on business champions leading the way towards a more inclusive European social economy.

SEGIE is a project funded by the European Social Fund and is implemented by four partner organisations:

Empow'Her Global (lead partner, France) is an international feminist organisation founded in 2013 that deploys several types of activities aimed at the same objective: supporting women in the realisation of their projects, allowing them to reach their full potential and giving them all the keys to empower themselves through entrepreneurship.

Action Aid Italia (Italy) is a non-profit organisation who works to promote and animate spaces for democratic participation everywhere, involving people and communities in the protection of their rights. Action Aid collaborates at local, national and international levels to bring about change and increase equity, improving the quality of democracy and thus supporting those living in situations of poverty and marginality.

Acube (Italy) is an incubator and accelerator of ideas and businesses with high social, cultural and environmental value. Acube encourages and supports the creation and development of impactful businesses in order to generate innovation and social transformation.

NOVA School of Business and Economics (Portugal) is an accredited and top-ranked business school that offers a variety of academic programs such as Bachelor's, Master's, PhD, MBAs.

Who Is This Handbook For?

This handbook presents hands-on pedagogies for European social entrepreneurs to strengthen their approach to gender equality and inclusion through an intersectional lens. It is designed to be shared with existing businesses in the social economy sector to help them take steps towards greater inclusion in their business models and practices. The contents of this handbook should enable them to take concrete actions and measures to transform their business models, internal practices, or value chain organization, thereby better contributing to the reduction of gender inequalities.

1- What Is Gender-Based Violence?

“Gender-based violence refers to any type of harm that is perpetrated against a person or group of people because of their factual or perceived sex, gender, sexual orientation and/or gender identity.”¹

1.1 Unveiling Complexity: The Multifaceted Nature of GBV

This definition of the Council of Europe builds upon the concept of “gender-based violence against women” as outlined in the Istanbul Convention² to encompass a broader spectrum of individuals beyond traditional male and female gender binaries. Through this expanded interpretation of the definition, individuals who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and others who do not conform to the heterosexual norm are also recognized as potential or actual victims of gender-based violence (GBV). It acknowledges that they may be targeted because of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity³.

Gender-based violence is a violation of human rights and a form of discrimination.

Council of Europe, 2011

Gender-based violence and violence against women are frequently used interchangeably, given that violence affects women disproportionately⁴. Although men can also fall victim to GBV, they are targeted to a much lesser extent than women⁵. Conversely, men are the main perpetrators of GBV. The latter can be committed by individuals from various relationships and backgrounds. This includes current or former spouses/partners, family members, colleagues, classmates, friends, strangers, or men acting on behalf of cultural, religious, state, or intra-state institutions.

GBV can occur in the private and public spheres as well as online, manifesting in various forms, including but not limited to:

Domestic violence

“All acts of physical, sexual, psychological, or economic violence that occur within the family or domestic unit or between former or current spouses or partners, whether or not the perpetrator shares or has shared the same residence with the victim.” (Council of Europe)⁶

Intimate partner violence

“Any act of physical, sexual, psychological, or economic violence that occurs between former or current spouses or partners, whether or not the perpetrator shares or has shared the same residence with the victim.” (EIGE)⁷

Violence 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.” (ILO)⁸

¹ Council of Europe, *Explanatory Report to the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence*, Treaty Series - No. 210, 2011.

² “Gender-based violence against women shall mean violence that is directed against a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately”, Council of Europe’s Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence, 2011, Art. 3 d.

³ Council of Europe, *Gender Matters Manual on addressing gender-based violence affecting young people*, 2019, p. 17.

⁴ European Commission, *A Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025*, p. 3.

⁵ Unodc, *Gender-related Killings of Women and Girls (Femicide/Feminicide). Global estimates of female intimate partner/family-related homicides in 2022, 2023*, p. 6.

⁶ Council of Europe’s Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence, 2011, Art. 3 b.

⁷ Eige, *Glossary and Thesaurus* [last access: 24 March 2024].

⁸ Ilo, *Violence and Harassment Convention C190* (2019), Art. 1.

Female genital mutilation

“It comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.” (WHO)⁹

Forced and early marriage

“It is a formal or informal union in which one and/or both parties have not personally expressed their full and free consent. A child marriage is considered both an early marriage and a form of forced marriage, as one or both parties are under the age of 18 and lack the legal capacity to give full, free, and informed consent. Early marriage is also applied to a person over 18 with development challenges.” (FRA)¹⁰

Human trafficking

“The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.” (UN)¹¹

Honour killings¹²

“Acts of violence that are disproportionately, though not exclusively, committed against girls and women, because family members consider that certain suspected, perceived or actual behaviour will bring dishonour to the family or community.” (EIGE)¹³

Cyber-violence

“It is an act of gender-based violence perpetrated directly or indirectly through information and communication technologies that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm or suffering to women and girls, including threats of such acts, whether occurring in public or private life, or hindrances to the use of their fundamental rights and freedoms.” (European Commission)¹⁴

⁹ Who, *Female Genital Mutilation*, 5 February 2024.

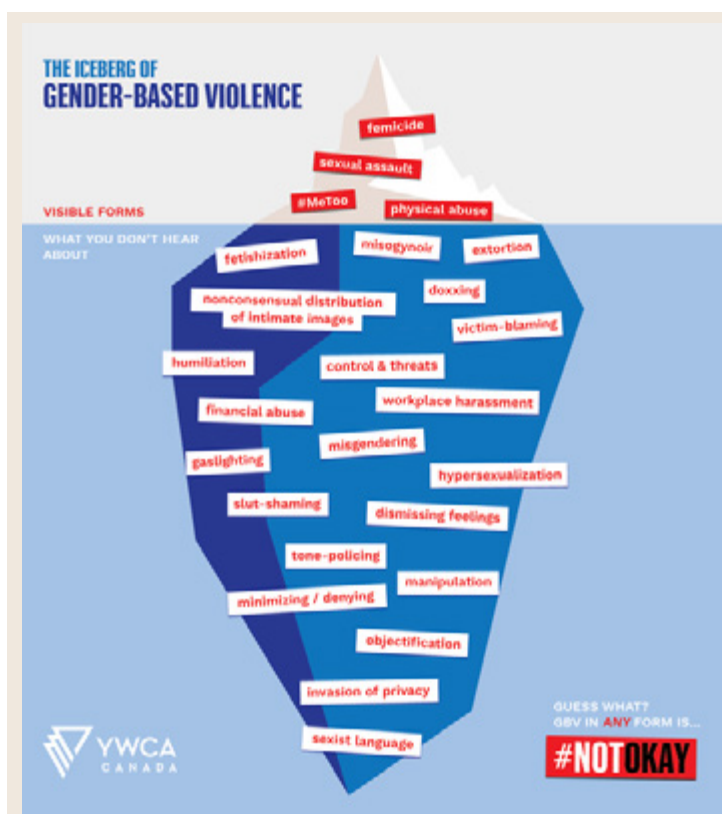
¹⁰ Fra, *Addressing forced marriage in the EU: legal provisions and promising practices*, 2014.

¹¹ UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, 2000, Art. 3.

¹² Female genital mutilation, forced and early marriage, and honour killings are “traditional harmful practices”, which often involve multiple forms of discrimination, leading to violence and causing physical and/or psychological harm. They disproportionately affect girls and women. While numerous traditional harmful practices exist, an exhaustive list is unavailable due to their evolving nature. Additional practices include virginity testing, breast ironing, witchcraft accusations, widow burning, widow inheritance, scarification, dowry violence, and forced feeding.

¹³ Eige, *Glossary and Thesaurus* [last access: 24 March 2024].

¹⁴ European Parliament, *Combating gender-based violence: Cyber violence*, 2021. The newly adopted EU directive 2024/1385 on combating violence against women and domestic violence outlines particular guidelines for offenses committed online, such as the non-consensual sharing of intimate or manipulated material, cyber stalking, cyber harassment, and cyber violence to violence or hatred.



All forms of GBV encompass a range of harmful behaviours, whether publicly visible or invisible, including verbal, physical, psychological, sexual, reproductive, economic, online, and institutional abuse. These forms of violence frequently co-occur in various combinations reinforcing each other:

VERBAL violence: insults and name calling, yelling, mockery and sarcasm, intimidating tone of voice, catcalling, whistling, sexist language.

PSYCHOLOGICAL violence: intimidation, threats, humiliation, public shaming, controlling, blackmailing, gaslighting, emotional manipulation.

PHYSICAL violence: punching, beating, biting, kicking, burning, maiming, strangling, weapons' injuries, femicide.

SEXUAL violence: harassment, unwanted touching, non-consensual sexual acts, forced prostitution, rape.

REPRODUCTIVE violence: sabotage of contraception (e.g. condom damaging or removal, oral contraceptive withholding), restricted/no

access to contraception or family planning services, pregnancy coercion, forced abortion, coerced sterilisation.

ECONOMIC violence: forced salary withholding, denying or restricting access to financial resources, not complying with economic responsibilities (e.g. alimony), sabotaging employment or educational opportunities, withholding basic necessities, property damage.

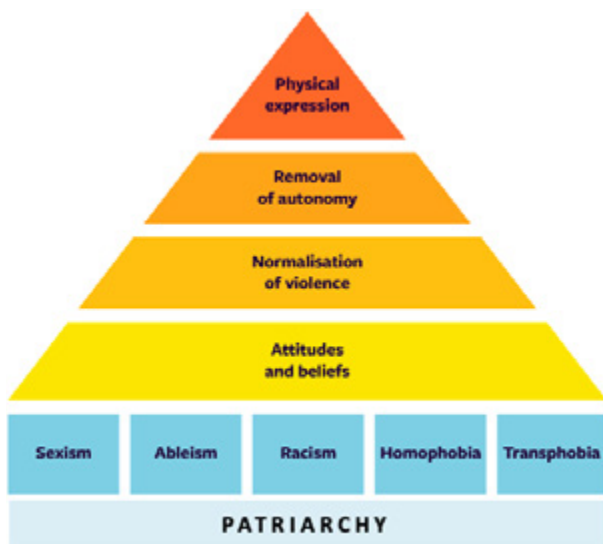
ONLINE violence: sexual solicitation, threats, gendertrolling, bullying, stalking, doxing, non-consensual distribution of intimate images, digital manipulation, sexting, grooming, hate speech, virtual rape.

INSTITUTIONAL violence: revictimization in legal and justice systems (insensitive questioning, minimization, disbelief, distrust, parental alienation, belated actions from law enforcement, lawyers, or judges), inadequate or unavailable support services, discriminatory healthcare setting (judgmental attitudes, inadequate care, or refusal of services), curtailing or preventing access to essential reproductive healthcare (prenatal care, contraception, STI testing and treatment, safe and legal abortion services) and intersex- and transgender-related healthcare (counselling, hormone therapy, medical tests, gender-affirming procedures), obstetric violence.

N.B. Non-exhaustive list

Gender-based violence affects everyone. It has a long-lasting effect on survivors, but also on their family, immediate circles, and society as a whole. The repercussions of GBV can be far-reaching and enduring. Physically, those affected may suffer injuries ranging from bruises and fractures to chronic pain and long-term health conditions. Emotionally and psychologically, individuals may grapple with a myriad of challenges, including depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, and low self-esteem. They may also face difficulties trusting others, forming healthy relationships, and engaging in social activities, leading to social isolation and withdrawal. The impact of GBV extends beyond individuals to their families and close friends. Loved ones may experience secondary trauma as they witness the suffering of their family member or friend. GBV can strain relationships, disrupt family dynamics, and lead to breakdowns in communication and trust. Children who witness or experience GBV within their families may suffer long-term emotional and

psychological consequences, impacting their development, relationships, and future well-being. GBV exacts significant economic costs, both in terms of direct healthcare expenses and lost productivity, as survivors may struggle to maintain employment or access education. It also undermines social cohesion, erodes trust in institutions, and contributes to a culture of fear and silence.¹⁵



Source: Adapted from University of Leeds, 2024

Gender-based violence has no single cause, but rather arises from a complex web of cultural, legal, economic, and political factors.¹⁶

The latter are all deeply entrenched in both overt and concealed patriarchal norms and behaviours, perpetuating unequal power dynamics and privileges across familial, educational, professional, communal, and societal spheres. Patriarchy is not a relic of the past but a pervasive system, actively generating gender stereotypes, prejudice, and normative expectations of femininity, masculinity, and sexuality. Within this framework, men wield primary power and

Over €290 billion is spent in the EU due to violence, with nearly €152 billion attributed solely to intimate partner violence.

Of this amount, 67% is allocated to criminal justice, 14% to health services, 12% to social welfare, 4% to personal costs, 2% to civil justice, and 1% to specialized services.

EIGE, 2021

dominance in political leadership, societal privilege, and family authority, perpetuating the marginalisation and subordination of women and other gender minorities. These dynamics fuel gender inequalities and discrimination, contributing to the prevalence of GBV. Furthermore, the combination of gender with other distinct parts of a person's identity (e.g. race, age, sexual orientation, disability, social class, etc.) increases the chances to experience violence. For example, while women typically face abuse and discrimination due to their gender, certain women may endure multiple and intersecting forms of violence. This can occur, among other reasons, because they belong to an ethnic minority, have a disability, or identify as lesbian or transgender.

1.2 Understanding the Scope: Global and EU Data on GBV

Gender-based violence, in all its forms, is significantly under-reported and overlooked, both globally and in Europe. While there is more detailed data available on violence against women, specific information on GBV as a whole is lacking.

Almost one in three women worldwide (about 736 million women) have experienced physical and/or sexual **intimate partner violence**, non-partner sexual violence, or both, at least once in their lifetime. Most instances of violence against women are perpetrated by current or former spouses or intimate partners. It is estimated that over 640 million women, representing 26% of those aged 15 and older, have endured intimate partner violence.

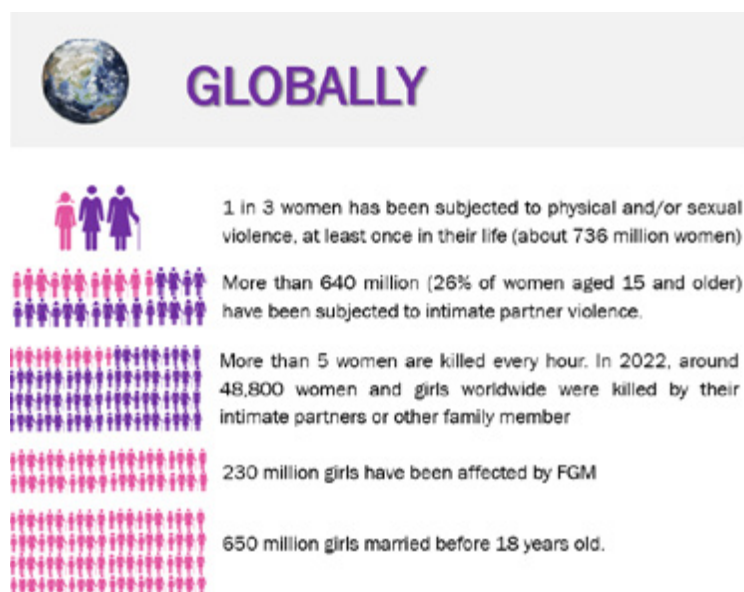
In 2022, approximately 48,800 women and girls worldwide lost their lives due to violence inflicted by their intimate partners or other family members. This staggering statistic equates to an average of over five women or girls per hour¹⁷. 6% of women have reported experiencing sexual violence from individuals other

¹⁵ Council of Europe, *Gender Matters op. cit.*, p. 18.

¹⁶ Idem, p. 21.

¹⁷ UN Women, *Facts and figures: Ending violence against women*, 2023.

than their husband or partner. However, the actual prevalence of sexual violence is likely significantly higher, given the stigma associated with this form of violence in societies where survivors are often blamed and discouraged from reporting incidents¹⁸.

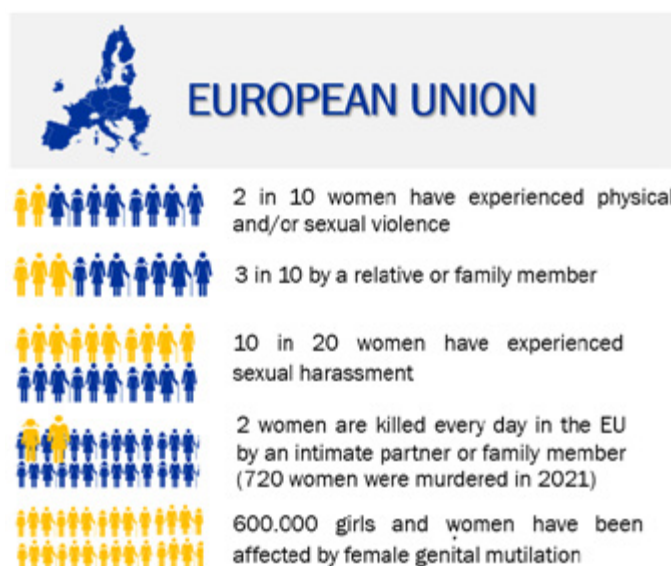


Regarding other forms of GBV, globally, an estimated 230 million girls¹⁹ have undergone **female genital mutilation**²⁰, and over 650 million women alive today were victims of **forced marriage** before reaching 18 years of age²¹. Moreover, at least 12 million girls are expected to be forced into marriage each year, whereas about 18% of those married before age 18 are boys. Due to the hidden nature of the crime, obtaining up-to-date statistics on **human trafficking** is challenging. However, according to the ILO, an estimated 24.9 million individuals were subjected to human trafficking worldwide: 20.1 million experienced forced labor, while 4.8 million endured sexual exploitation.²²

No comprehensive global estimates on **cyber-violence** are available. However, surveys specifically targeting girls underlines alarming trends: 58% have experienced online harassment.

Gender-based violence is a critical issue in the European Union. Available statistics reveal alarming rates: 2 in 10 women have experienced physical and/or sexual violence from a partner or friend, while this figure rises to 3 in 10 for violence by a relative or family member. About 3 in 10 women have endured one or more acts of physical violence since the age of 15 and nearly half of them (43%) have experienced psychological abuse at the hands of an intimate partner²³. Sexual harassment remains pervasive, impacting 10 out of 20 women. Additionally, approximately 600,000 girls and women are adversely affected by **female genital mutilation**²⁴.

In the EU, every single day, at least two women are murdered by an intimate partner or family



¹⁸ World Health Organization, *Violence against women prevalence estimates, 2018: Global, regional, and national prevalence estimates for intimate partner violence against women and global and regional prevalence estimates for non-partner sexual violence against women. Executive summary*, 2018.

¹⁹ Unicef, *Female Genital Mutilation: A Global Concern*, 2024.

²⁰ End FGM EU, *Female Genital Mutilation in Europe*, 2020.

²¹ Unicef, <https://data.unicef.org/topic/child-protection/child-marriage/>

²² Ilo, *Global Estimates of Modern Slavery*, 2017.

²³ Eurostat, *Gender based violence against women*, 2023.

²⁴ End FGM EU, *Female Genital Mutilation in Europe*, 2020.

member²⁵. According to data from EIGE, in 2021, 720 women were murdered by an intimate partner, family member, or relative across 17 EU Member States²⁶.

Also for the European Union, data on other forms of GBV is rather scattered and, sometimes, old. For instance, the most recent statistics on **human trafficking** specifically concern only persons officially registered as victims (10 093 in 2022)²⁷, leaving out most trafficked persons who have no contact with law enforcement agencies. No statistics on **early and forced marriage** are available since very few Member States collect data on this phenomenon. According to a study by the European Parliament, approximately 4 to 7% of European women have experienced **cyber-violence**, while between 1 and 3% have been subjected to cyber stalking.²⁸ Younger age groups appear to be most vulnerable, with the phenomenon's prevalence increasing alongside greater internet and social media usage. Gender-based cyber violence is anticipated to escalate further in the future, particularly among adolescents.

NATIONAL DATA ON GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

FRANCE

On average 321,000 women aged between 18 and 74 are victims of physical, sexual, and/or psychological violence committed by their spouse or ex-spouse in the course of a year (Interministerial mission for the protection of women against violence and the fight against human trafficking, 2022). On average, the number of women aged 18 to 74 who are victims of rape, attempted rape and/or sexual assault in the course of a year is estimated at 217,000. In 49% of cases, these assaults were perpetrated by a person known to the victim (woman or man). In 21% of cases, the perpetrator was the victim's spouse or ex-spouse. Following the rapes, attempted rapes and/or sexual assaults to which they were subjected, only 6% of victims lodged a complaint (whether they subsequently maintained or withdrew their complaint). (SSMSI, *Vécu et Ressenti en matière de Sécurité*, 2022).

ITALY

The collection of statistics on male violence against women, mandated by Law no. 53/2022, is facing implementation roadblocks. Some official information is however available. Approximately 100 women are killed by a partner or family member each year, with 104 reported cases in 2022 and 97 in 2023 (Ministry of Interior, 2024). Annually, about 60,000 women turn to anti-violence centres for assistance. In 2022, 60,751 women sought support: 66.7% reported experiencing physical violence, 50.7% faced threats, 11.7% endured rape or attempted rape, and 14.4% encountered other forms of sexual violence, including sexual harassment, online harassment, non-consensual distribution of intimate images, coercion into humiliating and/or degrading sexual activities (Istat, 2023).

PORTUGAL

20.1% of people aged 18 to 74 have experienced physical or sexual violence during adulthood, with women being more affected by intimate partner violence. One in ten women with a current or former partner has suffered physical or sexual violence (10.3%) in an intimate setting, while 3.9% of women have been victims of sexual violence. The percentages of victims who have reported their experiences to formal entities are 21.4% for those abused by current partners, 28% for those abused by former partners, and 25.3% for those abused by people other than partners. (Statistics Portugal, *Survey on Safety in Public and Private Spaces*, 2023).

Against this backdrop, it is essential to emphasise that data on various forms of gender-based violence have significant limitations, as they may be incomplete, outdated²⁹, or simply because a significant portion of incidents goes unreported or remains unrecorded. At the global level, less than 40% of women who experience violence ever seek help. In most countries with available data, most women turn to family and friends, with very few accessing formal support systems like police, health or specialist services. The situation is even more concerning when considering that fewer than 10% of those seeking help report the

²⁵ European Council, Council of European Union, *Ending violence against women*, 2024.

²⁶ Eige, *Gender Equality Index 2023*.

²⁷ Eurostat, *Statistics explained*, 2024.

²⁸ European Parliament, *Combating gender-based violence: Cyber-violence*, 2021.

²⁹ FRA started consultations with EU LGBTI organisations on their third EU LGBTI survey, which is expected to be published in 2024.

violence to the police.³⁰ In the EU, more than 80% of women who experience violence refrain from seeking professional assistance³¹. Furthermore, statistics on GBV very often fail to account for LGBTQI+ individuals. As a result, establishing global prevalence estimates of violence against LGBTQI+ individuals is unfeasible. However, both quantitative and qualitative evidence indicate that they encounter harassment and violence due to their sexual orientation and gender identity across all spheres of life – including in homes, at work, in public, in institutions, and online³².

In conclusion, while available statistics are crucial to consider, it is imperative to handle them with care, recognizing their inherent limitations and potential inaccuracies. Relying solely on violence statistics proves insufficient for fully grasping the scope of GBV. Therefore, it is crucial to regularly utilise a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods to gather comprehensive datasets. This approach ensures a more accurate overview of GBV, encompassing various types and target groups, to be assessed through an intersectional lens.

1.3 Gender-based Violence in the Workplace

Across the globe, more than one in five workers (22.8% or 743 million) have faced violence or harassment at work³³. Women (23.2%) are slightly more likely than men (22.4%) to experience violence and harassment during their working lives, with a difference of 0.8 percentage points. This disparity increases to 12.4 points when exclusively considering high-income countries. Of those who encountered violence and harassment at work, approximately one-third (31.8%) experienced more than one form, with 6.3% encountering all three forms during their working lives: physical (8.5% or 277 million), psychological (17.9% or 583 million), and sexual (6.3% or 205 million).

Globally, more than one in five persons in employment has experienced violence and harassment at work during their working life.

ILO, 2022

Violence and harassment in the workplace are not isolated incidents; they are recurrent and persistent, with over three in five victims reporting multiple occurrences. Certain demographic groups, including youth, migrants, and wage and salaried workers, face a heightened risk of experiencing such behaviour. Survey findings indicate that young women were twice as likely as young men to have encountered sexual violence and harassment. Similarly, migrant women were nearly twice as likely as non-migrant women to report experiencing sexual violence and harassment³⁴. In the European Union, an estimated 32% of women who experience sexual harassment report that it happens at work³⁵. The percentage of women who have ever worked and encountered any unwanted behaviour with a sexual connotation in the workplace ranges from 11% in Latvia to 41% in France³⁶.

Currently, 147 countries have legislation addressing sexual harassment in the workplace. Nevertheless, the mere existence of laws does not guarantee their alignment with international standards and recommendations, nor does it ensure their effective implementation and enforcement³⁷.

NATIONAL DATA ON GBV AT WORK

FRANCE

Over 4 in 10 women (41%) faced unwanted behaviour with a sexual connotation in the workplace, with 12% experiencing it from their male superiors (Eurostat, 2021).

³⁰ United Nations Economic and Social Affairs, *The world's women 2015: Trends and statistics*, p. 159.

³¹ European Council, Council of the European Union, *Ending violence against women*, 2024.

³² V. Ahlenback, *Ending Violence Against LGBTQI+ People: Global evidence and emerging insights into what works*, 2022.

³³ International Labour Organization, *Experiences of violence and harassment at work: A global first survey*, 2022.

³⁴ Ibidem.

³⁵ *EU calls for end of violence against women - European Commission (europa.eu)*

³⁶ Eurostat, *EU survey on gender-based violence against women and other forms of inter-personal violence (EU-GBV) — first results*, 2022.

³⁷ UN Women, *Facts and figures: Ending violence against women*, 2023.

ITALY

Approximately 8.8 million women (43.6%) and 3.7 million men (15.4%) have experienced some form of sexual harassment in the workplace. The perpetrators, predominantly men, account for 97% of female victims and 85.4% of male victims (Istat, 2018).

PORTUGAL

14.4% of women have experienced sexual harassment in the workplace. For nearly all these women, the aggressor was a man, with only 5% being harassed by other women (Cieg, 2016).

2 - Key Legislation to End GBV

Preventing and combating gender-based violence requires a multifaceted approach involving various stakeholders, including first and foremost international organisations. The latter can play a crucial role in developing comprehensive legal frameworks and policies that Member States shall adopt to strengthen their legislation and actions to promote gender equality, address GBV, and ensure access to justice for survivors. To this end, the Istanbul Convention, the ILO Convention No. 190, and the EU proposal for a directive on combating gender based-violence are indispensable.

2.1 International Conventions

The Istanbul Convention, formally known as the Council of Europe **Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence** (2011)³⁸, represents a milestone in addressing gender-based violence. It is the first international instrument to explicitly define various forms of such violence (i.e. violence against women, domestic violence, gender-based violation against women), recognizing them as human rights violations and discrimination. It is also the first treaty specifically defining the term “gender”. Beyond criminalising these acts, the Convention provides a comprehensive framework encompassing prevention, protection, prosecution, and policy coordination across different sectors. Mandating a wide range of measures, including data collection, awareness campaigns, support services, and legal actions, it also addresses gender-based violence against asylum seekers and migrants. By acknowledging gender inequality as a root cause of GBV, the Istanbul Convention calls for an intersectional approach to address the diverse experiences of survivors, crucially tackling societal norms perpetuating violence. The treaty establishes a rigorous monitoring mechanism to hold governments accountable for their actions, ensuring ongoing oversight and continual improvement in member States’ implementation efforts. With 39 member States having ratified and 6 having signed³⁹, the Istanbul Convention sets the international standard for addressing GBV, standing as a ground-breaking document in this field.



The **ILO Violence and Harassment Convention C190** (2019)⁴⁰ is the first international treaty that acknowledges the right of everyone to a world of work free from violence and harassment, including gender-based violence, as they constitute human rights violations, threats to equal opportunities, unacceptable and incompatible with decent work. ILO C190 encompasses various forms of violence, as it defines it as “a range of unacceptable behaviours and practices” that “aim at, result in, or are likely to result in physical, psychological, sexual or economic harm. Along with its supplementary Recommendation No. 206, it expands the scope of the “world of work” to include

situations beyond the immediate physical workplace. This comprises various scenarios linked to or arising from work, such as activities within the workplace, rest areas, and facilities, as well as during work-related trips, events, and social activities. Additionally, it covers work-related communications, employer-provided accommodations, and commuting to and from work. ILO C190 acknowledges the detrimental impact of unequal power dynamics between men and women, as well as gender, cultural, and social norms on violence

³⁸ [Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence](#) (CETS No. 210).

³⁹ As of 24 March 2024.

⁴⁰ International Labour Organization, [C190 - Violence and Harassment Convention](#), 2019 (No. 190).

and harassment. It is ground-breaking for recognizing the repercussions of domestic violence in the workplace, particularly affecting women and girls, and for requiring states to mitigate the impact of domestic violence in the workplace, safeguarding victims' jobs and ensuring their safety without compromising their income.

ILO C190 establishes extensive obligations for states to develop policies regarding violence and harassment in the workplace with an inclusive, integrated, intersectional approach. Such obligations may include implementing a workplace policy on violence and harassment, conducting hazard assessments, providing training and information to both workers and management in accessible formats, and delineating the rights and responsibilities of all parties involved, as recommended by workers and their representatives. The ILO identifies a key strategy for addressing GBV in workplaces through the use of the Occupational safety and health (OSH) legal framework⁴¹. The latter offers a direct approach to tackling the issue, as it contains detailed provisions on workplace violence and harassment prevention. It outlines the employer's duty to protect workers' health and safety and delineates workers' responsibilities in achieving this goal. By leveraging OSH legislation, businesses can address the root causes of violence and harassment, implement systematic responses, and mobilise stakeholders to collectively combat GBV in the workplace. The ILO C190 Convention was signed in June 2019 and came into force on 25 June 2021. Presently⁴², 39 countries have ratified it. While in France and Italy the convention is already in place, in Portugal it will enter into force in Portugal in February 2025.

The commitment to eliminating all forms of violence is upheld by other key **UN international instruments**, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979)⁴³ and its Optional Protocol (1999), the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (1993), the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995), and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDGs, 2015). The latter specifically includes Goal 5 to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, also through the elimination of all forms of GBV, and Goal 8 to accomplish full and productive employment and decent work for all⁴⁴. Other non-binding UN declarations and principles that outline the role of businesses in promoting human rights can influence efforts to prevent and address violence and harassment in the workplace, such as the Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy (rev. 2017), UN Guiding Principles for Business and Human Rights (2011), Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises (rev. 2011), UN Global Compact (2008), Women's Empowerment Principles (2019).

2.2 European Conventions and Policies

For a long time, the European Union lacked specific legislation targeting violence against women and domestic violence. However, certain aspects of these issues were addressed within EU directives and regulations related to judicial cooperation in criminal matters⁴⁵ and equality between women and men⁴⁶. To bridge this gap, following two years of debate, the EU adopted its first directive on combating violence against women and domestic violence⁴⁷ on 7 May 2024. The new law requires all EU Member states to criminalise female genital mutilation, forced marriage, non-consensual sharing of intimate images, cyber stalking, cyber harassment and cyber incitement to hatred or violence. However, it does not include provisions for criminalizing rape

⁴¹ International Labour Organization, *Preventing and addressing violence and harassment in the world of work through occupational safety and health measures*, 2024.

⁴² As of 24 March 2024.

⁴³ UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women* New York, 18 December 1979.

⁴⁴ UN General Assembly Resolution 70/1 (2015) - *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. "We are determined to end poverty and hunger, in all their forms and dimensions, and to ensure that all human beings can fulfil their potential in dignity and equality and in a healthy environment."

⁴⁵ Directive 2012/29/EU of the European parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2001/220/JHA.

⁴⁶ Directive 2004/113/EC of 13 December 2004 implementing the principle of equal treatment between men and women in the access to and supply of goods and services; Directive 2006/54/EC of the European parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation; Directive 2010/41/EU of the European parliament and of the Council of 7 July 2010 on the application of the principle of equal treatment between men and women engaged in an activity in a self-employed capacity and repealing Council Directive 86/613/EEC.

⁴⁷ European Commission, Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on combating violence against women and domestic violence, COM/2022/105 final. See also Council of the EU, Press release, 7 May 2024, Council adopts first-ever EU law combating violence against women.

based on a consent-based definition or sexual harassment in the workplace. Additionally, the directive sets standards for the protection against violence against women and domestic violence across the EU by establishing rules for the assistance and support that Member states must provide to victims.

On October 1, 2023, the Istanbul Convention was partially enforced in the European Union. Following years of negotiations among Member States⁴⁸, the Council adopted two decisions⁴⁹, completing the ratification process for matters within its exclusive competences, including judicial cooperation in criminal matters, asylum, non-refoulement, and EU institutions and public administration. Although all EU Member States have signed the Convention, only 22 countries have ratified it⁵⁰. Bulgaria, Czechia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, and Slovakia have not ratified the Convention, with some obstructing its ratification by the European Union. As a matter of fact, the ratification of the Istanbul Convention faced obstacles in the European Parliament due to various reasons, including political disagreements, concerns about sovereignty, and ideological differences regarding the provisions on gender equality and combating violence against women. Some members expressed reservations about the definition of gender and its potential impact on traditional family values.

The **Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025**⁵¹, adopted by the European Commission, reaffirms the EU's commitment to preventing and combating gender-based violence, supporting and protecting victims, and holding perpetrators accountable. It serves as a roadmap for achieving the same rights guaranteed by the Istanbul Convention. It outlines concrete actions and policies aimed at promoting gender equality, combating gender-based violence, and addressing systemic inequalities. By setting clear objectives and timelines, the strategy serves as a guide for EU institutions and Member States to prioritise gender equality legislation and initiatives and ensure progress in this critical area. Towards this end, the EU institutions support Member States through different funding programmes, including the Citizens, Equality, Rights, and Values Programme (CERV).

2.3 National Laws and Policies: France, Italy, and Portugal

French national legislation comprehensively addresses various forms of violence against women. Domestic violence, encompassing psychological, physical, and sexual abuse, is criminalized under the law. Rape within marriage is recognized as a criminal offense. Stalking, which encompasses harassment by a current or former partner, is also punishable by law. Female genital mutilation constitutes a crime, carrying a prison sentence of up to 15 years. In cases of physical violence, aggravated circumstances apply when the perpetrator is the victim's partner or when the motivation stems from the victim's refusal of marriage or partnership. Forced marriage itself is illegal. Since 2012, French legislation has undergone significant reinforcement regarding sexual harassment⁵², human trafficking, and female genital mutilation⁵³, and the protection of women

⁴⁸ European Parliament, *EU accession to the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women ('Istanbul Convention')*.

⁴⁹ Council Decision (EU) [2023/1076](#) of 1 June 2023 on the conclusion, on behalf of the European Union, of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence with regard to matters related to judicial cooperation in criminal matters, asylum and non-refoulement; Council Decision (EU) [2023/1075](#) of 1 June 2023 on the conclusion, on behalf of the European Union, of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence with regard to institutions and public administration of the Union.

⁵⁰ Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, and Sweden. [As of 20 February 2024]

⁵¹ Communication from the commission to the European parliament, the council, the European economic and social committee and the committee of the regions A Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025, COM/2020/152 final.

⁵² The law of 6 August 2012 on sexual harassment has consolidated the definition of harassment and made it more effective. The penalties have been reinforced and measures have been taken to protect victims from discrimination; the French parliament adopted Law No 2012-954 on 6 August 2012

⁵³ The law of 5 August 2013 has transposed the legal definition of trafficking in French law, following the ratification of the Council of Europe's Convention No 197. It has also created new criminal offences punishing whoever incites or pressures another person to undergo female genital mutilation.

victims of violence, including domestic violence⁵⁴, and of prostitution⁵⁵. Furthermore, France ratified ILO Convention No. 190 in April 2023⁵⁶.

At the legal level, Italy's framework criminalises various forms of violence. Sexual violence is addressed under Law No. 66/1996, while female genital mutilation is prohibited by Law No. 7/2006. Stalking is criminalised by Law No. 11/2019, along with forced marriage, disfiguration by acid attack, and the illicit distribution of sexually explicit images or videos, as outlined in Law No. 69/2019. Notably, violence and harassment in the workplace are not yet considered criminal offences, although Italy ratified ILO Convention No. 190 in 2021 under Law No. 4/2021. In November 2010, Italy enacted its first national plan against gender-based violence and stalking, marking an initial effort to comprehensively address male violence against women. Subsequent initiatives followed, particularly after the ratification of the Istanbul Convention in 2013 (Law No. 77/2013) and the subsequent enactment of Law No. 119/2013. The latter provides protection to women survivors of intimate partner violence and introduces a three-year strategic national plan to prevent and combat violence against women.

Portugal has no violence against women law but does criminalise numerous forms of violence. The Portuguese penal code defines rape as a criminal act by the use of force or threats or by using authority over a dependent. The crime of domestic violence was introduced into the Portuguese penal code in 2007 (Law No 59/2007). This included crimes of marital rape and date rape. Law 83/2015, which introduces the 38th amendment to the Portuguese penal code, added three new crimes, namely FGM, stalking and forced marriage. Regarding this last crime, the so-called 'preparatory acts' are now also criminalised and viewed independently. This amendment also changed the punishment framework for sexual assault. Article 144 A of the penal code made FGM an autonomous crime, and it is also punishable when committed in third countries. Portugal has still not ratified the ILO Convention No. 190⁵⁷.

⁵⁴ The law of 4 August 2014 has reinforced the provisions regarding protection orders in case of domestic violence and forced marriage. The law of 17 August 2015 has reinforced protection measures for victims of violence, including violence against women during investigations and court proceedings. The law of 7 March 2016 on the rights of non-nationals in France includes protection measures for victims of violence.

⁵⁵ The law of April 13, 2016, aimed at combating the prostitution system, strengthens support for victims of sexual exploitation. It also establishes that buying sexual acts is an offence. In instances of physical violence, the fact that these acts occur during the purchase of sexual services serves as an aggravating circumstance.

⁵⁶ Eige, [Combating violence against women FRANCE](#).

⁵⁷ Eige, [Combating violence against women PORTUGAL](#).

3 - Taking Action: Social Businesses Combating GBV

3.1 Responsibilities of Businesses

Violence and harassment have a significant impact on the workplace and the overall working environment. They can cause severe harm to the health and well-being of victims and lead to major repercussions for employers and society as a whole. Detrimental business outcomes can include damage to brand reputation, decreased productivity, and reduced profitability, thus hindering economic growth⁵⁸. From a business perspective, gender-based violence can cause significant harm, such as absenteeism, resignation, health issues, disability, or even fatalities among victims. It can also adversely affect work performance, employee motivation, loyalty, work quality, production timelines, and overall work environment. However, by effectively addressing violence and harassment, employers, employees, and especially those affected can overcome negative outcomes, leading to better working and personal lives as ILO and UN Women highlighted in the following Table:

Table 1 – The impact of violence and harassment against women in the world of work and the positive outcomes of addressing it

THE IMPACT OF VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT ON WOMEN WORKERS	POSITIVE OUTCOMES FOR AN EMPLOYER IF THE PROBLEM IS TACKLED EFFECTIVELY
<ul style="list-style-type: none">» Workers' psychological, physical, and sexual health, dignity and self-esteem are affected.» Motivation, performance, and attachment to the workplace are compromised.» Higher rates of absenteeism and higher turnover.» Severe harm and danger for victims and co-workers who may intervene to stop violence and harassment.» Negative impact on workplace relations, team working performance and company reputation.» Impact on the quality of services provided (e.g. to the public).» Victims' capacity to carry out their job effectively or reaching their full potential at work is reduced.» Career chances are jeopardised, particularly if a victim leaves her work without a reference.» Ramifications beyond the workplace, including poor social functioning and harmful coping mechanisms (e.g. alcohol/ substance abuse).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">» Days lost from sick leave will be reduced.» Contributes to a good working environment, benefitting workers' health, safety, and wellbeing.» Companies have improved reputations, enabling them to attract and retain workers.» In the absence of violence and harassment, productivity of former victims and perpetrators, as well as bystanders, improves.» Workers' satisfaction improves if they are able to talk to someone they trust and find trusted solutions to their problems.» There is a positive impact on the wider community and family relationships if violence and harassment at work is identified and stopped.

Source: ILO, UN Women, 2019

In both states with comprehensive legislation and those without a legal framework for intervention, the business sector can take proactive steps by establishing internal policies and regulations or seeking guidance from collective bargaining agreements. By fostering gender equality and implementing preventive measures and support systems, businesses can create a workplace environment free from gender-based violence. To achieve this, businesses can employ various strategies, as will be discussed below.

⁵⁸ ILO, *Briefing 4.1 - Making the case: human rights, economic development and business arguments for eliminating gender-based violence in global supply chains* [Last access: 24 March 2024].

3.2 Strategies and Solutions for Safer and Inclusive Workplaces

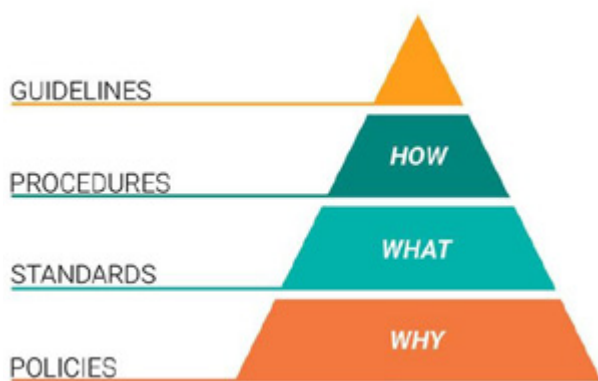
Social businesses have a significant role to play in combating gender-based violence in workplaces. By implementing proactive measures, promoting gender equality, supporting survivors, and collaborating with stakeholders, they can create safe and respectful work environments. Their mission-driven approach, centred on social impact rather than profit, along with innovation, community engagement, and collaborative partnerships, can develop holistic, scalable, and sustainable solutions.

"By fostering a culture of respect and equality at their core, social businesses can become models for other companies, demonstrating that preventing GBV is not just the right thing to do, but also good for business."

Stanford Social Innovation Review

Social businesses can implement various strategies both within their own workplaces and beyond, fostering a ripple effect that inspires a broader movement toward safer and more respectful work environments. They possess the potential to scale their impact beyond individual communities or regions by replicating successful models and approaches in diverse contexts. This scalability enables them to reach larger populations and address GBV on a broader scale, contributing to systemic change at national or even global levels. Some of these strategies include the following.

3.3 Policies and Regulations



Social businesses can play a pivotal role in developing comprehensive policies to create a safe and respectful work environment. These policies should clearly define the rationale behind the measures (why action is necessary), outline the standards to be implemented (what actions to take), and establish detailed procedures and guidelines (how to carry them out). By clarifying these three aspects, (social) businesses can effectively foster workplace safety and inclusivity.

A comprehensive policy to prevent and address gender-based violence (GBV) in the workplace must

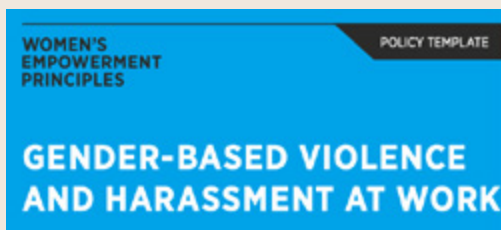
create a safe working environment while ensuring that employees are aware of their rights and responsibilities. This policy should include:

- » **Clear definitions and scope of application:** Provide explicit definitions of gender-based violence and unacceptable behaviours to set clear expectations. Make clear that the policy applies to all employees in the workplace and in any work-related settings outside the workplace, such as during business trips, tours and sponsored or authorised social events and other functions. The Policy should also apply to customers, guests, and other third parties as set out by the ILO Convention C190.
- » **Regulations for Sexual Harassment, Exploitation and Abuse (SHEA):** Establish clear rules and procedures to prevent and respond to GBV cases.
- » **Robust reporting mechanisms:** Implement safe and reliable systems for reporting GBV that protect against re-victimization, retaliation, or stigmatisation, ensuring accessibility for all employees, regardless of their position or status. Employees should feel secure and supported when reporting incidents of violence or harassment. These systems must guarantee that reports are taken seriously, investigated promptly, and kept confidential. Anonymous reporting should be an option for both employees and bystanders, with multiple channels for submitting reports.
- » **Effective accountability and disciplinary actions:** Establish clear guidelines to hold perpetrators accountable, ensuring consistent and appropriate disciplinary measures. These can range from retraining to termination, depending on the severity of the incident and in accordance with applicable laws.

Implementing robust accountability helps employees understand the repercussions of gender-based violence and harassment, reinforcing a zero-tolerance policy.

- » **Accessible support services:** Provide confidential support services, both within and outside the workplace, including counselling, legal aid, and other relevant measures for employees who experience GBV. These services not only help victims cope with the aftermath of an incident but also encourage others to come forward, knowing that they will be supported.
- » **Flexible work arrangements:** Provide flexible work options and specific measures for employees who have experienced GBV (e.g. paid leave, job transfer, financial compensation);
- » **Monitoring and evaluation:** Establish mechanisms to regularly assess the policy's effectiveness. By tracking incidents, response times, and outcomes, companies can identify areas for improvement and adapt their policies accordingly.

Policies should be developed in collaboration with employees, unions, and other stakeholders within the (social) business sector, ensuring alignment with the ILO Convention No. 190 and the Istanbul Convention. Additionally, policies must be clearly communicated to the workforce in clear and accessible language, with translations available when necessary.



This template is designed to help (social) businesses recognize and assess the risks of GBV and harassment in the workplace. It also provides clear guidelines for employees to report any incidents of violence or harassment, whether potential or actual. It is part of the tools developed within the Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs), an initiative by UN Women and the UN Global Compact, aimed at guiding businesses on promoting gender equality and empowering women in the workplace, marketplace, and community.

EXPLORE THE TEMPLATE: [CLICK HERE!](#)

3.4 Training and Awareness Programmes

The workplace serves as a critical gateway for challenging the social norms and behaviours that contribute to GBV across all areas of life – at work, at home, and in public spaces. In fact, sexism is deeply rooted across all domains, including the workplace, reinforcing the social norms and gender inequalities that allow violence and harassment against women to persist. For this reason, it is crucial to foster a culture of respect and inclusivity, not all through tailored policies but also through regular training sessions to minimise the risks of GBV occurring.

Indeed, training to combat GBV and harassment serves multiple purposes. It enhances awareness of gender inequalities, fosters positive changes in the workplace, and communicates the policies, procedures, recourse mechanisms, and support systems available to staff. Hence, social businesses can champion and implement comprehensive training and awareness initiatives for employees at all levels.

The training programmes should encompass at least the following key topics:

- » Addressing gender stereotypes, power dynamics, and discrimination to build a workplace culture that does not tolerate gender-based violence.

- » Dismantling unconscious and implicit bias to avoid harmful gender-based attitudes affecting decisions on work-related actions, including recruitment and career advancement.
- » Promoting gender equality, identifying gender disparities, and implementing strategies to foster an inclusive workplace culture.
- » Understanding the different forms and consequences of gender-based violence and learning effective methods to recognize the signs.
- » Understanding employees' rights and the company's policies for preventing and addressing gender-based violence.
- » Becoming familiar with the specialised support services available both within and outside the workplace.
- » Understanding and applying bystander interventions techniques to prevent and address GBV in the workplace.
- » Learning bystander interventions techniques to build skills needed to identify inappropriate workplace behaviours and attitudes that contribute to a culture of gender inequality, and to respond appropriately.

It is important to employ training methodologies and techniques that ensure ongoing engagement, especially those that are interactive and participatory by making use of case studies, real-life scenarios, group work, videos, and role-plays because they have the potential to help participants to understand important concepts that underpin violence and harassment. In fact, traditional means of training, such as one-off online training or self-paced courses, have been shown to have a limited effect in changing organisational culture, particularly when they are carried out in isolation from other workplace measures.

To ensure continuous engagement, it is crucial to use training methodologies and techniques that are interactive and participatory, incorporating case studies, real-life scenarios, group work, videos, and role-playing. These methods are effective because they help participants grasp key concepts related to violence and harassment in a more tangible way. Traditional training approaches, like single-session online courses or self-paced learning, often have limited impact on organisational culture, especially if they are conducted in isolation from other workplace initiatives.⁵⁹

Training can be delivered by internal staff, external experts, or through peer-to-peer sessions. Peer-to-peer training is particularly effective as it places the responsibility in the hands of colleagues, which can be a powerful way to influence culture and practices.⁶⁰ Consistently offering and reinforcing training for all employees, including as part of orientation for new hires, is crucial—not only to ensure compliance but also to signal the organisation's commitment to these issues.

3.5 Networking and Community Engagement

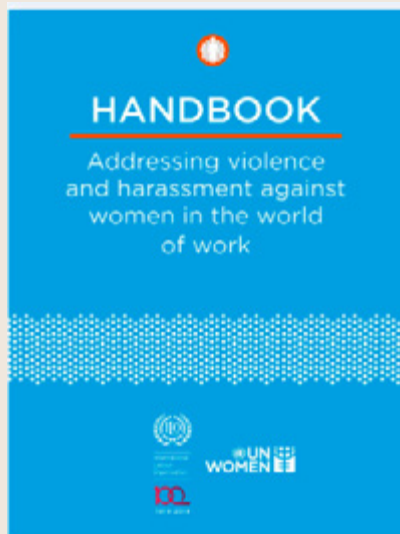
Social businesses have the unique opportunity to work alongside a variety of external stakeholders – such as other businesses, industry associations, trade unions, and government agencies – to spread and advocate for best practices in combating gender-based violence in workplaces. Social businesses can adapt their internal policies to create a more enabling environment, by for example setting up an internal partner charter with clear guidelines towards GBV prevention or/and make partners sign a common agreement on it. Special cooperation must be developed with the local anti-violence system, which can provide a wide range of services to both potential and current employees experiencing GBV in the workplace and/or at home. The ability of social businesses to engage with a wide range of partners enables them to tap into a diverse pool of expertise, resources, and networks. This approach significantly enhances the scope, impact,

⁵⁹ ILO, UN Women, *Handbook. Addressing violence and harassment against women in the world of work*, 2019.

⁶⁰ *Idem*.

and sustainability of their GBV prevention and response strategies. By bringing together different sectors, social businesses can drive more comprehensive and coordinated efforts to tackle GBV at its roots.

Moreover, these collaborative networks can lead to the development of cross-sectoral policies and initiatives, making it easier to disseminate best practices on a broader scale. When social businesses serve as a bridge between different stakeholders, they can influence industry-wide changes and foster a stronger, united response to GBV. For instance, this can include advocacy strategy towards public authorities with awareness raising campaigns and the dissemination of internal policies. Ultimately, by harnessing this collaborative power, social businesses play a critical role in creating safer workplaces and advancing gender equality.



This handbook is a useful tool as it compiles a diverse range of literature, policies, and practices, featuring successful examples from various countries worldwide. It encompasses both the public and private sectors, addressing formal and informal workplaces while exploring a wide array of issues and settings. The handbook also outlines key international and regional frameworks, offering insights into the roles of state and non-state actors, as well as social dialogue. Additionally, it provides practical guidance on preventing and addressing violence and harassment in the workplace.

EXPLORE THE HANDBOOK: [CLICK HERE!](#)

