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DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND THE WORLD OF WORK

#30YearsOfActivism

#RatifyILO190

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2021



**A WORLD
WITHOUT VIOLENCE
IS POSSIBLE.**

AND THE TIME FOR CHANGE IS NOW.

WELCOME TO THE 2021 GLOBAL 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE CAMPAIGN!



Source: Paula Bronstein/Getty Images

The Global 16 Days Campaign was launched in 1991 and continues to be coordinated by the Center for Women’s Global Leadership (CWGL) at Rutgers University. Running each year from November 25th (International Day Against Violence Against Women) to December 10th (International Human Rights Day), the 16 Day period reinforces the recognition of violence against women as a human rights violation. The Global 16 Days Campaign has been utilized by more than 6,000 organizations in over 187 countries. **By joining us this year, you will be participating in collective advocacy that has reached over 300 million people!**

The Campaign is addressing Domestic Violence and the world of work in tandem with this year’s 30th anniversary theme of femicide. The rise of domestic violence and femicide during the COVID-19 pandemic calls for unprecedented attention to these issues and exploration of how they impact women’s employment and livelihoods, as well as what governments, employers and other key institutions can be expected to do in response. For more information about femicide in the world of work, please utilize this link. (See [link](#))



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WHY FOCUS ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND THE WORLD OF WORK?

WHY FOCUS ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND THE WORLD OF WORK?

In 2018, the Campaign began a multi-year theme to end gender-based violence in the world of work. Since the adoption of International Labour Organization Convention 190 (ILO C190) on Violence and Harassment in 2019, the Campaign has called for the ratification of the new treaty, which is groundbreaking in its recognition of the critical link between domestic violence (DV) and the world of work.

This year, the Campaign is focusing on this link because DV disproportionately impacts women and has surged following the onset of COVID-19. According to 2021 estimates from the World Health Organization (WHO),ⁱⁱ almost one third (27%) of women aged 15-49 years worldwide have experienced some form of violence, whether physical, psychological, sexual, emotional, or economic harm, at the hands of their partner.

When thinking of DV, most people picture physical or mental abuse perpetrated by an abuser on a victim. However, in addition to the physical and emotional harm DV directly causes to its victims and survivors, there is an economic cost to them as well. There are

limited studies examining these links but, for example, in the United States it is estimated by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) that a woman who suffers from DV suffers a loss of over \$103,000 over her lifetime.ⁱⁱⁱ

However, it is important to note that the economic cost of DV is not limited to these factors, and that the “full cost of experiencing IPV, sexual violence, and stalking is unknown.”^v

Since COVID-19 was declared a global pandemic in March 2020, DV has increased dramatically and has become “an epidemic within an epidemic” because it has “exacerbated conditions that too often lead to violence.”^{vi} In fact, in some countries, calls to DV helplines have increased fivefold since the start of the pandemic.^{vii} For example, a Beijing-based NGO, Equality, dedicated to combating violence

against women, saw a surge in calls to its help line once lockdown restrictions were imposed in the Hubei Province of China, where the pandemic originated. Countries in Europe followed the same pattern. About two weeks after lockdowns began in Italy, Spain, and the United Kingdom, domestic violence reports also began to rise, with there being nowhere for the women to go.^{viii} In Brazil, reports of domestic violence have increased by 50%, while Argentina has seen a 25% increase. Cyprus has reported a 30% increase in domestic violence and reports in Singapore are 35% higher.^{ix}

According to the WHO, COVID-19 has increased the risk of domestic violence against women in the following ways:

- Stress and anxiety from the pandemic may have caused abusers to feel they have less control and thus trigger violence to give back that sense of power
- Social distancing has added to the isolation imposed by abusers
- Lockdowns have reduced chances of support or escape^{xii}

The increases in domestic violence during the pandemic have adversely impacted women in the world of work, making it more important than ever to prevent and develop adequate policy and institutional responses to domestic violence in all spheres.

ECONOMIC COSTS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The economic costs of domestic violence can come in the form of:

- I. Medical costs from the injuries sustained from the abuse
- II. Disrupted education, limiting employment choices
- III. Job loss or reduced productivity, preventing victims from earning enough money to live independently of their abusers
- IV. Direct financial abuse, which may include the abuser taking away the victim’s money, and which can impact their financial freedom and security
- V. Unwanted pregnancy, which can affect educational or professional plans, which may lead to financial instability on top of added childcare costs

Source: Forbes^{iv}

LELE A WOMAN IN CHINA

Lele,^x a woman in China, was having more and more arguments with her husband, who she was now quarantined with continuously. One day, while Lele was holding their baby, her husband began to beat her with a chair until she collapsed with the baby in her arms. “A photograph she took after the incident shows the high chair lying on the floor in pieces, two of its metal legs snapped off — evidence of the force with which her husband wielded it against her. Another image documents Lele’s injuries: Nearly every inch of her lower legs was covered in bruises, a huge hematoma blooming on her left calf.” The police only documented the attack, but still left her at home with her husband, and when she filed for divorce, her divorce proceedings were postponed, “forcing Lele and her daughter to continue to live with their abuser for weeks.”^{xi}

DEFINITIONS AND INTERPRETATIONS

For the purpose of this guide, the following definitions will be used:

Domestic Violence, which according to the UN is a “pattern of behavior in any relationship that is used to gain or maintain power and control.”^{xiii} This abuse can be emotional,^{xiv} psychological,^{xv} financial,^{xvi} physical,^{xvii} sexual,^{xviii} or stalking.^{xix}

Intimate Partner Violence, which according to the WHO is a form of domestic violence that is “behaviour by an intimate partner or ex-partner that causes physical, sexual, or psychological harm, including physical aggression, sexual coercion, psychological abuse, and controlling behaviours.”^{xx}

World of work, which is defined in ILO C190 to include all individuals who are “employees as defined by national law and practice, as well as persons working irrespective of their contractual status, persons in training, including interns and apprentices, workers whose employment has been terminated, volunteers, jobseekers and job applicants, and individuals exercising the authority, duties or responsibilities of an employer”^{xxi} and applies

“(a) in the workplace, including public and private spaces where they are a place of work; (b) in places where the worker is paid, takes a rest break or a meal, or uses sanitary, washing and changing facilities; (c) during work-related trips, travel, training, events or social activities; (d) through work-related communications, including those enabled by information and communication technologies; (e) in employer-provided accommodation; and (f) when commuting to and from work.”^{xxii}





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WHAT IS THE RELEVANCE OF ILO C190 AND SUPPLEMENTAL ILO R206?

WHAT IS THE RELEVANCE OF ILO C190 AND SUPPLEMENTAL ILO R206?

ILO C190 obligates governments and a range of relevant actors to address violence and harassment in the world of work, recognizing that domestic violence is in fact a workplace issue. The preamble of ILO C190 explicitly recognizes that “domestic violence can affect employment, productivity, and health and safety,” and states that “governments, employers’ and workers’ organizations and labor market institutions” should play a role to “recognize, respond to and address the impacts of domestic violence.”^{xxiii}

ILO C190 requires governments to “take appropriate measures to: recognize the effects of domestic violence and, so far as is reasonably practicable, mitigate its impact in the world of work.”^{xxiv} This Convention is supplemented by Recommendation 206 (ILO R206) which offers guidance, via recommendations, for actions that can be taken by governments, employers’ and workers’ organizations, and labor market institutions to formally offer support and mitigate the impacts of domestic violence on women in the world of work.

ILO C190 covers all workers, including applicants, volunteers, interns, apprentices, and those whose employment has been terminated, regardless of whether they work in public or private sectors, rural or urban areas, and formal or informal economies. This includes domestic workers and care givers who have living arrangements in their employers’ homes.

Source: Juan Arredondo/Getty Images



ACCORDING TO ILO R206, MEASURES TO "MITIGATE THE IMPACTS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN THE WORLD OF WORK" UNDER THE CONVENTION COULD INCLUDE:

- (a) Leave for victims of domestic violence;
- (b) Flexible work arrangements and protection for victims of domestic violence;
- (c) Temporary protection against dismissal for victims of domestic violence, as appropriate, except on grounds unrelated to domestic violence and its consequences;
- (d) Inclusion of domestic violence in workplace risk assessments;
- (e) A referral system to public mitigation measures for domestic violence, where they exist; and
- (f) Awareness-raising about the effects of domestic violence.^{xxvi}

COUNTRIES THAT HAVE RATIFIED ILO C190

As of November 2021, nine countries have ratified ILO C190. These include: Argentina, Ecuador, Fiji, Greece, Italy,^{xxvii} Mauritius, Namibia, Somalia, and Uruguay. Some of these countries already have legal provisions that address certain types of violence and harassment in the world of work.

ARGENTINA

Ley 10318/2016. Reglamento 1295/16 Córdoba, is a provincial law in the Argentine province of Córdoba that gives an entitlement of renewable leave for gender violence (in the family or in the workplace) of up to 30 days in any one year for Provincial State workers (teachers, health workers and workers in public administration).^{xxviii}

ECUADOR

Article 511 of the Ecuadorian Criminal Code states, "He who solicits sexual favors for himself or another by taking advantage of a superior position in the workplace or similar situation with the express or tacit possibility of hurting the victim's legitimate expectations within the context of that relationship, will be punished as responsible for sexual harassment with 6 months to 12 years in prison."^{xxix}

FIJI

Chapter 2 (Bill of Rights) of the Fijian Constitution states "Every person has the right to security of the person, which includes the right to be free from any form of violence from any source, at home, school, work or in any other place." Sec. 11(2)^{xxx}

NAMIBIA

The Combating of Domestic Violence Act includes harassment by unwanted contact at a victim's workplace in the definition of DV and also states that no-contact provisions apply to the victim's workplace.^{xxxi}

Among these nine, the countries that have also ratified the ILO 189-Domestic Workers Convention are Argentina, Ecuador, Italy, Mauritius, Namibia, and Uruguay.^{xxxii} Only Argentina has ratified the ILO C177-Home Work Convention.^{xxxiii}



Source: Juan Arredondo/Getty Images



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN THE WORLD OF WORK ARISES IN DIFFERENT FORMS AND CONTEXTS

Domestic violence in the world of work can take many forms, such as IPV against women because they work, or if they fail to fulfill their care responsibilities,^{xxxiv} violence against domestic workers whose workplace is the employer's home or private space, and violence against home-based workers whose own home or private space is their workplace. Rural women, who represent a quarter of the world's population and a large share of the agricultural workforce globally,^{xxxv} generally face a high incidence of DV and have far less access to support services, putting them in an especially precarious situation.^{xxxvi} This list is not exhaustive but illustrative of some of the different employment contexts in which women workers may be especially exposed to domestic violence.

Women workers in the informal economy often find themselves more vulnerable to many different forms of abuse due to denial of the social and legal protections which are typically afforded employees in the formal sector, as well as additional barriers to recourse against violence and harassment. (See: [2020 Global 16 Days Campaign Advocacy Guide](#))

One comprehensive study shows that it is important to note that not everyone experiences DV in the same way; different groups of women may face different types of abuse that impact their ability to work. For example, for women with disabilities, abuse can look like the withholding of medication or a lack of access to accessibility, which can impact the efficiency of their work. On the other hand, women who identify as LGBTQ+ may be threatened with being outed at their workplace. Culture can also affect how women face and react to domestic violence; for example, in Australia, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women may require a more culturally conscious environment and different provisions at work that are in line with their beliefs.^{xxxvii}

Regardless of their status as formal or informal workers, domestic violence can profoundly impact women's ability to engage in and be productive in the world of work and, for some, it prevents them from being able to work at all. It can impact women engaged in paid work in general as well as women engaged in specific types of work.

KAY

A WOMAN IN AUSTRALIA

Kay^{xi} is an Australian woman who began dating a man who seemed perfect. However, within two months of their relationship, he became abusive and started isolating her from her family, friends, and normal life. Kay recounts, “He made life at work very difficult, he was calling maybe 70 times a day and in the end, I lost my job.” With the loss of her job, Kay was even more dependent on him, but after a visit with her sister-in-law, she was able to leave him. Kay is now an ambassador for Domestic Violence NSW and a fundraiser for White Ribbon, and she has also authored a book on her time in an abusive relationship. When speaking about herself and other professional women who dealt with abuse, she says, “I’ve seen incredibly strong, beautiful, forthright women get completely ... they disintegrate into a shell of themselves. They don’t even know who they are anymore. They have trouble getting out of the house, they have trouble putting on makeup, getting dressed. They’ve just lost all sense of themselves.”^{xi}

WOMEN ENGAGED IN PAID WORK

Research shows that women can become vulnerable to domestic violence if they decide to step outside culturally ascribed gender roles and work, as opposed to spending all of their time performing care work inside the home. According to a 2017 study on women’s labor force participation and intimate partner violence in Nigeria, men are more likely to see their wives as homeworkers rather than wage workers due to deep-rooted views of women as daughters, unpaid household laborers, and mothers. “The increasing tendency for Nigerian women to participate in paid employment outside of the home is perceived as a departure from traditional norms, and it has been observed that the risk of IPV tends to increase if women bring in substantial income or if husbands perceive their authority and gender roles as being threatened by women’s work.”^{xxxviii}

This is further supported by a study from the United States on the differences in employment status and their link to domestic violence. The study concluded that “when both males and females were employed ... the odds of victimization were more than two times higher, lending credence to the notion that female employment may challenge male authority and power in a partnership, particularly as compared to those households where the male was the primary breadwinner. Indeed, when women are home-bound



through their role as domestic workers, they lack connections to co-workers and the social capital that is produced through those connections, in addition to wages, job prestige, resources, and thus, power. In turn, they must rely solely on their male partner for financial sustenance.”^{xxxix}

In some cases, a partner may not perpetuate DV specifically because the woman works, but the abuse can still impact her work negatively.

SHOVA

A WOMAN IN CANADA

Shova^{xlii} used to work as an interior designer in India prior to getting married. Following her marriage with Anant, she moved to Canada to live with his family, where she suffered domestic abuse from her in-laws due to her religious background and differences from them. In Canada, she started working a retail job, and was forced to use wages to help build up Anant’s family business. During this time, her contact with her own family in India was cut off. “The situation became worse when Shova was promoted to full-time managerial work in 2012. After discussions with Anant, she agreed to accept the new responsibilities the promotion would bring. During this time, Anant became even more controlling. He would call her and visit her numerous times a day at work, interfering with her work and making her colleagues nervous. He took full control of her finances, monitoring her spending, investments, and credit cards. Triggered by Anant’s overwhelming supervision, her hectic schedule of work (both paid and domestic), and caring for the children, Shova suffered a stress attack and was admitted to hospital with temporary paralysis.”^{xliii}

DOMESTIC WORKERS

The ILO classifies domestic workers as people whose work is “performed in or for a household or households.” They “may work on full-time or part-time basis; may be employed by a single household or by multiple employers; may be residing in the household of the employer (live-in worker) or may be living in [their] own residence (live-out)” and duties can include cooking, cleaning, childcare, gardening, caretaking of the elderly or disabled, driving, or taking care of pets.^{xliv}

Since domestic workers work for private households, they are “often working without clear terms of employment, unregistered in any book, and excluded from the scope of labor legislation,” which makes them vulnerable to abuse and exploitation by their employers.^{xlv} Oftentimes, employers “fail to pay the full wages due to [the workers], force them to work excessively long hours without breaks or days off, or deny them adequate food, living conditions, or medical treatment.”^{xlvi} If the domestic worker is employed in a country of which they are not a national, they are referred to as a migrant domestic worker. In their case, employers are known to confiscate passports or employ workers who have been trafficked.^{xlvii}

ILO R206 specifically states that “Members should adopt appropriate measures for sectors or occupations and work arrangements in which exposure to violence and harassment may be more likely,”^{xlviii} such as in domestic work.

DOMESTIC WORKERS CONVENTION, C189

The adoption of Convention 189 concerning decent work for domestic workers in 2011 was a historic step forward. This legally binding instrument recognizes the contribution of domestic work to the economy and protects workers around the globe. Since its adoption, at least 70 countries have begun implementing measures to ensure decent work for domestic workers. For example, several countries in Latin America have pursued the formalization of domestic work, such as through labor inspections and the extension of social security to domestic workers.

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**DOMESTIC
VIOLENCE IS
A WORKPLACE
ISSUE.**

#30YearsOfActivism #RatifyILO190

“C189 - Domestic Workers Convention,” ILO (ILO, 2011), https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NO:RMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C189.



Source: Paula Bronstein/Getty Images

FARAH A WOMAN IN THE UAE

Farah^{xlix} is one of many women from around the world who migrated to the UAE and Oman to work as domestic workers. What was advertised as a golden opportunity for migrant domestic workers turned out to be golden only for employers. Farah, who

traveled from her home country of Indonesia to work in Dubai, recounted, “The work wasn’t what I expected it to be. It was totally different. I would wake up to start cooking, then cleaning, washing clothes, and then cooking again. No rest, there was just no rest... Because she kept yelling, I cried and asked to go back to agency, but madam said ‘I already bought you’...”^l

HOME-BASED WORKERS

According to the ILO, home work is “work carried out by a person, to be referred to as a homemaker, (i) in his or her home or in other premises of his or her choice, other than the workplace of the employer; (ii) for remuneration; (iii) which results in a product or service as specified by the employer, irrespective of who provides the equipment, materials or other inputs used.”ⁱⁱ However, if the worker’s home is also the site of domestic violence, their productivity and safety can become heavily compromised.

Additionally, home-based workers are considered informal workers and, as a result, are often excluded from the purview of national labor codes. Being located in complex supply chains, they do not have access to formal workplace protections and therefore are vulnerable to the effects of domestic violence with essentially no access to support services or recourse.

HOME WORK CONVENTION, C177

The Home Work Convention, 1996 (C177) does not specifically address GBV but it can be used to support the demand for a national policy on home-based work, to be developed in consultation with home workers, which among other things addresses: protection against discrimination; protection of occupational health and safety; statutory social security protection; equal treatment with wage earners; maternity protection; data collection on home workers; and remedies for violations. Recommendation 184 elaborates key provisions of C177. C190 applies to all workers including home workers and can be used to tackle issues of GBV and harassment.

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Source: HomeNet South Asia

68% OF HOME-BASED WORKERS IN NEPAL REPORTED MENTAL TRAUMA DUE TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FROM FAMILY MEMBERS.

#30YearsOfActivism #RatifyILO190

“C177 - Home Work Convention,” ILO (ILO, 1996), https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORML_EXPUB:12100:0::NO:12100:P12100_INSTRUMENT_ID:312322:NO9.



Source: Paula Bronstein/Getty Images

KOKILA A WOMAN IN INDIA

Kokilaⁱⁱⁱ is a home-based tailor in Delhi, India. She said her husband did not value her work, but she often had to work throughout the night to finish her garment pieces and to bring in extra money for the family. “My dedication became the cause of physical abuse,” she said. “If my husband woke up, he would hit me and tell me to stop working on the sewing machine. He claimed that the noise made by the machine did not let him sleep.”ⁱⁱⁱⁱ

RURAL WORKERS

Rural Workers are “any person engaged in agriculture, handicrafts or a related occupation in a rural area, whether as a wage earner or as a self-employed person such as a tenant, sharecropper or small owner-occupier.”^{lv} Women in rural areas can be subject to violence both within their households and within their communities, which can consequently “reduce a rural woman’s ability to work, care for her family, and contribute to society.”^{lv} In fact, rural women experience a higher rate of DV than urban women, and they also live the furthest away from available resources for help. This dearth of resources and geographic isolation lead to rural women being less likely to report abuse and, even if they want to, “tight-knit communities keep victims in abusive relationships.”^{lvi} In the United States, 22.5% of women who reported DV were from rural areas, compared to 15.5% from urban areas.^{lvii} In countries like India, where nearly 68% of the total population lives in rural areas and villages, the rates for DV against women are even higher.^{lviii} However, these numbers are likely undercounted, as many cases go unreported.

This increased likelihood of DV decreases women’s ability to work efficiently both inside and outside the home, when even the most basic tasks, such as “fetching water and wood for fuel from distant locations or walking to or from markets after dark,”^{lix} expose them to additional risks of violence. Additionally, in many rural communities where there is greater adherence to tradition, common practices like forced and early marriage not only perpetuate violence against women between generations but also can expose adolescent girls and young women to a higher risk of domestic violence from their new spouses and in-laws.^{lx}

UN DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF PEASANTS AND OTHER PEOPLE WORKING IN RURAL AREAS

The UN Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas was adopted in 2018 and aims to protect the rights of rural populations, including agricultural workers and indigenous peoples, while recognizing their contributions and challenges. It recognizes their rights to a decent income, collective bargaining, and social security, as well as the right to be free from violence and discrimination. It sets out a comprehensive framework for the protection of workers defending their livelihoods, family farms, and small-scale agriculture from corporate and state dispossession.

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Source: The Guardian

RURAL WOMEN EXPERIENCE A HIGHER RATE OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE THAN URBAN WOMEN AND HAVE LESS ACCESS TO SUPPORT SERVICES.

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“United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas :” United Nations Digital Library (United Nations, 2018), <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/1650694>.

RUPALI A WOMAN IN INDIA

Rupali^{lxi} experienced domestic violence while working on a tea estate in Assam, India. When she reported a domestic violence grievance from the tea estate to her local Protection Officer (PO), she was told that “it was an internal matter of the husband and wife and that [the PO] would not interfere in the matter.” Additionally, Rupali’s testimony claims that while every workplace

is supposed to have an Internal Committee (IC) that “hear[s] cases of harassment and take[s] appropriate measures,” the ones on the tea estates are generally headed by the Estate Managers themselves, who do not side with the women bringing the complaint. Since many tea workers are illiterate, “there is a lack of awareness among the women about the legal provision” and their rights, so many do not even report the abuse they face and continue to suffer while they work.^{lxii}



Source: Paula Bronstein/Getty Images



Source: Juan Arredondo/Getty Images

4



WHY IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE A BARRIER TO WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE WORLD OF WORK?

WHY IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE A BARRIER TO WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE WORLD OF WORK?

**We must
“Recogniz[e] the
right of everyone
to a world of work
free from violence
and harassment,
including gender-
based violence and
harassment.”**

— ILO C190 Preamble^{lxiv}

The sections on Human Rights, Economic, Cultural, and Health Concerns have been adapted from the [2019 Advocacy Guide](#).

A HUMAN RIGHTS CONCERN

Violence and harassment in the world of work is a global phenomenon that disproportionately and uniquely impacts women, preventing them from fully realizing their human rights. It is a form of discrimination against women that governments are obligated to prevent, investigate, prosecute, and provide remedies for because it is linked to structural inequalities, making it an issue of broader societal concern as well as a matter of social justice.

This issue is also a feminist concern because domestic violence compromises women's agency and autonomy. It is important to address the gendered dynamics of domestic violence in both the public and private spheres, and recognize its links to gender inequality, discrimination, and unequal power relations in many different areas of women's lives.

Women in all sectors must be able to work in conditions of safety and security, with dignity, agency, and autonomy.



Source: Juan Arredondo/Getty Images

AN ECONOMIC CONCERN

Economic vulnerability and poverty increase women's risk of violence and harassment as jobseekers and workers. These dynamics often impede women's access to the labor market and once admitted, can make them dependent on jobs with exploitative conditions or abusive employers, co-workers, or third parties. Domestic violence against women workers is also linked to their ability to work, which has serious financial implications and connects to disrupted work histories, lower or loss of income, and frequent changes in jobs. The impact of this lost or reduced income in the short-term has long-term effects including lower retirement income or pensions, which leads to negative consequences for women's economic security throughout their life and contributes to poverty in older women.^{lxv}

“All human beings, irrespective of race, creed or sex, have the right to pursue both their material well-being and their spiritual development in conditions of freedom and dignity, of economic security and equal opportunity.”

— ILO C190 Preamble^{lxvi}



ON AVERAGE,
WOMEN PERFORM
75% OF ALL UNPAID CARE WORK
ACROSS THE GLOBE.

Source: WEIGO

16dayscampaign.org Source: Champions of Change Coalition

ECONOMIC COST OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE:

\$3.6 TRILLION IN THE US	\$22 BILLION IN AUSTRALIA	£66 BILLION IN ENGLAND AND WALES
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A CULTURAL CONCERN

In most cultures, discriminatory gender norms and stereotypes put a women's place in society as being within the home, primarily as a caregiver. Women around the world are responsible for over 75% of all unpaid care work.^{lxvii} Though this work is crucial for society and the economy, it remains unrecognized, unseen, and unvalued. The continued failure of governments to adequately recognize, reduce, and redistribute women's unpaid care and domestic work has put them at a disadvantage in the labor market, where they are over-represented in low-income, part-time,

informal, and precarious jobs. Additionally, this combined burden of paid and unpaid work often limits women's time for other activities including rest, leisure, education, or professional development. Often, the non-performance of care work by a woman can lead to domestic violence. Men who reported all forms of violence against their wives were more likely to agree that women are exclusively responsible for taking care of the children, the elderly, and the husband, in addition to not working outside the home for money.^{lxviii}

We must
“Acknowledg[e] that gender-based violence and harassment disproportionately affects women and girls, and recogniz[e] that an inclusive, integrated and gender-responsive approach, which tackles underlying causes and risk factors, including gender stereotypes, multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, and unequal gender-based power relations, is essential to ending violence and harassment in the world of work.”

— ILO C190 Preamble^{lxix}

A HEALTH CONCERN

DV is known to affect a woman's physical and mental health, and it can lead to long-term traumatic effects which can negatively impact job satisfaction and commitment, while increasing sickness absenteeism, turnover rates, and reduced productivity.^{lxx}

There are also key links between DV and a woman's reproductive health which may in turn negatively affect a woman's ability to work or hold a job. For example, "women who experience physical intimate partner violence or forced sexual intercourse [are] at greater risk of unintended or unwanted pregnancy," which can negatively impact their eligibility to work, such as when employers prohibit their workers from becoming pregnant or fire or penalize those who do get pregnant.^{lxxi} Additionally, pregnant women are reportedly more susceptible to DV, which is "linked to depression, substance abuse, smoking, anemia, first and second trimester bleeding, less than optimal weight gain, and unhealthy eating patterns."^{lxxii} All of these traumas stemming from domestic violence can negatively impact women's ability to work and their performance. Domestic violence has also been shown to increase the risk of women being infected by sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV. In many countries, persons with HIV are dismissed or not employed based on discriminatory prejudices.^{lxxiii}



Source: Jonathan Torgovnik/Getty Images

“ Violence and harassment in the world of work affects a person's psychological, physical and sexual health.”

— ILO C190 Preamble^{lxxiv}



Source: Paula Bronstein/Getty Images

5

WHAT ARE SOME PROMISING PRACTICES?

WHAT ARE SOME PROMISING PRACTICES?

FORMAL SECTOR

Some governments, companies, and unions have taken the initiative to implement their own workplace policies directly aimed at supporting employees who are or have been victims or are survivors of domestic violence. Many of these companies and organizations are not based in countries that have ratified ILO C190, but their policies still align with the actions included in ILO R206. In some cases, the policies were in place prior to the ratification of ILO C190 and go above and even beyond ILO R206 to offer support that is not outlined therein. Such existing policies have not only helped to shape ILO C190 and ILO R206, but they have also demonstrated promising practices in the world of work and shown that it is possible for employers to develop a well-rounded system of support and that workers do not necessarily need to wait for governments to ratify ILO C190 to demand their rights.

ACTIONS TAKEN BY GOVERNMENTS

In 2004, the Philippines became the first country to establish a 10-day paid leave for victims of domestic violence. In 2018, New Zealand adopted a similar law with additional progressive provisions, allowing victims to ask for flexible working arrangements and making discrimination against victims of IPV illegal. In Namibia, an employer may lay a charge and apply for a protection order for an employee against their domestic abuser

HIGHLIGHT: LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

In 2016, the 40th Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, Canada enacted The Employment Standards Code Amendment Act (Leave For Victims of Domestic Violence, Leave For Serious Injury or Illness and Extension of Compassionate Care Leave), a bill which allows victims of DV to take time off to seek medical or psychological care, seek legal assistance, relocate, etc. Among its provisions, in a 52-week period, employees who have been employed by the same employer for at least 90 days are entitled to leave of up to 10 days.

ACTIONS TAKEN BY COMPANIES

The “Employer’s Initiative on Domestic Abuse” is a British network of 300 small and large businesses that seeks to provide support to employers acting against domestic abuse. Among its recent initiatives, in 2018 the

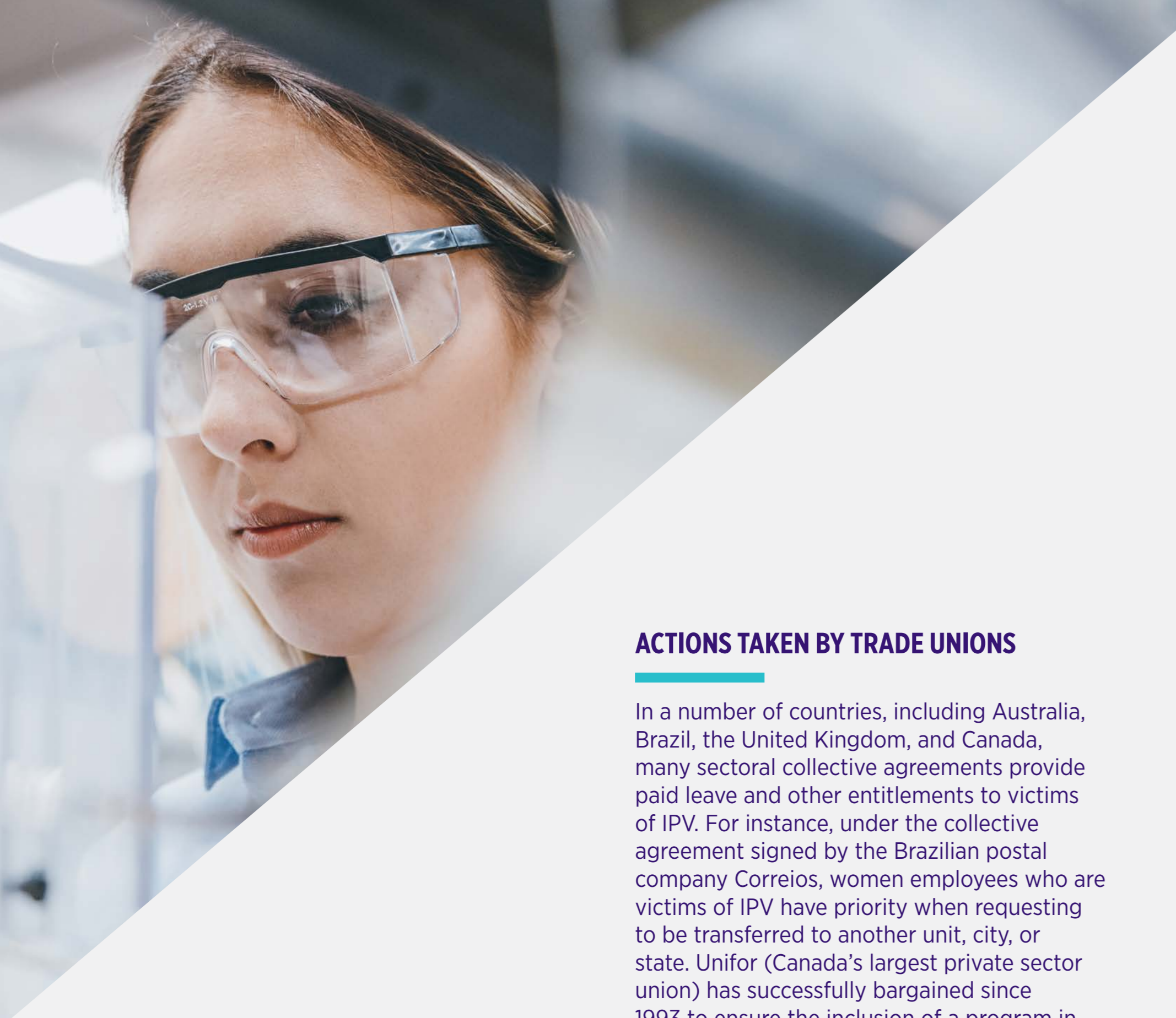
network became a partner of “Everyone’s Business,” a program that gives employers the tools to recognize and prevent domestic violence, be prepared to receive disclosures, and actively respond and speedily support employees experiencing IPV. Members of this network include Ernst & Young’s UK branch, Uber’s UK branch, and the BBC. Another company that is supporting its employees is Anglo American, a South African company that in March 2021 developed a policy that includes paid leave; flexible working time; financial assistance; safe accommodation and access to comprehensive risk assessment and safety plan for all employees, including those with temporary contracts, apprentices, trainees, interns, and non-payroll colleagues. The company also has campaigns like Stand Up For Everyone and Living with Dignity to combat harassment and GBV.

HIGHLIGHT: UNILEVER^{lxxxv}

In its “Global Domestic Violence and Abuse Policy,” Unilever offers what is known as “Safe Leave.” Under this policy, victims who have experienced “significant disruption” due to domestic violence, and who have confidentially disclosed their circumstances, are eligible for up to 10 paid days of leave each calendar year. This policy is flexible, allowing victims to take this leave as needed, whether it be in periods of multiple days, as single days, or even in hourly increments. Unilever also offers victims the ability to change their pay cycle and bank details at any time to ensure financial stability and security, including a one-time payment to victims if they incur additional expenses when setting up a new account or other activities to further ensure their financial security.

Additionally, victims of domestic violence can request to be relocated to another Unilever location or site in an attempt to better support their individual circumstances with the company also helping employers develop safety plans to ensure that victims are never working alone and can be escorted to their parking spots. Beginning in March 2021, following the rise of DV due to COVID-19, Unilever made this policy publicly available for all, so that other employers outside the company that do not currently have DV policies can follow their example.





ACTIONS TAKEN BY TRADE UNIONS

In a number of countries, including Australia, Brazil, the United Kingdom, and Canada, many sectoral collective agreements provide paid leave and other entitlements to victims of IPV. For instance, under the collective agreement signed by the Brazilian postal company Correios, women employees who are victims of IPV have priority when requesting to be transferred to another unit, city, or state. Unifor (Canada’s largest private sector union) has successfully bargained since 1993 to ensure the inclusion of a program in their collective agreements called Women’s Advocate, consisting of specially trained workplace representatives who assist women with concerns such as workplace harassment, intimate violence, and abuse.

HIGHLIGHT: UNISON^{lxxvi}

In 2020, Unison, one of the largest trade unions in the United Kingdom, developed a model workplace policy. This policy includes sample wording that trade unions can bring to company and organization management, making it easier for employers to visualize what a domestic violence policy might look like. This sample policy includes:

- Training for managers and employees, and named HR staff also with appropriate training
- Special paid leave and the potential for an advance of pay
- Temporary or permanent changes to working patterns, changes in duties to avoid conflict with a potential abuser, and relocation where appropriate
- Measures to ensure a safe working environment
- Access to counseling and support services during paid working time
- Access to courses developed to support survivors of domestic violence

In February 2021, UNISON “won a key amendment in the British Parliament to ensure that domestic abuse protection orders (DAPOs) will apply to the workplace.”^{lxxvii}

ACTIONS TAKEN BY INDIVIDUAL CHAMPIONS

In Australia, the “Champions for Change Coalition”^{lxxviii} which is comprised of leaders in the public and private sector and in the local community have been working together

to develop good practices geared toward addressing domestic and family violence as a workplace issue in their own organizations.^{lxxix} They report that “85% of Champions for Change Members have initiatives in place to support employees experiencing domestic and family violence.”^{lxxx} Based on several years of work, they have produced “A Framework for Workplace Action on Domestic and Family Violence”^{lxxxi} as a resource for businesses and organizations to tackle domestic and family violence as a workplace issue and eventually help eliminate it in the community. Among other things, they encourage employers to use the annual Global 16 Days Campaign period as a time to openly communicate with their employees about “domestic and family violence as a workplace and gender equality priority.”^{lxxxii} See the full toolkit [here](#).

16dayscampaign.org Source: ILO Recommendation 206

STATES CAN MITIGATE THE IMPACT OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FOR VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS BY IMPLEMENTING FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS AND LEAVE.

#30YearsOfActivism #RatifyILO190

INFORMAL SECTOR

Although some States, companies, and unions are taking steps to protect victims of domestic violence, many times the policies do not extend to informal workers, such as those employed as domestic workers, home based workers, or rural workers. Informal workers are generally denied the level of social and legal protection that is available to workers in the formal sector. However, there are NGOs and workers' networks that are striving to create changes specifically for informal workers to improve their work experiences.

ACTIONS FOR DOMESTIC WORKERS

The International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF)^{lxxxiii} has been advocating for national legislation to include provisions for domestic workers, which would create mechanisms for victims to file formal complaints, allow for home inspections, and educate workers about their rights. Additionally, the IDWF calls for the creation of local Domestic Workers' Organizations (DWOs) which offer help to victims by "provid[ing] shelter and legal aid, negotiat[ing] with employers or the authorities to obtain justice for the victims, and help[ing] the victims to become survivors and domestic worker leaders."

HIGHLIGHT: NATIONAL DOMESTIC WOMEN WORKERS UNION (NDWWU)^{lxxxiv}

The NDWWU is the first domestic workers union in Bangladesh and has been a driving force behind getting the 2015 Domestic Workers Protection and Welfare Policy passed by the Bangladeshi cabinet. This is the first policy of its kind in Bangladesh, and it ensures that domestic work is recognized as a profession and that employers are required to give their workers full time salaries, maternity leave, a safe space to sleep and pray, and time off for rest and recovery from sickness. The policy also introduced a helpline for domestic workers as well as an awareness campaign, which not only includes "DWRN-facilitated area-based groups [for workers] which meet on a monthly basis," but also runs media campaigns to change public perception of the importance of domestic workers in society and the need to implement better labor and social protections.^{lxxxv}

ACTIONS FOR HOME BASED WORKERS

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been growth in the number of people whose homes have also become a place of work. As the pandemic "pushes work[ers] to stay home under shelter-in-place orders and lockdowns, employees who are working remotely are increasingly at risk for abuse—especially from intimate partners quarantined with them."^{lxxxvi} Organizations have been working to design ways to keep home based workers safe so that they are not victims of DV and can continue to work and provide for themselves and their families effectively.

HIGHLIGHT: HOMENET SOUTH ASIA^{lxxxvii}

HomeNet South Asia released the Homeworker's Toolkit in 2020 for South Asian garment workers to help them navigate any challenges they face through their jobs. The toolkit devotes an entire section to DV, including definitions of DV, so that workers can identify if they are victims, understand laws that each South Asian country has to protect workers, and even specific complaint mechanisms that they can employ when national laws do not work for them. For example, in Bhutan, women can report any type of violence they face to both the Royal Bhutan Police as well as the National Commission for Women and Children via toll-free helplines. Similarly, in Pakistan, a 24-hour center run by women addresses the needs of victims of violence in Punjab, and similar centers are set to open in other major cities such as Lahore, Rawalpindi, and Faisalabad.

ACTIONS FOR RURAL WORKERS

Since rural women workers face considerable obstacles to accessing services for dealing with DV, specific actions are called for. A risk assessment on rural domestic violence victims outlines four practices that violence against women service providers can employ: interagency collaboration, which can foster relationships with other community agencies and services; public education, which can teach the community about DV and promote awareness; professional education, which can give members of the community training on DV and other forms of VAW; and outreach programs, to develop

and implement programs and services to reduce barriers like geographic isolation.^{lxxxviii}

HIGHLIGHT: MAHILA SAMAKHYA^{lxxxix}

Mahila Samakhya is a program created by the Indian Department of Education to enhance education and equality in rural parts of India. As a part of its goal to combat DV in rural communities in India, Mahila Samakhya has created Nari Adalat, or Women's Courts, in villages and communities all over the country. These courts are "a women's collective formed across caste, marital status, age, religion, region, and occupations which address issues of violence against women and helps women, especially those from marginalized communities, access their rights as citizens." One of the main objectives of the Nari Adalat and Mahila Samakhya is "to enhance the self-image and self-confidence of women and thereby enabling them to recognize their contribution to the economy as producers and workers, reinforcing their need for participating in educational programmes." To this end, Mahila Samakhya has released a step-by-step toolkit on how rural communities can start their own Nari Adalat and provides examples of communities where the courts are now supported by local Panchayat governments and law enforcement.



Source: Paula Bronstein/Getty Images

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HOW CAN WOMEN WORKERS BUILD EFFECTIVE ADVOCACY?

HOW CAN WOMEN WORKERS BUILD EFFECTIVE ADVOCACY?

Based on key provisions of ILO C190 and ILO R206, women workers can now advocate with their governments, unions and employers for the following: leave for victims of DV; flexible work arrangements and protection for victims; temporary protection against dismissal for victims arising from circumstances related to DV; inclusion of DV in workplace risk assessments; referrals to public mitigation measures for DV; and investment in programs to raise awareness about the effects of DV.

16dayscampaign.org Source: ILO Recommendation 206

STATES SHOULD RAISE AWARENESS ABOUT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND INCLUDE IT IN WORKPLACE RISK ASSESSMENTS.

#30YearsOfActivism #RatifyILO190

Here are some activities that you can initiate during the annual campaign this year to demand action aimed at addressing the links between domestic violence and their participation in the world of work.

URGE GOVERNMENT ACTION

- Send a [joint letter](#) to your country's Head of State with copies to key ministries including the Ministry of Labor, Ministry of Women, Ministry of Finance, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs (or equivalent) to congratulate them on the adoption of ILO Convention 190 and Recommendation 206 with a demand for speedy ratification and to implement laws and policies that protect workers who are victims or survivors of DV.
- Conduct advocacy to influence parliamentarians and local government officials for law reform by organizing briefings to highlight the connections between the ILO instruments' key provisions on DV and the circumstances faced by women workers in different employment sectors in your country.
- Approach your national human rights institution and/or women's commissions to draw their attention to the issue of domestic violence in the world of work locally. Encourage them to issue a formal recommendation to your government for ratification followed by implementation of ILO C190 and the recommendations in ILO R206.
- Contact officials to demand they recognize the broad range of women working in the informal economy as essential workers and strengthen their legal and social protections to include measures recognizing the impact of DV and stressing access to support

- services for victims and survivors as well as new measures in line with ILO R206.
- Call on governments to enforce the incorporation of domestic violence sensitization trainings for government, health care, police, and legal organizations.^{xc}
- Ask your government to incentivize businesses to introduce measures to address the impact of DV on women workers in the world of work, in accordance with ILO C190 and ILO R206.

ENGAGE WITH UNIONS

- Request strategy meetings organized with national trade union confederations. Plan informative sessions with them to provide a feminist perspective for a gendered approach to implementing policies to help victims and survivors of DV, such as conducting workplace risk assessments and implementing prevention and protection measures. For more information see the [Facilitator Guide](#) developed by ITUC and other allies.
- Find out who in your local union is involved in gender equality issues and/or is the focal point for DV in the world of work.

- Plan a meeting to explore ideas for common campaign activities to highlight the negative impact of DV on women workers and to call for specific measures to address these impacts.
- Invite your local union to speak to your networks about the importance of organizing women around addressing the impact of DV on women in the world of work.
- Gather women workers' stories on DV in cooperation with your local union to illustrate the importance of ratifying ILO C190 and inform advocacy actions that can be taken to implement the recommendations in ILO R206.

ENGAGE WITH EMPLOYERS

- Organize information sessions and briefings with your employer on the impact of domestic violence on the workplace, in line with the framework outlined in ILO C190 and ILO R206.
- Urge your employers to provide reasonable accommodations in the form of flexible work arrangements and paid leave for victims and survivors of domestic violence as well as other protection measures.
- Encourage employers to provide a safe space for employees to disclose any confidential information pertaining to incidents of domestic violence, without fear of dismissal or retaliation.
- Urge employers to provide special training for supervisors, managers, HR representatives and other relevant teams to respond to the needs of employees who face domestic violence by directing them to relevant resources or connecting them to a local domestic violence support group/organization.
- Demand measures to protect employees against dismissal on grounds linked to DV and to proactively identify workers who need support while safeguarding against stigma and/or retaliation.
- Hold employers accountable for responding to employees who may be perpetrators of the domestic violence, as mentioned in the Champions for Change Coalition toolkit [here](#).^{xci}

ENGAGE WITH THE MEDIA

- Meet with journalists to share information about the ILO instruments and explain why

they are important, particularly in light of the increase in DV stemming from COVID lockdowns and restrictions on mobility, as well as the possible impact of cuts in support services.

- Circulate a media advisory or [press release](#) about your campaign this year and its relevance to issues of violence and harassment, especially DV, in the local context to raise public awareness.
- Publish an [article](#), op-ed, [blog](#), or letter to the editor in your local newspaper highlighting the adoption of the new ILO instruments and the recognized links between domestic violence and the world of work, as well as the recommendations in R206.
- Take out ads in newspapers and magazines to garner attention to the issue of domestic violence and to introduce people to ILO C190 and ILO R206.

MOBILIZE

- Adopt the Global 16 Days Campaign theme in local seminars, meetings, and public events during November 25-December 10 to raise public awareness about the impact of domestic violence in the world of work. Use this advocacy guide as a basis for inquiry and discussion on how to adopt practices that guarantee the rights of all workers.
- Submit your events (online or in-person) to be featured on the digital map on the Global 16 Days Campaign website [here](#).
- Launch a [petition](#) to demonstrate public support for the implementation of these new global standards, from the grassroots up.

TAKE DIGITAL ACTION

- Join or initiate Twitter chats, Tweetathons, Facebook live conversations, or other social media calls to action and engage with @16dayscampaign on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) using the hashtags #RatifyILO190 and #16DaysCampaign.
- Amplify your voice on social media using shareables specially created for you and by adding a #16days frame to your profile picture.
- Tweet at key contacts such as government officials, employers, unions, parliamentarians, and activists to publicize and celebrate those who are taking steps to implement measures to protect women workers.
- Interact with journalists on social media platforms to publicize the issue of domestic violence and its impact on women in the world of work.
- Imagine what a workplace that has policies and safeguards for domestic violence survivors looks like and share your vision on social media. Be sure to use the hashtag #RatifyILO190 and tag @16DaysCampaign to inspire others.

“ [D]omestic violence can affect employment, productivity and health and safety, and ... governments, employers’ and workers’ organizations and labour market institutions can help, as part of other measures, to recognize, respond to and address the impacts of domestic violence. ”

— ILO C190 Preamble^{xxv}

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GLOBAL 16 DAYS CAMPAIGN ALLIES AND LEADING VOICES AGAINST GBV IN THE WORLD OF WORK

We would like to thank our partners and allies for staying committed to ensuring that a world without violence is possible.

FORUM¹ FOR WOMEN, LAW AND DEVELOPMENT (FWLD)

<https://fwld.org/>

HOMENET SOUTH ASIA

<https://hnsa.org.in/>

HOMENET INTERNATIONAL

<https://www.homenetinternational.org/>

INTERNATIONAL DOMESTIC WORKERS FEDERATION (IDWF)

<https://idwfed.org/en>

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ITUC)

<https://www.ituc-csi.org/>

SAMPADA GRAMEEN MAHILA SANSTHA (SANGRAM)

<https://www.sangram.org/>

SELF EMPLOYED WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION (SEWA)

<https://sewabharat.org/>

WOMEN IN INFORMAL EMPLOYMENT: GLOBALIZING AND ORGANIZING (WIEGO)

<https://www.wiego.org/>

MENENGAGE ALLIANCE

<http://menengage.org/>

STREETNET INTERNATIONAL

<http://streetnet.org.za/>

SOLIDARITY CENTER

<https://www.solidaritycenter.org/>

GLOBAL LABOR JUSTICE- INTERNATIONAL LABOR RIGHTS FORUM (GLJ-ILRF)

<https://laborrights.org/>

WOMANKIND WORLDWIDE

<https://www.womankind.org.uk/>

1. FWLD is Global 16 Days Campaign's national partner in Nepal. On March 9, 2021, "FWLD in partnership with the Global 16 Days Campaign, jointly launched the a national-level advocacy campaign with more than 25 allies from different sectors, to call on the Government of Nepal to ratify and implement the ILO Convention 190": <https://16dayscampaign.org/2021/03/16/fwld-and-the-global-16-days-campaign-mobilize-to-call-for-ratification-of-the-ilo-violence-and-harassment-convention-no-190/>

We'd like to get your feedback!

Thank you for your commitment to women's rights as human rights and for helping to end gender-based violence in the world of work, once and for all.

Please feel free to email 16days@cwgl.rutgers.edu with any questions, comments, or recommendations.

Visit the official Global 16 Days Campaign website at www.16dayscampaign.org to share your activities and stay connected.



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This Guide is dedicated to victims and survivors of domestic violence around the world as we continue to fight for justice and demand action and accountability for a world without violence.

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