

**TOWARDS AN END TO SEXUAL
HARASSMENT:
THE URGENCY AND NATURE OF
CHANGE IN THE ERA OF #METOO**



*“In 2006, Tarana Burke founded the **me too.** movement to help survivors of sexual violence, particularly young women of color from low wealth communities, find pathways to healing. Using the idea of “empowerment through empathy,” the **me too** movement was ultimately created to ensure survivors know they’re not alone in their journey.*

*The **me too** movement has built a community of survivors from all walks of life. By bringing vital conversations about sexual violence into the mainstream, we’re helping to de-stigmatize survivors by highlighting the breadth and impact sexual violence has on thousands of women, and we’re helping those who need it to find entry points to healing. Ultimately, with survivors at the forefront of this movement, we’re aiding the fight to end sexual violence. We want to uplift radical community healing as a social justice issue and are committed to disrupting all systems that allow sexual violence to flourish.”¹*

*“(…) On June 2015, in the Plaza del Congreso in Buenos Aires and in hundreds of squares throughout Argentina, a multitude of voices, identities and flags showed that **Ni Una Menos** is not the end of anything but the beginning of a new path (...) The call was born of a group of journalists, activists, artists, but it grew when society took it over and turned it into a collective campaign. **Ni Una Menos** was joined by thousands of people, hundreds of organizations throughout the country, schools, militants of all political parties.”²*

In October 2017 Alyssa Milano, a North American actor tweeted about her sexual harassment experience. The tweet went viral and thousands of women joined. The actor was joined by Hollywood celebrities and they gave unprecedented visibility to the **me too** movement. Milano’s tweet has 24,063 retweets and 54,454 likes.³

In November 2017 Time Magazine published a letter from 700,000 farm workers⁴ connecting to and supporting the Hollywood women. In January 2018, more than 300 women in Hollywood formed an anti-harassment coalition called **Time’s Up**.⁵

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This publication is the work of several teams and colleagues at and beyond UN Women.

It was produced, authored and edited by the Office of the Executive Coordinator and Spokesperson on Addressing Sexual Harassment and Discrimination at UN Women.

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Contributors who hold an advocacy and watching brief on the work of UN Women and the UN more broadly are the UN Women Youth Council and the UN Feminist Network.

Professor Catharine MacKinnon is engaged as an advisor on this work, produced the core elements and reviewed this publication.

Finally, inspiration for all efforts to end violence comes from the victims, survivors and women's rights advocates who clamour for change.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The greatest global challenge seen to sexual violence is in full flow.

From every region, women have grasped the power of social media to expose their pain and harm, including through use of the hashtags #MeToo, #NiUnaMenos, #BalanceTonPorc, #PrimeiroAssedio, #Babaeko and #WithYou⁶.

Sexual harassment is not complementary, humorous or unavoidable; victims have demanded that it be understood as a form of violence and abuse of power. Power's gifting of protection to the privileged has been profoundly challenged through victims serving notice on abusers, saying Time's Up. Some committed journalists have listened and treated with seriousness victims' stories; policy, practice and legal changes need to follow.

The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women - UN Women, with a mandate to promote gender equality and the rights of women as well as our history of working to end violence against women, stand with victims and fully endorse their calls for a new world order. We recognise that men, women and children can be, and have been, victims of sexual harassment.

This UN Women publication seeks to contribute to shaping business as unusual. It is part of UN Women's knowledge offer towards realising Sustainable Development Goals - SDG 5, 11 and 16. It recognises the framing provided by the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) to end discrimination against women. It draws on work underway and provides guidance from the leading authority on sexual harassment, Professor Catharine MacKinnon⁷.

This publication is not a comprehensive document on sexual harassment; more publications will follow. It is intended to support policy makers, employers and activists by sharing UN Women's varied work on this topic and it offers new guidance on policy and practice on sexual harassment. It does so within the context of international commitments and standards against violence, discrimination against women and on human rights. The voices of some critical groups are also given space here - the UN Feminist Network and the UN Women Youth Council. Both include in their orbit victims and survivors of abuse; their advice and expectations are taken seriously.

Urgent and thoughtful work is needed to build a new normal. This requires:

1. Understanding sexual harassment as a matter of sex and gender inequalities of power that intersect with other dimensions of inequality including race and ethnicity, age, disability and sexual orientation; it is a violation of human rights;
2. Recognition that sexual harassment has much in common with other sexual abuse, whether it happens in conflict, the home, the street or elsewhere;
3. Placing the concept of unwelcomeness at the core and acknowledging that the victim is the source of this determination;
4. The crafting of a culture of intolerance of sexual harassment, with unequivocal leadership that repeatedly and proudly speaks as well as acts against abuse and for victims;
5. Prompt, appropriate, and publicly disseminated sanctions against perpetrators, regardless of their status or seniority;
6. Recognize that those who report sexual harassment in fact help authorities (college, work, transport etc.) to deliver their obligations on equality and safety; refuse to pre-judge them as untrustworthy or malicious;

7. Enact policy and practices, including training and campaigns, that understand the cultural construction of inequalities and the need for persistent and repeated efforts to undo and reshape these;
8. Implement multiple and publicized avenues for reporting, so that victims have options from which to select what works best for them;
9. Provide support for bystander engagement in incidents, including but not only the enabling of immediate safety;
10. Acknowledging that sexual harassment runs the range from looks to rape, recognize the harm and trauma it can bring and structure all interventions to support healing and change. A victim focus requires setting out their rights.

These are UN Women's ten essentials of addressing sexual harassment. This publication offers policy makers a framing for the revision or promulgation of sexual harassment policies. It identifies practices that have promise in addressing sexual harassment and eroding its tolerance – such as specific laws against sexual harassment.

In all work, UN Women honours the victims and survivors across the world who have forsaken their imposed acquiescence to abuse and served notice, saying Time's Up.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

2030 AGENDA	2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development	MINUSTAH	United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti
APDEL	Association pour la Promotion du Développement Local	NGOS	non-governmental organizations
CEB	Secretary-General's Chief Executives Board	OIOS	Office of Internal Oversight Services
CEB TASK FORCE	Secretary-General's Chief Executives Board Task Force on Addressing Sexual Harassment	OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women	SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
CEDAW GR	CEDAW General Recommendation	SEA	Sexual exploitation and abuse
CRSV	Conflict Related Sexual Violence	SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women	SH	Sexual Harassment
EVAW	Ending violence against women	SHA	Sexual harassment and assault
HIV/AIDS	Human immunodeficiency virus / acquired immunodeficiency syndrome	UN	United Nations
HLCM	High-Level Committee on Management	UN WOMEN	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
ILO	International Labour Organization	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
INGOS	International non-governmental organizations	UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration	UNFN	UN Feminist Network
JJR	Justice Rapid Response	UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
LGBTQI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Intersex	UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
		USA	United States of America
		VAW	Violence against women
		VAWP	Violence against women in politics
		WHO	World Health Organization
		WPS	Women, Peace and Security

INTRODUCTION: “UPRISING OF THE FORMERLY DISREGARDED”⁸”

The most significant global challenge to male sexual claims on women’s bodies is in full swing and shows no sign of abating. The #MeToo wave has unearthed a long running injustice and invited the public into a discussion that has not previously garnered widespread attention or support. It taps into and grows from ongoing struggles against violence and abuse, including on social media under using the hashtags⁹, of #NiUnaMenos (Not One Fewer), Argentina¹⁰, #BalanceTonPorc (Rat Out Your Pig), France¹¹, The First Time I Got Harassed I Was..., Egypt¹², #WithYou, Japan¹³ and #PrimeiroAssedio (First harassment), Brazil¹⁴. MacDonald’s workers across the USA held a strike to protest sexual harassment¹⁵ and many others globally, from farm workers¹⁶, nuns¹⁷ to Buddhist monks¹⁸ have stepped out in public to denounce their abuse¹⁹. They also take inspiration from the work of Tarana Burke²⁰ who initiated Me Too movement in 2006.

Bonds have been forged between women who have named their abuse and those who have not been public about their abuse. They have inspired and strengthened each other, they have found comfort in the collective outing of their traumas and consequent harms. They have together challenged the norm of public silence and broken the pattern of women’s required acquiescence to sexualised expressions of gender inequality. Women have had to bleed publicly, to bare their wounds to the world in order to win understanding and in their pursuit of justice. Brave and committed journalists have shaped a new media response to women’s outing of their abuse.

Women have occupied the power of solidarity to name the pain of sexual harassment. They have called for an end to the normalisation, tolerance and minimisation of the harms inflicted. They have shown that sexual harassment is more routine than it is exceptional and that it tends to be used by men in positions of power and authority. They have shown that beyond the harassers there are others who enable: friends, colleagues and subordinates may either be complicit

in that exercise of power or too cowed to refuse to co-operate.

Women have served notice on the impunity known to date by the powerful who sexually harass, whoever might be their victims. Power’s gifting of protection to the privileged has been profoundly challenged, with some major names and careers being felled. Those who have been ‘protected species’²⁰ are starting to feel that there may be consequences for their actions. The women of the #MeToo international uprising have created a pivotal moment in time, pushed open a door and demanded change. They have shown that sexual harassment is neither trivial nor is it exceptional: its ubiquitous presence can take many forms from looks and words to physical assault and rape.

Men, women and children can all be victims of sexual harassment. Not all men enjoy similar privileges or power, however, harmful masculinities pervade our social norms. Women can and do sexually harass. Gender norms shape expected sexual roles that impact on the entitled (who sexually abuse) or the

abused. The common thread is male sexual entitlement, whether that entitlement targets women, other men or children. Not all men are sexual harassers, but most men are in a position to challenge abuse and hold perpetrators accountable.

Sexual harassment, as with all sexual violence, removes from victims the ability to control intimate contact (see e.g. Kelly 1988²¹). In naming their experiences and seeking accountability, victims seek to claim that ability and to exert some control. Women's absence of control over their sexual interactions is routine and normalised, denial of their accounts and recall are common, as is victim-blaming and a presumption of good intent on the part of the powerful. #MeToo denounces this normality and it both envisions and demands a different global order. The reach and resonance of #MeToo and similar is immense.

UN Women acknowledges and honours those who have braved public space, and the condemnation and abuse that can follow, to put sexual harassment on

the political and policy agendas. This publication seeks to contribute to shaping the new world order that has been demanded and is part of UN Women's knowledge offer towards realising Sustainable Development Goals - SDG 5, 11 and 16 (see box). It draws on work being done as well as providing guidance from the leading authority on sexual harassment, Professor Catharine MacKinnon.

In 2015, States echoed the ambition of the movements to end sexual harassment as part of their commitment to end all violence against women, by 2030. This bold ambition requires considerable effort, including recognition that sexual harassment can constitute criminal behaviour and may require specific legislation. All efforts must pay heed to those who have knowledge and experience – survivors, the women's movement and experts on violence and gender inequality.

This publication is not a comprehensive document on sexual harassment; it complements previous work and more publications will follow. It offers an overview of the range of work being done by UN Women on sexual violence and sets out a framework for policy and practice to address sexual harassment at work. It does so within the context of international commitments and standards against violence and on human rights.

UN Women will step up to support women around the world and grow their vision of a world free of sexual harassment and of accountability for perpetrators.

We say to victims: we believe you, we are with you. We are not neutral on sexual harassment or other sexual violence— we are unequivocally committed to its elimination.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)²²

SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.²³

Target 5.2 - Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.

SDG 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable²⁴

Target 11.7 - By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities.

SDG 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.²⁵

Target 16.1 - Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere.

CORE ELEMENTS OF POLICY AND PRACTICE

Recognising sexual harassment as an expression of and support for sexual inequality and discrimination against women requires that these problematics be addressed: to end sexual harassment there must be action to end sex and gender inequality.

UN Women's advisor on sexual harassment, Professor Catharine MacKinnon, has drawn up core elements of sexual harassment policy and practice, for UN Women's work. Drawing on her decades of expertise on sexual harassment and sexual violence²⁶, Professor MacKinnon brings to bear in these core elements the following framing and principles:

- a) Sexual harassment is a matter of sex and gender inequality and a violation of human rights;
- b) In non-criminal proceedings, e.g. workplace procedures, criminal standards and procedures are not appropriate;

- c) Equality of treatment for those who report and those who are accused;
- d) Gender inequality sits alongside and across other forms of inequalities, such as race, disability, sexual orientation and age. How these intersect to shape sexual harassment, responses to reports or avenues of redress, needs to be woven through all work on sexual harassment.

These core elements will be the basis for review and updating of UN Women's work on sexual harassment across our portfolio.

Core Elements of Effective Sexual Harassment Policy & Procedure Policy

A] Policy

1. Define sexual harassment as what it is: a human rights violation of gender-based discrimination, regardless of sex, in a context of unequal power relations such as a workplace and/or gender hierarchy. It can take the form of various acts including rape, other aggressive touching, forced viewing of pornography, taking and circulation of sexual photographs, as well as verbal sexual conduct. Definitions should define, not trivialize (e.g. refer to “annoyance”), make moral judgments (“offensiveness”), or engage in demeaning psychologizing (“humiliation”).

2. Define sexual harassment to include its intersection of gender with other structural social inequalities, prominently race, ethnicity, age, disability, nationality, religion and any other social vulnerabilities such as poverty that intensively target certain groups for sexual aggression, use, and privilege their perpetrators for impunity on being reported.

3. Recognize sexual harassment in employment as unwelcome sexual conduct in the world of work. The experience comes in two types: (1) an environmental workplace condition, made up of persistent or pervasive conduct or a single serious incident, or (2) proposal or execution of an exchange of a workplace benefit or absence of workplace detriment for sexual compliance. Each type is equally grave.

4. Sexual conduct, to be harassment, is unwelcome. Unwelcomeness is the standard used, not “consent”. Consent is not used because it is a criminal standard routinely satisfied by acquiescence to sex under conditions of unequal power, which is the opposite of what an equality standard requires.

B] Procedure

5. Procedures should be simple, accessible, have multiple entry points that make sense to targeted groups, and create a victim-friendly and welcoming, not intimidating and complex, process.

To achieve an effective procedure, consider what would encourage, rather than discourage, reporting. Crafting such a process begins by asking victims and frequently targeted populations: “what do you need?”

with respect to sexual harassment. Listen with the understanding that nonreporting is rife, and is usually rational and justifiable.

6. Procedures must be equitable. Equality between the parties must be built in and procedurally observed. If accused perpetrators are allowed a lawyer or advocate, survivors and witnesses can have a lawyer or advocate. If a representative for the accused can question witnesses, so can a representative for the victim/s. If, and when, the accused receives documents, survivors receive them. If accuseds get a copy of an investigative report or outcome holding, victims do as well and at the same time. Equal access to appeals provided.

7. Jurisdiction extends over everyone who can be sexually harassed or who can sexually harass within the system. Contracts of employment, including consultants and interns, embody accountability to the procedure and state clearly that immunities are not effective within this system. Victims can bring proceedings against perpetrators as long as perpetrators (not victims) are employed, and against institutional employers indefinitely for inadequate response to prior reports or retaliation.

8. Statutes of limitations should be realistic or eliminated. Survivors of sexual harassment are often traumatized for a considerable period of time, then enter post-traumatic states, making short time limits on reporting unrealistic.

9. Investigations should be independent of institutional structures of power. Investigations must both appear to be, and be, separate from the chain of command. Create reporting procedures worthy of survivor trust.

10. Pathways in procedure to be clear, simple, accessible, and comprehensible, not overlapping, bureaucratic, byzantine, labyrinthine, and inaccessible to normally diligent staff. If training occurs, test for effectiveness and include how to report.

11. Interim measures should be available, effective, and implemented at any time during pendency of proceedings, supportive and sensitive to the possibility that the reported abuse occurred, without so concluding.

12. Process should be prompt. Time limits should be set and followed. A year from report to final outcome is not prompt.

13. Data collected on the entire cycle of reports, disaggregated by intersectional identities for survivors and perpetrators, with official steps taken or not taken, must be built into the normal functioning of the process and transparently made available publicly at regular intervals.

14. Retaliation protections built in for initiating party, as well as whistleblowing protections for bystander and witnesses reporting.

15. Any division between available processes and procedures needs to be explicit and coherent, with movement between them to be streamlined, and consistent with victim perspective. This includes transitions between informal and formal process and the interface between internal to external processes, including criminal justice authorities. Survivors often begin informally and progress to more formal steps, or begin wanting counseling and with support progress to wishing to assert their rights.

16. Confidentiality should not be used as secrecy, that is, as a barrier to effective redress or a cover for institutional reputation. Confidentiality guarantees must, however, be sufficiently robust to protect survivors, witnesses, and alleged perpetrators from rumours and reputational damage emanating from the process, to the extent possible consistent with diligent investigation. This can be difficult.

17. Criminal concepts are not to be employed. Potential sanctions for sexual harassment in civil institutions do not include incarceration. Presumed innocence, criminal due process standards, consent, clear and convincing burden of proof, sexual history of the victim (other than with the accused), preclusion of evidence of the accused perpetrator with others of the victim group, and victim appeal only for procedural error, for example, are inappropriate or irrelevant. History of the accused perpetrator with other members of the group of which the complainant is a member is highly relevant to the gender and intersectional discrimination approach.

18. Victims prove their cases by a preponderance of the evidence (more likely than not), as in civil administrative proceedings.

19. Sanctions range proportionally according to the severity of behavior sanctioned. Separation or dismissal of the perpetrator is made available where appropriate. Perpetrators are not to be simply shifted around to avoid the immediate victim. The survivor is a member of a group, targeted on that basis. A record of findings to follow perpetrator.

20. Adjudicators and evaluators of complaints as well as counselors will be trained and expert, with training and expertise evaluated by latest standards for actual effectiveness and impact.

21. Hearings are held, both sides allowed to speak, preferably in a comfortable environment. Whoever (person or entity) presides over a hearing, hence hears the evidence and the parties, recommends sanctions.

22. Settlements permitted. Data reflecting them, as well as details of initiating party and accused, and alleged behavior, kept and made publicly available periodically.

23. Nondisclosure agreements not permitted in cases of repeated or violent abuse. If repeated or violent behavior by an accused is known by the institution but not disclosed during settlement, or if such behavior occurs by the perpetrator subsequent to a settlement, nondisclosure agreement is void.

C] Culture

24. Leadership buy-in with all core elements and frequent public rejection of, and conveying of gravity of, sexual harassment as antithetical to institutional mission, is crucial.

25. Advance women to high positions of power accountable to equality norms, rather than maintaining male-dominant and rigid hierarchical norms and strata.

26. Prevention is contingent upon transparent accountability, not hidden impunity and secrecy, as well as upon promotion of equality across the organization and system. Longitudinal data on incidence and prevalence must be collected and analyzed, so as to indicate whether incidence and prevalence of sexual harassment change.

POWER AND INEQUALITY

Sexual harassment expresses and reinforces inequalities of power. The powerful can use sexual harassment as part of an exchange (*quid pro quo*) where their power allows them to confer a good (e.g. a job, promotion, attendance at a meeting) in return for sexual engagement. Sexual harassment can also create hostile or intimidating environments without relying on specific exchanges. While often involving a pattern of behaviour, it can take the form of a single incident. It is used to gain compliance, submission and assert sexual inequality whether at work, in educational establishments, in housing or in public spaces. Inequalities based on race, ethnicity, immigration status, age, disability, and sexual orientation, among other factors, also contribute to structuring the distribution of power and therefore to the perpetration of sexual harassment and its redress.

Young women, early in their careers, are among the least powerful in a workplace and commonly targeted by sexual abusers. Sexual harassment can be bound up with discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Racial and ethnic myths and expectations can also influence the sexual expectations, prejudices and entitlement that infuse sexual harassment.

“Power is being believed no matter how little sense you make and how little evidence you have. Powerlessness is not being believed no matter how much evidence you have and how much sense you make.”

— Catharine MacKinnon

Power gives authority and credibility, it is the ability to dismiss the words of others. The story of accountability for sexual harassment is still being written and it remains contested. Some powerful figures have fallen²⁷, liability of employers for abuse is in the spot light and awareness is growing of the importance of cultural change in organisations.

As sexual harassment is exercised by the more powerful, their denials and minimisation carry more cultural capital than the voices and accounts of the abused: the powerful enjoy credibility.²⁸

Interrogation of motives and intent permeate responses to women who name their abuse, putting them under the spotlight of organisational or public

scrutiny. Speaking of their experiences has brought women condemnation, ridicule and abuse. They have faced defamation suits and gone into exile from their home countries. Yet, a myth prevails that women who name harassment (or other abuse) do so for attention or other gain, out of ill-will, confusion or the absence of a sense of humour. This expresses gendered assumptions which are particularly sharp and antagonistic when women speak of sexual matters, and is evidenced, for example, in the contestation women experience in relation to naming and reporting rape. The construction of women's words and memories as untrustworthy is a deep, pervasive and enduring prejudice that impacts all aspects of sexual violence from rape to child abuse, including sexual harassment. These beliefs, that permeate administrative and criminal justice systems, require persistent and widespread tackling of cultures of sexual inequality. The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) article 5 recognises this constraint on equality and requires that states address such prejudices and stereotypes:

*CEDAW Article 5*²⁹

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures:

(a) To modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women, with a view to achieving the elimination of prejudices and customary and all other practices which are based on the idea of the inferiority or the superiority of either of the sexes or on stereotyped roles for men and women;

Accounts of sexual harassment have been shared from private and public spaces and from formal and informal institutions, education and employment, including from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the United Nations. As the public uncovering continues and as victims and survivors continue

to claim the power to name harassment, no organisation should consider itself immune. A serious and considered approach will involve learning from those who know about sexual harassment and other sexual violence— whether those are activists, scholars or victims and survivors.

Illustrative Data on Sexual Harassment (SH)

- A study of 42,000 people in the European Union found that every second woman (55%) has experienced sexual harassment at least once since the age of 15, and one in five women (21%) in the 12 months before the survey. Among women who have experienced sexual harassment at least once since the age of 15, 32% indicated somebody from the employment context – such as a colleague, a boss or a customer – as a perpetrator.³⁰
- In a South African study, 77% of women reported experiencing sexual harassment at some point during their working lives.³¹
- In Australia, approximately one in two women (53% or 5 million) had experienced sexual harassment by a male or female perpetrator during their lifetime.³²
- An estimated 246 million girls and boys experience school-related violence every year with evidence that girls are at greater risk than boys of sexual violence, harassment and exploitation.³³
- Seventy-six per cent of female university students across eight universities in Bangladesh reported incidents of sexual harassment.³⁴
- Sixty-two per cent of students have witnessed or experienced some form of gender-based violence on campus in Spain.³⁵
- A global report found that nearly 2/3 of women reporters had experienced some form of intimidation, threats or abuse in relation to their work.³⁶
- Eighty-two per cent of women parliamentarians who participated in a study in 39 countries across 5 regions in 2016 reported having experienced remarks, gestures and images of a sexist or humiliating sexual nature made against them or threats and/or mobbing to which they might have been subjected. They cited social media as the main channel through which this was perpetrated with nearly half of those surveyed (44%) reported having received death, rape, assault or abduction threats towards them or their families.³⁷
- In Washington, D.C., United States, a survey revealed that 27% of women transit riders experienced some form of sexual harassment.³⁸
- In Kigali, Rwanda, a baseline study shows that 55% of women reported that they were concerned about going to educational institutions after dark.³⁹
- In Port Moresby, a scoping study conducted by UN Women found that over 90% of women and girls have experienced some form of sexual violence when accessing public transport in 2013, including on buses, while waiting at bus stops, while walking to and from bus stops, or in taxis.⁴⁰
- An Australian survey of over 30,000 university students found that 32% of female students had been sexually harassed at university, including while travelling to university, compared to 17% of male students.⁴¹

A ratio of 1 in 3⁴² is the established reference point for the prevalence of violence against women globally; it refers to intimate partner violence and non-partner sexual violence. Sexual harassment is not included. As the numbers from studies above demonstrate, the figures when sexual harassment is included are much higher. This suggests that a more comprehensive global figure on violence against women should be used, to include sexual harassment in all spaces, and that this would be significantly higher than 1 in 3.

Sexual harassment is not simply about the misbehaviour of a few misguided or malicious individuals. The prevalence and persistence of sexual harassment, together with widespread impunity of perpetrators, manifest a systemic, structural problem linked to broader social, economic and political distributions of power that vest authority, decision making and belief in men. It is discrimination. These cultures and structures of inequality need to be recognised and dismantled if sexual harassment, and other gendered violence, are to be ended, and the SDGs realised. Sexual harassment causes harm and trauma and runs the gamut of behaviours from looks and words to rape. Sexual harassment is not minor or trivial but a grave problem that needs serious, knowledgeable and urgent attention. It is part of the continuum of violence against women that includes sexual assault as well sexual exploitation and abuse.

Survivors of sexual assault have learned to keep their experiences hidden, shared only with trusted confidantes or therapists because they have rightly judged that speaking up is costly, no matter their context. Women who have taken the brave step of naming their abuse or abusers have routinely encountered disbelief, trivialisation or minimisation of their experiences or expectations, doubt and undermining of their accounts

and sometimes retaliation. The notion that any man should face consequences for sexual harassment - everyday acts that could by his supporters be deemed to be complementary, negligible or humorous - has had little traction. The notion that any man should face consequences for sexual harassment - everyday acts that could by his supporters be deemed to be complimentary, negligible or humorous - has had little traction. Should there be a conversation about sexual harassment the notion of harm has been successfully eliminated and replaced by narratives that focus on women's flawed sense of humour or failure to understand their place in the world, for example the normal functioning of relations between men and women.

The United Nations has also been shaken by accounts of sexual harassment, including reports of victims leaving their jobs either because they were harmed or because the perpetrators were not held to account. At UN Women we too have felt the pain of discovering sexual harassment in our own organisation.⁴³

Institutional and cultural norms, as well as power differentials, have forced women to acquiesce to behaviours that constitute sexual discrimination and violence against them. To acquiesce is not to accept or condone: it is to tolerate, to put up with and not to know alternatives: it is in many ways an expression of powerlessness to make change. These norms have excused, denied or covered up abusive behaviours; they have framed and perpetuated structural gender inequalities that are expressed through and supported by sexual abuse. These norms are founded on the presumed innate sexual voraciousness of men and availability of women. All of this has to be confronted to deliver the change that is now demanded and is integral to the 2030 Agenda vision and its Sustainable Development Goals.

Sexual harassment as violence and discrimination

Sexual harassment, as discrimination and violence against women as well as broader gender-based violence, is counter to global, regional and many national standards. It violates human rights. Regional conventions and protocols from different parts of the world affirm this, including from Latin America, Africa and Europe:

- Latin America - Belem do Para Convention: "violence against women" shall be understood as any act or conduct, based on gender, which causes death or physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, whether in the public or the private sphere.⁴⁴
- Africa – the Maputo Protocol: "Violence against women" means all acts perpetrated against women which cause or could cause them physical, sexual, psychological, and economic harm, including the threat to take such acts; or to undertake the imposition of arbitrary restrictions on or deprivation of fundamental freedoms in private or public life in peace time and during situations of armed conflicts or of war.⁴⁵
- Europe – the Istanbul Convention: "violence against women" is understood as a violation of human rights and a form of discrimination against women and shall mean all acts of gender-based violence that result in, or are likely to result in, physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.⁴⁶

The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights developed Guidelines for Combating Sexual Violence and its Consequences which address the eradication of sexual violence, including sexual harassment.⁴⁷ The Organization of American States adopted a Model Law against violence against women in politics which directly addresses sexual harassment.⁴⁸

Governments have adopted a number of resolutions on the elimination of violence against women through the UN General Assembly (UNGA), the Human Rights Council (HRC) and the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). These include a specific resolution⁴⁹ on preventing and eliminating sexual harassment in the workplace, calling on States to take a range of measures to prevent and respond to the issue. Sexual harassment has also been addressed in the context of the online safety of women journalists⁵⁰, violence against women in politics⁵¹ and action has been called for to end cyberbullying and cyberstalking⁵². A body of the UN that focus on rights, the Human Rights Council, has adopted a resolution calling on Member States to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls in digital contexts much of which are forms of sexual harassment.⁵³

The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) is the international treaty that spells out what constitutes discrimination against women and has an oversight body (CEDAW Committee) that helps to define meaning and application. Drafted by Member States of the UN, this treaty has been ratified by 189 states and constitutes the global treaty on sex inequality.

The CEDAW General Recommendation (GR) 19⁵⁴ clearly framed violence against women as a form and manifestation of gender-based discrimination, used to subordinate and oppress women. Article 11 directly addresses sexual harassment:

CEDAW GR 19. Article 11 paragraph 17 - Equality in employment can be seriously impaired when women are subjected to gender-specific violence, such as sexual harassment in the workplace.

CEDAW GR 19. Article 11 paragraph 18 - Sexual harassment includes such unwelcome sexually determined behaviour as physical contact and advances, sexually coloured remarks, showing pornography and sexual demand, whether by words or actions. Such conduct can be humiliating and may constitute a health and safety problem; it is discriminatory when the woman has reasonable

grounds to believe that her objection would disadvantage her in connection with her employment, including recruitment or promotion, or when it creates a hostile working environment.

CEDAW further addressed violence in a new recommendation issued twenty-five years after the first. General Recommendation (GR) No. 35⁵⁵ elaborates on the gender-based nature of this form of violence, building on the work of the Committee and other international human rights mechanisms, as well as developments at national, regional and international levels.⁵⁶ It adds to previous work including through reference to sexual harassment faced by women politicians.

Sexual harassment has particular complexity in the informal sector where the reach of employment laws is minimal. Workers there have a heightened vulnerability to the abuse of power and are in large part female and their experiences and harassment have been very poorly recognised or documented. In some contexts, even basic sanitation facilities are not available – the need to defecate and urinate, or tend to menstrual flow, in open spaces leaves them susceptible to sexual abuse in ways dissimilar to workers in the formal sector⁵⁷. Domestic workers, located inside their employers' homes, can find sexual harassment a common aspect of their job, where they are isolated and there may be no co-workers. There are no formal avenues of complaint, redress or accountability in such situations.

Sexual harassment can bring harm, including emotional distress, sleeplessness, anxiety and physical damage through sexual violence. If sexual engagement is refused there may also be consequences such as not getting a job or promotion (at work) or not being able to access public space without trauma.

The costs of sexual harassment and sexual violence in the world of work are high – for the individuals affected, for the organisation in which sexual harassment or sexual violence occurs and in terms of social costs as well as on public services. The cost of sexual harassment to organisations can include high/increased turnover and absenteeism, lower

individual and group productivity, expenditure of managerial time to investigate complaints, and legal expenses, including litigation costs and paying damages to victims.⁵⁸ Data⁵⁹ suggests that where sexual harassment is more prevalent, average business profits are negatively impacted.⁶⁰ The ILO is developing a new standard on violence and harassment in the world of work which is expected to be adopted in 2019. This will likely expand obligations to address violence and harassment in the world of work, including sexual harassment and domestic violence.

In education, whether in schools, colleges or universities, sexual harassment impedes educational opportunities and undermines learning. Unsafe environments and abuse can lead to victims having difficulty with their studies, causing poor attention and poor performance. Being sexually violated at school is inconsistent with learning. It can lead to drop outs from specific classes or from study as a whole.

State level initiatives

CEDAW has been ratified by 189 states. Yet, 35 do not have legislation on sexual harassment, 59 do not have legislation on sexual harassment in the workplace, 123 countries do not have legislation on sexual harassment in education, and 157 do not have legislation on sexual harassment in public spaces.^[61] Although there are significant gaps in national legislations, some states do have specific legal provisions including in India; (see box).

Sexual harassment blights school and university life as well as employment. In education, states have undertaken specific measures such as workshops on sexual harassment targeting primary and secondary education in Barbados, Cambodia and Cape Verde. There have been curriculum reforms to address gender stereotyping in Jamaica and to promote human rights education in Greece.⁶²

Several countries have initiatives to address sexual harassment in public spaces. Mexico has committed to the participation of women and girls in the design of public spaces; in Venezuela campaigns on

Sexual harassment legislation in India 2013

- The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 seeks to provide a safe and secure environment to women at the workplace. The Act covers all women, irrespective of their age or employment status and protects them against sexual harassment in all workplaces, both in public and private sector, whether organized or unorganized. Domestic workers are also covered by this law. The law provides for a mechanism in the form of Internal and Local Complaints Committee to provide redress in cases of sexual harassment. It also casts a duty on employers to sensitize employees by carrying out various awareness generation programmes and workshops.⁶³
- The term ‘eve teasing’ has historically been used to refer to sexual aggression by men against women in public across several countries in South Asia. In popular culture this has been seen as harmless or as a legitimate way to begin a relationship – ‘flirtatiousness’. Indian law, however, recognised these behaviours as offences. In 2013 after the gang rape and consequent death⁶⁴ of a young woman⁶⁵ that horrified India and much of the world, women across the country agitated to have the Indian law change many provisions on sexual assault. This included new offences of acid attacks (actual and attempted), actions intended to disrobe a woman, voyeurism and stalking. Sexual harassment was also added as an offence – including unwelcome and explicitly sexual behaviours, forcible showing of pornography and demands for sexual favours.⁶⁶

women’s safety and sexual harassment have been promoted via public transport.

Legislation on sexual harassment has been introduced or amended in several countries. Legislation specifically addressing sexual harassment has been introduced in Barbados and in France a new law on sexual harassment has been implemented.⁶⁷ Revisions to criminal law to include provisions on sexual harassment have been made in Cameroon, Croatia, Cyprus, Germany and Haiti. Sexual harassment provisions have been developed within human rights, anti-discrimination or labour laws in Cambodia, Iran and Lithuania. Israel’s comprehensive law includes verbal sexual harassment and carries penalties that include imprisonment. In Canada and Lithuania there is explicit requirement of employers and educational institutions to take steps to prevent sexual harassment or provisions that stipulate the liability of employers for sexual harassment unless they have taken reasonable steps to prevent it. Indonesia, Jamaica, Kingdom of eSwatini (formerly known as Swaziland), Mali and Saudi Arabia are considering draft legislation on sexual harassment. New legislative provisions against online harassment have

been introduced in Denmark, Ecuador, El Salvador, Kenya, Republic of Korea and United Arab Emirates.

There are limited legal provisions on against sexual harassment in public spaces, though national and city level⁶⁸ regulations exist. A national law in Belgium penalizes sexual harassment in public spaces.⁶⁹ Similarly, city-level laws have recently also been adopted in Argentina, Chile, Ecuador and Philippines.⁷⁰ City law in Buenos Aires, Argentina, requires educational campaigns.⁷¹

Many countries have independent equality bodies, ombudspersons or national human rights institutions which receive complaints of sexual harassment. The Australian Human Rights Commission has just completed (in 2018) a fourth national survey on sexual harassment.

There is training for public sector employees in Georgia and Republic of Korea. Japan requires senior civil servants to undergo prevention training before they can be considered for promotion. A programme exists in Kenya to address sexual harassment in the tea industry.

ADDRESSING SEXUAL HARASSMENT AT WORK

Employers that have sought to address sexual harassment have often adopted policies stating an intolerance of sexual harassment along with training in line with that intent.

Training has lately been acknowledged not only to have failed to tackle sexual harassment, but several analysts found it has done harm.⁷² Some employers provided training hoping to avoid legal liability while participants have gone through training to meet their obligation to that training, rather than to address behaviour or culture. Responses to sexual harassment that bring marginal consequences and insipid forms of punishment (e.g. a chat or a letter) convey the message that sexual harassment really is a minor issue that will be permitted to occur without significant sanction.

Best practices on sexual harassment are still in development. With, in large part, belated recognition of the problem there is a limited set of practices on which to draw that have proven effective over the medium or long term. Instead, **promising practices** are emerging as the spotlight has been shone on this issue.

Strategies that appear to have a positive impact include (not ranked):

- a) Create a culture in which women are treated as equals and there is respect between colleagues;
- b) Commit to and display unequivocal and courageous leadership;
- c) Encourage and support bystander interventions - to defuse a situation, remove the target from the context or address the harasser. Bystanders can talk to the victim after an incident, also discuss with co-workers;

- d) Have training that is in person, interactive and tailored for the given workplace. It should last several hours and regularly be repeated. Ingrained cultural norms about power and sexual norms cannot be undone in a short/one-hour, one-off, online session;
- e) Promote (more) women and minorities. Workplaces with higher numbers of women in management appear to have lower reports of sexual harassment. Such staff profiles will also disrupt the distribution of power along gender lines. Ensuring that those who generally experience discrimination and are denied power are instead in positions of authority within the organization can change the ways in which power and authority are exercised. This includes at least indigenous and LGBT people, racial minorities, young and old staff and those with disabilities.
- f) Encourage reporting – make available many routes for reporting and people to whom to make reports. It is more likely that victims will find someone with whom they are comfortable speaking if multiple routes are open to them. Make it possible for victims to record their harasser's name, times and dates of abuse, and turn this into a formal report if another note is made against the same person (information escrows).

A meta-analysis of the impacts of sexual harassment on organisations showed that organisational tolerance is the single most important influence on whether sexual harassment occurs in a workplace.⁷³

SEXUAL HARASSMENT (SH) AND SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE (SEA) IN THE UN

As the UN organization that leads on gender equality and women's empowerment, UN Women recognizes violence against women as the expression of structural inequality between men and women. Ending violence against women (EVAW) is at the core of our mission and work. UN Women is invested in the establishment of safety for women and girls in private and public spaces as a core aspect of equality. We support efforts to prevent and respond to this violence, to increase access to services for survivors and the end of impunity for perpetrators.

In the UN Sexual Harassment (SH) and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) are treated as distinct areas of abuse with distinct reporting and policy domains. In summary, SH is staff-to-staff sexual abuse while SEA refers to sexual violence perpetrated by UN staff (or those operating under a UN banner) against others outside UN employment. The United Nations has put in place processes and policy frameworks to address sexual harassment as well as sexual exploitation and abuse. The development of a **victims-rights approach** on SEA work is underway and UN Women is developing a victims' rights charter on sexual harassment, which will dovetail with the SEA work. The CEB Task Force, under the leadership of United Nations

Secretary-General (SG), has clearly identified the source of the problem:

Work on sexual harassment is being overseen by the Secretary-General's Chief Executives Board (CEB) Task Force on Addressing Sexual Harassment⁷⁵; the Secretary-General has a Strategy on Zero Tolerance for Sexual Abuse⁷⁶ and has appointed a special Victims' Rights Advocate⁷⁷ on sexual exploitation and abuse. The Secretary-General's Bulletins have specifically addressed sexual harassment and sexual exploitation.⁷⁸

Secretary-General's Chief Executives Board (CEB) Task Force on Sexual Harassment

In November 2017, under the aegis of the United Nations Chief Executives Board (CEB), the Secretary-General established the CEB Task Force on addressing sexual harassment in the UN system. This section is written by Ms. Jan Beagle Under-Secretary-General for Management, Chair of the CEB task force and Chair of the High-Level Committee on Management (HLCM) and her team.

The CEB issued a statement (May 2018)⁷⁹ in which UN system leaders reiterated their commitment to

“Sexual harassment, like sexual abuse and sexual violence, is rooted in historic power imbalances and the male dominated culture that permeates governments, the private sector, international organizations and even areas of civil society.”

—Secretary-General's Chief Executives Board Task Force on Addressing Sexual Harassment (CEB Task Force on Addressing Sexual Harassment)⁷⁴

a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment, strengthening victim-centered efforts and fostering a safe and inclusive work environment. In October, the High-Level Committee on Management adopted the following outcomes on behalf of the CEB:

- A UN System Model Policy on Sexual Harassment that is applicable to all organizations. This is expected to underpin strengthened and aligned sexual harassment policies throughout the UN system and is intended to provide a common, harmonized framing for all entities to use in their work;
- A “ClearCheck” Sexual Harassment Screening Database to avoid re-hiring of individuals whose employment in the system ended due to their perpetration of sexual harassment. The database Guidelines have been expanded to include individuals with pending allegations of sexual harassment who leave employment before the completion of the process;
- Development of a mechanism for system-wide data collection and analysis for timely and accurate reporting and evidence-based policy making. It will also capture results of a system-wide staff survey (see below);
- Initiatives to strengthen investigative capacity across the UN system, including through agreement for a joint meeting in November 2018 between the Task Force and members of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) to discuss the work of investigatory bodies;
- Draft Model Code of Conduct to prevent sexual harassment during and in relation to UN events;
- Assessment of helplines/hotlines and support for the development of a framework of best practices for these;
- Perception survey on the views of staff and non-staff personnel across 31 UN system and related entities.

The UN is taking a cross-sectoral approach to addressing sexual harassment. The Secretary-General has set the tone by appointing a Rapid Response Team to address the issue; senior managers are driving accelerated action, improving guidance, information and services for staff and ensuring appropriate disciplinary action in substantiated cases.

The Secretariat’s focus is on implementing a robust and evidence-based policy framework relying on the newly adopted Model Policy and raising awareness among staff through communication and training. For example, a mandatory training program, launched in January has been completed by over 17,500 staff by the end of October 2018. A 24-hour multilingual Secretariat helpline, staffed by trained responders in different regions, opened in February 2018 to offer support for persons affected by sexual harassment.

The UN is strengthening its investigation systems to build confidence among staff that sexual harassment reports will be investigated and just outcomes delivered in a timely manner. Since February 2018, OIOS investigates all complaints and fast-tracks its procedures. A specialized team investigates sexual harassment and now has additional, mostly female, staff. Specialized training programs on sexual harassment are delivered to all OIOS staff. A staff survey seeks to understand staff perceptions of the prevalence, nature and experience of sexual harassment, and provide data and analysis to support focused and evidence-based policy decisions.

The UN system’s efforts on sexual harassment are integrated into a broader organizational change agenda addressing culture and leadership. The multidisciplinary approach brings together human resources, medical, ethics, training and staff counselling teams. Partnerships within and outside the UN, including with Member States, are particularly important and support information sharing and accelerated efforts.

Group of Friends to Eliminate Sexual Harassment

In September 2018 Member States of the United Nations in New York established a Group of Friends to Eliminate Sexual Harassment.⁸⁰ This promises to be a powerful mechanism through which their efforts and collaborative work to end sexual harassment will be channelled. The group was founded by France, Israel, the Netherlands and Kenya and its first meeting saw full attendance and passionate discussion. The experiences of states in their own countries and amongst their own staff made for grounded discussion that promises much for the contribution that the Group of Friends will make to the progress of this work at and beyond the United Nations.

UN WOMEN'S WORK TO ADDRESS SEXUAL VIOLENCE

UN Women's efforts against sexual harassment in a range of contexts is situated in thematic and standard-setting work to end violence against women, as indicated in the UN Women's 2018-2021 Strategic Plan. The next section in this publication indicates that range. MacKinnon's Core Elements (in this publication) will frame future work by UN Women on sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse. The voices of victims as well as experts, including but not only in the UN and at UN Women, will also shape our efforts across the system and beyond.

Preventing violence against women and girls

Violence against women is one of the most pervasive human rights violations in the world, rooted in gender inequality, discrimination and harmful cultural and social norms. While UN Women works to strengthen legislation and policy, data collection and analysis, and quality support services for survivors, it is actively working to ensure that these underlying causes are addressed. We work to change institutions, social norms and the hearts and minds of individuals to erase discrimination, with human rights and equality at the centre of all efforts.

UN Women led an inter-agency framework to underpin action to prevent violence against women⁸¹, which articulates an evidence-based understanding of the root causes, risk and protective factors associated with violence.⁸¹ It also outlines the eradication work that can be undertaken by stakeholders across countries, regions, communities, sectors and disciplines.

Within this comprehensive approach to prevention, institutional change is identified as a key pillar. Institutions, whether public or private, formal or informal, often reflect the harmful attitudes, beliefs and

practices that perpetuate discrimination and gender inequality that underpin violence against women and girls. They are sites where structures and culture enable sexual harassment and abuse against women and girls to be meted out and where harmful social norms can go uncontested, reinforcing these notions and behaviours.

UN Women is advancing policy and programming guidance tailored to sectors and contexts highlighted by research and practice as key entry points to prevent harassment and abuse:

- Global Guidance on Addressing School-Related Gender-Based Violence (with UNESCO);⁸²
- Handbook on Violence against Women and Girls and Sport (with UNESCO);
- Handbook on Violence against Women in the World of Work (with ILO);
- Handbook on Violence against Women and the Media (with UNESCO);
- Guidance Note on Addressing Violence Against Women in University Campuses.

The work on institutional change is grounded in the fundamental principles of a **survivor-centred** and **human-rights based approach**, recognizing the importance of prioritizing the rights, needs and wants of women, their safety, autonomous decision-making and confidentiality. The variety of women's experiences is acknowledged through an intersectional lens that brings race, age, disability, sexual orientation, class and other characteristics into view.

With this framing, institutional change work entails the establishment of zero-tolerance for sexual harassment and abuse of any kind with the unwavering commitment of senior leadership. This is zero-tolerance as a practice and culture as well as an ambition. It requires:

- the rebalancing of institutional structures to achieve gender equality and ensure the inclusion of women in decision-making bodies and mechanisms with dedicated policies, protocols and guidelines to deal explicitly with sexual harassment and abuse;
- the provision of support services (for medical, psychosocial, safety and legal needs) to women and girls who have experienced harassment and abuse, in-house or through established referral pathways;
- effective reporting, investigation and disciplinary measures to be in place to hold perpetrators accountable;
- assessment of the content, messaging and work products (e.g. news, entertainment, curricula, advertising, training) being generated;
- opportunities for the engagement of personnel and their communities to examine and dialogue around harmful attitudes, beliefs and practices related to discrimination, inequality, masculinities and gender-based violence; skills building around respectful relationships and how to be a positive bystander.

Violence against women in politics

There are gendered consequences for how political power is exercised. Women's experiences in politics are rife with sexual harassment, abuse and violence. When women engage in public life, they disrupt business as usual: their presence as decision-makers challenges the way in which politics has always been structured. Women in politics who speak out about the harassment they face are often silenced by being reminded that they chose a job that comes with risks.

Violence, however, has no place in political processes and institutions. Women's equal right to political participation without discrimination is well established in international commitments often translated into national policy and legal frameworks.⁸³ Women must be able to exercise those rights to contribute to public life wherein society's policies are made and shaped. With few exceptions, Member States have not met their targets to achieve gender balance in decision-making and women's equal opportunities for participation, nor are they on track to do so.⁸⁴ Globally, only 25% of national parliamentarians are women.⁸⁵ Albeit the highest proportion ever reached, this figure barely rises half a percentage point each year. If women are not in decision-making spheres, the world risks losing what it has gained on gender equality and sustainable development.

Awareness is growing that violence against women in politics (VAWP) is a major deterrent to women exercising their political rights. It undermines policy outcomes and the work of political institutions such as parliaments or local governments.⁸⁶ Testimonies and available research suggest that VAWP is a phenomenon affecting women in all countries and at all levels of political participation – from voters to candidates, to elected officials to heads of state. It manifests physically, psychologically and sexually, both online and offline. Social media has inflamed harassment against women who voice their opinions; when effective this curtails their freedom of expression. Being young, a woman of colour, human rights advocate or associated with opposition politics appears to heighten the targeting of women.⁸⁷

UN Women is addressing VAWP with national partners and UN agencies through country programming, as well as awareness raising to elevate the issue into the normative agenda in coordination with the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, OHCHR and other international organizations. Explicit references to VAWP are now in key UN resolutions and Secretary-General reports.⁸⁸ A joint UN Women and UNDP programming guide on Preventing Violence Against Women in Elections⁸⁹ codifies examples of violence and policy response options from over 40 countries.

A 2018 global experts' meeting co-convened with the Special Rapporteur, OHCHR, Inter-Parliamentary Union and National Democratic Institute helped deepen international commitment to tackling the problem and advanced understanding of its causes and consequences. The meeting's outcomes are reflected in the Special Rapporteur's 2018 thematic report to the General Assembly.⁹⁰ A training module on violence against women in elections was developed in coordination with the UN Electoral Assistance Division.⁹¹ Ongoing good practice exchanges between national stakeholders,⁹² country studies and initiatives to mainstream VAWP into electoral violence monitoring⁹³ are all helping to tackle VAWP at country level.

Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces

Across the world in urban and rural areas, many women and girls fear and experience sexual harassment in public spaces, whether on streets, in and around work places, on the way to and from school, in markets, while taking various modes of transportation, etc. Despite the growing evidence on the nature and scale of the problem, there is still a lack of local and national data on this issue within countries, little comparative data, and very few policies and practices in place to respond. This is also exacerbated given the normalization of the issue, lack of awareness among authorities and other community partners on how to address the issue.

The Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces initiative was launched at the creation of UN Women in 2011. Local

governments, UN partners, grassroots women, and women's rights organizations in five cities focused on the prevention of and response to sexual harassment against women and girls in public spaces. These were Cairo (Egypt), Kigali (Rwanda), Port Moresby (Papua New Guinea), Quito (Ecuador), and Delhi (India). In 2018, 35 cities⁹⁴ participate in the programme and UN Women continues to receive requests to join from cities in developed and developing countries.

Each city that participates in this programme adapts a global framework to local and country contexts. The common understanding framing all Safe Cities work is that 'Women and girls are socially, economically, and politically empowered in public spaces that are free from sexual harassment and other forms of sexual violence in public spaces'. Local governments and their partners express that the model helps the city to implement multiple Sustainable Development Goals and targets. Specifically, these are SDG 4 (Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all)⁹⁵; SDG 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls)⁹⁶, SDG 11 (Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable)⁹⁷, and SDG 16 (Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all level)⁹⁸.

All cities are equipped with guidance notes, cross regional knowledge exchanges through a global community of practice. They also have access to technical accompaniment to support a step by step process in developing, implementing and assessing a **comprehensive evidence** and **human rights based approach** to ending sexual harassment in public spaces.⁹⁹

Through strong multisectoral partnerships, each city is achieving results at many different levels (community, policy, institutional). For example, in Cairo, Egypt, strong participatory mechanisms at the community level with youth groups and neighbourhood committees have been established to prevent and respond to sexual violence and are operational. In Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, where 80% of vendors are women, the National Capital District Commission (local

government), under the leadership of the Governor, is collaborating with sector-specific institutions and women's safety partners in a **gender approach** to urban planning. Quito (Ecuador) amended a local ordinance in 2012, to strengthen action against sexual harassment in public spaces and in 2016, the municipality adopted the Safe City Programme as an emblematic programme with strategies, interventions and a budget allocation to ensure sustainability. Other countries have also revised and or passed recent legislation on sexual harassment in public spaces informed by the evidence, community mobilization, and policy advocacy efforts in safe cities, such as Cairo in Egypt, Quezon City in Philippines, and Delhi in India.

UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women

The UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women invests in projects that work to prevent and end sexual violence. Through its competitive grant-giving process, at least three of the newest cohort of grantees awarded in 2018 will implement projects to prevent and end sexual harassment. The following current grantees address harassment in Egypt and Cameroon.

In the West Region of Cameroon, the Association pour la Promotion du Développement Local (APDEL) implemented "Breaking the Silence", a project to reduce sexual harassment in school environments, a burning issue in the country and a major impediment to girls completing their studies. In the two years of the project, APDEL worked with local government and schools to develop and institute ethical codes of conduct addressing violence in schools. Fifteen partner schools worked with APDEL to educate 2,542 girls and boys, as well as 63 parents and educational staff.

In the informal settlements of Ezbet El-Haggana and El-Marg in Cairo, Egypt, home to about one million people, women and girls from some of the most marginalized communities often struggle with poverty, high rates of illiteracy, and barriers to medical, legal and economic services. Starting in 2015, the Al-Shehab Institution for Comprehensive Development, funded by the UN Trust Fund, established a community

drop-in centre focused on providing essential services for women and girl survivors of violence, women living with HIV/AIDS and those at risk of violence, as well as for women domestic workers. The objective was to create safe, stigma-free and accessible services.

The project ensured health, legal and psychological services through anti-violence programmes, to 1,662 women. The project has raised consciousness about the unacceptability of violence against women. Thirty-five women who participated in the project reported that before their participation, they considered street harassment and domestic violence as a normal part of their lives, whereas now they all report that domestic violence is no longer acceptable in their minds.

"Today, I have much more self-confidence and I'm not afraid of interacting with anybody or voicing my opinion", said Sarah Fawzy (Participant in UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women grantee programme).

Addressing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA)

UN Women's work on peace and security encompasses the four pillars of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda: participation, protection, prevention and peacebuilding and recovery⁹⁰. We believe that women and girls will be safer if women lead efforts to improve their own security, if perpetrators of violence are held to account and if survivors have access to comprehensive redress.

UN Women country and regional offices implement initiatives across all WPS subject areas. We have ensured that Conflict Related Sexual Violence (CRSV) is at the forefront of our activities related to human rights monitoring, security sector reform, transitional justice, peace negotiations, and peacekeeping. We provide leadership and coordination on new and existing WPS accountability frameworks to Member States and regional bodies, support to Civil Society

Organizations (CSOs), in particular women-led organizations and work to ensure a place at the table where the contributions of women of all ages to conflict prevention, resolution and peacebuilding are recognized and valued.

UN Women, like the rest of the UN system, has a zero-tolerance policy that prohibits the exchange of money, employment, goods, services and other assistance for sex, and prohibits all personnel from engaging in sexual relations with persons under the age of 18 in any circumstances. The zero-tolerance policy strongly discourages, but does not prohibit, non-transactional sexual relationships between UN personnel and local beneficiaries of assistance on the grounds that these relationships “are based on inherently unequal power dynamics” and “undermine the credibility and integrity of the work of the United Nations.”

Acts of SEA are abuses of power and privilege and contrary to our organization’s values, ambitions, and policies; they are also, in many instances, criminal acts. Our organizational response needs to acknowledge this dual nature and ensure that our internal disciplinary and administrative sanctions are not where the issue ends. Crimes need to be dealt with as such by a competent jurisdiction, with our cooperation and support.

UN Women strongly supports the initiatives of the Secretary-General to deal with SEA. Specific actions have included:

- Development of a mandatory Prevention of SEA e-learning course for all personnel with UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF.
- ‘No Excuse cards’ have been distributed to all of our country and regional offices. The cards outline UN personnel’s responsibilities and obligations with respect to conduct, and to prevent and report SEA.
- UN Women has established Prevention of SEA focal points at its Headquarters and in all the regions where we operate.

Since 2009, UN Women has partnered with Justice Rapid Response (JRR)¹⁰¹, a multilateral organization with a constituency of 100 participant States and institutions, to deploy specialized Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) investigators to international, regional and national accountability mechanisms around the world. At present, the JRR-UN Women Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Justice Experts Roster is comprised of more than 200 experts, with close to 50% from the global south, representing more than 70 nationalities. The individuals on the Justice Experts Roster represent a wide range of expertise, including investigations, prosecution, law reform, interpretation, psychosocial support and forensic sciences. Experts on the JRR-UN Women Justice Experts Roster have experience investigating allegations of sexual harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse, both within national jurisdictions and for international organizations. Expertise from the JRR-UN Women Roster can be requested confidentially, through the secretariat of Justice Rapid Response.

Around the world, UN Women has worked to prevent and respond to Conflict Related Sexual Violence (CRSV):

In Bosnia Herzegovina UN Women participates in a joint programme with UNDP, UNFPA, and IOM to tackle the legacy of CRSV among survivors. The project aims to improve access both to justice and services, and to combat stigma. UN Women supports the economic empowerment of survivors through livelihood programmes and access to reparations. We have also supported comprehensive and effective care for wartime rape survivors and witnesses before, during, and after their trials, monitoring and documenting the treatment of witnesses by judges and prosecutors.

In Mali, UN Women conducted the first investigations of the use of sexual violence in the civil war. UN Women subsequently partnered with other UN agencies to assist CRSV survivors and train security forces on the protection of women and girls.

In Colombia, UN Women has amplified the voice and given support and visibility to survivors of CRSV,

through multiple interventions both during the peace negotiations in Havana, Cuba in the efforts for the implementation of the Victims and Land Restitution Law in 2011, and in collaboration with the Office of the Attorney General.

In Uganda, in collaboration with UNICEF, UN Women has helped reintegrate hundreds of women and girls formerly abducted by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), many of them with children born of rape, through income generation activities and access to land. Thanks to this programme, many operate successful businesses and use this income to support education and medical needs.

Addressing violence against women in university campuses

Research and anecdotal evidence indicate that VAW is a severe problem at universities globally.¹⁰² University¹⁰³ campuses create a unique set of risks for women's exposure to and experience of violence, for example sexual harassment; specific strategies are required to address it. The issue will be addressed in more details in UN Women's upcoming Guidance Note on "Addressing Violence Against Women in University Campuses," along with the "10 Essentials for Addressing Campus Violence."

An ethical and effective response to VAW on campus must be guided by key principles. This includes a **survivor-based approach** that prioritizes rights, needs and wishes. Interventions must be implemented using a **human rights-based approach** that accounts for the needs of survivors who may face multiple forms of discrimination. Universities should ensure perpetrators are held accountable while also respecting a survivor's right to choose not to report. Effective responses to VAW on campus should be guided by a **comprehensive approach** that requires change across multiple levels, including at individual, relationship, community and institutional levels.

There are many actions for a university to take to create an enabling institutional environment to end VAW, including sexual harassment. The design of

effective interventions first requires an assessment of the situation to understand the extent and nature of VAW in and around campus. This can be done through a rigorous study or less formal assessments such as focus group discussions, community conversations and one-on-one meetings. Zero tolerance must then be translated into an explicit university policy that is informed by the situation assessment and that applies to all students, faculty and staff. Specific protocols that outline the detailed steps and procedures required should also be developed as part of the university policy. This should include a code of conduct for university staff and faculty, a reporting and confidentiality protocol, a protocol for supportive and interim measures and investigation and adjudication protocols. For long-term effectiveness, the policy and protocols need regularly to be reviewed (usually every 2-3 years) to incorporate lessons learned and there should be a dedicated university coordinator on this work. If a survivor reports an incident and requests support, it may be necessary to take adequate interim and supportive measures, such as in relation to accommodation, class attendance, or exams schedule, to ensure the survivors safety and the safety of others. Additionally, monitoring and evaluation are necessary components to effectively track implementation and impact of university policies and protocols, collect good practices and identify lessons learned. All these institutional steps necessitate adequate resources and a dedicated budget, without which any measures will fall short of what is required to end VAW on campus.

A survivor-based and a **human rights-based approach** require that universities have a long-term commitment to the provision of support and services for all those who experience violence. Information about available services should be adequately disseminated and all responses should be effectively coordinated with providers on and off campus, including health clinics, shelters, non-governmental organizations, police, legal and social services. Steps should include an urgent response system with a 24-hour hotline/helpline, identifying and training first responders, establishing clear referral systems and signing Memoranda of Understanding with service providers

from different sectors, and establishing a crisis centre/ women's resource centre on campus.

Finally, a comprehensive approach should not only include provision of quality services to survivors, but also ensure that every effort is made to prevent violence before it occurs. It is necessary to transform social norms, behaviours, practices and gender stereotypes that tolerate or condone VAW. To achieve this, it is important to apply multiple strategies at different levels. Essential to elimination is the creation of a campus community that is respectful and empowering for all women. Prevention efforts should include:

- awareness raising,
- training for all university staff,
- bystander programmes,
- community mobilization and
- accountability to sexual harassment must be promoted.

Prevention also requires interventions that promote respectful relationships and challenge harmful masculinities by addressing gender stereotypes and roles.

WHAT WOULD IT TAKE TO GET CLOSER TO ELIMINATION?

UN Women includes here contributions from interested parties in the journey towards ending sexual harassment, written in their own voice. A Youth Council was established in the agency in 2018 and a cross agency Feminist Network was established in 2016. Each has contributed to this section.

UN Women Youth Council

The UN Women Youth Council is a group of young professionals that aims to streamline the youth focus in UN Women's internal policy frameworks and in our broader work to advance gender equality and ensure the 2030 Agenda in its entirety delivers for women and girls, as well as other minority genders, everywhere. The UN Women Youth Council recognizes the specific and essential role of youth in all aspects of UN Women's work, including the efforts to address sexual harassment in the workplace.

The Secretary General has called for a review of current practices in preventing and addressing sexual harassment at the UN.¹⁰⁴ Recognizing that sexual harassment is a symptom of structural inequalities – specifically, those that arise from systematically embedded racism, sexism, homophobia, ableism and ageism -- the UN Women Youth Council believes the particularly vulnerable situation of young people must be adequately addressed in order to prevent and adequately respond to cases of sexual harassment. Given UN Women's mandate to lead on gender equality and women's empowerment, we believe that we have a responsibility to advocate for young people everywhere, and ensure we create safe public, private and digital spaces where we can thrive.

#MeToo and similar movements have shown us that no country or organization is immune to the occurrence of sexual harassment. It can happen to anyone and it can happen anywhere. Young people, however,

have an added challenge of being at the early stages of their careers in an environment where positions of power are still dominated by men. Women have often been expected quietly to accept the expression of this power, which too often, manifests as sexual harassment. Young people are often in a precarious position in the workplace, with many junior personnel at UN Women either interns or on short-term, insecure short term contracts. Being in these financially and professionally vulnerable positions, in which contract renewals, references, and future job prospects are potentially in the hands of a perpetrator, only serves to further discourage survivors from speaking up about sexual harassment. When a young person is also a person of colour, or has a disability, is a woman or gender minority, has dependents, or is LGBTQI, these identities can also heighten their vulnerability to experiencing harassment, as well as make them less likely to report any such experiences. As such, sexual harassment cannot be tackled without a truly intersectional approach to understanding the insidious and complex nature of such abuse.

In recent years, we have seen a change in the tide around the conversation of sexual harassment, particularly in the digital space, a platform heavily influenced by and influential to young people. An intergenerational study conducted in the response to the #MeToo movement revealed that women under the age of 35 years were the most likely to think that the #MeToo movement positively progressed society's thinking around sexual harassment; to think it was

important to report instances of sexual harassment; to think it was acceptable for an alleged perpetrator to be held accountable; and to understand the importance of electing females to political office. These results highlight the ways in which young people are key actors in this global movement to reshape and progress social norms.

Therefore, while young people are a particularly vulnerable group, we are also an important part of the solution. To this end, the UN Women Youth Council is working to ensure policy frameworks apply equally to all personnel and are sensitive to the vulnerabilities of young people and other at-risk groups. We have an important role and responsibility to:

- raise awareness of the barriers that prevent young people from reporting sexual harassment;
- advocate for workplace culture change to one that actively promotes zero tolerance of sexual harassment and to
- center the survivor in our policy frameworks, educational resources and reporting mechanisms.

With the support of strong, feminist leadership at UN Women, we are engaging in important decision-making and leadership spaces, including consultations with the Executive Co-Ordinator for Addressing Sexual Harassment, the UN Women Feminist Think Space on Sexual Harassment, Senior Management Team meetings, Human Resources workshops and UN Women's program to end gender discriminatory laws.

It is imperative that we listen to those who are at risk of being most marginalized and left behind in our community at UN Women, and amplify the voices of those too-often not listened to in these debates: primarily, the voices of survivors. The UN Women Youth Council is committed to listening to and advocating for those voices to ensure we create a safer world and workplace for the next generation of young people.

UN Feminist Network

The UN Feminist Network (UNFN) was founded in 2016, to provide an informal space for feminists working within the UN, as well as civil society allies, to network and strategize to help the UN system to meet its commitments to gender equality and women's rights. One of the founding principles of the Network is that when feminists in different parts of the UN, as well as those from civil society, work together, we can be more effective in influencing change; and that in order to work together more effectively, we need a political space to meet, to understand one another's strengths and positions, and to identify opportunities to move our bureaucracies towards greater gender justice.

In our first year, we devised a feminist agenda for the incoming Secretary General¹⁰⁵, generating widespread support for our proposals across the UN system and among feminists in civil society, and dialogued with UN principles and senior officials. Many of our proposals were reflected in the SG's system-wide strategy on gender parity, released in September 2017. When it was launched, we pointed out that although the plan represented a landmark in the UN's commitment to advancing gender equality within its own organizations, efforts would be stymied if pervasive sexual harassment and abuse of authority were not addressed.

In March 2018, against the backdrop of the #MeToo movement, as well as revelations in both INGOs and the UN, UNFN convened a meeting of more than 100 feminists to discuss the ongoing problem of sexual harassment, sexual assault and abuse of power in multilateral development organizations. Based on those discussions, the Network put together set of key principles¹⁰⁶ and recommendations for the CEB's high-level taskforce on sexual harassment, an agenda that has since been endorsed by feminists in more than 30 UN organizations and entities, as well as hundreds of civil society organizations and individuals.

Historically, the UN has been a leading force in defining gender-based violence as a form of discrimination and a violation of human rights, adopting global normative standards to guide both prevention and response efforts. The UN now has an opportunity to be at the forefront of the response to sexual and gendered harassment and abuse within its own organizations,

to ensure safe workplaces for UN personnel and the people it serves, providing a model for others which reflects its fundamental values. We hope that the CEB High Level Taskforce will seize this opportunity.

To do so, the leadership of the UN needs to acknowledge that there are deep systemic problems, admit it has a mountain to climb to address them, and apologize to its personnel, past and present, for its failure to prevent and respond to abuse over decades. Our senior leaders must be bold in identifying solutions and ending impunity.

Generating bold solutions will come from two sources: victims and survivors of abuse, and experts in gender-based violence within and beyond the UN system. To date, the former group has not been consulted in any meaningful way. A survey of secretariat staff is planned, which is welcome (and should be replicated in all agencies and entities), but the UNFN would like to see a much more comprehensive and proactive approach taken to listening to the voices of victims and survivors in the UN across the globe, so that we can design policies and implement practices that are genuinely survivor-centred, that respond to UN staff in all their diversity, and that are tailored to the complex working environments that make up UN postings. This should not be a one-off: integrating survivor feedback and experiences into the process on an ongoing basis can help to ensure that these policies and practices are working, so that adjustments can be made where necessary. A carefully designed approach to listening to the voices of survivors could serve as part of a process of restorative justice for them too.

Experts on gender-based violence within and beyond the UN are another critical source of expertise, which is why UN Women being the co-chair of the group tasked with defining a new model policy, along with the Office of Human Resources Management, was an obvious choice. Sexual harassment is rooted in unequal gendered power and cultures of male supremacy, and therefore requires responses that aim to transform our organizational cultures. The UNFN and the Gender Focal Points from across the UN system

have provided inputs into the process of developing the model policy for the UN, aiming to achieve this cultural shift, and we hope that those proposals will be strongly evident in the final document.

But, if the UN wants to lead the world in addressing sexual harassment, as it must, we need to work with feminists in governments, civil society organizations, trade unions, universities, and the media, who have been grappling with the problem of sexual harassment in diverse and complex institutions and have a wealth of knowledge and experience. We are not alone in facing these problems. One of the UN's key resources is convening power, and one of our key constituencies, historically and today, is the women's movement. On an ongoing basis, we should invite them to advise us on designing survivor-centred policies, gender-sensitive investigations, surveys and other data collection methods, and so on.

On ending impunity, if efforts to address sexual harassment and abuse of authority in the UN are to have any meaningful and lasting effect, the senior leadership across all entities must be willing to enforce the policies and procedures, to ensure that all who work for or with the UN are held accountable for their actions. The protection of the organization is naturally a key priority. However, the protection of those who abuse only serves to corrode the trust that the staff and the public have in our precious global institution. It will not prevent future abuse and will not stop the drip-drip of damaging revelations in the media. We also need Member States, who have been rightly concerned about these cases, to play their part in fostering accountability by renouncing the use of diplomatic immunity to shield alleged perpetrators of sexual assault from prosecution.

If the UN genuinely wants to get to grips with the problems we have, we should be brave enough to open ourselves up to scrutiny, listen to the experience of survivors and the advice of experts, and have the difficult conversations about the radical changes that are so urgently needed. The UNFN will continue to seize every opportunity to support this vital work.

THE TIME IS NOW

This is a historic moment in which many stars align towards deep and lasting change on age old patterns of sexual harassment. There is a growing knowledge base as to interventions that can have impact and recognition that leadership and culture change are the foundation stones for permanent and meaningful change.

Addressing sexual harassment – some pointers

- **Start by naming the problem:** sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual conduct, which can range from looks to rape. It is a creature of gender inequality that is also shaped by other inequalities, such as ethnicity, indigenous status and race, sexual orientation age and disability as well as social class. It is an abuse of power and a human rights violation. Anyone can be a target and in the main perpetrators are men, as they tend to occupy positions of power and are implicated in broader systems and structures of gender inequality. Not all men abuse but all men can challenge abuse.
- **Know the knowers and learn from them:** Connect with knowledge holders/experts and understand them as valuable advisors or resources. They include scholars, activists, victims/survivors and they need to be shaping, reviewing and amending processes and systems.
- **There may be policies and procedures in place but are they fit for purpose?** The task is not to protect an organisation by denying or minimising what is happening but to end sexual harassment by changing behaviour and culture: that is, ending skewed and rigid power distributions. This means reviewing the effectiveness of what is in place in bringing about change. Revisit, assess and re-shape policy and practices, with the core elements (in this publication) as a guide.
- **Build a culture of respect, practice equality and ensure diversity in senior positions.** This requires some potentially difficult work such as establishing and maintaining channels of discussion on power and authority in the organisation, led by staff and able to say (and bring change to) what might be unpalatable to seniors' staff.
- **Develop and demonstrate unequivocal leadership.** Ensure clear, consistent messages and actions in line with each other – policies and statement of zero tolerance, for example, are undermined by the dismissal of reports of sexual harassment and the absence of meaningful consequences for abusers. Ensure there are no protected species – nobody can know impunity. Treat those who report as credible not as untrustworthy, without prejudging a conclusion, so that those who report sexual harassment, and the relevant procedures, are open to the possibility that sexual harassment may indeed have taken place. Make zero tolerance a practice not only an aspiration and outsource investigations or have external representation on investigation teams.
- **Learn from evidence and research** by update training approaches and content, investing in bystander programmes and supporting cultural change where everyone feels they have a stake in changed culture. End the myths that render women and all victims/survivors eminently unbelievable and men as credible.
- **Ensure prompt, appropriate responses to reports and provide transparency in processes and outcomes.** This should include information on how many reports were made, over what period, by whom and against whom (at least by grade and socio-economic data, with confidentiality where appropriate), how many reports proceeded to

investigation and what were the outcomes of such investigations. Make this information available to staff, students (where relevant), stakeholders and the public.

- **Ensure that the rights of victims/survivors are clear, documented and known.** Those who report must have multiple routes for reporting and be able to select amongst them and be protected from retaliation. Those who report are to be treated on a par with those who are reported against and kept informed and consulted in any/all actions taken during investigation process and at conclusion.

The urgency of action

Victims across the world have made common cause and spoken with one voice; the violence of harassment is finding recognition; impunity is being challenged and accountability calls are finding a hearing. Parts of the popular media are paying attention and respect to women's voices thus enabling a wider and more participatory public conversation on sexual harassment than has been previously known. Spearheaded by women, the majority victims, the uprising has created space for recognition of the harm of such abuse for **all** victims.

States have expressed their vision of a new world through their commitment to ending all violence against women. Many actions taken by them have illustrated the serious intent with which sexual harassment, as part of the world of sexual violence, is being addressed.

Reputable scholars and legal experts on sexual harassment have established what sexual harassment is, its gendered character and established 'unwelcomeness'

as the core concept. There is a body of work that has reviewed previous efforts to address sexual harassment, that has evaluated their effectiveness. There is a growing body of data that tells us of the ubiquity of this abuse.

This constellation of demand, knowledge and commitments is full of potential and promise. Yet without the fracturing of the norms that structure expectations and behaviours along gender lines, and other dimensions of inequality, this promise will not materialise. Young people, black and indigenous women, people with disabilities, LGBTQI people – all have specific experiences and vulnerabilities that they will best advocate. Their experiential knowledge, the wisdom of the relatively less powerful, is essential in shaping work to end sexual harassment and they must find representation in positions of power to disrupt how these operate. The global commitment to **leave no one behind** is a call for their influential participation in this work. This will produce profound cultural change.

This publication is intended to be a resource on this collective effort, outlining some of the interconnected ways in which sexual abuse is manifested and how they are being addressed. UN Women and partners work across these issues in initiatives shared here. The core elements included here offer a framework for future initiatives – policies and practices – from which all authorities, employers, campuses and others can build. UN Women will continue to bring expertise and advice to support efforts to end sexual harassment.

Victims across the world have pushed open a door to a different world – now policy makers, states, employers and others will need to go through that door and play their part. That way lies the future that has been demanded, promised and is deserved.

NEWS HEADLINES

#MeToo challenges taboo against admitting sexual abuse in Africa
October 20, 2017 Reuters

Al Azhar calls for penalties for sexual harassment
August 29, 2018 - Dawn

Yet another World Cup reporter had to deal with sexual harassment on live TV
June 26, 2018 - Machable

The Climbing Industry Tackles the #MeToo Movement
July 24, 2018 - Outside

MPs demand reforms to tackle workplace sexual harassment
July 25, 2018 - Financial News

Employers must be forced to tackle sexual harassment, say MPs
July 25, 2018 - The Guardian

Vatican meets #MeToo: Nuns denounce their abuse by priests
July 22, 2018 - CityNews

'Dismaying' level of sexual harassment in corporate SA – survey
September 1, 2018 - Fin 24

When will China implement laws to combat sexual harassment?
September 15, 2018 - Aljazeera

Sexual harassment in science won't end without 'serious systemic change', STEM women say
September 15, 2018 - ABC News

U. administration clarifies minimum penalty for faculty responsible for sexual harassment
September 24, 2018 - Daily Princetonian

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September 25, 2018 BBC-Reuters-Slate by teleSUR/mrs-MS

Revisiting what happened to Anita Hill
September 26, 2018 - NY Times

Morocco criminalises violence against women and sexual harassment
September 12, 2018 – Al Jazeera

'MeToo' takes India by storm
October 9, 2018 - The Tribune

One Year of #MeToo: A Modest Proposal to Help Combat Sexual Harassment in the Restaurant Industry
October 10, 2018 - The New Yorker

700,000 Female Farmworkers Say They Stand With Hollywood Actors Against Sexual Assault
November 10, 2017 - Time Magazine

ENDNOTES

- 1 Text from the me too site. Accessed on 10.02.2018 <https://metoomvmt.org>
- 2 #NiUnaMenos (Not One Less), Argentina – Text edited from NiUnaMenos site. “Ni Una Menos is a collective cryout against gender violence. It arose from the need to say “enough femicides”, because in Argentina every 30 hours they kill a woman just because she is a woman. The call was born of a group of journalists, activists, artists, but grew when society made it their own and turned it into a collective campaign. Ni Una Menos was joined by thousands of people, hundreds of organizations across the country, schools, militants from all political parties. Because the request is urgent, and change is possible, Ni Una Menos was installed in the public and political agenda. On June 3, 2015, in the “Plaza del Congreso”, in Buenos Aires and in hundreds of squares all over Argentina, a multitude of voices, identities and flags showed that Ni Una Menos is not the end of anything but the beginning of a new road”. Free translation from NiUnaMenos site, access on 10.02.2018 <https://niunamenos.com.ar/> Ni Una Menos twitter, Accessed on 10.02.2018 <https://twitter.com/NiUnaMenos>
- 3 Alyssa Milano’s tweet Accessed on 10.02.2018 https://twitter.com/alyssa_milano/status/919659438700670976?lang=en
- 4 700,000 Female Farmworkers Say They Stand With Hollywood Actors Against Sexual Assault – Time, access on 10.02.2018 <http://time.com/5018813/farmworkers-solidarity-hollywood-sexual-assault/>
- 5 The Time’s Up initiative begun with a letter of solidarity sent by 700,000 female farmworkers to a legion of Hollywood actors. The Time’s Up site mission states that “TIME’S UP™ is an organization that insists on safe, fair and dignified work for women of all kinds. We want women from the factory floor to the floor of the Stock Exchange to feel linked as sisters as we shift the paradigm of workplace culture. Powered by women, TIME’S UP addresses the systemic inequality and injustice in the workplace that have kept underrepresented groups from reaching their full potential. We partner with leading advocates for equality and safety to improve laws, employment agreements, and corporate policies; help change the face of corporate boardrooms and the C-suite; and enable more women and men to access our legal system to hold wrongdoers accountable. No more silence. No more waiting. No more tolerance for discrimination, harassment or abuse. TIME’S UP™” Accessed on 10.02.2018 <https://www.timesupnow.com/>
- 6 For information about hashtags #MeToo, #NiUnaMenos, #BalanceTonPorc, #PrimeiroAssedio, #Babaeko and #WithYou see ENDNOTES 9], 10], 11], 12], 13 and 14].
- 7 Catharine A. MacKinnon is Elizabeth A. Long Professor of Law at the University of Michigan and James Barr Ames Visiting Professor of Law at Harvard Law School (since 2009). She holds a B.A. from Smith College, a J.D. from Yale Law School, and a Ph.D. in political science from Yale. She writes and practices law widely, focusing on equality issues, especially sex equality, including and together with racial issues, under international and domestic (including comparative, constitutional, and criminal) law administration, and in political theory. She created the legal claim for sexual harassment as sex discrimination and the concept “gender crime,” which she implemented with the International Criminal Court as the first Special Gender Adviser to the Prosecutor (2008-2012). Among the schools at which she has taught are Yale, Stanford, Minnesota, Chicago, Osgoode Hall (York University, Canada), Basel (Switzerland), Hebrew University (Jerusalem), and Columbia. She was awarded residential fellowships at the Institute for Advanced Study, Stanford, the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin, and the University of Cambridge, UK. Professor MacKinnon’s thirteen scholarly books include *Sexual Harassment of Working Women* (1979), *Feminism Unmodified* (1987), *Toward a Feminist Theory of the State* (1989), *Only Words* (1993), *Women’s Lives, Men’s Laws* (2005), *Are Women Human?* (2006), *Sex Equality* (3d ed. 2016), *Traite, Prostitution, Inégalité* (2014), and *Butterfly Politics* (2017). In 2014, she was awarded the Ruth Bader Ginsburg Lifetime Achievement Award by the Women’s Section of the American Association of Law Schools and is an elected member of the American Law Institute (ALI). Empirical studies document that Professor MacKinnon is among the most widely-cited legal scholars in the English language and the most widely-cited woman.
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- 11 #BalanceTonPorc (Rat Out Your Pig), France – Balance Ton Porc is the only website that allows victims of sexual harassment, sexual assault or rape to anonymously post their testimonials and interact with each other. Free translation from Balance Ton Porc site. Accessed on 10.02.2018 <https://www.balancetonporc.com/> BalanceTonPorc twitter, Accessed on 10.02.2018 <https://twitter.com/balancetonporc>
- 12 The First Time I Got Harassed I Was..., Egypt – “Over the past few days, a hashtag, where Egyptian women reveal the age and stories of when they first got sexually harassed, went viral on Egypt’s social media. Most users were shocked to learn the naked truth about sexual harassment in Egypt, which, in this case, should just be called what it is, child molestation and abuse.” This article published in 05.04.2017 translates some tweets from the hashtag, which literally translates to #TheFirstTimeIGotHarassedIWas” access on 10.02.2018 <http://cairoscene.com/Buzz/Egyptian-Women-Reveal-When-They-Were-Sexually-Harassed-for-the-First-Time>
- 13 #WithYou: How women journalists in Japan are fighting harassment- Columbia Journalism Review. Accessed on 10.02.2018 <https://www.cjr.org/analysis/japan.php>
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“The millennials who are rising up in the companies and are destined for the corner office, will know that the corner office doesn't come with a girl — that you will get in trouble ... that the boards of organizations cannot afford these cases and the stigma, and the public will punish you.¹⁰⁷”

—Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women

UN WOMEN IS THE UN ORGANIZATION DEDICATED TO GENDER EQUALITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN. A GLOBAL CHAMPION FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS, UN WOMEN WAS ESTABLISHED TO ACCELERATE PROGRESS ON MEETING THEIR NEEDS WORLDWIDE.

UN Women supports UN Member States as they set global standards for achieving gender equality, and works with governments and civil society to design laws, policies, programmes and services needed to implement these standards. It stands behind women's equal participation in all aspects of life, focusing on five priority areas: increasing women's leadership and participation; ending violence against women; engaging women in all aspects of peace and security processes; enhancing women's economic empowerment; and making gender equality central to national development planning and budgeting. UN Women also coordinates and promotes the UN system's work in advancing gender equality.



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