

# MANUAL ON ORGANISING & ENGAGING WITH THE LGBTQI





## FOREWORD

This manual is more than a training tool- it reflects collective effort. Across Sri Lankan trans and queer workers contribute daily to the countries economy, and they come from every sector of our economy. Yet too often, their labor remains invisible.

ILO convention C190 affirms that everyone has a right to a world of work free of violence and harassment. For trans and queer workers this promise means the right to be treated with respect, to work without fear, and to organise without discrimination. But rights on paper are not enough. They must be claimed, protected and lived. That's where organizing becomes powerful.

This manual brings together knowledge, and tools to start a conversation with trans and queer workers on importance of organizing build all the way up to practicing collective bargaining.

We hope this manual will be used, discussed, challenged and expanded by trans and queer workers and their allies. Each tool is meant to spark action not just awareness. As the Gender Platform members we have experienced many of these tools both as participants and as facilitators.

As you use this manual, remember: change begins with people like you- workers who come together and organise for what Together, we build a world of work where everyone can live and labour with pride, safety, and dignity.

In solidarity,

The Gender Platform Sri Lanka

## INTRODUCTION

This manual is the result of five years of organizing workers across Sri Lanka uniting campaigns for safe and respectful workplaces. Our work was framed within a demand for structural changes through the ratification of ILO Convention 190 (C190) on Violence and Harassment in the World of Work. For example in 2022 we drafted a proposal called Equal Opportunity Bill through community consultations and presented the proposal to the government.

When we began, Sri Lanka faced — and still faces — a significant gender gap in the labor market. As of 2023<sup>1</sup>, only 33.5% of individuals aged 15 and above in Sri Lanka’s workforce are women, compared to 66.5% for men.



In the informal sector, which makes up 58% of all employment, workers have little to no protection under labor law. This reality is even harsher for trans and queer workers, whose rights are not recognised in law and whose very presence in the workforce is often stigmatised.

Trans and queer workers in Sri Lanka face layered and intersecting barriers to decent work that go far beyond the lack of legal recognition. Many are denied employment altogether due to discrimination in hiring, while those who find work often endure daily harassment, misgendering, and exclusion from workplace benefits. In sectors like the informal sector, where protections are already weak, trans and queer workers are further marginalised by stigma, police harassment, and the absence of grievance mechanisms. Fear of exposure, retaliation, and loss of livelihood prevents many from reporting violence or harassment. Without union spaces that affirm their identities, these workers are often invisible in broader labor struggles, leading to their issues being sidelined.

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.statistics.gov.lk/Resource/en/LabourForce/Bulletins/LFS\\_Q4\\_Bulletin\\_2023.pdf](https://www.statistics.gov.lk/Resource/en/LabourForce/Bulletins/LFS_Q4_Bulletin_2023.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ifc.org/content/dam/ifc/doc/mgrt/sri-lankan-businesses-advance-gender-equality.pdf>

Our work began with the aim of organizing informal workers and established trade unions to demand for C190 ratification. From the very beginning of the C190 discourse we believed that it provides protection to everyone in the world of work including trans and queer workers.

Creating the Gender Platform and setting up the Abhimana Worker's Union that openly include trans and queer workers are the two significant outcomes of last five years of organizing.

### South Asian Workers Gender platform – Sri Lanka



This is a network of already established trade unions and workers groups to take collective action to address violence and harassment in the world of work. Gender Platform was set up in 2019 following the adaptation of convention 190 at the ILO general assembly.

The group has been advocating for ratification of C 190 since its inception.



## වැඩ ලෝකය තුළ හිංසනය සහ ප්‍රචණ්ඩත්වය දුරලීම

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විත්තවේගී හිංසනය, වාචික හිංසනය, දෘමරිකකම්, රූපු ගැසී විහිච්චනම්  
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ආරක්ෂාවක් හිමි වන්නේ නැත.

"මාව ගබඩා කාමරයකට දාලා මගේ ඇඳුම් ඔක්කොම ගැලපවිවා. ඒගොල්ලොන්ට ඔහේ  
වුණේ මගේ ලිංගික අවයව මොන වගේද කියලා බලන්න."

ඉවත්නොවූවලේ බෝජනසේවා කොමිෂනරියක සේවය කළ සංක්‍රාන්ති තරුණියක්.

"අනිත් ගුරුවරු නිතර මගෙන් අහනවා 'ඇයි මට දරුවෝ නැත්තේ?' කියලා. හැම වෙලේම  
විහිච් කරනවා දරුවෝ නැති එක ගැන. ඒක මට මානසික වදයක්."

රජයේ පාසලක සේවය කරන ගුරුවරයෙක්.

"මගේ මහන මැලීම කැටුණා. ඒක හදන්න එන තාක්ෂණික නිලධාරියා මගෙන් ලිංගික  
අල්ලසක් ඉල්ලුවා. මම කැමති වුණේ නෑ. ඒ නිසා එයා මගේ මැලීම පිළිසකර කපේ නෑ.  
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කවුන්දායක ඇගෙම් සේවිකාවක්.

"ලිංගිකව හැසිරෙන්න බැ කියනු නිසා මගේ කේ දළ හැමදාම කිරින්නේ හවසට. කොළ  
වේලෙනකොට බර අඩුවෙනවා. ඉතිං මට පටි ලැබෙන්නේ අඩුවෙන්."

හැටත් ප්‍රදේශයේ කේ දළ තෙලන ස්ත්‍රියක්.



**සි 190 හි විසුම්  
අපරාමුඛ කර  
ක්‍රියාත්මක කිරීමට  
සහය වෙන්න.**

ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ ස්ත්‍රී ශ්‍රම බලකාය  
**33.6% ක්.**

රැකියාව හැර ගිය ස්ත්‍රීන්ගෙන් **3/5ක්**

ලිංගික හිංසන සිදු නොවෙනවා යැයි

සහතිකයක් තිබෙනවානම් නැවත

රැකියාවට පැමිණීමට කැමතියි.

රටේ සමස්ත ශ්‍රම බලකායෙන්

**66%ක්**

නියැලෙන්නේ අවිධිමත් ක්ෂේත්‍රයේ

රැකියා වලයි.

Gender Platform created this leaflet for Members of Parliament to seek attention to C 190 and its discourse. The leaflet was distributed to all Members of Parliament with the support of the National Postal & Telecommunication Workers Union who is a member of the Gender platform.

During last five years the Gender Platform has developed a policy framework for trade unions on adapting inclusive policies to address violence and harassment within trade unions.



For Sri Lankan Trade Unions

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Framework for  
Gender Sensitive

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N U S S

### 1. What is this document?

National Union of Sea Farers (NUSS) Sri Lanka has been working very closely with the state, employers, and workers on prevention of violence in the world of work. Since ILO C190 was adopted at the ILO general assembly in June 2019, NUSS has been a strong advocate for ratification and implementation of the convention.

In 2019, NUSS together with the International Transport Workers Federation invited trade unions in Sri Lanka to join hands to demand for C190 ratification and this led to setting up the South Asian Workers Gender Platform (SAWGP) in 2020.

The Sri Lankan chapter of the South Asian Workers Gender Platform consists of 14

1. Ms. N. H. A. Karunasawathi - SL Independent Teachers Union (SLITU)
2. Ms. M. K. Sumitra Dassayuthi - Jathika Sevaka Sangamaya (JSS)
3. Ms. Anuruddika Jayaratna - Govt. Nursing Officers Union (GNOA)
4. Ms. Inasha Perera - National Transgender Network Sri Lanka (NTNSL)
5. Mr. Charith Attarapola - All Island Association to protect the Rights of Taxi Owners and Drivers (AIAPROD)
6. Ms. Chamila Tushani - De-Bindu Collective
7. Mr. Kalpa Maduranga - PROTECT Union
8. Ms. Chandra Devanarayana - Red Organization
9. Ms. Nalini Galappathi - Union of Sri Lankan Teachers Solidarity (USLTS)
10. Ms. Saraswathi Sivaguru - National Union of Workers (NUW)
11. Ms. Dharmika Kumari - Lanka Jathika Estate Workers Union (LJEWU)
12. Ms. Nilanthi Ranasinghe - National Post & Telecommunication Workers Union (NPTWU)
13. Ms. Sudeshi Pathiratne - National Union of Seafarers Sri Lanka (NUSS)
14. Mr. Lal Jayasinghe - National Union of Seafarers Sri Lanka (NUSS)

As C190 requires tri party agreement on the convention, SAWGP while engaging with the state and the employers, make a strong effort to work with their own trade unions to introduce and implement Anti-Harassment policies to address violence and harassment within trade unions and in their respective workplaces.

<sup>1</sup> C190 is the "Violence and Harassment" Convention, adopted on 21 June 2019 by the International Labour Conference. It establishes the right of everyone to a world of work free from violence and harassment, including gender-based violence and harassment. It is the first international law to do so. [https://www.ilo.org/csi/org/1163/pdf/c190\\_mini\\_guide\\_en.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/csi/org/1163/pdf/c190_mini_guide_en.pdf)

During last five years we have conducted five residential in-depth trainings for Gender Platform members to increase their understanding on C 190, Sexuality, Gender, Constitutional law, Labour laws and political participation of women in Sri Lanka. This manual carries five workshop tools that proved effective during this period. Part 1 of the manual includes those selected tools - Shared language through C190.

## Abimana Worker's Union



Abhimana Workers' Union emerged in 2022 with the aim creating awareness among trans and queer workers about organizing and collective bargaining. Six LGBTIQA led organizations based in Colombo supported this process by mobilizing workers through their networks. Since the start AWU has organized workers in 5 districts in Sri Lanka and increased their membership to over 140. During this process we conducted three residential leadership trainings for the core



team of 20, six awareness building sessions on trade unionism, collective bargaining and the importance of C 190.

Registering this union has faced multiple challenges including lack of common employer. Abimana Workers Union leadership is currently negotiating various strategies to organize as a workers' front.

This manual carries ten workshop tools that were effective in organizing trans and queer workers and develop strategies to advocate for a violence free world of work. Part 2 of the manual include those selected tools - Organizing Trans and Queer workers to unionize in Sri Lanka

### **Part 1: Shared language through C190**

This section includes 5 participatory tools that we selected from over 20 different activities that we conducted over a period of 5 years for various mainstream trade union members and leaders to increase their understanding on Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Gender Expression and sex characteristics and challenges that LGBTIQ+ individuals face in the world of work.

The facilitator team comprised of trans and queer activists to make these sessions grounded in their realities.

### **Part 2: Organising Trans and Queer workers to unionise in Sri Lanka**

This section includes 10 participatory tools and activities. From 2021 to 2025 we have sensitised over 350 trans and queer workers on organising using these activities. Workers represented varied backgrounds and they came mainly from the informal sector. This included apparel workers, domestic workers, sex and spa workers, street vendors, man power workers and NGO/CBO workers in Sri Lanka.

Sessions were conducted by trans and queer activists and existing trade union leaders who were trained through a series of workshops on Gender and Sexuality (Gender Platform Members). Therefore the facilitators carried an indepth understanding of LGBTIQ+ community and their challengers in the world of work.

## PART 1: SHARED LANGUAGE THROUGH C190



C190 is the first international treaty to set a clear, enforceable standard for eliminating violence and harassment in the world of work. Its scope is broad and inclusive:

- Covers all workers regardless of contractual status: employees, informal sector workers, self-employed, trainees, apprentices, volunteers, jobseekers, and even those whose employment has ended.
- Recognises all forms of harm: physical, psychological, sexual, and economic.
- Protects across spaces: from the workplace to employer-provided accommodation, commutes, work-related travel, and even online communications.
- For informal sector workers — street vendors, domestic workers, home-based producers — C190 is transformative. It recognises the world of work as it actually exists in South Asia: multi-location, unregulated, and often without formal contracts. For trans and queer workers, it opens the door to legal recognition of harassment and



discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation as part of gender-based violence at work.

- It provided a global standard to measure our national laws.
- It shifted the conversation from isolated cases of sexual harassment to the systemic need for safe, respectful workplaces.
- It gave unions and worker collectives a shared language for cross-sector and cross-border solidarity.
- It offered leverage in economic arguments: Sri Lanka could add US\$20 billion to its GDP by closing gender gaps in the labour force — but only if workplaces are safe, inclusive, and respectful.

These qualities of the convention allowed us to reimagine a world of work that is free of violence and harassment, and it helped us bridge trade unions that are working in isolation to address violence and harassment. Further, this convention demanded a honest conversation within trade unions to be inclusive and responsive to violence and harassment in the world of work.

### **Tool 1.1: Focus group discussions**

We conducted over 20 focus group discussions during last five years to understand ground realities of informal sector workers and that has immensely helped us to strengthen our programmes.

Following excerpt is from a report of a focus group discussion that we conducted in 2019 with informal sector workers to understand different types of violence and harassment that they encounter.

During the discussion we prioritized building genuine rapport and ensuring confidentiality from the outset. Participants were clearly informed about the purpose of the discussion, how their information would be used, and their right to withdraw at any time without consequence. We used inclusive and non-judgmental language, allowing participants to speak in the language they were most comfortable with. The sessions began with trust-building activities that helped ease tension and encouraged open sharing. Facilitators maintained empathy and active listening throughout, validating participants' experiences without probing or sensationalizing. The space was designed to be private, respectful, and affirming—particularly important for participants from marginalized identities—allowing them to share their stories of workplace violence honestly and safely.

Sample plan of a focus group discussion is shown below.

#### **Objectives:**

1. To understand the current perceptions of violence and harassment
2. To assess the understanding of LGBTIQ+ among the workers.



**Duration :** 2 hours

**Material:**

- ✓ Flipchart or whiteboard
- ✓ Markers and sticky notes
- ✓ Role cards with short scenarios (about harassment, discrimination etc)
- ✓ Recording materials (if consent is given)
- ✓ Ground rules chart

**Method:**

1. Welcome & Ground Rules.
  - I. Facilitator welcomes participants, introduces purpose of the FGD.
  - II. Emphasize confidentiality and respect (“What we share here stays here”).
  - III. Ground rules: no judgment, listen actively, use respectful language.
  - IV. Short energizer to build comfort. i.e Simen says<sup>3</sup>
2. Opening Question:
  - I. Ask participants: “When you hear the word ‘safe workplace,’ what comes to your mind?”
  - II. Write down words on flipchart based on their answers. i.e. safety, respect, fair pay, no harassment
3. Exploring Violence & Harassment Perceptions
  - I. Facilitator asks:
    - a. “What kinds of violence or harassment do workers face at work?”
    - b. “What counts as harassment for you? Is it only physical, or also verbal, emotional, sexual, or online?”
  - II. Use sticky notes for each person to write one example and put them on the wall.
4. Scenario Activity: Trans and Queer Workers’ Issues
  - I. Share 3–4 short scenarios (written or acted out). Examples:
    - a) A trans beautician denied wages after being insulted by employer.
    - b) A queer garment worker being teased and excluded by co-workers.
    - c) A gay NGO worker asked intrusive questions about his sexuality during a staff meeting.
  - II. For each scenario, ask:
    - a) “Is this violence or harassment?”
    - b) “How would other workers usually react?”
    - c) “What support systems are available?”
    - d) “How can unions or collectives respond?”
5. Reflection Questions: Understanding of Trans and Queer Issues
  - I. Ask open questions:
    - a) “What challenges do Trans and Queer workers face that others may not?”

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/353814114494063264/>



- b) “How do you feel unions or employers should address these?”
  - c) “Do you think Trans and Queer workers feel safe to report harassment?”
6. Reporting
- I. Transcribe or summarize notes as soon as possible.
  - II. Analyze themes: Look for patterns, similarities, and differences.
  - III. Report findings: Present main themes with illustrative quotes.

Below are some findings from a focus group discussion we conducted in 2020 to understand the prevalence and types of violence and harassment in the informal sector.

#### Sexual Violence and Harassment

Female participants spoke of the sexual harassment they encountered while working. Challenges of work environments, not knowing or having mechanisms of redress, and the safety of the environment in which one works, is challenging.

*“I was on a hire, in the driving seat. The man was trying to touch me. I could feel it. He kept asking me questions. He was Indian (but spoke Sinhala). It is up to us to deter him. I made him afraid by telling him we were in my hometown. He also asked me what would happen if something were to happen to me...I told him that I would have to throw whoever it was out of the vehicle. We have to be crafty in situations like this” - Female Cab driver.*

While personal safety becomes very difficult while travelling together, participants also shared their anxieties of having to work in environments in which harassment had a direct impact on the work they do, and the sustainability of their employment or their target.

*“If I don’t respond to the mechanic in the factory, he won’t fix my machine. He knows I will have to come back to him” – Manpower, Garment factory worker.*

*“I worked at a garment factory for 7 years. The manager used to harass me a lot. He didn’t stop pursuing me. He’d sit next to me the whole day. I stopped going to work. And because I stopped going in, they took me off the line. Then I asked for another line. He then befriended my friend. He used to ask me for money too. I didn’t have anyone to give me”. – Manpower, Garment Factory Worker.*

Those who identify as LGBT have to deal with discrimination in their workplaces. For those whose appearance or demeanor is seen as non-conforming, the stress is perhaps more present.

*“If they find out we are LGBT, then they will make fun of us” – Male Casino Worker*

This participant indicates that it makes it easier when he *“adapts to the way in which to be presented at work”*. Understandably, what this means is to conceal the overtly “gay” or “camp” characteristics to ‘look straight’.

Having to deal with discrimination, a Trans woman explained that she had to deal with people turning away from her services working in a waxing salon, once they found out she was Trans.

*“A lot of people don’t even know I’m trans. But in my previous workplace people have come into the place I’ve worked in, and then refused to get waxed because I was trans. They’ve said they should have been informed earlier.” – Trans Woman, Owner of Home-based Salon*

### **Hiding Identity**

Whilst many of the participants worked with people who were understanding or supportive of their gender, sexuality and choice, for others they claim to continue to hide their identity for the sake of their sanity.

*“I don’t talk to too many people in the place I work. Only those in the cleaning staff. Sometimes they ask why I’m not married”- Gay Cleaning Service Worker.*

*“I wear my uniform and cap. I go to work with 490 people. I grow my beard. They have no idea that I’m like this. Ask anyone here how I dress. But I can’t go to my workplace like that. Ask anyone about my Indian jewelry. But I don’t use any of that at work. I worked at the bathroom in the shopping centre building for 4 years. Do you think a “nachchiya” can work in a place like that? We have to learn to protect ourselves” - Trans Cleaning Service Worker*

Participants stated that they had to deal with name calling and slurs-- “Ponnaya” (Slang for gay), “Wandha” (Slang for impotent) and “Baduwa” (Slang for Sex worker), questioning their masculinity and manhood. Whilst some participants stated that this made them feel sad and hurt, others said they retorted these claims.

### **Tool 1.2: Understanding violence**



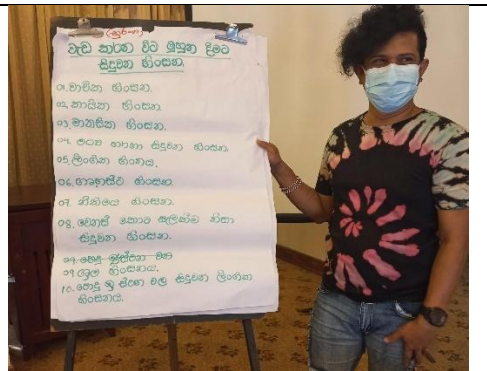
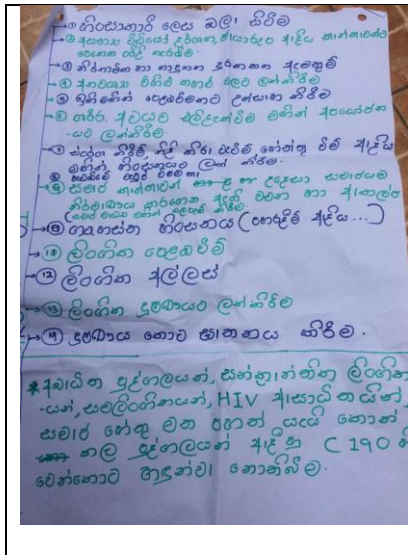
**Workshop was held in December 2020 for Gender Platform members.**

This activity plays a crucial role in creating a broader and more inclusive understanding of violence and harassment in the world of work, directly linking to the principles of ILO Convention C190. By encouraging participants to identify and discuss the things that make



them uncomfortable at work, the activity helps uncover the everyday realities of workplace behaviour that often go unnoticed or unreported. It allows workers to articulate their experiences in their own words, which helps reveal how violence and harassment can take multiple forms—physical, verbal, emotional, sexual, or economic—and how these forms often overlap. The participatory nature of the activity also empowers workers to critically reflect on their environment and recognize that discomfort, disrespect, and intimidation are not “normal” parts of work but indicators of deeper structural issues.

Through collective reflection and categorization, the activity builds awareness of the many ways violence manifests beyond physical acts—such as through exclusion, verbal abuse, or economic pressure. This understanding aligns directly with C190, which emphasizes that all forms of violence and harassment that cause physical, psychological, sexual, or economic harm and must be addressed.



Two images exhibit a list of different types of violence an harassment that participants identified. Workshop held in 2023.

We conducted this activity with the 20 gender platform members including two trans workers in 2020. Participants rerepresented apparel industry, man power, plantation, public sector and infomal sector.

Outcome of this workshop was a demand paper on C190 calling for urgent action to ratify the convention.

*“In view of the reasons above mentioned, with the expectation of a world of work where everyone is treated respectfully, we demand the Government of Sri Lanka to ratify ILO Convention 190. We further demand the Government to adopt national laws and regulations to give effect to the Convention and put in place an enforcement mechanism. Noting that effective implementation of the Convention requires a comprehensive national strategy which goes beyond legislation, we demand also that such a strategy is developed through a gender responsive approach.”* Singed by Da Bindu Collective, Stand Up Movement Sri Lanka, RED, Government Nursing Officers’ Asso. – GNOA, National Union of Workers, Textile Garment Clothing Workers Union – TGCWU, Taxi Owners & Drivers Union SAFE Organization, National Transgender Network



## Session plan

### Objectives:

- I. To increase understanding on various manifestations of violence in the world of work.

**Duration:** 1 hour

### Material:

- ✓ Flip charts
- ✓ White board markers

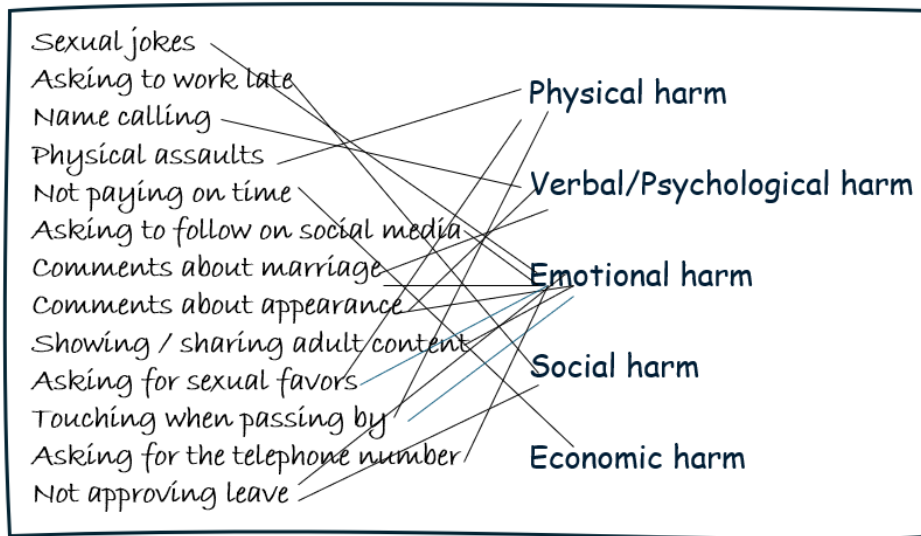
### Method:

1. Group activity: Ask the participants to create a list of things that make them uncomfortable in the workplace
  - I. Provide them with a large paper and pens.
  - II. Ask them to list things that make them uncomfortable in the workplace. Some examples are,

Sexual jokes  
Name calling  
Physical assaults  
Asking to follow on social media  
Comments about marriage  
Comments about appearance  
Showing / sharing adult content  
Asking for sexual favors  
Touching when passing by  
Asking for the telephone number

2. Discussion:

- I. Facilitate a discussion by asking following questions.
  - a. What are the different types of behaviours that makes you uncomfortable?
  - b. Can you categorise these actions under physical, verbal, emotional, economic harm?



- c. What are the overlaps that you see in the list?
- II. Show following videos and ask participants if they notice anything other than what they wrote. These videos will help participants to explore the informal sector in relations to violence and harassment.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HCsVuM-IJQs&t=9s>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5xMeHNtyNvA&t=18s>

- III. Conclude the discussion with a word cloud or a list of different types that reflects the lists.
- IV. Finally ask the participants to produce something creative to address violence and harassment in the world of work.

As an outcome of this session Gender Platform participants created informative posters on violence and harassment under the hashtag #RatifyC190. These were shared among their fellow Trade Union brothers and sisters and shared publicly on the official Facebook page<sup>4</sup> of this programme.



No – unwanted looks, touch, comments and acts in the workplace



Cartoon about unwanted comments in the workplace

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/ViolenceFreeWorkplace/photos>

### Tool 1.3: Pink & Blue isn't True

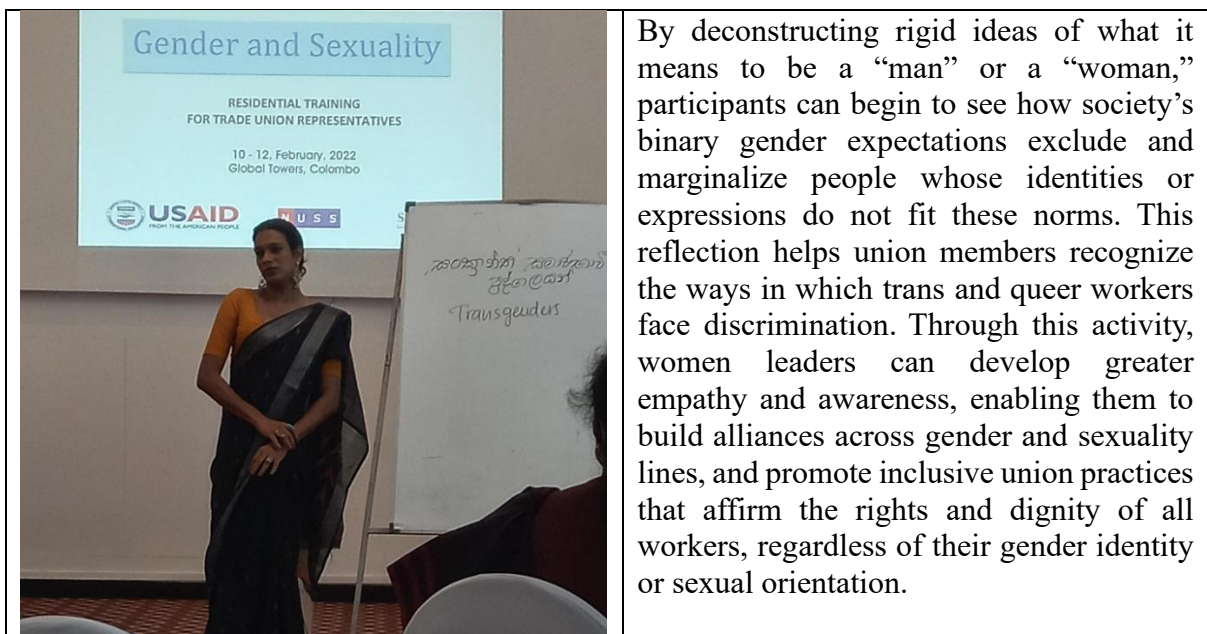


Photo from one of the In-Depth training held in 2022 for Gender Platform members

Conducting the “Pink & Blue isn’t True” activity for women leaders and trade union members was an interesting experience for the programme team because many participants talked about their own experiences of having to adhere to ‘feminine’ looks in the work place.

This activity was a turning point for many female participants as it challenges deep-rooted gender stereotypes that influence both personal and professional spaces, including trade unions and workplaces.

In addition, this activity is especially important for fostering understanding of trans and queer experiences within trade unions.





By visually exploring how society assigns different roles, appearances, and expectations to boys and girls from birth, participants can better understand how gender norms shape power dynamics, leadership opportunities, and decision-making in their unions.

During this activity as participants draw and compare images of children, teenagers, and young adults, they notice how physical appearance, clothing, behavior, and even colors become gendered over time. This shows that gender roles are not natural or biological, but rather taught and reinforced through families, schools, media, religion, and workplaces. The activity helps participants see how these social messages shape people's identities, limit their choices, and influence their opportunities.

**Objective:**

1. To increase understanding of concept of Gender to respond to stereotypes effectively.

**Duration:** 90 minutes

**Material:**

- ✓ Flip chart
- ✓ Pens
- ✓ Color paper

**Method:** Group activity:

1. Assign each group the tasks. Provide them enough color pens and color paper/magazine paper to create a collage.
  - a) Group 1 – Draw a picture of newborn girl and a boy
  - b) Group 2 – Draw a picture of 16-year-old girl and a boy
  - c) Group 3 – Draw a picture of 21 year of girl and a boy
2. Presentation:
  - I. Ask the groups to paste their work on the wall.

Facilitator takes everyone to where the pictures are put up and they focus on the first image. You may not notice a big difference between two images. But as they move on to second and third images there may be a clearly visible differences in body parts, cloths and body shape.

3. Discussion:
  - I. While the groups present facilitator lists out the characteristic of female images. List may include,
    - Long hair
    - Body shape
    - Beauty
    - Pink
    - Makeup

- Smaller than the male image
- II. Repeat for the male image.
- III. Facilitators may explain how gender is constructed from birth by assigning certain characteristics and roles.

*“Gender refers to the characteristics of women, men, girls and boys that are socially constructed. This includes norms, behaviours and roles associated with being a woman, man, girl or boy, as well as relationships with each other. As a social construct, gender varies from society to society and can change over time.”*

In this discussion facilitator can connect ‘feminine traits’ and ‘masculine traits’ with the expected roles of men and women public/private space.



### Tool 1.4: Power Walk

The Power Walk activity is a highly effective tool for trade union members to explore the structural inequalities, power dynamics, and vulnerabilities that shape experiences of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in the workplace. By assigning participants diverse role cards representing workers of different genders, sexual orientations, abilities, employment sectors, and socio-economic backgrounds, the exercise enables union members to step into the shoes of their colleagues and visualize how privilege and marginalization operate in real life.

As participants physically move forward or backward in response to statements, the activity sparks empathy and critical reflection. Participants noticed who benefits from societal privileges—such as a male union leader whose voice is always heard—and who faces compounded barriers, such as a queer man in an NGO hesitant to disclose his identity due to fear of losing employment.

These real-life reflections ground the activity in the local work environment and encourage union members to confront the structural and cultural factors that perpetuate SGBV.

The debrief discussion allows participants to analyze these disparities and consider practical union interventions, such as inclusive SGBV prevention policies, union-led support networks



for marginalized workers, and awareness campaigns targeting both employers and workers. A solidarity pledge wall, where members write specific actions they will take to promote inclusivity, reinforces commitment to collective action.

# POWER WALK

A highly effective tool for trade union members to explore structural inequalities, power dynamics, and vulnerabilities that shape experiences of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in the workplace.



For exercises enables union members to step into the shoes of their colleagues and visualize how privilege and marginalization



Some reflections from the participants

Female garment factory worker:

*“When I stepped back during the statements about unsafe night travel and harassment in public transport, I realized how much fear we live with every day just to get to work.”*

Trans woman working in a beauty salon:

*“I stepped back when the statement about facing daily harassment came up. Customers often mock me, and even some colleagues are disrespectful. I want the union to recognize that trans workers need protection and support, and that our rights at work matter just like anyone else’s.”*

Young woman in the Free Trade Zone:

*“I had to step back when the statement about night shifts and unsafe travel came up. We work long hours and often fear for our safety going home. The activity made me understand that unions can advocate for safer transport and better working conditions for women like me.”*

Participants listed out their key learnings from this activity.

- Workers experience unequal vulnerability to harassment and violence depending on gender, sexuality, disability, employment type, and location.
- Privilege and power in workplaces often determine whose voices are heard and whose concerns are addressed.
- Trade unions have a critical role in creating safer, inclusive, and representative spaces for all members, especially trans, queer, informal, and marginalized workers.
- We gained empathy and solidarity, motivating collective action to prevent SGBV and promote equality.

## **Objectives**

1. To help union members recognize how gender, sexuality, and workplace hierarchies shape vulnerability to SGBV.
2. To build solidarity by acknowledging unequal experiences and discussing collective strategies for prevention and support.

**Duration :** 40 minutes

## **Material:**

- ✓ A large open space (hall or outdoor area).
- ✓ A list of prepared role cards (workers of different genders, sexual orientations, positions, industries, union roles).
  
- ✓ Masking tape to mark a starting line.
- ✓ Debrief questions (printed or written on flip chart).



## **Method:**

1. Introduction
  - I. Facilitator explains: “This activity will help us explore how different workers experience vulnerability to violence and harassment. Please remember: these are role cards, not about you personally.”
  - II. Emphasize confidentiality and respect.
2. Role Assignment (5 minutes)
  - I. Each participant receives a role card
  - II. Ask them to silently imagine themselves in this role.
3. Power Walk Instructions
  - I. Everyone stands on the same line (starting line).
  - II. Facilitator reads out a series of statements.
  - III. Based on the statement they move either forward or back.
  - IV. Once all statements are read, participants will be spread across the room.
  - V. Facilitator asks everyone to pause and look at where others stand.

## **Discussion:**

1. Gather participants in a circle. use the following questions to facilitate a discussion.
  - a) How did it feel to move forward or stay behind?
  - b) How did you feel to move back?
  - c) What differences did you notice in positions?
  - d) Which roles were most vulnerable to SGBV? Why?
  - e) How can unions close these gaps and create safer workplaces?
  - f) What actions can unions take to include trans, queer, and informal sector workers in SGBV prevention?

Remind participants that the aim is to understand structural inequalities, not to blame individuals. Always close with union solidarity: “A union is strong when it protects all members. Preventing SGBV is a shared responsibility.”

## **Additional activity:**

1. Add a solidarity pledge wall where members write actions they will take as union leaders.

This activity has the potential to drive the sensitised union leaders to take action to make their respective unions inclusive to trans and queer workers. You can find the policy framework developed and adapted by the Gender Platform members in Annexure 1.



## Resources for the activity

### Characters

- Female tuk-tuk driver from Matara
- Male tuk-tuk driver from Matara
- Male politician from Colombo
- Female politician from Colombo
- A Tamil woman from Vavuniya (can only speak Tamil)
- A Tamil man from Vavuniya (can only speak Tamil)
- A disabled Muslim man from Puttalam
- A disabled Muslim woman from Puttalam
- A female university student from Colombo (21 years)
- A male university student from Colombo (21 years)
- A female nurse working at General Hospital (26 years)
- A male nurse working at General Hospital (26 years)

### Statements

- If you went to a prestigious school in a big city, take one step forwards
- If you are always invited to attend public functions, take one step forward
- If you have experienced sexual abuse / sexual harassment at work, take one step back
- If you own a piece of land in your name, take one step forward
- At school and at university, if you had the opportunity to play any sport you wanted to, take one step forward
- If you are employed in a full time job, take one step forward
- If you have faced sexual harassment in public transport, take one step back
- If people always listen to your advice, take one step forward
- If you are unable to travel outside your home without the help of another person, take one step back
- If you feel safe to travel at any time in the night, take one step forward
- If you can go to the police station and make a complaint in your own language, take one step forward
- If you have faced domestic violence, take one step back

Note – This activity can be adapted to focus more on violence and harassment in the world of work.

Facilitators may create their own statement cards to match to their context, some samples are included below.

- If you feel safe traveling to and from my workplace without fear of harassment take a step forward.
- If you know where to go if you experience violence or harassment at work take a step forward.



- If you have access to a union, committee, or group where you can raise your concerns without fear of retaliation take a step forward.
- If you feel that your gender identity has never affected how you are treated by employers or co-workers take a step forward/
- If you feel that your gender identity have affected how you are treated at work take a step back.
- If you can refuse unsafe or unfair work without risking losing your job take a step forward.
- If you have been rejected by an employer due to the way you dress take a step back.
- If you feel that your co workers will support you if you face harassment at work take a step forward.
- If your employer provides training on sexual harassment, gender equality, or respectful workplace culture take two steps forward.
- If you feel that the justice system in Sri Lanka protects workers like you equally, regardless of identity take a step forward.

When you create the characters make sure to reflect diverse worker identities. See below sample characters.

- Female garment factory worker – supporting her family on a low wage.
- Trans woman working in a beauty salon – facing daily harassment from customers.
- Queer man working in an NGO – worried about job security if he is open about his identity.
- Domestic worker – working in Colombo, far from her village and children.
- Young woman in the Free Trade Zone – struggling with night shifts and unsafe transport.
- Disabled man working in a small shop – often excluded from union meetings.
- Male construction worker – facing accidents and unsafe conditions without insurance.
- Trans man tailoring apprentice – not accepted in local trade union.
- Union leader (male) – powerful voice, but reluctant to include queer workers' issues.
- Young woman school dropout – working in a garment factory, unaware of her rights.
- Male three-wheeler driver – facing police harassment and unstable income.
- Female agricultural worker – unpaid family labor, rarely acknowledged.

## Tool 1.5: What is gender identity?



This activity is a critical tool for trade union members to understand gender identity and the experiences of trans and queer workers, fostering empathy and inclusion within unions. Using the Gender Bread Person, the activity visually and interactively explains that gender identity is an internal sense of self as a man, woman, transgender, or another gender, and that this may or may not correspond with the sex assigned at birth.

During the activity, participants are encouraged to reflect on their own identities and the identities of workers within their unions. This prompts discussion on whether trans members are present in their unions, the sectors where trans workers are most likely to work, and barriers preventing their participation.

By having a trans facilitator present, participants gain the opportunity to ask questions, clarify misconceptions, and hear firsthand about lived experiences, which significantly strengthens understanding and empathy.

The session also allows trade union members to reflect on why trans workers may hesitate to join unions and discuss strategies for inclusion. Members can explore concrete actions, such as ensuring union policies explicitly protect trans and queer workers, creating safe reporting mechanisms for harassment, and actively inviting trans members into leadership roles. In Sri Lanka, this approach has proven effective; for example, when National Transgender Network members facilitated Gender Platform trainings, union participants became more open to organizing trans workers in their respective unions.

### Objectives:

1. To explain what gender identity is and introduce the term Transgender.
2. To create empathy towards trans and queer workers.

**Duration:** 1 hour

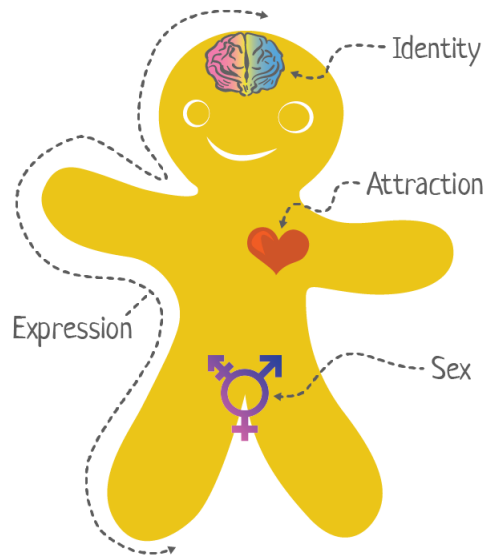
**Material:**

- ✓ Flip charts and pens
- ✓ Large printed copy / PPT slide of the gender bread person

**Method:**

1. Introduction:
  - I. Facilitator starts by asking the meaning of the word ‘identity’.
  - II. If the participants struggle to answer, facilitator can start by saying his or her identities. i.e., Mother, father, daughter, son, teacher, friend
  - III. Explain that identity is how we feel, what we recognize us as. Explain that some of the identities are based on gender and gender roles that we take on.
  - IV. Pull up the Gender Bread Person.

## The Genderbread Person v4 by its pronounced METROsexual.com



⊖ means a lack of what's on the right side

Gender Identity

- ⊖ → Woman-ness
- ⊖ → Man-ness

Gender Expression

- ⊖ → Femininity
- ⊖ → Masculinity

Anatomical Sex

- ⊖ → Female-ness
- ⊖ → Male-ness

Identity ≠ Expression ≠ Sex  
Gender ≠ Sexual Orientation

Sex Assigned At Birth  
 Female  Intersex  Male

Sexually Attracted to... and/or (a/o)

- ⊖ → Women a/o Feminine a/o Female People
- ⊖ → Men a/o Masculine a/o Male People

Romantically Attracted to...

- ⊖ → Women a/o Feminine a/o Female People
- ⊖ → Men a/o Masculine a/o Male People



## 2. Explanation:

### I. Explain below using the Gender Bread Person.

Gender identity refers to your internal sense of yourself as a woman, a man, transgender (man or woman), or of some other gender.

According to the American Psychological Association Dictionary of Psychology, gender is “an understanding of the socially constructed distinction between male and female, based on biological sex but also including the roles and expectations for males and females in a culture. Children begin to acquire concepts of gender, including knowledge of the activities, toys, and other objects associated with each gender and of how they view themselves as male or female in their culture, possibly from as early as 18 months of age”.

Sometimes our gender identity does not correspond with the sex assigned to at us birth. If this happens we identify ourselves as transgender. Some of us who are transgender take hormonal therapy and undergo sex reassignment surgery to change sex to match our gender identity.

There are many people in the world who think of their gender identity as different to woman or man (or what is known as the gender binary). Some of the more frequent identities that are outside of the gender binary are:

**Transgender:** A transgender person is someone whose gender identity is different from what was assigned to them at birth (e.g. someone who was assigned to be a man at birth who grows up to identify as a woman is a transgender woman, while someone who was assigned to be a woman at birth who grows up to be a man is a transgender man). Transgender is also used as an umbrella term to describe all people who have gender identities that are outside of the gender binary.

## 3. Discussion:

### I. Facilitate a discussion with following questions.

- a) Do you have members like this in your union?
- b) Do you think they are interested in union activities?
- c) In which sectors have you noticed trans workers? Why do you think that is?
- d) Do you think trans worlkers should join your union? Why/ why not?

### II. Provide an opportunity for participants to ask questions about trans identities.

Is being trans a mental illness?

Yes

No

For this session it is important to include a trans person as a facilitator who can constructively speak about being trans gender so that the participants get a chance to clarify concerns they may have.

For these Gender Platform trainings, members of the National Transgender Network now known as Sankranthi Foundation contributed as facilitators. They were able to build a strong relationship with the union participants and that increased the interest to organise trans workers in their respective unions.

## PART 2: ORGANISING TRANS AND QUEER WORKERS TO UNIONIZE

### Tool 2.1 - One Voice, Many Voices Role Play



Image: Workshop held in January 2023 with trans and queer workers in Colombo on organising.

We conducted this activity with over 100 trans and queer workers as a collective roleplay activity. First, we asked volunteers to share their experiences facing harassment. Among many stories we have included four scenarios for the purpose of this activity.

This role-play activity helps participants experience the difference between facing workplace harassment alone and taking collective action to demand change. Activity helps participants to reflect on how power operates in the world of work and how organizing can shift that power.

The exercise highlights the importance of solidarity and collective voice in addressing discrimination, harassment, and exclusion — especially for trans and queer workers who often face isolation or fear retaliation. Through this activity, participants will see that when workers come together around shared demands, such as the right to a violence and harassment free workplace under ILO Convention C190, their voices become stronger and more effective. It encourages participants to see organizing not just as resistance, but as a pathway to dignity, equality, and long-term structural change.



## Objectives:

1. Contrast the effect of acting alone vs. together.
2. Highlight organizing as a tool to shift power.

## Duration :

45 Minutes

**Materials:** Scenario cards

## Method:

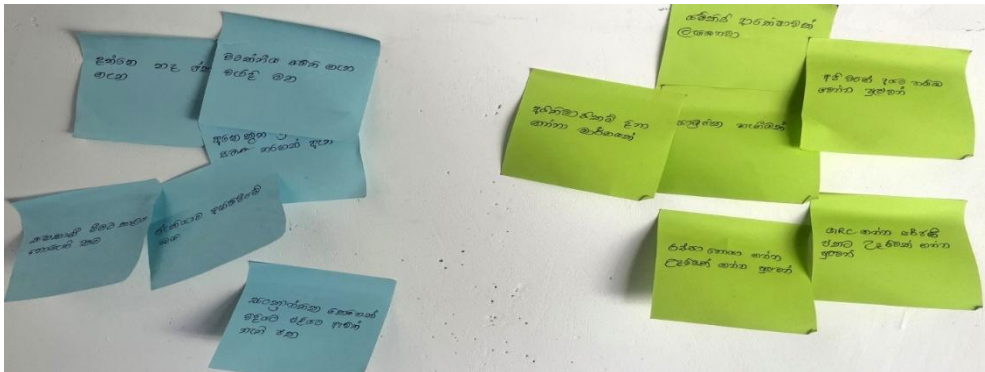
1. Setting up.
  - I. Divide the participants into two groups as
    - Group A = individuals.
    - Group B = collective demand;
  - II. distribute the scenario cards and allow 5 minutes to prepare for their role play.
  - III. Set up a table and the facilitator may act as the employer.
  - IV. Ask group A to make their case as individuals.
  - V. Then ask group B to make their case.
2. Discussion:
  - I. Compare outcomes and ask following questions to conduct a brief discussion on importance of organizing at work.
    - a) How did the worker feel acting alone?
    - b) What changed when the demand was made collectively?
    - c) In real life, what challenges prevent queer/trans workers from acting together?
    - d) How can organizing overcome those barriers?

## Scenarios

- A female trans garment worker is told she cannot use the women's restroom and is forced to use the men's restroom, where she faces harassment.
- A sex worker doesn't get paid by a client and the client comes back to have her services.
- A non-binary person applies for a short-term NGO contract. Despite qualifications, management refuses, claiming "we are looking for more visible trans qualities"
- A male trans street vendor faces harassment from other men saying he is not tough enough to be a street vendor.

This activity helped participants develop collective action strategies to address these challenges. During the discussion of the experience of trans female garment worker who was denied access to female restrooms, participants proposed to write a letter to the management with their signatures. Gender platform members also signed this letter and this action led to having one unisex restroom in the factory.

## Tool 2.2: The Two Sides of Organizing



We conducted this activity during a mapping process to understand the strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and threats that Abhimana workers union may have. For the first time it was in Anuradhapura we used this tool with 22 newly joined members of the Abhimana workers union. They highlighted various reasons that prevent trans and queer workers from organizing.

In Sri Lanka, organizing at work has long been a powerful way for workers to demand labour rights including fair wages, safety and dignity. But for many trans and queer workers, the decision to come together is far more complicated. While unions and collectives offer strength and solidarity, they also exist within a legal and social environment that can feel unsafe.

We still carry colonial-era penal laws (Sections 365 and 365A of the Penal Code) that criminalize same-sex relationships, and other laws like the Vagrants' Ordinance and Section 399 are often used to harass or detain trans individuals. Despite some recent progress—such as the Supreme Court's recognition that decriminalization is consistent with the Constitution and new police guidelines to protect LGBTIQ persons —discrimination and stigma remain widespread. Many trans and queer workers still face harassment, job insecurity, and social exclusion simply for being themselves.

In this context, organizing can feel risky. Workers may fear being outed, losing their jobs, or facing retaliation from employers or the police. Internal divisions, mistrust, and lack of visible support can deepen this hesitation.

As some of the strategies to increase membership, participants discussed monthly movie screenings, discussions, parties and running a social media campaign to increase their visibility.

### Objectives :

1. To help participants reflect on the benefits of organizing
2. To understand barriers or fears that prevent workers from coming together.

**Duration:** 45 minutes



## Materials

- ✓ Two flip chart sheets (one titled “Why We Want to Organize”, the other “Why We Hesitate to Organize”).
- ✓ Markers or sticky notes.
- ✓ Tape/wall space.

## Method:

### 1. Introduction

Start by saying something to introduce the activity. For example, “Organizing into groups or unions is one of the strongest ways to demand rights and protections. But many workers also feel hesitant. Let’s explore both sides together.”

### 2. Brainstorming

- I. Split participants into two groups.
- II. One group brainstorms reasons for wanting to
- III. The other group brainstorms reasons for hesitation
- IV. Each group writes their points on sticky notes or directly on the flip chart.

### 3. Gallery Walk

- I. Post both charts on the wall.
- II. Ask participants to walk around, read, and add any extra points they feel are missing.

### 1. Discussion:

- I. Come back together and discuss:
- II. Which reasons stood out most strongly?
- III. How do the fears connect to real experiences of workers?
- IV. What strategies could help overcome these hesitations?

Highlight that organizing is both powerful and risky — and that acknowledging both sides helps groups plan safer, smarter strategies. End on a hopeful note like “Even with challenges, organizing has always been a key to change. Our role is to find safe, inclusive, and creative ways to build collective power.”



Trans and Queer workers taking part in 2023 May Day rally organised by trade union collective including Nationa Union or Sea Farers.

### Tool 2.3: “The Rope of Strength”



Image: Workshop on trade unionism for Abhimana union members in April 2025.

In 2022, we conducted three awareness sessions for 100 trans and queer informal sector workers focusing on ILO Convention C190 and the importance of organizing to address violence and harassment in the world of work. The session aimed to build understanding of how collective action and trade unionism can help workers secure safer and fairer workplaces. However, the discussions revealed that many participants had very limited understanding of trade unionism and the role of collective bargaining.

When the idea of trade union action—such as strikes—was introduced, several participants immediately questioned its relevance and legitimacy. They expressed frustration over how such actions often affect the general public, citing examples from their own experiences. Some mentioned that when doctors strike, patients are left helpless, and when train drivers stop work, passengers suffer. For many, these examples framed trade union action as an inconvenience rather than a tool for justice. Their perception was that strikes harm innocent people rather than challenge unjust systems or unsafe working conditions.



This discussion highlighted a deep disconnect between the lived realities of workers and the historical role of unions in protecting labour rights. Many trans and queer workers also shared that they have never been approached by a trade union, nor have they felt represented or welcomed in these spaces. Their skepticism toward union activity was shaped by mainstream narratives that portray strikes as disruptive, while failing to show how collective action has led to significant improvements in wages, safety, and equality.

The conversation became a valuable learning moment. Facilitators were able to unpack the purpose of trade unions, emphasizing that collective action is not meant to harm the public but to push employers and governments to uphold rights and fair treatment. It also highlighted the need for inclusive education on trade unionism tailored to trans and queer workers, linking their own experiences of workplace discrimination and harassment to the broader struggle for decent work.

Following activity questioned this mindset. It further helped the participants to develop strategies that involve collective action such as petitions, meetings and demand papers.

**Objective:**

To demonstrate how a trade union works and why workers are stronger when united.

**Duration :** 25 minutes

**Material:**

- ✓ A rope
- ✓ A few printed cards with “Worker Alone” and “Workers United”

**Method:**

1. Set the Scene
  - I. Facilitator may start the activity by introducing the activity. For example, “Imagine you are a single worker facing a big employer. How much power do you really have? Let’s try it out.”
  - II. Choose one participant as “Worker Alone” and give them the “Worker Alone” card.
  - III. Choose three participants as “Employer side”.
2. Round One: Worker Alone vs Employer
  - I. Worker Alone holds one end of the rope.
  - II. Employer side holds the other end.
  - III. They do a short tug-of-war. (The Worker Alone always loses quickly.)
  - IV. Debrief: Ask the worker how they felt. Ask observers what they noticed.
3. Round Two: Workers United
  - I. Now, invite 5–6 participants to join the Worker, each holding the rope together.

- II. Give them the “Workers United” card.
- III. Run the tug-of-war again: this time Workers United pull against Employer side.
- IV. Workers should win easily.

4. Discussions:

- I. Led a small discussion with following questions.
  - How did it feel when workers were together?
  - What changed in the balance of power?
  - What does this tell us about unions?
- II. Summarize: “A trade union is when workers join to act as one. Alone, a worker is weak. Together, we are strong enough to demand fair wages, respect, and safety.”
- III. Connect back to participants’ real struggles saying something encouraging for participants to organize. For example “For trans and queer workers in informal jobs, joining together is even more important because our voices are often ignored. A union makes us visible and powerful.”

This activity visually shows individual weakness vs collective strength—a core idea of trade unions.

**Tool 2.4: “Our Work, Our Lives – Mapping Together”**

විද්‍යාල ශ්‍රේණිය තුළ නිරන්තර සහ ප්‍රවණිකත්වය දැරුවේ.

I shouldn't tell anyone that I am trans.

සමූහ

විනිසා අයිතිය

විනය - සීතා විජේසිංහ

USAID FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE N U S S SAOGP South Asian Workers Gender Platform bakamoono.lk



We conducted this activity with 120 trans and queer workers who represented over 15 workplaces including factories, cleaning etc.

This activity helps participants visualize their workplaces, the challenges they face, and the support they have. By mapping their experiences collectively, workers can see patterns: many challenges are shared, even across different sectors. This activity brings participants to the realization that harassment, lack of contracts, unsafe commute, and exclusion from decision-making are not just individual problems but they are systemic.

This exercise invites participants to explore collective organizing, such as forming unions or support networks, to strengthen their voices. It highlights how working together can help demand rights and protections, including the ratification of ILO Convention C190.

Ultimately, this activity is about recognition, empowerment, and imagining change. It reminds trans and queer workers that their voices and experiences matter, and that together they can transform workplaces into spaces of safety, respect, and dignity.

## Objectives

1. To help trans and queer workers visualize their diverse workspaces and struggles.
2. To highlight shared challenges and strengths.
3. To gently introduce how collective organizing (including unions) can be a tool for change.

**Duration** – 1 hour

## Materials

- ✓ Large chart paper / brown paper
- ✓ Markers, colored pens
- ✓ Sticky notes (different colors: challenges, supports, dreams)
- ✓ Tape
- ✓ Optional: simple drawings/icons (salon, street corner, garment factory, office, market, NGO, etc.)

## Method:

1. Safe Circle Check-In
  - I. Start the session by introducing these three ground rules for this activity : confidentiality, respect, no judgment.
  - II. Conduct a quick icebreaker: ask each participant to share one word about how they feel at work. e.g., “tired,” “proud,” “unsafe,” “invisible”
2. Mapping Our Workplaces
  - I. On a big sheet, draw a circle map with “Trans & Queer Workers” in the middle.

- II. Around it, ask participants to add sticky notes showing where they work: beauty salons, street vending, tailoring, call centers, NGOs, factories, etc. Allow for “unrecognized” or informal work too (sex work, caregiving, daily wage labor).
3. Naming Our Challenges
    - I. Give each person sticky notes to write or draw their main challenges (1 per note). Examples: harassment from customers, police targeting, lack of contracts, bathroom access, stigma from coworkers.
    - II. Place these around each workplace cluster.
  4. Identifying Strengths and Support
    - I. On a different color sticky, participants write sources of strength or support: chosen family, community groups, an understanding employer, NGOs, faith spaces, or online networks.
    - II. Add them to the map.
  5. Reflection: What If We Acted Together?
    - I. Lead a discussion using following questions.
      - Which problems are individual, and which are shared by many here?
      - When problems are shared, what could be done if we acted together?
      - Who might stand with us (allies)? Who blocks us (employers, police, politicians)?
    - II. Introduce unions softly: “Unions are one kind of space where workers join to face these issues together. What would make such a space welcoming for us? What would make it unsafe?”
  6. Dream Corner
    - I. Invite participants to write/draw one dream for a safe and fair workplace. e.g., “no harassment,” “fair pay,” “respect for my identity”
    - II. Collectively discuss: What steps could bring us closer to these dreams? Could collective organizing be one of those steps?

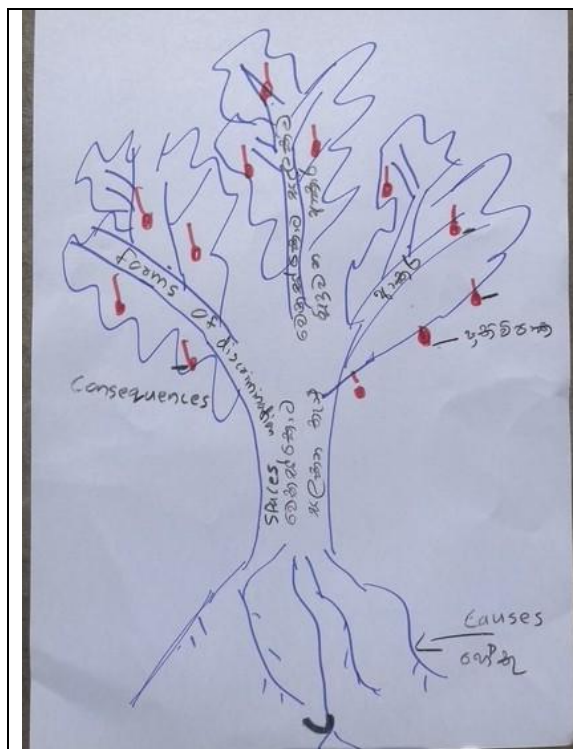
### Tool 2.5: Discrimination Tree



Image: Workshop held in July 2025 for emerging leaders of the Abhimana workers union.

We conducted this activity in 2022 with the Gender Platform members to deepen their understanding of gender-based violence and its causes. When we conducted this activity with trans and queer workers, it helped them understand how decriminalization of homosexuality is not the final hurdle but one very important one towards dignified world. Because root causes of discrimination go beyond legal framework.

The Discrimination Tree activity helps us understand how discrimination against trans and queer workers starts, grows, and affects everyday life — especially in the informal sector. Like a tree that grows from its roots, discrimination also begins with deep causes such as unfair social attitudes, gender stereotypes, and laws that don't protect everyone equally. These roots create the visible problems we face — the “branches” — such as harassment, low pay, or being excluded from certain kinds of work.



In this activity, participants used their own experiences to build the tree together.

*“When customers find out I’m trans, they stop coming to my salon,”*

*“At the garment factory, people laugh when I use the women’s washroom,”*

*“I can’t rent a room near my workplace because landlords don’t accept people like me.”*

These are the visible parts — the branches. Then, as a group, participants discussed why these things happen and identify the “roots,” such as “patriarchy,” “lack of legal protection,” “religion,” or “fear and ignorance about gender diversity.”

By linking their own stories to these deeper causes, participants can see how discrimination is built — and start thinking about how to challenge it together through awareness, organizing, and collective action.

## Objectives

1. To help participants explore the structural and systemic roots of discrimination faced by marginalized groups
2. To encourage participants to envision actions and solidarities that can “nourish” the tree of equality, while recognizing the harm caused by discriminatory “fruits.”

## Materials:

- ✓ Large sheet of chart paper or a drawn outline of a tree (roots, trunk, branches, and fruits)
- ✓ Markers, sticky notes in different colors
- ✓ Tape or blu-tack



## Method

1. Setting the Scene
  - I. Draw a big tree on the board/wall (roots, trunk, branches, fruits).
  - II. Explain the metaphor:
    - Roots = Causes of discrimination
    - Trunk = Institutions, norms, or spaces where discrimination takes shape
    - Branches = Forms/types of discrimination
    - Fruits = Consequences for individuals, families, and communities
2. Roots – Causes of Discrimination
  - I. Ask participants: “What are the hidden roots that feed discrimination in our society?” Encourage answers like patriarchy, caste/class hierarchies, religious bias, colonial legacies, lack of education, cultural taboos, harmful laws.
  - II. Write them on cards and place them at the bottom.
3. Trunk – Spaces of Discrimination
  - I. Ask: “Where do these roots show up in our daily lives?” Examples: workplaces, schools, health services, unions, government offices, families.
  - II. Place these on the trunk area.
4. Branches – Forms of Discrimination
  - I. Ask: “What shapes does discrimination take?” Examples: exclusion from promotions, harassment, denial of housing, wage gaps, online bullying, police violence.
  - II. Write each on a branch card.
5. Fruits – Consequences
  - I. Ask: “What are the results of these discriminatory practices?” Examples: poverty, mental health struggles, unsafe workplaces, loss of dignity, migration, violence.
  - II. Place these as fruits hanging from branches.
6. Season Two Twist – Nurturing Equality
  - I. Give participants new colored notes (green leaves or water drops). Ask: “If this tree represents discrimination, what can we feed it with so that it transforms into a tree of equality?”
  - II. Encourage the participants to laws, solidarity, union inclusion, awareness campaigns, peer support, safe spaces.
  - III. Place these around the roots and trunk as positive nutrients.



## 7. Discussion

- I. Ask following questions to conduct a brief discussion on importance of organizing at work.
  - Which root felt the hardest to talk about?
  - How do these roots connect with the fruits?
  - Which positive “nutrients” do we already see in our lives/unions?
  - What actions can we take to water the tree of equality?

## Conclusion

Organizing trans and queer workers under the umbrella of C190 has been very encouraging experience for the programme team. The ILO Convention 190 (C190) reminds us that every worker has the right to a world of work free from violence and harassment. This allowed us to reach out trans and queer workers informal sector with global agenda to address violence and harassment in the world of work.

But we know this right is still not a reality for many. Trans and queer workers continue to face discrimination, bullying, and exclusion every day. That’s why organizing is so important, it’s how we make our voices heard.

By using these tools we’ve discussed what violence looks like at work, practiced how to negotiate demands, and explored how solidarity can make a difference

Organizing also means building communities of care. It means making sure no one is left alone to face harassment or discrimination. Trans and queer workers have shown incredible strength and leadership in this process. They’re not just part of the movement—They are shaping it.

The Gender Platform has played a key role in bringing this work together. It has created space for learning, strategy, and solidarity among unions, activists, and organizations that care about gender justice. The Platform continues to be a bridge between different movements—connecting labour rights with gender and queer rights—and supporting trans and queer workers to organize, speak up, and be heard.

## How Other Trade Unions Can Support

Trade unions have a major role to play in addressing violence and harassment in the world of work. Violence and harassment affect everyone—but the impacts are stronger for workers who already face stigma or exclusion. Supporting trans and queer workers is not only about equality; it’s about strengthening the whole labour movement.

- Include trans and queer workers in all union activities, leadership spaces, and membership drives.
- Review membership policies to remove barriers for people whose identity documents don’t match their gender identity.



- Integrate C190 and SOGIES issues into union education, collective bargaining, and campaigns.
- Work with the Gender Platform to access training, materials, and guidance on gender inclusion.
- Build alliances with LGBTQ+ groups, women's movements, and informal worker collectives to make the labour movement stronger and more connected.

### **How Other Allies Can Support**

- Support trans and queer worker groups with training, resources, and platforms for visibility.
- Advocate for laws and policies that reflect the principles of C190.
- Use media and community outreach to challenge hate and highlight positive stories.

### **Thank You**

This manual and the organizing journey behind it were made possible through the hard work, courage, and collective energy of many people.

A heartfelt thank you to all Gender Platform members for leading this process, connecting partners, and making sure gender equality remains at the heart of the labour movement. Your work continues to inspire and guide efforts to bring C190 to life in Sri Lanka.

To all the trainees and participants, thank you for sharing your experiences. Your stories have shown the reality of violence and harassment at work, and your courage has helped shape practical solutions. You are proof that change is possible.

To all the facilitators and trainers, thank you for creating safe learning spaces, guiding discussions, and helping participants build real skills for organizing and advocacy.

And to every union, ally, and supporting organization—thank you for standing with trans and queer workers. Your solidarity shows that the fight for safer, fairer workplaces belongs to all of us.

Finally, we congratulate the newly appointed leadership of Abhima Worker's Union and we stand with them in solidarity.



Photo: Abhimana AGM held on the 25<sup>th</sup> October 2025

For Sri Lankan Trade Unions

Framework for  
Gender Sensitive

# 1. What is this document?

National Union of Sea Fears (NUSS) Sri Lanka has been working very closely with the state, employers, and workers on prevention of violence in the world of work. Since ILO C190<sup>1</sup> was adopted at the ILO general assembly in June 2019, NUSS has been a strong advocate for ratification and implementation of the convention.

In 2019, NUSS together with the International Transport Workers Federation invited trade unions in Sri Lanka to join hands to demand for C190 ratification and this led to setting up the South Asian Workers Gender Platform (SAWGP) in 2020.

The Sri Lankan chapter of the South Asian Workers Gender Platform consists of 14

1. Ms. N. H. A. Karunawathi - SL Independent Teachers Union (SLITU)
2. Ms. M. K. Sumithra Damayanthi - Jathika Sewaka Sangamaya (JSS)
3. Ms. Anuruddika Jayaratna - Govt. Nursing Officers Union (GNOA)
4. Ms. Imasha Perera - National Transgender Network Sri Lanka (NTNSL)
5. Mr. Charith Attarapola - All Island Association to protect the Rights of Taxi Owners and Drivers (AIAPROD)
6. Ms. Chamila Thushari - Da-Bindu Collective
7. Mr. Kalpa Maduranga - PROTECT Union
8. Ms. Chandra Devanarayana - Red Organization
9. Ms. Nalini Galappathi - Union of Sri Lankan Teachers Solidarity (USLTS)
10. Ms. Saraswathi Sivaguru - National Union of Workers (NUW)
11. Ms. Dhammika Kumari - Lanka Jathika Estate Workers Union (LJEWU)
12. Ms. Nilanthi Ranasinghe - National Post & Telecommunication Workers Union (NPTWU)
13. Ms. Sudeshi Pathiratne - National Union of Seafarers Sri Lanka (NUSS)
14. Mr. Lal Jayasinghe - National Union of Seafarers Sri Lanka (NUSS)

As C190 requires tri party agreement on the convention, SAWGP while engaging with the state and the employers, make a strong effort to work with their own trade unions to introduce and implement Anti-Harassment policies to address violence and harassment within trade unions and in their respective workplaces.

SAWGP has been meeting consistently to discuss strategies to address challenges faced within trade unions, especially due to a male-dominated/patriarchal culture.

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<sup>1</sup> C190 is the “**Violence and Harassment**” **Convention**, adopted on 21 June 2019 by the International Labour Conference. It establishes the right of everyone to a world of work free from violence and harassment, including gender-based violence and harassment. It is the first international law to do so. [https://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/c190\\_mini\\_guide\\_en.pdf](https://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/c190_mini_guide_en.pdf)

One of the collective recommendations of the SAWGP was to develop a framework for trade unions to incorporate gender inclusive policies with the objective of ultimately creating an equal opportunity for men, women and trans people to participate in trade union activities, including elections. SAWGP believes that equal opportunity will strengthen workers confidence and self-esteem, and ultimately enhance workers capacity to respond to and prevent incidents of harassment and violence.

This document was development in consultation with the SAWGP to use as a guideline for trade unions to:

1. Address violence and harassment in. the world of work
2. Adapt gender inclusive policies to reduce gender-based discrimination in the world of work

## 2. Principals

This document is based on the belief that no worker shall be discriminated against on grounds of race, religion, language, caste, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, political opinion, place of birth or any such difference.

Violence and harassment in the world of work can constitute a violation of human rights.

Violence and harassment are threats to equal opportunity and is therefore unacceptable and incompatible with decent work<sup>2</sup>.

All workers should enjoy same rights, opportunities, and protections.

Everyone has the right to a world of work free from violence and harassment, including gender-based violence and harassment.

Everyone in the world of work must be treated fairly with dignity, empathy, and be able to actively participate in decision-making.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/decent-work/lang--en/index.htm>

### 3. What is the need for this?

As a collective of trade unions SAWGP strongly believe that trade unions have an important role to play in addressing violence and harassment in the world of work by challenging traditional gender roles and promoting gender equality.

In Sri Lanka, trade unions largely consist of and are led by men; underscoring that a trade union is currently a workmen's space, not for workwomen, or those who identify as Trans. This is reflected in the current Trade Union ordinance of 1935 which includes the following definition - "*trade union*" means any association or combination of workmen or employers, whether temporary or permanent...<sup>3</sup>

There are numerically female dominated workspaces in Sri Lanka. For example, only 5% of the nursing staff are male.<sup>4</sup> Yet, nurses trade unions are led by men.<sup>5</sup> Similarly, government teachers' unions are largely led by men even though there are only 64635 male teachers compared to 176,956 female teachers<sup>6</sup>.

Globally there is an increase in female membership in trade unions, however, the increased presence of women in trade union membership does not necessarily lead to long term structural changes to create gender equality. For example, mainstream trade unions in Sri Lanka do not have equal female representation in decision making bodies despite high female trade union membership.

Therefore, SAWGP attempts to address traditional and persistent structural barriers that prevent women and LGBTIQ+ workers from taking leadership roles in trade union movements by negotiating within one's own trade union to:

1. Adapt anti-harassment policies
2. Adapt a gender-neutral language
3. Adapt equity measures to close gender gap in decision making
4. Create awareness on gender equality and prevention of violence

This document provides a guideline to SAWGP members in the negotiations with one's own trade union.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.lawnet.gov.lk/trade-unions-3/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.dailynews.lk/2018/06/13/local/153736/male-nurses-be-increased>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/gnoa.nhsl/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://moe.gov.lk/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/School-Census-Report-2017.pdf>

# Strategies

## 1. Adapt Anti-Harassment Policies

In order to create a respectful union space trade unions can adopt anti-harassment policies. SAWGP has developed following anti-harassment policy for trade unions to use as a guideline.

### **Definitions**

1. For the purpose of this policy:

(a) the term "violence and harassment" refers to a range of unacceptable behaviours and practices, or threats thereof, whether a single occurrence or repeated, that aim at, result in, or are likely to result in physical, psychological, sexual or economic harm, and includes gender-based violence and harassment;

(b) the term "gender-based violence and harassment" means violence and harassment directed at persons because of their sex or gender, or affecting persons of a particular sex or gender disproportionately, and includes sexual harassment.

(c) the term "member" refers to a person who has formally obtained membership from the trade union.

### **Scope**

1. Any member of the union have a right to participate in union activities without any form of violence and harassment.

2. Any employee and/or volunteer and/or intern and/or outsourced worker of the union and have a right to participate in the world of work without any form of violence and harassment.

### **Response Mechanism**

1. All existing and new members should agree to this policy and sign with name and signature. Trade union will maintain a database of signed document.

2. Any member who face violence and harassment relating to their union activities may complain to [ Each trade union should insert this before adapting the policy based on their reporting mechanism.]

3. Each complaint will be assessed by an independent committee and transparency of the processes and confidentiality of the complainant will be ensured.

### **Remedies**

1. In the event such violence and harassment are verified through evidence, trade union will,

A. Advise the member/ employee to abstain from such act in the future

B. Suspend the membership/ employment for a short period

C. Suspend the membership/employment permanently

### **Prevention**

Trade union is committed to eliminate violence and harassment in the world of work. To achieve this goal trade union will,

1. Conduct awareness session on prevention violence and harassment in the world of work.

2. Conduct awareness session on people of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities to increase their participation on trade union activities.

3. Encourage female workers to join the trade union.

## 2. Encourage female workers and LGBTIQ+ workers to join the trade union

Trade unions must proactively encourage female workers and LGBTIQ+ workers to obtain membership. Trade unions should ensure that all members feel safe within the union and their needs are well represented in collective bargains.

Trade unions must openly discuss issues that female workers and LGBTIQ+ workers face as a way of encouraging them to exercise their right to join a trade union.

Trade unions can adapt zero tolerance policy on discrimination to ensure that LGBTIQ+ workers feel welcome to join the trade union.

When advertising to increase membership trade unions can resort to a female and LGBTIQ+ worker friendly campaign.

Some suggestions are:

1. Introduce female centric welfare initiatives i.e., Bank account for newborn children / offer loan scheme for low interests during pregnancy
2. Benefits offered by the trade union for women and trans people can be highlighted. I.e., Protect dignity and rights of people who are transitioning and those of diverse sexual orientation.
3. Conduct awareness on benefits of trade unions.

## 3. Conduct continued Education and training

Trade unions must conduct education/ awareness programmes to its members on prevention of violence to create a workplace that respect, and dignity are guaranteed.

Education and awareness programmes must lead to substantial change in existing discriminatory practices within trade unions.

Education and awareness programmes must include anti-harassment policies, at least an anti-sexual harassment policy must be adapted by trade unions. Education and awareness programmes should clearly lay out existing remedies for victims of gender-based violence and sexual harassment including a clear and established line of communication.

Trade unions must proactively create awareness on sexual orientation and gender identity to eliminate discriminatory norms and practices against LGBTIQ+ workers.

Some suggestions are,

1. Include awareness of violence and harassment in orientation programmes for new members. Trade unions can use the outline provided is the RESPECT MODULE in Annexure 2.
2. Continues training of the leaders of trade union on gender and gender-based violence. When selecting topics for trainings, trade unions can seek support from the Gender Platform or refer to ILO standers. Training topics can be revised/ updated to ensure accuracy and relevancy is maintained.
3. Introduce a third-party monitoring system to ensure quality of the education and training programmes.

## 4. Increase representation in decision making bodies

Trade unions must include minimum of 25% female and LGBTIQ+ workers in decision making bodies.

This framework suggests 25% in accordance with national quota for women in local governments. This does not mean that trade unions should limit female and LGBTIQ+ workers participation to 25%.

Increase of representation should apply across central union and its branches the including branch committees, working committees, executive committees, and national councils.

To increase participation, trade unions must proactively encourage women to take part in elections, similarly must ensure non-discrimination based on sexual orientation gender identity for LGBTIQ+ workers to participate at the decision-making level.

### How can a trade union do this?

Some suggestions are,

1. Amend existing constitutions to provide a legal guarantee for the quota.
2. Pass a resolution at the Annual General Meeting to ensure the quota.
3. To ensure full participation of women and LGBTIQ+ workers in the decision-making bodies include 25% quota in quorum of any meeting.
4. Create a non-discriminatory and bullying free environment for women and LGBTIQ+ workers apply for positions of decision-making levels and run for elections.
5. When convening decision making meetings, keep in mind that there are traditional gender roles and gender expectations that prevent women from participating. For example, women may find it difficult to participate at night or travel out for a weekend.
6. Encourage more women and LGBTIQ+ workers to join the trade union.

## 5. Participation in national and international platforms

Trade unions must encourage female members to take part in national and international labor platforms including in appearing in media.

Trade unions must include minimum of 25% of female and LGBTIQA+ workers in events, meetings, conferences etc.

Trade unions must be sensitive to challenges those female members face due to traditional gender roles that are imposed on them such as childcare & cooking and must facilitate a gender sensitive union culture to allow women to be more active in decision making bodies.

Trade unions must include a representation of diversity in press conferences and in any media programmes.

Government Nursing Officers Association passed the following policy on prevention of violence in the trade union.

**හිමිකම් රජයේ හෙද නිලධාරී සංගමය සතුය**

**හිංසනය හා සම්බන්ධ ප්‍රතිපත්ති මාලාව- රජයේ හෙද නිලධාරී සංගමය ශ්‍රී ලංකාව**

**හිංසනය යනු-**

යම් කෙනෙකුගේ කැමැත්තකින් තොරව සිදු කරන හෝ සිදු වන කායික, මානසික.

චිත්තවේගික හානියක් හෝ වෙනස් කොට සැලකීමක් ලෙස අර්ථ දැක්විය හැකිය. මෙහිදී කාන්තාවක් හෝ පිරිමියෙක් ඇගේ කැමැත්තකින් තොරව වැළඳ ගැනීම, හේත්තු වීම, තට්ටු දැමීම, මිරිකීම විතරක් නොවෙයි කෙනත්තීමක් වුව ද දණ්ඩ නීති සංග්‍රහයේ 345 වන වගන්තියට අනුව ලිංගික හිරිහැරයකි.

සමහර විට කාර්යාලයේ සේවය කරනකොට ඇය හෝ ඔහු අපහසුතාවට පත් කරන්න විවිධ දේ කරයි එනම්. කොණ්ඩේ ඇදීම, ඇඳුමෙන් ඇදීම, බලෙන් පින්තුර ගැනීම. ඇය /ඔහු ඉන් මානසික පීඩාවට පමණක් නොවෙයි කායිකවත් හිංසනයට ලක් වෙයි "සමහරු ඇය අපහසුතාවට පත් කරන වචන පාවිච්චි කරයි. කාර්යාලයේදී වගේ ම මහමගදිත්. බඩුව, ගෙඩිය, කැල්ල වගේ වචනයක් උණත් කාන්තාවක් අපහසුතාවට පත් වන ආකාරයෙන් යම් පුද්ගලයෙක් පාවිච්චි කළොත් එම පුද්ගලයා නීතිය ඉදිරියට ගෙනියන්න කාන්තාවකට අයිතිය තිබේ," සමහරු දුරකතනයෙන් කතා කරලා අසැබි වචනයෙන් විහිළ කරයි. කාන්තාවක් මේ ක්‍රියා නිසා විශේෂයෙන් ලිංගිකව අපහසුතාවට පත් වී යැයි ඔප්පු වුණොත් දඬුවම් නියතයි. පසුගිය දින කිහිපය තුළ සමාජ මාධ්‍ය තුළ වැඩි කතාබහකට ලක් වූ ත්‍රිරෝද රථ රියැදුරෙකු කළ අහිනයක් සම්බන්ධ සිදුවීමේදී.

"දැන් මෙතැනදී මේ අහිනය කරන පුද්ගලයා කාන්තාව ලිංගික වශයෙන් අපහසුතාවට පත් වන ආකාරයෙන් එම අහිනය කළා දැයි සොයා බැලීමක් කරයි. ඇහිලි දික් කිරීම, දිව දික් කිරීම වගේ දේවල් වුණත් ප්‍රමාණවත් නීතියෙන් දඬුවම් කරන්න."

අවයව ප්‍රදර්ශනය කිරීම ද කලක සිට කාන්තාවන් අපහසුතාවට පත් කරන සිදුවීම්කි. දුරකතන කෙටි පණිවුඩ, ඊ මේල් මෙන් ම සමාජ මාධ්‍ය භාවිත කරමින් කාන්තාවන් හිංසනයට පත් කරන අවස්ථාවලදී ඊට එරෙහිව නීතිය ක්‍රියාත්මක කිරීමට අවශ්‍ය පියවර ගැනීමට කාන්තාවන් ද දැනුමින් සන්නද්ධ විය යුතු යි. එක්සත් ජාතීන්ගේ ජනගහන අරමුදල 2015 වසරේ ලබා ගත් දත්ත අසුරින් එළිදැක්වූ වාර්තාවකට අනුව ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ පොදු ප්‍රවාහන සේවා භාවිත කරන කාන්තාවන්ගෙන් සියයට 90ක් විවිධ ලිංගික අතවරයන්ට ලක් වන බව පෙන්වා දෙයි.

නීතියේ හෝ යම් සංවිධානයක පිහිටි පනතවා කියන්නේ දෙමාපියන් හෝ පවුල වෙන් කිරීම නොමෙයි, ජීවියෙකුට නිදහසේ, සතුටින් ජීවත් වෙන්න සුදුසු පරිසරයක් ඇති කිරීමයි."

**හිංසනයේ ස්වරූප**

ආයතනයක සේවය කරන කෙනෙකුට සිදුවන

- කායිකව සිදුකරන හිංසන
- මානසිකව සිදුකරන හිංසන
- වින්තවේගිව සිදුකරන හිංසන හා
- වෙනස්කොට සැලකීම

**සංගමයේ අරමුණ**

සංගමයේ සාමාජිකයකුට, ආයතනය තුළ හෝ ආයතනයෙන් පරිහානිව සිදුවන

කායිකව, මානසිකව, වින්තවේගිකව හෝ සිදුවන හිංසන හෝ වෙනස්කොට සැලකීම පිටුදැකීම.

**හිංසනය සිදුවිය හැකි කණ්ඩායම්**

සේව්‍යා, සේවා දායකයා, කණ්ඩායම් හෝ ඊට පරිහානි ඕනෑම කණ්ඩායමකින් සිදුවන හිංසන

**සංගමයේ කාර්යයන්**

- හිංසනය සම්බන්ධ දත්ත පද්ධතියක් ස්ථාපිත කිරීම
- සංගමයේ සාමාජිකයන්ට තම තමන් ගේ ආයතන වල හිංසනයෙන් තොර ආයතනික පරිසරයක් ගොඩ නැගීමට මැදිහත්වීම
- ආයතනික හිංසනය පිටුදැකීමේ ප්‍රතිපත්ති ගොඩනැගීමට කටයුතු සම්පාදනයට දායකවීම
- හිංසනයට ලක්වූ පුද්ගලයාට තමාට සිදු අසාධාරණය පිළිබඳව පැමිණිලි කිරීමේ හා පැමිණිලි සාධාරණව ලබා ගැනීමේ ආයතනික හා නීතිමය ක්‍රමවේදයක් සැකසීමට බලගැන්වීම.
- හිංසනයට ලක්වූ පුද්ගලයාගේ පෞද්ගලිකත්වය ආරක්ෂාවන පරිදි සිද්දිය පැතිරීම වැලැක්වීමට දායකවීම
- හිංසනයට ලක්වූ කෙනා නැවත රැකියාවට යාමේදී රැකවරණය ලබා දීමට දායක වීම
- හිංසනයට ලක්වූ පුද්ගලයාගේ අභිමතය පරිදි සේවා ස්ථානය මාරු කිරීමට අවශ්‍ය වූයේ නම් ඒ සඳහා ආයතන ප්‍රධානී හරහා අවශ්‍ය මැදිහත් වීම
- වින්දිතයාට (සංගම් සාමාජික) අවශ්‍ය සේවා පහසුකම් හා නිවාඩු ලබාදීමට සංගමය මැදිහත්වීම
- පැමිණිලි විභාග කිරීම සඳහා පුහුණු පොලිස් නිලධාරීන් සංගමය මගින් ඉල්ලීම (ස්ත්‍රී පුරුෂ අසමානතාවයකින් තොරව සුදුසු අදාල වෘත්තීය නිලධාරියකු පැමිණිලි විභාග කිරීම සඳහා පත් කිරීමට සංගමයේ මැදිහත් වීම)

- හිංසනයට ලක්වූයේ (සාමාජිකයා)ආයතන ප්‍රධානියකු හෝ ආයතනයේ වගකිව යුතු නිලධාරියකු නම් එකඟතාවකට පැමිණීමේ ක්‍රමවේදයකයට දායක වීම
- හිංසකයාට විරුද්ධව නීතිමය පියවර ගැනීමට සාමාජිකයා වෙනුවෙන් සංගමයේ මූල්‍ය අනුග්‍රහය දැක්වීම
- හිංසනයට ලක් වූ සාමාජිකයා අනාරක්ෂිත නම් අවශ්‍ය රැකවරනය සැලසීමට කටයුතු සම්පාදනයට සංගමය මැදිහත් වීම.
- හිංසනයට එරෙහි පෝස්ටර් ආයතනිකව ප්‍රදර්ශනය කිරීමට සහාය වීම
- වින්දිතයාට( සංගම් සාමාජික) උපදේශනය හා කාන්තා රැකවරණය අවශ්‍ය යැයි හැඟේ නම් උපදේශනය සඳහා අවශ්‍ය පහසු කම් සංගමය විසින් සැලසීම
- සංගම් සාමාජික) තේරෙන භාෂාවකින් නීතිමය කටයුතු කිරීමට ඉල්ලීමට සංගමය කටයුතු කිරීම (සිංහල,දෙමළ, ඉංග්‍රීසි.....)
- සේවා ලාභියාට තීන්දුව පිළිබඳව සෑහීමකට පත් නොවන්නේ නම් නැවත අභියාචනයක් (Appeal) කිරීමට සංගමය මැදිහත් වීම.
- මූල්‍ය අපහසුතා ඇති අයට නීතිආධර ආයතනයේ සහාය ලබා ගැනීමට සංගමය කටයුතු කිරීම

ස්ත්‍රීයට එරෙහි ව සිදුවන හිංසනය නැතිකිරීම සඳහා සකසන ප්‍රතිපත්ති යේ අඩංගුවිය යුතු කරුණු

**01 .වෘත්තීය අවශ්‍යතා**

- රාජකාරි ලයිස්තු
- ප්‍රතිපත්ති
- රක්ෂණ
- නීතිමය රාමු

**02.සෞඛ්‍ය ආරක්ෂාව**

- ඖෂධ/ආහාර?රෝහල්/ ප්‍රතිකාර
- විවේකාගාර හා changing room
- සනීපාරක්ෂක පහසුකම්
- ගමනාගමන පහසුකම්
- Personal protection equipment

**03.ප්‍රතිපාදන**

- Personal protection equipment ලබාදීම

- රක්ෂණ ආවරණ
- ආධාර ලබා ගැනීමේ නීතිය රැකවරණය
- දැනුම

**04. සංවිධානය වීමේ සහ සංවිධානය කිරීමේ නිදහස ආරක්ෂා කිරීම සඳහා සාමාජිකයාට සංගමයේ සහය විය යුතුය .(eg-Duty leave ලබා ගැනීමට)**

**05.සංගමය සමග එකතුවී සාමූහිකව කේවල් කිරීමේ අයිතිය මව් සංගමය තහවුරු කිරීම**

2.

# Respect Modules

This document contains four outlines that trade unions can use in their training an education programme. Each trade unions may adapt each discussion to its context. For example, when conducting sessions trade unions can include data from their relevant sector.

# **1. Introduction to Gender Based Violence**

- **Objective:** To understand the meaning of gender-based violence and its scope in Sri Lanka
  
- **Learning Outcomes:**
  - To create an understanding about what is meant by gender-based violence
  - Learn about the scope of gender-based violence in Sri Lanka
  - Understand different manifestations of gender-based violence
  
- **Timeline**
  - 30-40 minutes approx.
  
- ❖ **What is GBV**
  - Ask participants to define “Gender-Based Violence”.
  - Ask the following question – “Whom do you think are at the receiving end violence on a higher degree and a more frequent basis – Men or Women”? ask if they have heard about transgender people? Ask “do you think transgender people face violence and harassment?”
  - Once the question has been answered, ask the students why they gave their respective answers.
  - Explain the gender disparity among GBV victims to participants – with an emphasis on how women are victimized as they are considered as the “Weaker Sex”. Explain that transgender people are further discriminated because they challenge the gender binary.
  
- ❖ **Prevalence**
  - Help participants to understand that historically women and trans people have been the victims of GBV, while men are perpetrators.
  - Even though it is rare, emphasize there are instances where men are victims too.
  - Explain the recent statistics to discuss the scope of gender-based violence in Sri Lanka - especially within the world of work. Some statistics can be found here –  
Trade unions may seek support from the National Transgender Network for support to build sessions.
  
- ❖ **Forms of GBV**
  - Ask the participants to identify different types of GBV.
  - Explain the types of violence that are committed by individuals.
  - Explain the type of violence that is carried out by the state.
  - Remind participants that violence and harassment in the world of work can be a manifestation of GBV.

- Enable participants to understand that GBV can be inflicted on a person physically, emotionally, and verbally.

Below are some example images that can be used to provoke a discussion

විද්‍යා ලේඛනය තුළ නිරීන්ද්‍ර සහ ප්‍රවණිකත්වය දුරලදී විද්‍යා ලේඛනය තුළ නිරීන්ද්‍ර සහ ප්‍රවණිකත්වය දුරලදී



විනය - අමන්දි නෙල්ලිගෙදර



විනය - අමන්දි නෙල්ලිගෙදර



- **Key Message** - The reason why women are mostly victims of GBV is because of the patriarchal structure, not because they are 'weaker'.

## **2. Understanding Gender Roles**

➤ **Objective:** To understand the existing gender roles and stereotypes in Sri Lanka to successfully eliminate them.

➤ **Learning Outcomes:**

- To create an understanding about the influence of gender roles
- To identify the existing gender stereotypes in our culture
- Learn effective strategies to break gender stereotypes within the world of work

➤ **Lesson Timeline**

- 30-40 minutes approx.

❖ **Gender Roles**

- Ask the following question - "Can you explain the difference between gender and sex?"
- Explain the difference to the students by emphasizing that gender is not determined by our reproductive organs, but rather a label that we are assigned by society.
- Explain what is meant by gender roles. Ask students to identify some gender-roles that have been assigned to women and men. Discuss why these decisions have been made. Emphasize on the role of modeling behavior.
- Discuss the pink-blue dichotomy. Ask students why pink has been 'historically' assigned to girls and blue to boys. Explain the history of this dichotomy clearly.

❖ **Gender-Stereotypes**

- Explain what is meant by 'stereotyping' and how it can occur depending on a person's race, ethnicity, gender among many other factors.
- Discuss what is meant by gender-stereotyping by offering clear examples from our society. i.e., men re good at decision making / Women are too emotional
- Discuss the consequences of gender-stereotyping and specifically focus on how it can impact the strength of the trade union.
- Emphasize how gender-stereotyping can affect both men and women.

❖ **How to Break Gender-Stereotypes**

- Emphasize how important it is to break these gender-stereotypes to ensure everyone feels respected and valued as a member of the trade union.

- **Key Message** - Despite their gender, everyone has the right to feel respected and valued. More importantly, everyone has the right to make their own decisions including who they are, who they want to be and what they want to do.
-

### **3. Equal opportunity**

- **Objective:** To understand the importance of equal opportunity in trade unionism
  
  - **Learning Outcomes:**
    - To create an understanding about what is meant by equal opportunity
    - Emphasize the importance of equal opportunity
    - Identify methods to create equal opportunities
  
  - **Lesson Timeline**
    - 30-40 minutes approx.
  
  - ❖ **What is Equal Opportunity**
    - Ask the following question - “What is meant by gender equality?”
    - Explain what is meant by equal opportunities.
    - Emphasize that gender equality does not mean ‘favoring’ women and trans people but rather ensuring that everyone is treated equally and according to their own abilities.
  
  - ❖ **Why is it Important**
    - Ask the following question - “Why do we need to have equal rights and opportunity in trade unionism?” Discuss the answers.
  
  - ❖ **Creating Equal Opportunity**
    - Explain the strategies mentioned in the framework to create equal opportunities for all.
  
  - **Key Message** - A world of gender parity can only be achieved with the active participation of all genders.
-

## **4. Creating a respectful union space**

- **Objective:** To understand the importance of respect in various aspects of trade unionism.
- **Learning Outcomes:**
  - To understand what is meant by respect
  - Learn the importance of self-respect
  - Learn the importance of empathy
  - To understand what is meant by consent
- **Lesson Timeline**
  - 30-40 minutes approx.

### ❖ **Introduction**

- Ask the participants the following question - "What does respect mean?" Identify the keywords used to describe respect.
- Explain what is meant by respect as explained below.

Respect is valuing someone.  
Respect is an attitude that develops through mature and mutually enriching interpersonal relationships. It is the attitude of accepting others' differences; It is important to understand that respect is threefold. We must have respect for self, others and difference.

### ❖ **Respect for Self**

- Ask the following question - "What does self-respect mean?" Identify the keywords used to describe self-respect.
- Explain what is meant by self-respect and emphasize on how it cannot and shouldn't be affected by what other people think of you.

### ❖ **Respect for Others**

- Ask the following question - "What does empathy mean?" Identify the keywords used to describe empathy.
- Clearly explain the difference between sympathy and empathy.
- Inquire participants about strategies that can help us become more empathetic towards our peers. Discuss the answers.

### ❖ **Respect for Difference**

- Ask the following question - "Why do we need to respect those who are different than us?" Discuss the answers.
- Explain the importance of respecting difference - especially in the world of work and in trade unionism.

