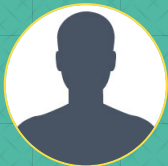
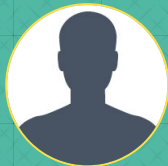


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# Addressing gender-based violence and harassment in the private sector



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## The private sector increasingly recognises the importance of preventing and responding to GBVH

When CDC Group started developing [guidance on addressing gender-based violence and harassment](#) 18 months ago, we had no idea how timely it would feel when it was published.

It comes at a time when the world is grappling with the unforeseen socio-economic impact of COVID-19, a realisation that we have more work to do on addressing all forms of inequity including racial ones, and a welcomed global awakening as to why the 'S' in ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) is fundamentally important and touches all spheres of the societies we live in.

Globally we have made good progress on gender equality and women's economic empowerment. A key milestone in 2019 was the adoption of the ILO Convention 190 on Violence and Harassment that focuses on combatting violence and harassment in the world of work, including gender-based violence and harassment (GBVH). However, we also recognise that we have work to do.

GBVH is a widespread and serious global issue that affects individuals in the workplace, their communities, and homes: one in three women have experienced physical or sexualised violence in their lifetime. That is not including emotional, financial, or verbal abuse.

While GBVH disproportionately impacts women and girls, it is important to recognise that boys, men and sexual and gender minorities also experience gender-based violence. Some have also called GBVH a pandemic within an ongoing pandemic; the United Nations Population Fund estimates an additional 31 million cases of gender-based violence were perpetrated in the first six months alone of COVID-19.

GBVH can manifest in many different forms and it is important to identify what qualifies as gender-based violence. It is an umbrella term and can include physical, psychological, sexual or economic harm. Think of it as an act of violence that is directed at a person because of their sex or gender, or by disproportionately affecting persons of a particular sex or gender.

GBVH can happen in the private or public sphere, in kitchens and bedrooms, markets and boardrooms. It can include street harassment, unwanted attention in public spaces, offensive jokes and comments in the workplace and intimate partner violence.

There is growing recognition that the private sector has an important role to play to address gender-based violence and harassment. That's why CDC, in partnership with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the International Finance Corporation (IFC), developed guidance that responds to the need raised by companies and investors for practical tools and guidance on emerging best practice to prevent and respond to the risk of violence and harassment.

While GBVH is systemic, it can also be difficult to detect, and it requires training to respond to it appropriately. As the private sector increasingly recognises the importance of addressing gender-based violence and harassment, it is essential that businesses and investors know what to do - and what not to do.

> **Read the full report** [Addressing gender-based violence and harassment](#)