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Vision Zero Fund approach to gender equality

Guidance for projects working on improving occupational safety and health in global supply chains

Note

- ▶ This document provides information on the approach of Vision Zero Fund in contributing towards advancing gender equality. It also provides projects working on improving occupational safety and health in global supply chains, in particular those of Vision Zero Fund, with clear guidance on ensuring the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of gender-responsive projects.

1. Introduction

Vision Zero Fund is a Group of Seven (G7) initiative that seeks to eliminate severe and fatal work-related accidents, injuries and diseases in global supply chains. The International Labour Organization (ILO) administers the initiative, which is part of its Safety + Health for All flagship programme.

Vision Zero Fund implements a multistakeholder approach to promote collective action for safer and healthier supply chains. The Fund currently works at global, country and workplace levels in three global supply chains in eight countries: garments (Ethiopia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Madagascar and Myanmar); agriculture, with a primary focus on coffee (Colombia, Honduras, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mexico, and Viet Nam), but also on lychee, chili peppers, tomatoes and ginger farming (Madagascar, Mexico and Myanmar, respectively); and construction (Madagascar and Myanmar).

The Fund's 2019–23 global strategy states that, "In line with the ILO Policy on Gender Equality and

its Action Plan for Gender Equality 2018–21, a more strategic approach to gender equality and women's empowerment is adopted in all of Vision Zero Fund's activities".¹

Vision Zero Fund aims to be a gender-responsive programme, in order to ensure gender equity and contribute towards the achievement of gender equality. Vision Zero Fund is not meant to be a gender-transformative initiative, as this would require measures that might be beyond its mandate and means.

The purpose of this document is to provide readers with a clear understanding on Vision Zero Fund's approach to gender equality. Specifically, this document provides projects working on improving occupational safety and health in global supply chains, in particular those of Vision Zero Fund, with clear guidance for ensuring that the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of projects effectively integrate gender-responsive provisions.

¹ ILO, 2019. [Vision Zero Fund Strategy 2019–23: Collective Action for Safe and Healthy Supply Chains](#).

Key definition

Sex refers to biological and universal physical attributes of men and women.

Gender refers to the socially constructed expectations about abilities, interests and capacities based on stereotypes about these, and the unequal power relations between women and men.

Unequal power relations from a gender perspective affect every aspect of employment, working conditions, social protection, representation and voice at work. This is why gender is called a cross-cutting issue in the world of work.

Gender analysis is a tool to establish the division of paid and unpaid work by women and by men, women's and men's access to and control over productive resources, women's practical and strategic needs from a gender perspective, and the opportunities and challenges for constituents to address these and promote gender-responsive outcomes. This last step also takes into account other factors in the larger social, economic, political and environmental context.

Gender equality refers to the enjoyment of equal rights, opportunities and treatment by men and women and by boys and girls in all spheres of life. It asserts that people's rights, responsibilities, social status and access to and control over productive resources do not depend on whether they were born male or female.

Gender equity means fairness of treatment for women and men, according to their respective needs. This may include equal treatment or treatment that is different but considered equivalent in terms of rights, benefits, obligations and opportunities. Equity measures are short-term strategies to help achieve the goal of gender equality.

Gender responsiveness is the ability to be proactive, and to consistently integrate gender perspectives. In addition, it aims to include gender equality, women's empowerment, and a "men and masculinities" approach (the latter of which aims to contribute to gender equality and women's empowerment). Gender responsiveness challenges unequal power relations between women and men, and promotes women's equal opportunities and treatment in the world of work.

Gender-transformative initiatives transform the existing distribution of resources and responsibilities in order to create a more equal relationship between women and men. Women and men may be targeted or one group alone may be targeted by the intervention.

Gender mainstreaming is defined as the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action. It seeks to guarantee that the concerns and experiences of individuals of both sexes are taken into consideration in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes with the aim of achieving gender equality. Gender mainstreaming is a strategy to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment so that both women and men can participate in, and benefit equally from, the development process.

The content of the document was based on identified gender-strengthening needs, arising from Vision Zero Fund project evaluations and gender assessments commissioned by the Secretariat of Vision Zero Fund and

discussions with project teams. Where relevant, guidance is provided as per identified good practices from the ILO and the Fund's experience to date.

2. Occupational Safety and Health in the International Labour Organization

The protection of workers' safety and health is a core ILO priority. In its preamble, the ILO Constitution (1919) lays down the principle that workers should be protected against sickness, disease and injury arising from their employment. This principle is reasserted in the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Declaration concerning the aims and purposes of the ILO (Declaration of Philadelphia, 1944), which stipulates that the ILO should develop programmes to achieve "adequate protection for the life and health of workers in all occupations".

ILO instruments address occupational safety and health (OSH) through over 40 Conventions, Protocols and Recommendations, including:

- Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155) and its Protocol of 2002;
- Occupational Health Services Convention, 1985 (No. 161);
- Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187);
- Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81);
- Safety and Health in Construction Convention, 1988 (No. 167);
- Safety and Health in Agriculture Convention, 2001 (No. 184).

OSH was mentioned as a priority in the context of global supply chains during the 2016 International Labour Conference and is also part of the ILO programme of action on decent work in global supply chains.

Gender in the ILO

Gender equality is specifically enshrined in the ILO's core labour standards by means of two fundamental Conventions:

- Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100);
- Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111).

Additional Conventions and a Recommendation with relevance to working women and gender equality are:

- Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156);
- Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183). The first maternity protection convention (Maternity Protection Convention, 1919 (No. 3)) was established by the ILO in 1919 and revised in 1952 (Maternity Protection Convention, 1952 (No. 103)) and again in 2000. The new Convention establishes

rights for all employed women, including those in atypical forms of dependent work;

- Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190), which was adopted in 2019 and will enter into force on 25 June 2021;
- HIV and AIDS Recommendation, 2010 (No. 200).

The five Conventions cover gender equality themes in the world of work, including: the gender wage gap; discrimination in recruitment or treatment in employment, workplace violence and harassment; combining work and care (including care of children and the elderly); and protection related to motherhood such as the health protection of pregnant and breastfeeding women, maternity leave, leave in case of complications, benefits and employment protection.

ILO Action Plan for Gender Equality 2018–21

Gender equality and women's empowerment are integral to the "leave no one behind" pledge of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda) and will be key in achieving all of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including Goal 8 on decent work. The ILO Action Plan for Gender Equality 2018–21 contains some SDG-related indicators and is aligned, as per the 1999 ILO Policy on Gender Equality and Mainstreaming, with ILO-wide processes such as the programme and budget. The latter consists of strategic policy outcomes to which constituents have decided to contribute in order to fulfil their relevant national and international commitments.

Decent work, gender equality and non-discrimination feature prominently in the 2030 Agenda and corresponding SDGs adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 25 September 2015. Specifically, these include Goal 5 "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls"; Goal 8 "Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all"; and Goal 10 "Reduce inequality within and among countries".

Gender mainstreaming in occupational safety and health

When considering gender and safety and health at work, women's reproductive health is often in focus. In fact, women workers are specifically vulnerable in pregnancy and as mothers of small children.

Certain physical conditions or being exposed to toxic substances in their work pose a significant risk to women's health and safety and/or that of the unborn child or neonates (through lactation). The physical and mental stress of workers with a young child may have negative impacts on the child. Convention No. 183 and national laws address such issues, provide for paid maternity leave and for breaks or reductions in working time for breastfeeding mothers. However, such protective legislation can also lead to discriminative practices on the part of employers such as the dismissal of pregnant women, offering women only temporary contracts that make dismissal easier, or only hiring young, unmarried women. These and other discriminative practices in the workplace can result in fear and psychological stress. Women often do not complain about working conditions and OSH hazards in the workplace for fear of retaliation.

Appropriate hygiene and washing facilities at work are important for all workers, but the lack of such facilities affects women differently for a variety of reasons, including because women menstruate and are biologically more prone to urinary tract infections.²

Social norms and roles, biological differences, the division of labour between men and women at home and in the workplace can contribute to gendered employment patterns and, consequently, to specific patterns of occupational hazards and risks for women and men workers. Recognition of the division of labour from a gender perspective in the workforce is essential in promoting safer and healthier workplace outcomes for all workers.

Exposure to the same hazards may affect women and men differently. For example, gender differences in risk perception associated with the concept of masculinity may result in men undertaking risky/unsafe behaviours in the workplace. Moreover, existing OSH data are often gender-blind; for example, injury- or compensation-related data refer to "workers", which makes it difficult to draw conclusions regarding the OSH of men and women workers. Such data should therefore be disaggregated by sex and complemented by qualitative research in order to have a better understanding of the relationship between OSH and gender.

Taking a gender-mainstreaming approach to OSH goes beyond collecting sex-disaggregated OSH data and analysing risks at work for male and female workers. The effects of gender stereotyping on safety and health must be explored and a gender perspective taken into account in the design of OSH legislation, policies, systems and preventive measures. Men's over-representation in decision-making bodies reinforces the persistence of inequalities between the sexes in the context of OSH, as working women's needs are not heard or considered.

Mainstreaming gender issues in OSH means giving it the same priority for both women and men by taking into account the specific gender realities of women and men in the design of policies on OSH and preventive measures, which will ultimately result in better OSH practices.

In order to transform global supply chains into sectors without fatal or severe OSH injuries, it is essential that the challenges faced by women and men are reflected in planning processes, and that women are sufficiently represented in research and in the formulation of the collective action plan, as well as in any associated decision-making bodies.

² [Women develop urinary tract infections \(UTIs\)](#) up to 30 times more often than men because a woman's urethra (the tube from the bladder to where the urine comes out of the body) is shorter than a man's. This makes it easier for bacteria to get into the bladder. A woman's urethral opening is also closer to both the vagina and the anus, the main source of bacteria such as *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*) that cause UTIs.

3. Vision Zero Fund and gender dynamics in targeted global supply chains

In 2020, the Vision Zero Fund independent mid-term evaluation recommended following up on the gender diagnostics to strengthen the integration of gender in the methodology for improving OSH in global supply chains, and consolidating gender mainstreaming by adopting appropriate measures and allocating sufficient resources to provide gender-mainstreaming guidance, tools and training to country ILO teams and country constituents, to ensure that Vision Zero Fund interventions are gender responsive.

The gender diagnostics referred to an internal study carried out by the International Training Centre of the ILO, Turin Centre (ITC-ILO), commissioned by the Fund,³ which sought to strengthen the integration of gender into the Fund's work through a comprehensive analysis of the assessments produced following the implementation of the ILO methodology for identifying drivers and constraints for OSH improvement, conducted by Vision Zero Fund at each project start-up.

This study found that, even if the ILO methodology was gender responsive, and some of the assessments produced following its implementation included gender-specific dimensions of risk assessment and suggested elements for gender planning,⁴ gender integration was "dependent on the individual capacity and willingness of researchers to apply methods for gender analysis and planning in their research activities".⁵ Systematic instructions on how to perform gender analysis and planning in the research methodology are missing.⁶

If initial assessments are gender blind and do not assess gender-specific risks, drivers and constraints for OSH improvement in the value chain, it is more likely that intervention planning is not gender responsive and can even contribute to discrimination. This in turn can adversely affect, rather than improve, occupational safety and health in global supply chains. For example, violence and harassment in the workplace is an OSH issue, but is rarely considered in most assessments, with the exception of some occasional references.

Vision Zero Fund is currently active in three global supply chains: the garment, agricultural and construction sectors.

In garment global supply chain, the majority of workers are women, and women workers also play a major role in agricultural global supply chains. The construction sector is often male dominated and has only recently been addressed by the Fund. In all sectors, the majority of women workers are found in informal, temporary or seasonal jobs (including family workers and home-based workers). Women workers are usually under-represented in unions and in workers' organizations, employers' organizations and government structures. The study reports that "this has numerous consequences, including that OSH risks specific to female workers are less likely to be acknowledged and addressed, a lack of understanding of the severity of sexual harassment in the sector, a deficient legal framework on maternity protection and childcare issues (to name but a few)".⁷ Sexual harassment is a violation of human rights, a form of discrimination, and a safety and health issue⁸ based on unequal power relations. The majority of victims are women. It is a physical and psychological health hazard and as such should be considered as an OSH issue.

Agriculture

In many agricultural global supply chains, the majority of producers are small and medium-sized farmers, with the significant involvement of family members in the work. A high percentage of women work as unpaid family workers. Studies conducted by the Fund in Mexico, for example, found that women played a key role in coffee production, although they were often not included in statistics.

The toxicological characteristics of the agrochemicals applied by both women and men, without the use of any protective equipment or protocol, are a significant health hazard, aggravated by a lack of sanitation services and access to clean water, restrooms and public showers. Mechanical, physical, ergonomic and

3 This study was commissioned by Vision Zero Fund in 2020. The report is not publicly available. The study reviewed the methodology as illustrated in the ILO guide [Occupational Safety and Health in Global Value Chains Starterkit](#) and in the case studies developed through its implementation.

4 For example: ILO, 2017. [Food and agriculture global value chains: Drivers and constraints for occupational safety and health improvement, Volume Two – Three case studies](#).

5 ITC-ILO study, footnote 4.

6 ITC-ILO study, 11.

7 ITC-ILO.

8 ILO, 2007. [ABC of women workers' rights and gender equality](#), second ed.

psychosocial risks are described, but an analysis of the different risks for female and male workers, especially for pregnant or breastfeeding mothers, is missing.

Harassment and violence is a reality for many women in the agricultural sector, especially migrants and indigenous women. Long working hours, especially during harvesting, and the double burden placed on women performing both paid and unpaid work contribute to physical exhaustion and psychosocial stress.

The Vision Zero Fund study in Mexico found that participation in the organizational structures of women working in the coffee sector is often limited by their educational level and time constraints due to the unequal burden that is placed on them to perform both paid and unpaid work. Therefore, their participation in such initiatives does not guarantee that they will enjoy optimal development, concrete benefits or equal treatment as compared to male members.⁹

Garment

A large proportion of workers in the textile and garment industry are women. They are mostly employed as sewing machine operators or helpers, while supervisory and management positions are often filled by men. Long working hours, overtime work in peak production periods and night shifts are common in the sector. The incidence of verbal abuse is reported as high, affecting both women and men. Gender-based violence and sexual harassment is prevalent and largely under-reported, and there is a lack of effective reporting and redress mechanisms. Strong management and organizational awareness of the issue, combined with targeted interventions, are important to reduce prevalence, as experience has shown.¹⁰ Other major OSH risks include injuries related to the use of equipment, noise levels, fires and electrical hazards, temperature and inadequate ventilation.

The main accidents and injuries occurring in factories are those associated with needle-puncture wounds, working with cutting equipment and grinders, and slips, trips and falls. Chemical injuries also occur.¹¹ Accidents happen to both female and male workers. However, as female workers make up more than 80 per cent of all workers in the garment sector, and many women work as machine operators, needle-puncture wounds are more prevalent among women.

In Ethiopia, where the Fund works in the garment sector, training on OSH issues, adequate sanitation facilities and personal protective equipment (PPE), access to free drinking water and on-site medical staff and facilities are uncommon, with international enterprises faring slightly better than domestic ones. Factories tend to provide equal numbers of toilets for females and males, which is not proportionate to the composition of the workforce because many more women than men work there. Formal grievance procedures or an established grievance mechanism are more likely in foreign-owned enterprises.

Female membership and representation in workers' organizations, trade unions and workers' councils is low. Support services such as childcare facilities are a rare exception and not easy to organize.

Construction

The sector is highly male dominated (worldwide around 90 per cent of workers are men) and it is one of the sectors increasingly employing internal migrant workers from rural areas.¹² A growing number of women are entering this sector, mostly in office positions, but also on construction sites. There is a high risk of harassment (including bullying and sexual harassment) directed at women, with reprisals when they report cases.¹³ Concepts of masculinity also influence men's risk perception and safety practices, which has an impact on male workers' OSH behaviour, for example in the use of PPE. Vision Zero Fund in Madagascar has planned a study to look into how masculinity affects OSH conditions in the workplace in construction.

Tools and equipment are often designed (although often not ergonomically) to be used by average-sized men. Also, PPE (face masks, face shields, gloves and work boots) are mostly designed to fit average-sized men; when PPE does not fit, the protection it can offer is reduced. Thus, women have a higher risk of workplace injury due to poorly fitting equipment.

On many construction sites, there are no toilets or they are unhygienic, or there are no separate and safe toilets for men and women. The lack of water for personal hygiene is also a problem, in particular for women of reproductive age. As childcare facilities are almost non-existent, some women have to bring their small children to construction sites.

⁹ ILO, 2020. [Improving Occupational safety and health in the global value chain of coffee in Mexico: Drivers and constraints. A case study.](#)

¹⁰ ILO, 2019. [Improving worker wellbeing in Ethiopia's garment industry through the model of shared responsibility.](#)

¹¹ Idem

¹² ILO, 2020. ["Developing International and Internal Labour migration Governance in Myanmar"](#).

¹³ ITC-ILO, 2020 (unpublished); See also European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, CDC and IFC (International Finance Corporation), ["Addressing Gender-Based Violence and Harassment \(GBVH\) in the Construction Sector"](#).

4. Ensuring the integration of gender into Vision Zero Fund's work

Women and men should benefit equally from Vision Zero Fund project activities, outputs and outcomes and have equal access OSH services.¹⁴ To do so, projects must:

1. **Design** the project in a gender-responsive manner that includes the formulation of outcomes, outputs and indicators in such a way that gender responsiveness is clearly communicated and visible;
2. Conduct **research**, including assessment of risks, drivers and constraints, in a gender-responsive manner;
3. Carry out **awareness-raising** activities in the workplace and, if possible, beyond, given that social norms have strong impacts and modifying them requires a comprehensive approach;
4. Organize gender-responsive **capacity-building** activities that address the rights and duties of both women and men workers (this has an impact on the planning of materials for activities and on the activities themselves);
5. Plan and deliver **technical assistance** based on gender-responsive assessments and taking into account the specific risks and needs of women. Where relevant, include **harassment and gender-based violence** (at work and on the way to work) as a safety in the workplace issue;
6. Address **voice, representation and leadership** as a precondition for equal access to participation and influencing decisions at the factory, sector and policy level. As needed, **promote dialogue** on gender equality and OSH with the social partners, and/or deliver training programmes on gender issues and gender sensitivity.

Practical recommendations are provided below to guide projects on how to ensure compliance with the six points listed above.

Many of these have been adapted from the ILO/SIDA working paper "10 Keys for Gender Sensitive OSH Practice – Guidelines for Gender Mainstreaming in Occupational Safety and Health" to VZF work. Where relevant, readers are referred to the specific guidelines of that document for further information.¹⁵

4.1 Design

Perform gender analysis from conceptualization through to programme design. Analyse how the programme design and desired outcomes may be influenced by and affect the different roles and responsibilities that culture assigns to men and women, particularly around power and decision-making. This may include access to resources, technology and services, ability to participate meaningfully and other factors.¹⁶ If this is not done during the design of the project, it could be integrated into initial research, including into the assessment of drivers and constraints for OSH improvement.

- Identify gendered assumptions and risks that may affect the programme's success.
- Establish a process for programme design that engages the target groups and is inclusive, age and developmentally appropriate, gender responsive (is aware, integrates and addresses different gender perspectives), and engages relevant key stakeholders.
- Take into account the heterogeneity of the groups and the different experiences of indigenous, disabled, and/or other vulnerable women and men workers. Find the best way of engaging in conversations with them about the project in a way that everyone feels safe, and that allows for sharing the diversity of perspectives and situations of the groups. You might need to: organize additional and/or separate group meetings to discuss particular situations in more detail, hold the meeting(s) in certain languages (so that everyone has an equal chance of expressing himself or herself), consider a facilitator of a specific sex or gender (for groups to feel more comfortable and open up).
- During consultations or strategic planning workshops, invite the ILO regional gender expert to hold a session on OSH and gender for project partners.
- Formulate project outcomes; outputs and indicators should be formulated in such a way that gender responsiveness is clearly communicated and visible. If women are explicitly named, all stakeholders are

¹⁴ The information below is applicable to any project working on improving occupational safety and health in global supply chains, beyond those of Vision Zero Fund.

¹⁵ ILO/SIDA, 2013. "[10 Keys for Gender Sensitive OSH Practice – Guidelines for Gender Mainstreaming in Occupational Safety and Health](#)", working paper.

¹⁶ The German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) has published a "[Gender analysis checklist for health within a programme or project cycle](#)", which could probably be adapted for the VZF and OSH projects.

reminded that workers are not only male workers that are often considered “the norm” (one example showing the “male norm” mentioned is the use of a drawing of a male body when explaining about physical risks in one of the training sessions). Neither women nor men are a homogenous group; they differ in terms of age, family status, origins (for example urban/rural), class status and level of education. Analysis and action planning needs to

take diversity into account (also regarding ethnicity, cultural norms and language). It will be important to acknowledge gender differences in occupational segregation, in gender-based discrimination and in risk and vulnerability patterns, and make them visible. Visibility will be increased by naming female and male workers; collect and analyse sex-disaggregated data and aim at gender-responsive OSH protection, prevention and compensation.



Because of the different jobs women and men do and the different societal roles, expectations and responsibilities they have, women and men may be exposed to different physical and psychological risks in the workplace, thus requiring differing control measures. This approach also improves the understanding that the sexual division of labour, biological differences, employment patterns, social roles and social structures all contribute to gender-specific patterns of occupational hazards and risks. This needs to be taken into account if OSH policies and prevention strategies are to be effective

Source: ILO/SIDA, 2013. “10 Keys for Gender Sensitive OSH Practice – Guidelines for Gender Mainstreaming in Occupational Safety and Health”, 2013 (Preface).

The framework below is an example of what a gender-responsive results chain can look like.

Development outcome (impact)

Reduced exposure of women and men working in targeted global supply chains to OSH hazards in the workplace.

Outcome 1: Strengthened global, regional and national enabling environments for the promotion of safe and healthy working conditions for women and men in targeted global supply chains

Outputs:

1.1 Improved knowledge and information on OSH and global supply chains at the global, regional and/or national level, using a gender-responsive approach;

1.2 Enhanced industry-wide and/or global-wide, regional-wide and/or country-wide commitment to improve compliance with OSH standards in targeted global supply chains.

Outcome 2: Improved legal and policy frameworks to promote and enforce OSH protection, prevention and compensation for female and male workers in targeted global supply chains

► VZF thematic brief n°2

Vision Zero Fund approach to gender equality: Guidance for projects working on improving occupational safety and health in global supply chains

Outputs:

- 2.1** Improved capacity of practitioners and/or policymakers to collect and analyse gender-specific, sex-disaggregated OSH data;
- 2.2** Improved capacity to promote and enforce gender-responsive OSH standards;
- 2.3** Improved access by female and male workers to compensation mechanisms.

Outcome 3: Increased application of effective OSH prevention, protection and compensation mechanisms for women and men working in targeted global supply chains

Outputs:

- 3.1** Improved capacity of employers and workers (organizations) to promote gender-responsive OSH in the workplace;
- 3.2** Improved mechanisms to promote gender-responsive OSH in the workplace –

Additional indicator

- Number of OSH committees with female representation as a fair percentage of the number of women workers, disaggregated by global supply chain.

- 3.3** Female and male workers are more empowered to engage in the promotion of OSH.

Additional indicators could also be framed to track and report the number of women (workers, representatives and leaders) trained. The substantive aspects of such training, such as the extent to which the capacity of women participants to voice their needs and concerns increased, should also be included, although this would require specific qualitative methods to collect data.

The importance of both women's and men's voice, participation and leadership (for example, in representation and in OSH prevention activities) for achieving equal access to OSH measures is highlighted, but is so far not established in the design of the project. Therefore, the inclusion of gender-specific indicators is recommended. Through well-directed capacity-building and training for women, Vision Zero Fund can contribute to increasing the number of female workers represented in workers' organizations, on worker-management committees or OSH committees.

In addition to quantitative indicators, qualitative assessments of the impact of interventions are recommended, for example through the collection of workers' stories on how they see the changes in their lives. Knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP)

studies are also a method to provide quantitative and qualitative information on changes over time.

4.2 Research, including assessment of drivers and constraints for OSH improvement

Research and knowledge generation are one of the first activities that Vision Zero Fund projects carry out. OSH research should properly take into account gender differences.

Securing a sound OSH and gender analysis requires the implementation of the following measures to improve gender sensitivity and gender equality:

- Selection of consultants: gender expertise and gender sensitivity are a must when commissioning research (including assessment of drivers and constraints) and when hiring technical advisers.

If it is difficult to hire local/regional consultants with expertise in both OSH and gender, consider:

- Providing more guidance on gender and a checklist for researchers: key questions for gender analysis at each stage of the methodology;
- Involving the ILO gender focal point and/or expert (from the relevant branch or region) from the outset to ensure that a gender lens is applied throughout the document and included in all data collection tools;
- If time and resources allow, consider hiring a consultant with expertise in gender to support the work of the main researcher and to support and provide inputs to data collection and analysis.

Risk assessment should take into account sex and gender differences, including gender-based violence, harassment and other psychosocial hazards at work.¹⁷ Furthermore, it is important to explore the effects of gender roles on safety and health and examine the OSH aspects of working time patterns. The effect of unpaid work and childcare in addition to paid employment has to be assessed, as this work adds to the total workload and time and is normally undertaken by women workers.

- During the research consultation or validation processes (for example, development of the intervention models), ensure that women are sufficiently represented in the stakeholder engagement leading to the formulation of the action plan. Raise concerns with constituents if

¹⁷ As the latter is a very sensitive topic, it needs specific methodologies and interviewing skills.

women are under-represented. Aim for gender-balanced consultations. Provide incentives for women and supportive measures to enable more women to attend meetings and consultations (see “Organization of training” below).

- Request and support the presence of women in tripartite constituents, for example by facilitating access to childcare services, organizing secure transport.
- Link up with women’s cooperatives, women’s unions and/or women’s organizations.
- Cooperating with structures within the workers community may be an option to address gender issues such as gender-based violence impacting on safety in the workplace, at the same time going beyond the workplace.
- Make sure to include female experts in conferences and other knowledge-sharing and learning activities.
- As buying companies, for example in the coffee value chain, are increasingly asking for gender equality information, include components of gender-responsive OSH in the discussion and revision of certification schemes.

4.3 Capacity development

Tool development

- Include gender experts in the development of all training tools, including OSH promotion, compliance and enforcement tools.
- Ensure the participation of women in the process.
- If existing regulations are modified/improved, request feedback from gender experts.
- Organize feedback loops with constituencies of female workers.

Organization of training

- Selection of trainees and composition of training groups: Take care to address women and men equally when inviting to training events. Use gender language, for example a gender-neutral noun, like chairperson (instead of chairman). Where relevant to the language, avoid the use of male pronouns like “he,” “him,” “his,” or “himself” to refer to people who may be female, for example a labour inspector or a coffee farmer.
- Incorporate awareness-raising on gender differences in OSH and gender training in capacity-building for social partners (including trade unions, employers’ associations and civil society organizations addressing work-related issues).

- Content of training: Include gender sensitivity in OSH training module(s) and training on prevention of harassment and sexual violence in the workplace. Discuss examples of women’s and men’s differences in OSH, for example men report more work accidents – why? Harassment and violence in the workplace are a risk for both women and men, but the incidence of gender-based violence is highly under-reported – why? Why are women and men represented differently in trade unions, OSH committees and other social structures?

- Develop or revise training materials and tools with a gender lens: integrate gender-specific elements representing the different experiences and occupational risks of women and men; and address the gender aspects of OSH, for example gender-based violence and its impact on female workers’ health, stress levels, well-being and productivity, mechanisms for reporting and redress, masculinity and risk-taking behaviour, and masculinity and gender-based violence. When using drawings of a body for explaining physical risks, use drawings of a female and a male body, thus making women workers also visible and not taking men as the norm.

- Take women’s needs into account when selecting the venue and time frame: Can women reach the venue easily? Do they feel secure? Are appropriate sanitation facilities available? Is the time frame suitable for them, bearing in mind the unequal burden that is put on women to perform both paid and unpaid work?
- Assess if the topic or the specific environment provide reasons for training in separate groups for women and men. Consider if initial women-only training sessions are an option for the empowerment of women (in situations where women are highly under-represented in institutional set-ups and their voices are not heard, empowerment to speak for themselves is a crucial step towards their equal participation in the design and implementation of OSH measures).

Training of labour inspectors

- Incorporate awareness-raising on gender-responsive OSH and gender training in institutional capacity-building (for labour inspectors and government officials).

It is very important to go beyond the number or percentage of female inspectors trained, and measure knowledge and understanding of gender-responsive OSH in the workplace (for example before and after the training addressing gender aspects of OSH in the sector).

More information: [Guideline 8: Developing gender-sensitive OSH information, education and training.](#)

4.4 Technical assistance and other activities

Legal and policy development outputs

- Conduct a gender gap assessment of policies and legislation.
- Support administrators and legislators to revise their regulatory frameworks. Make sure that gender needs related to OSH are discussed and addressed.¹⁸
- Institutionalize collaboration with ministries dealing with gender equality or gender departments in other relevant ministries, with gender departments at universities, and with other institutions for advice and review of documents.
- Promote the involvement of social partners (workers' and employers' representatives) and make sure that women are represented. If possible, agree on quotas for female representation (for example, by 2024 at least 30/40/50 per cent of representatives should be women).

More information: [Guideline 1](#): Taking a gender mainstreaming approach to reviewing and developing occupational safety and health legislation; [Guideline 2](#): Developing OSH policies to address gender inequalities in OSH practice; [Guideline 10](#): Working time arrangements and work-life balance.

Work equipment, tools and personal protective equipment

- Taking the male worker as the norm, work equipment, tools and PPE have long been designed for the male body size and shape. To minimize the risks for women resulting from inappropriately designed equipment, tools and PPE, the Fund has developed, and should develop, solutions taking women's characteristics and needs into account.

► Good practice n°1

In early 2019, Vision Zero Fund Myanmar supported OSH improvement in three ginger trading warehouses, through training and the provision of equipment to mainstream OSH. A feasibility study was conducted to understand the workflow and work environment (safety and hazards)

and to explore ways to improve productivity based on available space, resources and workers. A sorting table (with mesh to let dust flow down and a narrow end to facilitate packaging) and a trolley were provided as prototypes, along with training for supervisors and workers in implementing the suggested improvements. Typically, sorting is carried out by female workers, who are used to crouching to sort in the traditional way – thus standing at the table required ergonomic adjustment for these practices to have a major effect on their health and safety. Trading houses were not implementing a first-in, first-out principle for managing inventory, resulting in loss of inventory (up to 30 per cent as reported by a trader) and several sorting stages that exposed female sorters to dust inside often poorly ventilated warehouses.

The implementation of the sorting table led to productivity improvements, thanks to faster sorting and packaging and dust reduction (making it easier to collect), with at the same time improved OSH. Women users said that they liked to sort ginger using the table because of the impact on reducing exposure to dust, and they feel the table was better and safer than squatting.

Promote equal access to OSH services and health care

Strengthening occupational health services must take the specific risks to, and needs of, women into account (analysis of biological, environmental, social and economic factors as health determinants, maternity protection, gender-based violence and harassment in the workplace).

More information: [Guideline 6](#): Promoting equal access to occupational health service and health care for all workers.

► Good practice n°2

As women experience sexual harassment and gender-based violence not only in the workplace, but also within families, on public transport or in

¹⁸ ILO, 2014. "[The gender dimension: Integrating the gender perspective in OSH policies](#)": "A national policy on OSH should include the specific protection of women workers' safety and health as a goal. It should provide guidance to enable employers, trade unions and national authorities to identify problems, make the appropriate links with general safety and health activities for all workers and develop specific programmes to ensure that the needs of women workers are taken into account in occupational and industrial restructuring processes at the national level, particularly in the areas of legislation, information and training, workers' participation and applied research".

workers' accommodation, and this physical and psychological insecurity and the violations affect their work performance, the Vision Zero Fund in Ethiopia has started cooperating with structures within workers' communities. For example, they looked at transport systems and organized safe transport for women workers through collaboration with other partners beyond the factory gates.

4.5 Voice, representation and leadership (to support the project's other areas of work)

- Develop and provide leadership training to women on different levels in global supply chains: for female workers on the shop floor, members of cooperatives, trade unions, OSH committees, worker-management committees and female employers. Cooperate with other (women's) organizations to implement this kind of training.
- Provide additional training and support to women's representatives. As social norms prevent women from speaking out about their concerns and women find it difficult to combine the unequal burden placed on them to perform both paid and unpaid work, including childcare, with active membership in committees and organizations, it is also important to assess the obstacles and address them. This could be done, for example, by addressing husbands, brothers, fathers and other family members simultaneously to minimize resistance and by providing childcare facilities during training.
- Conduct the training of trainers for female trainees to enhance the pool of qualified women who can train other women and men. Female trainers will also serve as role models for other women.
- Representation of women on worker-management committees and in trade unions, union federations and collective bargaining processes is low in many sectors and countries, but women's civil society organizations usually exist. Engagement with women's organizations could therefore be strengthened. Explore collaborating with social partners and civil society organizations working on women's health issues, gender-based violence, sexual and reproductive rights, maternity care and protection and care work.
- Provide additional training and support to women's representatives.

► Good practice n°3

Institutional capacity within committees, groups and organizations is key to the building of a new OSH framework for greater adoption and compliance, as a study on Vision Zero Fund Myanmar revealed (in ginger cooperatives, garment tripartite structures and OSH committees). The assessment highlights the importance of building the capacity of workers' organization members and recommends recognizing and encouraging the important role of female leadership in driving OSH adoption and impact at the workplace level.

Also, in order to improve the gender responsiveness of the project, the Vision Zero Fund team in Myanmar designed a training module on "Gender, OSH and Agriculture". The module has been implemented through the training-of-trainers model and rolled out through subsequent training.

More information: [Guideline 7: Ensuring the participation of both men and women workers and their representatives in OSH measures, health promotion and decision-making.](#)

4.6 Gender-responsive reporting, monitoring and evaluation

A gender-responsive monitoring, evaluation and reporting process has two core aspects: first, the monitoring, evaluation and reporting systems make appropriate provisions for measuring results in a gender-responsive manner; and, second, the process of monitoring, evaluation and reporting itself is gender responsive.

Vision Zero Fund projects need to ensure that the monitoring, evaluation and reporting frameworks create space to measure, collect and report results in a gender-responsive manner. They also need to make sure that the process of data collection is inclusive, allowing both women and men to participate in monitoring and evaluation exercises.

ILO units such as the Partnerships and Field Support Department (PARDEV) and the Evaluation Office (EVAL) already provide strong guidance in this regard (refer to the "More resources on gender equality" section for guidance notes). Some key points to consider are:

- Project results at all levels should explicitly convey the intended gender dimensions within these results, and, wherever possible, frame specific result areas

- with regard to promoting gender equality within OSH interventions;
- Ensure that the gender equality dimensions of project results are equally reflected in memorandums of understanding and implementation agreements with implementing partners;
 - Frame indicators in a manner that allows for measuring quantitative as well as substantive progress on intended gender-specific outputs and outcomes. For the latter, include qualitative data collection methods in your monitoring and evaluation frameworks. If such a data collection process does not seem possible at the project level, make sure your project is part of qualitative data collection exercises as and when undertaken by the Fund and/or the flagship programme;
 - To the extent possible, ensure a gender-balanced team when undertaking monitoring visits. Make sure to include both women and men in a representative manner during your monitoring-related interactions;
 - Ensure that gender-specific activities and results are presented in the progress reports. This should also include specific challenges observed and lessons learned in promoting gender equality within OSH-related work;
 - Give appropriate visibility to women-led OSH initiatives in the form of periodic case studies/ good practice documents that could complement monitoring, reporting, evaluation and learning exercises.

More information: The ILO Evaluation Office's *Checklist 1: Writing the evaluation terms of reference*¹⁹ for integrating gender and inclusion dimensions in evaluation terms of reference, and its *Guidance Note 4: Integrating gender equality in monitoring and evaluation*,²⁰ is followed by evaluation managers and evaluators.

5. Further resources on gender equality

GIZ (German Agency for International Cooperation). 2019. [Gender reloaded: Vision needs Attitude – Attitude meets Action](#).

GIZ. n.d. [“Gender analysis checklist for health within a programme or project cycle”](#).

ILO. 1999. [Director-General’s Circular No. 564: “Gender equality and mainstreaming in the International Labour Office”](#).

ILO/PARDEV. [“How to” guide no. 15: “Gender Mainstreaming in Development Cooperation”](#).

ILO/PARDEV. [“How to” guide no. 18: “Inclusion of People with Disabilities”](#).

ILO. 2019. [Guidance Note 4: “Integrating gender equality in monitoring and evaluation”](#).

TUC. 2017. [“Gender in occupational safety and health: A TUC guide for trade union activists \(with gender checklist\)”](#).

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OSH improvement in global value chains and intervention design – Guide for implementers.

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¹⁹ ILO, 2018. [Checklist 1: Writing the evaluation terms of reference](#).

²⁰ ILO, 2019. [Guidance Note 4: Integrating gender equality in monitoring and evaluation](#).

Vision Zero Fund approach to gender equality: Guidance for projects working on improving occupational safety and health in global supply chains

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ILO. n.d. "Occupational Safety and Health in the Myanmar Garment sector: Executive Summary".

ILO, EU and UN Women. 2020. *Empowering Women at Work: Policies and Practices for Gender Equality in Supply Chains.*

ILO and IFC/Better Work Programme. 2018. *Global Gender Strategy 2018–2022.*

ILO/SIDA. 2013. "10 Keys for Gender Sensitive OSH Practice – Guidelines for Gender Mainstreaming in Occupational Safety and Health". Working paper.

ILO/VZF (Country Office, Andean Countries). 2020. *Gestión de la Seguridad y Salud en el Trabajo en el sector Cafetero.*

ILO/VZF. 2020. *Improving occupational safety and health in the global value chain of coffee in Mexico: Drivers and constraints. A case study.*

ILO/VZF. 2020. *Improving occupational safety and health in the global coffee value chain in Honduras: Drivers and constraints.*

ILO/VZF. 2020. *Improving worker wellbeing in Ethiopia's garment industry through the model of shared responsibility.*

ILO/VZF. 2021. *Vision Zero Fund Myanmar: Outcomes and Practices Assessment 2017-2020.*

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