

# Learning Activity 3.1

## What is our understanding of gender-based violence?

### Overview

This is an awareness-raising and consensus-building activity using a participatory methodology. Cultural norms and existing gender relations may hamper an open discussion on the subject of gender-based violence at work and hinder a full understanding of the phenomenon, even with highly educated participants. This activity may help participants progress in their understanding of existing facts and help to arrive at a consensus over an agreed definition of gender-based violence at work.

### Suggested time

90 minutes

### Aims

- Discuss and define gender-based violence and sexual harassment in the world of work.

### Target group

Representatives from:

- Lead companies aiming to improve supply chain organization;
- Global, national and local employer organizations and trade unions;
- National and local government responsible for legislative implementation and factory inspection;
- Multi Stakeholder Initiatives and social auditors;
- Global, national and local NGOs and women's organizations.
- Factory and farm workers.

### Preparation

- Collect sources of information for the working session, including short visual presentations.
- Search and provide official definitions for the terms to be discussed. Use international (UN, EU) and national references from contexts that are appropriate to the participants' reality. The selected definitions can be written on a flip-chart (to be displayed when required) or included in a slide (to be projected if technology is available).

### Setting

Chairs in a circle or any other informal setting.

### Materials

- Flip charts or posters with the terms to be discussed
- Post-it cards
- Markers
- Tape (if needed)

## Time/Steps

### Step 1: (suggested time: 20 minutes)

- Ask participants to sit in a circle of chairs (or use any other setting that may be conducive to confidence and sharing).
- Ask them to individually reflect on the term **“violence”** and express what they think or ‘feel’ about that term, using words or drawings on a post-it card. Invite them to focus on situations that are not necessarily associated with the world of work. Allow a few minutes for reflection and writing/drawing.
- Using the same instructions, repeat the exercise with the term **“sexual violence”** and then with **“sexual harassment”**.

### Step 2: (suggested time: 30 minutes)

- Display three flip-charts, one for each term, and ask participants to post their cards accordingly.
- Allow participants to examine the definitions provided by others and encourage them to group the cards and facilitate a discussion in plenary to arrive at a shared definition for each term.

### Step 3: (suggested time: 40 minutes)

- Once one or more definitions have been agreed for each of the terms, ask participants to consider the characteristics that each of the three terms may have in a working context. If visuals have been identified which illustrate cases of violence in the world of work, it may be good to use them at this stage.
- Facilitate a structured discussion over each of the terms again, taking into account the specific context.
- At the end of the discussion, show the official definitions which were prepared in advance (poster or slide) and allow for some concluding remarks from participants.

## How to adapt it

- Limit the discussion to one term at a time.
- Divide into groups of four. Each group is given a sheet of flip chart paper and marker pen.
- Each group discusses what the terms (violence, sexual violence or sexual harassment) mean to them and agree on a definition.
- In plenary, each group spends two minutes explaining their definition to the whole group, followed by a trainer/facilitator-led general discussion on the differences in each group’s definition.
- At the end of the exercise the trainer shows the official definitions of violence, sexual violence or sexual harassment already prepared on a flip chart sheet and there is further discussion.

## Tips

Depending on the target audience and on the ability of the facilitator to moderate the session, active methodologies such as those used by the Theatre of the Oppressed (e.g. Image Theatre and Forum Theatre) may be very conducive to achieving the desired aims. See resources below.

## Resources

<http://www.parteciparte.com/eng/methodology>