‘MADE BY WOMEN’
Dignity
Uncompromised!

Advocacy on ILO Convention
CARE Bangladesh’s journey in Amplifying the Voices of Women Workers
Key Challenges in Promoting Dignified Work for All Women:

- Bangladesh as an aspiring middle income country is less inclined towards international conventions that demand accountability of market actors and therefore less responsive to civil society and workers’ voice

- Women workers issues were not strongly supported by labor movements

- Weak representation and participation of women in claiming their rights

Key Advocacy Strategy:

- Engaging influencers and developing strong allies amongst worker bodies to support ILO convention that address violence and harassment at workplace - a key issue identified by women workers
Since 2017, CARE Bangladesh has gradually built the momentum on ILO Convention by

- Sensitizing and mobilizing the legislators
- Establishing relationship and mobilizing trade unions and movements
- Constant engagement and sensitizing Factory management to acknowledge the issue of harassment and violence
- Influencing the influencers within the political parties that represent Bangladesh at the ILC
- Engaging with media and civil society
- Working with communities and workers on the ground
Deepening Advocacy and Campaign for State Action in 2019

Collectively work with policymakers, trade unions, activists, employers for a strong and progressive ILO Convention and Recommendation on Ending Violence and Harassment in the World of Work, particularly for women.

Engage with the key stakeholders to ensure national policies and laws are responsive towards Ending Violence and Harassment in the World of Work.
Government of Bangladesh

Advocating with State Minister of Labour and Employment, Minister of Industries & female policy makers to sensitize and mobilize their support for the Convention

Trade Unions

Partnering trade unions to engage with the employers’ association

General Population

To sensitize and generate support of the general population and civil society for the ILO Convention
Commitment from State Minister of Labour and Employment

-The State Minister of Labour and Employment, Ms. Monnujan Sufian, MP has committed to discuss the issue with PM and has provided positive indication that she would support the convention.

She also agreed to meet the women leaders of TUs and Federations that CARE works with to further understand the significance of the convention and its implication for Bangladesh.

Jan 2019, Lobby meeting with the State Minister of Labour and Employment Ms. Monnujan Sufian MP. and her team on the ILO Convention

April 2019, The State Minister asserts her support for the ILO Convention & at CARE’s Women’s World of Work photobook event & commits to take the issue to the Prime Minister. Country Representatives from ILO, UN Women, Trade Union Leaders and civil society members were part of the event
Key Policy Makers’ Recognition of ILO Convention

12 Leading and influential female and male MPs and Minister of Industry acknowledged the importance of preventing violence and harassment at workplace and recognised the positive aspects of the convention.

Support for Convention Raised in Tripartite Consultative Committee:

Influential MPs later raised their concern and need for endorsement of the convention in tripartite consultative committee, comprised of the Government, Employers and Trade unions.
Partnership with Apex Body of Workers Organization Established:

For the first time, an advocacy partnership to promote policy change was established with Bangladesh Institute of Labor Studies (BILS).

BILS represents 12 trade unions and federations comprising 13,34,419 workers representing public work, domestic work, ready made garment and other sectors.
Media Action: National Media Acknowledged the Issues and ILO Convention
Social Media Action in Addressing Violence and Harassment at Workplace

Social media campaign launched on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to sensitize the general public.

In 1.5 months, the Facebook page has more than **3,350 followers** till date; please join us in our Facebook page to express your solidarity. https://www.facebook.com/CAREWomenBD
Implementation of Career, Capital and Confidence (3C): Empowering women garment workers through career mobility, financial literacy, and reduced violence against women

Personal Advancement and Career Enhancement (P.A.C.E) Project

Promoting Enabling Environment for Women in Factories (PEEWF) Project

Promoting Worker Well-being

Women in Factories Initiative

Solidarity and Empowerment through Education, Motivation and Awareness (SEEMA) Project

SEEMA II

Improving Women's Health and Education through Effective Learning (IWHEEL)

OIKKO (Unity)- United for Translating Rights into Action NOW!

CARE – GSK RMG Workers’ Health Initiative

Since 2011, we have reached 349,925 participants in RMG sector in Dhaka, Gazipur and Chattogram.
Diverse Experience: Since 1999, CARE’s work has evolved from providing financial and numeracy literacy to RMG workers to strong programming focusing on women workers’ rights.

Unique Methodologies: We developed two tested models in collaboration with private sector actors and donors. Factory Based and Community Based. CARE’S Community based model EKATA, (Empowerment, Knowledge and Transformative Action) focusing on women's leadership and facilitating women workers collective voice, has been adopted in Vietnam and Indonesia.

Instilling Leadership: Creating Worker collective and building women worker’s leadership is key to our interventions.

Implementing at Scale: Capacity to implement large scale programs in factories.
CARE Bangladesh’s Expertise and Proven Models

Established relationship with top brands: Walmart, Gap Inc., Marks & Spencer, Target, Cotton: On, Galeries Lafayette, VISA INC.

Working with Factory Managers and Supervisors to address issues around social and gender norms in the world of work.

Leader in women empowerment: Established capacity of in-house women leadership to influence dignified work in Asia and beyond

Wealth of training resources that can be adopted by other countries and programs

Creating enabling ecosystem in communities and factories

Recognized strength on advocacy and influence by connecting communities with policy makers
Amplifying Voices: Our Networks and Alliances

- Partnership established with Bangladesh Institute of Labor Studies (BILS), a collective of 12 trade unions.

- **AWAZ Foundation**, that has a network on 50 trade unions

- **OIKKO** worked with 40 trade unions. We have connection with 9 federations.

- **International Trade Union Confederation**

- Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) member

- **Girls not Brides** - Executive Committee Member

- **Men Engagement Network Bangladesh** (EC member)

- **Citizen’s Initiative against Domestic Violence** (former Secretariat)

- Active member of Made by Women- Asia Impact Growth Strategy, CARE
One day Lucky (19) in her workplace saw Line Chief verbally abusing and attempting to physically beat a junior female colleague.

Lucky mobilized all the helpers and operators. They collectively complained to the Floor in Charge and demanded justice. Immediate action was taken against the perpetrator. The Floor in Charge also promised that no incidence of harassment or violence will ever take place on the floor again.

“This incidence helped me to realize the power of EKATA sessions and the power of collective actions. Not only in workplace, EKATA has also contributed to my family and social life.”

– Lucky Akter, Operator, Amazing Fashion Limited

“Working along with CARE was a very important decision for us. The most important crucial part of empowerment is knowledge. CARE has given that to our employees effectively.”

- Mohammad Zahidullah, Head of Sustainability, DBL Group
Bangladesh, the 2nd largest Ready Made Garments exporter in the world, has about 4 million workers in the industry. 70-80%, tentatively 2.8 million and above are women workers. With increased participation of women in workforce, including 93.8% of female workers in informal sector, the impact of dignified work and ILO Convention is immense.

For further details:

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THANK YOU