



Since 2016 CARE's Made by Women initiative has worked to economically empower women garment workers through dignified work.

Engaging with women, businesses, governments and civil society partners across the supply chain, we have focused on addressing some of the most fundamental barriers to women accessing their rights in the garment industry.

We have seen many positive changes, including a slow shift in mindset among businesses towards greater prioritization of gender equality in the supply chain and stronger legislation at national and global level to protect women workers. We have seen inspirational actions from women who are leading efforts to create positive change for all workers.

However, many challenges remain to securing the rights of women workers. The COVID-19 pandemic has fundamentally changed the garment industry while highlighting how workers carry the majority of business risk—and have suffered for it once the crisis hit. For Made by Women, the first half of 2020 was dedicated to responding to the immediate needs of garment workers during the COVID-19 pandemic, with a particular focus on the specific risks and challenges faced by women.

Made by Women is adapting to the new human rights situation facing women working in the garment industry. Looking ahead, we aim to play our part in creating a more just and sustainable garment industry which provides decent, dignified jobs and respects the rights of women workers.

MADE BY WOMEN: 2016-20 SNAPSHOT



Women garment workers have accessed rights which they were previously being denied.



Women garment workers stand to benefit from improved legal protections as a result of CARE's advocacy.



Women garment workers directly participated in CARE's work.



People were indirectly reached by CARE's work under Made by Women.

MADE BY WOMEN focuses on three key areas: **empowered women, protected workers and ethical supply chains.** We support work in **11 priority countries**—Bangladesh, Cambodia, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka & Vietnam—and engage at regional and global level.



Milasack Southisane/CARE Laos

CONTEXT: THE GARMENT INDUSTRY

In Asia, the garment industry is the largest employer of women among all industrial sectors, employing more than five per cent of all women workers.¹

The industry has long been characterized by low wages, lack of legal protections, human rights abuses and a business model where workers carry the majority of business risk.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted and exacerbated these existing inequalities. Clothing outlets were shut in many countries around the world by government measures to contain the virus, resulting in sinking demand for apparel among consumers. Brands and retailers moved quickly to cancel or postpone production orders, refusing, in many cases, to pay for clothing their supplier factories had already produced. The result has been the partial or complete shutdown of thousands of factories in producing countries. In September 2020, 31 million garment workers in Asia and the Pacific lived in countries which closed garment factories as ‘non-essential workplaces’.² As a result, hundreds of thousands of factory workers across the world – mostly women – have been suspended or laid off. Business started to increase again in some countries towards the end of 2020 but has offered little respite to workers, as many employers are offering even more precarious and insecure jobs and are attempting to cut worker’s rights and entitlements in order to weather the pandemic.

COVID-19 is not the only challenge facing the global garment industry. The fashion industry produces 10% of the world’s carbon emissions and nearly 20% of its global waste water, and the climate crisis will have an unprecedented impact on workers and businesses.³ Automation and technological change also present a significant transformation for the industry, with research suggesting up to 88% of jobs in some garment producing countries could be at risk of displacement from automation, though change appears unlikely to happen quickly or at this scale in the near future.⁴

It is clear that the garment industry cannot return to business as usual. CARE believes a transformative change in its business model—including a more equitable distribution of business risk and rapid reduction in climate and environmental impact—with a fundamental shift in the balance of power between workers and employers is needed to deliver a more just, equitable and sustainable future.

CANCELLED ORDERS



70% decrease in imports from Asia’s garment-producing countries to major buying countries.⁵

FACTORY SHUTDOWNS



1 in 2 garment workers in Asia & the Pacific live in countries where workplaces were forced to close due to COVID-19.⁵

LOST JOBS



1 in 10 workers in Vietnam reported their work had resumed to pre-pandemic levels by August 2020, with the remainder working reduced hours.⁶

UNPAID WORKERS



42% reduction in monthly income for garment workers in Cambodia.⁷

“I now receive a low income and I cannot earn full money because there is no overtime anymore... some workers did not have enough money to purchase any kind of food.”

Factory worker, 24, Laos

¹ ILO: *A Gender-Responsive Employment Recovery: Building Back Fairer*, 2018.

² ILO: *The Supply Chain Ripple Effect: How COVID-19 is Affecting Garment Workers and Factories in Asia and the Pacific*, 2020.

³ Ellen MacArthur Foundation: *A New Textiles Economy: Redesigning Fashion's Future*, 2017.

⁴ ILO: *ASEAN in Transformation: The Future of Jobs at Risk of Automation*, 2016.

⁵ ILO: *The Supply Chain Ripple Effect: How COVID-19 is Affecting Garment Workers and Factories in Asia and the Pacific*, 2020.

⁶ CARE Vietnam: *COVID-19 impact on Vietnamese apparel and footwear workers: Workers' Perspective*, 2020.

⁷ CARE Cambodia: *Garment Worker Needs Assessment during COVID-19*, 2020.

CONTEXT: WOMEN WORKERS

What does this mean for workers – 75% of whom are estimated to be women?

Many lived in a precarious situation even before the crisis. Women are disproportionately represented in lower-level roles, with low pay and unequal access to advancement opportunities. A lack of female representation in leadership roles—both within workplaces and in worker organizations—is compounded by gender norms which often disregard their voice, meaning the specific concerns of women are often ignored. They face violence and harassment at work, additional unpaid care burdens outside of work and financial insecurity resulting from unjust employment practices.

The COVID-19 pandemic has dramatically increased the health challenges experienced by women in a context where many already face barriers to accessing adequate healthcare. The working and living conditions faced by garment workers put them at risk of contracting COVID-19 as social distancing measures are often inadequate or simply not possible in crowded living areas. Women have little decision-making power over their working hours, breaks to wash their hands or other sanitary needs.⁸ If women do fall ill, they face huge barriers to accessing sick pay, health insurance or healthcare services.

Women who have been suspended or lost their jobs face a huge reduction in the income they need to support themselves and their families, have few savings to fall back on and high debts to manage, and are reverting to highly insecure and precarious forms of work to generate some income. Even those that are still working are often on reduced hours and are not earning enough to support themselves or their families. Alongside this, CARE's assessments show that during the pandemic, female workers are facing food insecurity, increased risk of gender-based violence, an increased burden of unpaid care work and barriers to practicing their sexual and reproductive health rights.

Without assistance to get through the current crisis and ongoing support to ensure equal opportunities and better jobs as the industry recovers, many women garment workers face bleak prospects. However, women are also demonstrating their resilience in the face of the crisis as they adapt to new realities. Listening to their collective voice is essential for building a more just and sustainable future.

WOMEN'S JOBS MORE AT RISK



6x more

likely to lose paid working hours if you are a woman garment worker in Bangladesh than a man.⁹

GREATER UNPAID CARE BURDEN



60% of women

in Bangladesh reported increased household work at home.¹⁰ Women in Asia already did an average of three times more care work than men prior to the pandemic.¹¹

INCREASED GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

2x

Double

the rate of gender-based violence at home in Vietnam compared with before the pandemic.¹²

UNEQUAL REPRESENTATION



Less women

Women are significantly under-represented in leadership in the Mekong and this has been mirrored in COVID-19 taskforces and committees across the region.¹³

“[Reproductive health] services are more challenging now during the COVID-19, because some of the service providers stay at home, so it makes it hard to access the health service.”

Factory worker, 30, Cambodia

⁸ UN Women: *The first 100 Days of COVID-19 in Asia and the Pacific: A Gender Lens*, 2020.

⁹ Gender in Humanitarian Action Working Group Asia and the Pacific: *The COVID-19 Outbreak and Gender: Regional Analysis and Recommendations from Asia and the Pacific*, 2020.

¹⁰ CARE Bangladesh: *RAPID ANALYSIS How are female garment factory workers during COVID-19*, 2020.

¹¹ ILO: *Care Work and Care Jobs for the Future of Decent Work*, 2018.

¹² CARE Vietnam: *COVID-19 impact on Vietnamese apparel and footwear workers: Workers' Perspective*, 2020.

¹³ CARE International: *Rapid Gender Analysis during COVID-19 Pandemic: Mekong sub-regional report*, 2020.

IMPACT

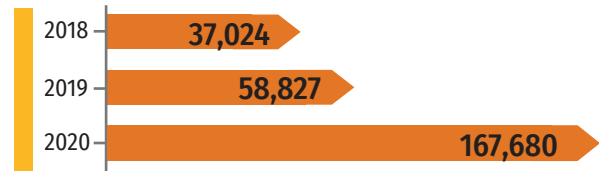
Since 2016, Made by Women has worked in collaboration with partners and allies who share similar goals to promote dignified work for women garment workers. We rigorously monitor whether Made by Women has contributed to a meaningful, positive change in worker's access to their rights. We are confident our sustained focus has contributed to access to rights and better working conditions for thousands of women.

Actual impact to date



167,000+ women

working in the garment industry, and nearly 50,000 men, have accessed rights which they were previously being denied.

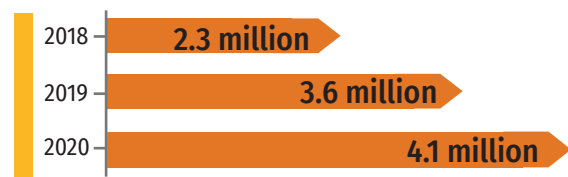


Potential impact



4.1 million women

working in the garment industry stand to benefit from improved legal protections as a result of CARE's advocacy.



Overall reach

In the past year our reach increased by 34% to more than 119,000 women garment workers who directly participated in CARE projects. Overall our work has indirectly reached more than 900,000 people, including 519,000 women in the garment industry.



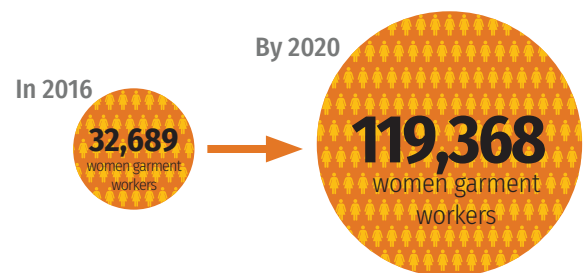
119,000+ women

working in the garment industry directly participated in CARE projects.



183,000+ people

from factories and communities were directly reached by CARE projects, including 147,000+ women and 36,000+ men.



Progress towards our impact goal

We believe the work of Made by Women thus far has been a significant achievement. However, Made by Women has fallen short of our original goal to support the economic empowerment of 8 million women garment workers through dignified work. In particular, we made less progress than we had aimed for in supporting women's organizing and leadership and in promoting better business practices in the supply chain. Building trusting and equal relationships with worker organizations and movements requires very long-term commitment and has had varying levels of engagement across different contexts; and CARE's efforts to influence brand policy and practice in the global north have sometimes been disconnected from our long-term programs in garment producing countries.

Despite these challenges, we have made steady progress in both these areas and our advocacy efforts on public policy, particularly on Convention 190, have led to significant potential impact both within and outside the garment sector as Asia awaits its first national ratification, which is expected to encourage others in the region to follow.

There is strong evidence supporting the effectiveness of CARE's programming models but the scale of implementation will always be limited by our narrow garment industry focus and the changing role of INGOs away from direct delivery. In response, Made by Women is evolving to focus more on innovative forms of partnership and expanding the scope of our work with new thematic areas on the Future of Work and Economic Resilience, in line with CARE's broader strategic shift on Women's Economic Justice. See page 15 for further details.

OUTCOME 1: EMPOWERED WOMEN

We believe dignified work can be achieved when women mobilize collectively for change, are supported by more equitable relationships and behaviors in their homes, communities and workplaces, and when their voices are heard and listened to by the powerful. That's why we support women and their organizations and movements in their efforts to build solidarity and take collective action. It's also why we engage with men and duty-bearers in communities, workplaces and government institutions to support dialogue and allyship.



21,000 women

working in the garment industry have gained access to rights which were being denied to them as a result of women taking collective action to demand their rights from employers and local government.



31,000 people

in total have benefitted from changes resulting from women taking this collective action.



28,000+ women workers

have been organized within worker collectives and trade unions to promote their rights.



65,000+ workers

are more aware of their rights and entitlements at work.

OUTCOME SPOTLIGHT: WOMEN TAKING ACTION

Women raised their collective voice to fight unjust actions by factories during the COVID-19 crisis.

In early 2020, many factories across Asia closed and workers lost their jobs or were forced to take unpaid leave. In Indonesia, a union member who had joined leadership training negotiated with the factory to adjust the schedule so all workers received some income over that time. She also addressed the concerns of workers who were scared to go to work due to the lack of social distancing and hand-washing facilities by ensuring COVID-19 health protocols were applied in the factory.

In Bangladesh, many factories did not provide any prior notice to workers who lost their jobs, despite labor law stating three months' notice is required. Members of a local community action group known as EKATA raised this issue with a union federation and bargained with the manager to recover the unpaid salary for laid-off workers.

“[I am now capable of holding dialogue with factory management and protesting when they violate worker rights... I have taken action to help 1000 workers collect the salary they were due.”

Factory worker & EKATA leader, Bangladesh

OUTCOME 2: PROTECTED WORKERS

We believe workers should be protected by inclusive public policies which recognize their rights and protect women from gender-based discrimination and abuse. That's why we advocate alongside our partners and allies at national and international levels to raise awareness among policy-makers and employers and build support for progressive, effective labor laws and supply chain regulations.



4.1 million women

working in the garment industry stand to benefit from improved legal protections as a result of CARE's advocacy.



3 countries with improved policies

CARE and our partners have contributed to the achievement of more progressive and inclusive public policies and national action plans in three countries which strengthen legal protections against violence and harassment in the workplace.



2 countries with support for ratification of ILO Convention 190

Advocacy coalitions in a further two countries have increased support among policymakers for ratification of ILO Convention 190.



28 million people

in Vietnam will be protected under strengthened provisions to prevent sexual harassment in the new Labor Code.

OUTCOME SPOTLIGHT: VIETNAM LABOR CODE

An advocacy campaign coordinated by CARE secured inclusion of sexual harassment prevention provisions and promoted workplace gender equality in the Revised Labor Code in Vietnam.

Prior to the new Labor Code, there were no specific regulations on sexual harassment in the workplace in Vietnam and policymakers were hesitant to approach the issue. CARE Vietnam played a coordinating role among CSOs, UN agencies, donors and other stakeholders to conduct an influencing campaign. The team worked closely with brand representatives, employers, HR professionals, Trade Union representatives and factory workers to identify recommendations for the accompanying guiding Decree.

CARE Vietnam directly engaged with the Decree drafting team to provide technical inputs. The team conducted a desk study reviewing current business practices, supported a national survey evaluating implementation of existing decrees and coordinated technical consultations.

The influencing campaign coordinated by CARE resulted in a comprehensive national legal framework which includes clear guidance on sexual harassment prevention. This will enable businesses to create a safer working environment in Vietnam through improved work regulation and policies which protect employees from sexual harassment. **This has the potential to ensure 1.2 million women in the garment industry do not experience sexual harassment and regulate safer workplaces for 28 million people across Vietnam.**

“The Commission believes that it is a smart step for the government if we go for the ratification [of ILO Convention 190] that is why we are talking about businesses and human rights.”

Secretary Chief, National Commission on the Status of Women, Pakistan

OUTCOME 3: ETHICAL SUPPLY CHAINS

We believe better business practices at all levels of the supply chain—from individual factories to global brands—are vital in order for the rights of women to be respected. That’s why we influence and support brands and employers to implement effective policies and systems and change workplace culture in order to ensure the rights of workers are respected.

Since 2016, Made by Women has worked with:



270+ factories



15 leading garment brands



77 factories

have made changes to their policies, systems and workplace cultures in order to be more responsive to the rights of women workers.



154,000+ workers including **118,000+ women**

will have more dignified working conditions as a result of these changes.



60 factories

have worked with CARE to strengthen their policies, reporting and prevention mechanisms to prevent sexual harassment.



93,000+ women

will have safer workplaces as a result of these improvements.



5 global brands

CARE has successfully influenced five leading garment brands to strengthen their supply chain policies, procedures and investments to prevent gender-based violence and harassment, with the potential of improving working conditions for thousands of workers in their supply chains.

OUTCOME SPOTLIGHT: STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES FOR THE SECTOR

CARE and Better Work developed model Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) on Addressing Gender-Based Violence and Harassment (GBVH) in response to the needs of the apparel industry for expert support in preventing and responding to this issue.

Developed in consultation with industry stakeholders, the SOPs contain seven core principles designed to be used by all garment supply chain businesses to address GBVH in their own operations and in their supply chains. The SOPs provide a clear set of procedures for businesses at any level to use. They aim to support a shared understanding of good practice and what action is required to adopt it.

The SOPs were shared with industry stakeholders at a joint Learning Summit in early 2021. **Through the SOPs, CARE and Better Work aim to enable industry-wide action to address GBVH and promote safer workplaces for thousands of women workers around the globe.**

“We are assisting our workers by providing lots of sanitizing gel and the compulsory wearing of masks. ... It is now an extra expense for the factory, but we are absorbing these costs at the price of keeping our 2,300 workers safe.”

Senior Factory Manager, Myanmar

COVID-19 SPOTLIGHT: RESPONSE

Made by Women adapted quickly to respond to COVID-19 through actions focused on the **specific risks and challenges faced by women workers** and their families during the pandemic, including those who have lost their jobs.

The scale and depth of hardship faced by women workers as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic has been immense and Made by Women aimed to alleviate some of the **immediate needs of women garment workers**.

CARE's COVID response in the garment industry directly reached:



423,500+ women & girls.



600,000+ people in total including garment workers, their families and their communities.

Women workers themselves have driven the response and have been at the center of efforts to adapt and support each other. Their actions have ranged from practical activities, such as arranging handwashing stations, distribution of soapy water in their communities and securing government food support for struggling families, to addressing rights abuses, including negotiating payment of wages and maternity benefits from employers during the crisis.

CARE has worked to support these efforts and to highlight the need for the **voices of women workers themselves to be at the heart of the recovery**.

To date more than USD \$2.6 million in re-allocated and additional funds has been committed by Made by Women partners to support CARE's COVID-19 responses with garment workers in Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Myanmar and Vietnam.

MADE BY WOMEN'S COVID-19 RESPONSE FOCUSED ON THREE KEY AREAS:

HEALTH



GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE



ECONOMIC RECOVERY



HEALTH: COVID-19 prevention and access to health services

CARE has disseminated health-focused information, education and communication (IEC) materials in hundreds of factories and communities with the aim of increasing awareness and understanding among workers of how to protect themselves from COVID-19. CARE has also provided sanitation and hygiene kits and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to over 150,000 workers. In some countries, CARE ensured access to critical health services by providing roving health clinics or strengthening linkages with existing health services.

Spotlight on Bangladesh: CARE Bangladesh ensured women had access to key health services by establishing two roving medical teams, mobile health clinics and tele-medicine services to support women workers across 10 locations. CARE also provided ambulance services, isolation wards for women, safe delivery rooms for COVID-19 positive women at public health facilities and referrals to COVID-19 testing/medical services for female garment factory workers.



24,000+ workers received medical support through roving health centers.

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE: Addressing increased risks faced by women

With as many as one in three women in some countries reporting increased tension and conflict at home, CARE promoted access to critical services for women workers, such as safe spaces, psychosocial counselling, sexual and reproductive health services, and case management and referrals for gender-based violence. CARE adapted and disseminated IEC materials on gender-based violence and sexual, reproductive and maternal health in factories and communities to ensure information reached workers who are at risk alongside supporting critical service providers to provide accessible services.

Spotlight on Cambodia: CARE Cambodia worked with factories and local authorities to share IEC materials on the prevention of GBVH and access to sexual and reproductive health services during the pandemic. CARE also strengthened referral mechanisms to service providers and provided them with refresher training and PPE to keep their services available during the pandemic.



15,000 workers accessed support services and safe spaces for women and girls during the pandemic.



CARE Bangladesh

ECONOMIC: Mitigating economic impact on workers and supporting recovery

Workers report that lack of income to pay for food and other essentials is the biggest challenge they face during the pandemic.¹⁴ In response, CARE has provided cash assistance to women workers and their families to support them to meet core living costs and has facilitated opportunities for women to maintain paid work during the crisis—including home-based production of masks and soap and by supporting factories to transition to producing PPE to meet local demand.

Made by Women is also starting to support transferable hard and soft skills development and access to alternative livelihoods for women who have lost their jobs or whose livelihoods are at risk.

Spotlight on Indonesia: In Indonesia, 100 women who had lost their jobs were supported with sewing machines to produce masks at home. Working through community action groups known as EKATA groups, they were able to fulfill orders together and earn income during the crisis.



8,000+ women workers received cash assistance to support themselves and their families during the crisis.



500 workers in Myanmar kept their jobs as a result of CARE's support for factories to produce PPE.



10,000 women workers received stipends to cover food and accommodation costs during the crisis.

¹⁴ CARE Cambodia's Rapid Gender Analysis found 89% reported lack of income; the Rapid Gender Analysis in Bangladesh found 91% of workers had reduced their spending on food.

Pavi* is a garment worker in Bangladesh.

She lost her job due to COVID-19 and was abandoned by her husband at the same time – leaving her four months pregnant with no way to support herself.



“When I lost my job and my husband left me, I visited the Government Hospital to check my health and the baby’s, but it cost me a lot of money each time.” Through CARE’s women-friendly space, Pavi was registered as a vulnerable worker eligible for a subsistence allowance which enabled her to purchase food and cover the costs of medical check-ups. She also received hygiene kits to reduce her risk of catching COVID-19.

Since delivering her baby Pavi has accessed medical support from the roving health team supported by CARE. “I have received support on breastfeeding a newborn, information on the cycle of immunizations for my baby girl and advice on hygiene practice for the pandemic situation. I frequently visit the roving medical team; when my baby had a fever I checked with doctors and they provided a prescription for her.”

Now that her baby is four months old, Pavi continues to visit the women-friendly center. She speaks positively about the impact of their support on her baby’s well-being and is more hopeful for the future. “It does not matter if it is large or small, what is important is this contribution at such a crucial time. With this I can buy medicine and baby food. Now I am searching for a job. If I get a job then I will try hard to educate my child; I don’t want that my child will suffer like me.”



PATHWAYS TO SCALE

Made by Women aims to achieve impact at scale by supporting the collective voices of women, building the capacity of businesses in the supply chain and strengthening government regulation and protections. There has been much progress since Made by Women began focusing on these in 2016, although many challenges remain. This section summarizes the changes we have seen in women's voice, businesses and governments over the past 5 years.

Supporting the collective voices of WOMEN by strengthening women's organizing and leadership

In 2016, women working in the garment industry had limited opportunities for organizing into representative organizations. Government and employers were patriarchal and worked to repress the voice of workers. Most trade unions in the garment sector were also patriarchal in culture with men holding the majority of decision-making roles. As a result, female workers had limited opportunities to make their voices heard and the industry lacked accountability to workers, particularly women.

These challenges still exist in 2021. Patriarchal gender norms and the imbalance of power between workers and employers are root causes of injustice in the garment industry, set against a backdrop of ever-tightening restrictions on civil society. The COVID-19 pandemic has made the situation even worse, with employers using retrenchments as an opportunity to discriminate against union members and excluding workers—particularly women—from decision-making about how to respond to the crisis.

Despite this, CARE has witnessed actions from inspirational organizations, movements and leaders which have led to tangible improvements for workers and hope for a more inclusive and just future. CARE along with our partners, peers and allies has worked to enable and support this change.

What progress have we seen?

- **Women holding employers and authorities accountable:** We have seen numerous examples of EKATA groups set up by CARE coming together with unions to successfully address rights abuses in factories, including preventing employers from denying workers their legally mandated rights during the pandemic. In the informal sector, increased awareness of their rights is leading home-based workers to demand formal registration at municipal level.
- **Union action to support women:** In Bangladesh, a number of CARE's partner trade unions and federations have increased the proportion of female members and the number of women on their executive committees. In Bangladesh, Myanmar and Indonesia we have seen increased union action on the prevention of gender-based violence and harassment, including collaboration on campaigns to promote ILO Convention 190.
- **More women in factory leadership roles:** Within factories across the region, more women are applying for promotions and being elected to represent workers on committees, enabling the concerns of women to be raised and addressed by management.



Building the capacity of BUSINESSES to promote improved practices in global supply chains

In 2016, many garment sector businesses were supporting efforts to strengthen labor standards, including initiatives to strengthen the knowledge and skills of workers. However, most of these did not focus on addressing the complex human rights issues related to gender inequalities which affect the experiences of women in the garment industry. At brand and manufacturer levels, many businesses were reluctant to acknowledge the existence of issues like violence and harassment in the world of work and were wary of discussing it publicly. The few leading companies that did often lacked understanding of how to take action effectively.

By 2021, CARE has seen a significant increase in recognition, understanding and action by garment sector businesses on gender inequality, particularly on the prevention of violence and harassment. Deep rooted social norms continue to normalize discrimination and violence against women around the world, but there are positive signs of change in the industry.

Despite these positive signs, many brands and manufacturers have responded to the COVID-19 crisis by cancelling orders, denying workers their legal entitlements, and discriminating against women and union members. Increased action to tackle gender inequality by businesses will only be successful if it is accompanied by a transformation to a more ethical and sustainable business model, where risk is not pushed down onto workers and their rights are respected.

What progress have we seen?

- **Increased understanding and action by brands to address violence and harassment:** Growing evidence from CARE and other civil society and worker organizations has increased business acceptance and understanding of the scale and depth of GBVH in the supply chain and how to address it. There is much work left to do, but many global brands are now actively reviewing their supply chain policies and procedures and defining roadmaps to prevent violence and harassment. The creation of new guidance and tools—including CARE’s STOP model and new Standard Operating Procedures for garment businesses—has contributed to this shift from denial to recognition and action.
- **Stronger policies and prevention and reporting mechanisms in factories:** More garment manufacturers are now willing to talk about violence and harassment. Many are working with CARE and others to strengthen HR policies, implement reporting and referral mechanisms and deliver prevention training in their factories.



Working with GOVERNMENTS to promote national, regional and global policy change

In 2016, labor laws in many garment sourcing countries were not responsive to the rights and needs of women. 235 million women around the world lacked legal protection against violence and harassment in the world of work and no international legal standard yet existed.¹⁵ Legislation to regulate respect for human rights in global supply chains was still in its infancy, starting with the passing of the UK Modern Slavery Act in 2015.

By 2021, many barriers to effective regulation remain, but significant progress has been made on regulating both the prevention of violence and harassment in the world of work and respect for human rights in global supply chains. There is greater awareness among policymakers of the issues faced by women garment workers and homeworkers, including regarding the impacts of COVID-19, and this has begun to influence policy decisions in sourcing countries.

What progress have we seen?

- **Adoption of a new ILO Convention on Violence and Harassment (C190):** ILO Convention 190 was adopted at the International Labour Conference in 2019 following a long campaign by worker's organizations and civil society—including CARE. Convention 190 provides the world's first international legal standard for the prevention of violence and harassment in the world of work. Convention 190 has since been ratified by three countries with at least three more expected to follow in 2021. Seven countries in the Made by Women portfolio continue to engage with CARE campaigns on ratification of Convention 190 alongside our allies.
- **Improvements in efforts to regulate global supply chains:** New legislation in the global north promotes business respect and accountability for human rights, such as Australia's 2018 Modern Slavery Act. The European Commission is in the process of creating an EU-wide strategy on Sustainable Textiles, informed by organizations including CARE through the Civil Society European Shadow Strategy.
- **Strengthened regulation and government action in key garment sourcing countries:** Vietnam, Myanmar and Cambodia all recently updated labor laws or action plans to contain stronger measures to protect women workers, particularly from violence and harassment at work. Governments in three more countries are engaging with CARE and our allies under Made by Women to raise awareness of existing laws, strengthen protections against violence and harassment and promote gender justice in the industry.

¹⁵ WORLD Policy Analysis Center: *Preventing Gender-Based Workplace Discrimination and Harassment: new data on 193 countries*, 2017.

PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships are essential for achieving Impact at Scale. Made by Women prioritizes active engagement with industry partners and with civil society and labour movement allies to increase our collective influence and support broader efforts to create change.

Read more about Made by Women's partners at care.org/madebywomen/partners.

2020 progress spotlight: Empower@Work

Empower@Work (E@W) is a collaborative which seeks to empower women workers, embed gender equity in business practice and catalyze policy and systems change. It is an innovative new initiative by CARE, Better Work, Business for Social Responsibility and Gap Inc's P.A.C.E. project to achieve greater change in the industry.

In alignment with Made by Women's pathways and CARE's global impact at scale strategies, E@W aims to encourage best practices to be widely adopted and scaled while amplifying our collective voice for evidence-based policy change.

In 2020, E@W has created and launched a joint toolkit bringing together the best parts of our respective worker training modules. We are now exploring ways that Empower@Work can act as a platform for collective action to achieve significant impact at scale.

2020 partnership spotlight: HomeNet Nepal

In 2019 CARE Nepal formalized its partnership with HomeNet Nepal (HNN), a membership-based organization of working poor people from urban and rural areas, to support continued advocacy engagement by CARE Nepal, HomeNet Nepal and ActionAid Nepal in promoting ratification of ILO Convention 190.

Joint advocacy initiatives included celebration of key international days, joint memorandum submission to the ministry on ILO ratification and joint media campaigns. Co-hosted policy workshops brought together multiple stakeholders to discuss the issues faced by home-based workers. Partnership opportunities with national level media organizations enabled continued policy influence despite COVID-19 restrictions; for example, HomeNet Nepal's formal partnership with national print media continued media advocacy on the issues faced by home-based workers.

HNN and CARE Nepal have been able to establish issue-based partnerships with trade unions and employer organizations, building organizational recognition while raising the concerns of women workers in the informal sector. As a result of continuous engagement, trade unions in Nepal are supportive of ILO Convention 190 and continuously pushing ratification.

PARTNERS FOR INFLUENCE

Made by Women has global partnerships with: **Better Work; Business Fights Poverty; Empower@Work Collaborative; Ethical Trading Initiative; Fashion Revolution**. At regional level we collaborate with **ActionAid, the International Trade Union Confederation—Asia Pacific and International Women's Rights Action Watch—Asia Pacific** to support ratification of ILO Convention 190.

INDUSTRY PARTNERS

Made by Women has worked with: **ALDI SUD; C&A; Cotton On; Fast Retailing; Gap; Galleries Lafayette; H&M and H&M Foundation; Levi Strauss Foundation; Marks & Spencer; Primark; PVH; Target and Target Foundation; United Colors of Benetton; VF Corp and VF Foundation; Walmart Foundation**.

IN-COUNTRY PARTNER ENGAGEMENT

Country teams maintain their own unique partnerships specific to the context and the focus of their programs. These include **implementing** partners, **government** partners, **industry** partners and **advocacy** partners.

Fundraising

Since the inception of the strategy in 2016, CARE has secured new funds from government, multi-lateral and private sector donors **totaling nearly USD\$16 million**, including new support of **USD\$2.6 million committed in 2019-20**. In addition to our industry partners, Made by Women has received funding from donors including:

- Australian Government
- Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- European Union
- Gates Foundation
- GIZ
- Laudes Foundation (formerly C&A Foundation)
- Livelihoods and Food Security Trust Fund (LIFT)
- UK Foreign Commonwealth & Development Office (formerly DFID)
- UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women

LOOKING AHEAD

Looking to the future, Made by Women has refreshed its strategy to address the new realities facing women workers.

In 2020 CARE reviewed and refreshed the Made by Women strategy in consultation with country programs. This integrated learning from previous years and updated our focus to adapt to the impact of COVID-19.

Going forward, Made by Women will focus on **four priority themes**—two new and two ongoing—which reflect the current realities faced by women working in the garment industry.

PRIORITY THEMES FOR MADE BY WOMEN GOING FORWARD:

WOMEN'S VOICE & LEADERSHIP



Ensuring women working in the garment industry have the opportunity and ability to meaningfully participate in the decisions that affect their rights at work. Supporting worker's organizations and movements to demonstrate transformative leadership on women's rights at work so they provide substantive representation to all workers in the industry.

ADDRESSING VIOLENCE & HARASSMENT



Ensuring women working in the garment industry can work free from violence and harassment.

FUTURE OF WORK



Supporting women working in the garment industry to adapt to the changing nature of work in the industry and ensuring they equitably benefit from new opportunities for career advancement.

ECONOMIC RESILIENCE



Ensuring women working in the garment industry are more resilient to economic shocks through financial inclusion and inclusive social protection.

Made by Women reflects CARE's overall shift of focus from **Women's Economic Empowerment** to **Women's Economic Justice**. We want to transform social norms and economic structures that perpetuate gender inequality, rather than seeking empowerment of women within an economic system that is deeply flawed. Reframing our work as women's economic justice recognises a need to shift the balance of economic power—at home, in the community, in government, and internationally—so that all women and girls can live a life of potential and prosperity.



COVID-19 recovery

Looking ahead, Made by Women will continue to actively engage in advocacy on the importance of industry-wide action for a just recovery from the COVID-19 crisis.

We encourage brands and manufacturers to recognize that **retaining and sustaining the workforce is vital** for the future of the industry and that a more resilient industry is not possible without decent work and respect for workers' rights. This includes their right to work free from violence and harassment. We advocate for **fair purchasing practices**, stronger and **more equitable business relationships** between buyers and suppliers, and **social dialogue** at all levels. We support the **strengthening of social protection systems** and services in order to build a more just and resilient industry, and a rapid **reduction in industry emissions, pollution and waste** in order to ensure a sustainable future for our planet. As business starts to pick up, we believe it is important to **prioritise access to work for marginalized groups**—including women—to ensure they are not crowded out of the jobs market and to invest in supporting them adapt to the changing nature of work in the industry.

Through this all, it is vital that the collective voices of women are heard and that they are meaningfully **included in decision-making** to ensure those who have been most adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic have a say in the recovery and future of the garment industry.

CARE endorses the **COVID-19 Call to Action in the Global Garment Industry** and is signatory to the **Civil Society European Shadow Strategy for Sustainable Textiles, Garments, Leather and Footwear**.

This is a critical time in terms of challenges but also opportunity. Without sustained engagement, there is a risk that governments and employers may double down on poor standards in order to support business survival and competitiveness. However, the COVID-19 crisis and looming future crises may finally push the industry towards more responsible business models.

Now is the time for Made by Women to strongly advocate its vision for a just recovery in the industry and support supply chains which respect the rights of the women making our clothes.



Made by Women

Made by Women engages CARE teams from around the world to advance our work. For more information, contact Lesley Abraham, Made by Women Strategy Coordinator, at lesley.abraham@care.org.

care.org/madebywomen



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