We don’t need your program in our factory: experiences and lessons from designing a workplace intervention against VAW in ready-made garment factory in Bangladesh
**HERproject model**

HERproject is BSR’s collaborative initiative with a mission is to unlock the full potential of women working in global supply chains through workplace programs on health, financial inclusion, and gender equity.

- **Improve health-related knowledge and behaviors and access to health services and products for low-income working women.**
- **Build the financial capability of low-income employees by delivering financial education programs and connecting factory employees to appropriate financial services.**
- **Promote positive gender relations in the workplace and family through training, policy development, and peer support groups.**
HERproject Model

BSR

Companies

Factories

Workers

NGOs

SCALE

IMPACT

SUSTAINABILITY
Our Company Partners
Why HERrespect
Socially Stigma
Production / Shipment

Lack of legal framework

Communication Gaps

Pressure

Cultural

Man’s expectation

Security / Guard
(At fly gate)
(7 in one month)

Superior: Verbally Abuse

Workers/ Colleagues

Street Vendor

Facial Expression
Rude/ Isolated
(Refuse)

Prominence

Support

Home in Law
Experiences of intimate partner violence in the past 12 months

- **Economic violence**: 35.1% (Female garment workers), 5.4% (National)
- **Emotional violence**: 49.5% (Female garment workers), 21.3% (National)
- **Physical violence**: 34.4% (Female garment workers), 18.5% (National)
- **Sexual violence**: 42.8% (Female garment workers), 12.2% (National)
Violence used as a tool for achieving production targets

“The workload is tremendous here. They swear at us when we fail to complete the work. …They scold. They say, ‘Hey you! Daughter of a bitch, daughter of a pig! How come so much work has been piled up?’ …At such times I feel really bad. … I cannot stand this. I cry. I feel like quitting my job. But I can do nothing. I have to work here to take care of my family. My family lives on my earnings.”

Rimi, Sewing Operator

“The PM (Production Manager) and APM (Assistant Production Manager) verbally abuse line chiefs and supervisors. They in their turn abuse us (workers). They do so because of their huge workload.”

Tazia, Helper

Workplace emotional violence by management in the last 4 weeks: 63%
# Management attitudes and management style

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>STRONGLY DISAGREE</th>
<th>DISAGREE</th>
<th>AGREE</th>
<th>STRONGLY AGREE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sewing operators usually want to do as little work as possible</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>43.7</td>
<td>44.0</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male supervisors are much better at meeting production targets than women would be</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>29.5</td>
<td>60.6</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sewing operators should have their pay reduced if they don’t work hard enough</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>73.7</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women supervisors are too soft on women workers</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>49.6</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You need to be tough to be a supervisor or manager</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>55.5</td>
<td>25.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If they haven’t finished work Sewing operators should just stay until the targets are completed</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>73.5</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sewing operators in a garment factory should always obey their supervisor and managers</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>59.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s not your concern if women Sewing operators get into trouble at home for staying late to meet targets</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>73.2</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HERrespect Workplace Intervention
HERrespect Expected Outcomes

- Workers become more willing and equipped to engage in respectful dialogue with managers/colleagues at work and intimate partners.
- Greater gender awareness and sense of empowerment.
- Less acceptance and normalization of the use of violence.
- Managers and workers have better coping mechanisms to work stress.
- Greater awareness on protection mechanism and support for abused women inside and outside the workplace.
But we don’t need your programme in our factory
HERrespect Intervention

**Skill Building:**
Enhancing management and workers’ abilities to build harmonious working relationships in the workplace through enhanced communications, problem-solving skills, and stress management.

**Reflection on Norms:**
Sensitizing management and workers on causes and consequences of unharmonious relationships at work and in intimate relationships.

**Strengthening Company Policy:**
Supporting factory management to develop and communicate policies and mechanisms to prevent and address workplace violence.
HERrespect Intervention

HERrespect is a workplace-based program over a 9-month period in four intervention RMG factories (another four factories as control).

**Training**

- 18-hour training for:
  - 100 middle managers
  - 100 married female workers
  - 50 male workers

**Joint-Sessions**

- Three joint-sessions between training participants (married female, male workers, and managers) to reflect on learnings

**Awareness Campaigns & Factory Policy Review**

- Improvement of factory’s policies and systems
- Support for factory to communicate policies to the management and workers

**Evaluation**

- External evaluation (baseline and endline) to be conducted by icddr,b
Sample activities
Role play on happy and unhappy relationships
Sample activities
Managerial trainings

‘I used to shout at the workers but even then they don’t give quality work. Now I feel they only take out their anger on the worker and this affects our shipment as well’. – Line chief
Sample activities
Joint sessions between management and workers
Sample activities
Factory policy review and communications
Sample activities
Community component
Learning

- Workplace as an incubator of dialogues and positive changes
- VAW as a business priority
- Institutionalizing prevention and responses efforts in workplace
- Investing in capacity building of partners
- Power, power, power
Think Beyond the Workplace – Violence in the Supply Chain

1. Contact between Brand/Importer with Local Agent/Buying House
2. Contacting Production Units (factory)
3. Ordering Sample
4. Price Negotiation
5. Placement of work order
6. Opening Master LC, Back to back LC
7. Importing/purchasing materials and accessories
8. Production
9. Inspection after production
10. Shipment (FOB/ C&F)

Source: Transparency International Bangladesh
Thank you!

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