





# A Global Women's Safety Framework in Rural Spaces:

INFORMED BY EXPERIENCE IN THE TEA SECTOR



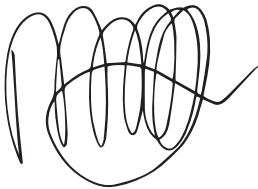
**ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN SECTION  
UN WOMEN,  
With support of Unilever  
New York, 2018**

# FOREWORD



**Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka**

UN Under-Secretary-General and  
Executive Director of UN Women



## **Global Women's Safety Framework in Rural Spaces: Informed by experience in the tea sector**

Every woman and girl has the right to be able to walk in her community, ride on public transportation and attend school, work and social events without the fear of violence. This is just as true for women and girls living and working in rural areas as it is for those in bustling cities. In each case, it tends to be those who have least visibility, who are the least skilled and lowest paid, who are the most vulnerable to abuse.

The new Global Women's Safety Framework adapts UN Women's longstanding initiative on Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces for women and girls through incorporating experience in the tea sector in rural spaces. With its strong focus on prevention of violence against women and girls in public spaces, including harassment, the Framework helps to build a common understanding in the tea sector that is applicable to other commodity sectors in agricultural value chains. It explores the many manifestations and causes of violence against women and girls, and sets out their impacts on women, communities and businesses. The Framework provides examples of how producers, authorities and civil society groups can work together with links to tools and organizations.

UN Women's partnerships with Unilever and other producers and women's rights groups have strongly informed the Framework. It is my hope that its application will help to drive further bold action across the global supply chain to support the safety and empowerment of all.



**Marc Engel**

Unilever Chief Supply Chain Officer

A stylized, handwritten signature of the name 'Marc' in black ink.

Violence is a horrifying reality for millions of women and girls, and one of the most widespread human rights abuses. At Unilever, we work hard to provide a safe and inclusive environment. Women are instrumental to the functioning of our business at every level – in our fields and communities, factories and offices and are 70% of our consumer base. Addressing issues such as harassment and violence across the entire value chain is critical, because without a safe working environment, women cannot fully participate in society or in the workplace if they fear for their safety or that of their daughters.

As well as a strong moral case, addressing these challenges also makes enormous economic sense. Research from the UN Foundation shows that women reinvest 90% of income into their families, compared with the 30–40% reinvested by men. If women are empowered by providing equal access to land rights, finance, education, jobs, training and pay, it will positively impact the global economy.

Through partnerships such as with UN Women, Unilever is taking action so that women across our value chain are safe and free from discrimination. We have made some good progress, for example, in our tea plantations in East Africa where we've instituted policies on sexual harassment, child protection, and violence prevention and management, all developed with the participation of local employees and community representatives. And we have conducted different types of training for management, employees, village elders and specialised groups such as medical personnel. We've also improved our grievance reporting process with a dedicated, confidential, free and local language hotline. Once a month, our Friday Safety Talks on the plantations, focus on sexual harassment and related topics.

But these issues are not unique to Unilever or East Africa. Many other companies and our suppliers face similar challenges. Which is why we expanded this work to India and why a Safety Framework for women in rural spaces, particularly in agricultural chains is a priority for us. Our hope is that this guidance and step by step approach will bring lasting change.

However, even with our very best efforts, some of our biggest ambitions can often only be met if we get the whole industry to move and that is what we hope to achieve with this framework.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

“A Global Women’s Safety Framework in Rural Spaces: Informed by Experience in the Tea Sector” (GWSF) forms part of a three-year women’s safety partnership (2016-2019) between the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) and Unilever to increase the safety of women in agricultural value chains, starting in the tea sector, and expanding to other commodity sectors over time. The partnership includes:

1. strengthening the Unilever safety programme for women, girls and boys in Kericho, Kenya aimed at preventing and responding to sexual harassment and other forms of gender-based violence in the work place and out grower farms in a rural area; and
2. developing a comprehensive approach aimed at preventing and responding to intimate partner violence and sexual harassment against women workers and girls in tea estates and in public spaces in a rural area in India.

The GWSF will be accompanied by further practical guidance to support producers in adapting and implementing the Framework to be published in March 2019. It will contain additional case studies and examples of various materials including training plans, guidance to support redressal mechanisms, etc.

Adaptation of the GWSF would not have been possible without:

- The courage of many women and girls living in rural spaces who have shared their experiences of violence and their insights on how to ensure women’s safety in all spaces in the tea sector, and support of those men who stand with women to end gender-based violence.
- Leadership from Unilever, including Unilever Tea Kenya (UTK), and Hindustan Unilever and other producers of large, medium and small-size tea companies, and tea associations working on their initiatives to prevent and respond to sexual harassment and other forms of violence against women and girls on estates and in smallholder farms.
- The commitment and input of agency representatives: Kalliopi Mingeirou, Laura Capobianco, Wangechi Grace and Anju Pandey; Salina Wilson, Karin Fueg, Zebib Kavuma and Nishtha Satyam for their leadership in contributing to and coordinating inputs for the adaptation of content in the GWSF in rural spaces (UN Women), with technical inputs from members of the Global Team at Unilever, including: Katja Freiwald, Rachel Cowburn-Walden, Winfridah Nyakwara, Daleram Gulia, and Victoria Morton (Consultant); and consultant, Miho Watanabe, for helping to finalize the current framework and coordinating the formatting and design process of the GWSF with the company: Blossom Italy
- Time, insights, and sharing of tools and practices by participants in two Expert Group Meetings in September 2018 (in Kericho, Kenya, and Assam, India) and the consultation held in October 2018 (in South India) including producers, NGO partners, women and men smallholder farmers, and tea associations working to increase the quality of life of women workers and smallholder farmers, and their families (See Annex 4).

# ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

<b>CBO</b>	Community-based organization
<b>CDF</b>	Community Development Forum
<b>CREAW</b>	Centre for Rights Education and Awareness
<b>DFID</b>	Department for International Development (United Kingdom)
<b>ETP</b>	Ethical Tea Partnership
<b>EVAW</b>	Ending violence against women
<b>FGD</b>	Focus group discussion
<b>GBV</b>	Gender-based violence
<b>GEP</b>	Gender empowerment platform
<b>GVRC</b>	Gender Violence Recovery Centre
<b>GWSF</b>	Global Women's Safety Framework
<b>IC</b>	Internal committee
<b>ICC</b>	Internal complaints committee
<b>ICPC</b>	International Centre for the Prevention of Crime
<b>IDH</b>	Sustainable Trade Initiative
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organization
<b>IPV</b>	Intimate partner violence
<b>ITC</b>	International Trade Centre
<b>KES</b>	Kenyan shilling
<b>KPI</b>	Key performance indicator
<b>NGO</b>	Non-governmental organization
<b>OHCHR</b>	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
<b>SC/SPS</b>	Safe Cities/Safe Public Spaces
<b>SDG</b>	Sustainable Development Goal
<b>SH</b>	Sexual harassment

<b>TOC</b>	Theory of change
<b>TOT</b>	Training of trainers
<b>TROT</b>	The Republic of Tea
<b>UN Women</b>	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations Population Fund
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund
<b>UNV</b>	United Nations Volunteers programme
<b>UNODC</b>	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
<b>UTK</b>	Unilever Tea Kenya
<b>VAW</b>	Violence against Women
<b>VAWG</b>	Violence against Women and Girls
<b>WASH</b>	Water, sanitation and hygiene
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization
<b>WSA</b>	Women's safety audit

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