



BetterFactories
Cambodia

Gender Strategy

2024 - 2027



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Foreword: Why a Gender Strategy?

Better Work programme aims to create sustainable change in factories and improve working conditions together with improved business benefits. Research from the Better Work global program has demonstrated that improved working conditions benefit both female and male workers. An independent impact assessment of Better Work demonstrated how the programme has contributed to specific improvements for women.⁷ Better Work has bridged gender pay gaps, had a positive impact on hours worked and take-home pay, reduced incidents of sexual harassment, strengthen women's voice and increased access to pregnancy related healthcare - which also led to increased productivity and well-being.¹⁶

Improved working conditions have an impact beyond factory walls. A recent study showed that, although cultural expectations influence gender roles, women working in Better Work factories have increased agency over their earnings in the household, increased ability to manage the effects of financial insecurity, and improved communication and negotiation skills that are learned at work and applied in their home setting.²⁰ Understanding these gender dynamics and impact of increased gender equality in the garment sector, Better Factories Cambodia will look to further boost the promotion of gender equality to maintain and improve this trajectory. There is still work to be done - differences by gender persist for overall satisfaction in life and in the workplace.

Better Factories Cambodia (BFC) launched its first gender strategy in 2017. In the first gender strategy, BFC aimed to have gender responsive assessments, training, advisory services, monitoring & evaluation, and

gender specific research and communication materials. This revision is based on the result of additional work and consultations conducted both internally and with external stakeholders including at both enterprise and policy levels to continue seeking a more gender responsive strategy. This strategy includes an analysis of the national and sectoral context, as well as a gender mainstreaming exercise of BFC's factory level services Assessment, Advisory and Training and other areas of work. It incorporates findings from the gender analysis and sets out the rationale for the promotion of gender equality in the Cambodian garment industry, incorporating a theory of change for Better Factories Cambodia 2024 - 2027.

Note: This document will use the terminology "Garment Sector" to cover the Garment and Apparel, Footwear, and Travel Goods and Bags"

Executive Summary:

Better Factories Cambodia's Gender Strategy 2024 - 2027 aims to build on the work of the first [Better Factories Cambodia \(BFC\) foundational gender strategy released in 2017](#), and of the work that was undertaken to operationalise that strategy, while also referencing and incorporating the Better Work Global Gender Strategy.

This acknowledges that the strategy is not a standalone document, as all the work that BFC undertakes should aim to be using a gender transformative lens, and that the strategy reflects and responds to challenges with a localized, practical context.

This document aims to provide a concise overview and a background behind why BFC believes it is so important to have a gender strategy in the first place. This strategy outlines various dynamics that help to contextualise this strategy in relation to gender in Cambodia and highlights barriers to change that will need to be removed to make sustainable changes.

It also categorises areas of focus. These categorisations detail BFC's work with four distinct stakeholder groupings: BFC Internal Staff, Constituents (Government, Employers' Associations, and Trade Unions), external stakeholders (including Non-Governmental Organisations and Civil Society Organisations), and brand representatives.

They also categorise in relation to content, namely the 'Five Pillars' which are bundled under the categories of discrimination, health and safety, voice and representation, care and family and leadership and skills development.

Each of these five pillars has distinct areas of work that help to guide and shape our focus. We are aware that gender as a cross-cutting topic is wide ranging, so this is one way to be clear on what we will do, and what we won't be able to do.

This strategy provides an overview, including a theory of change, about how we will operationalise the strategy into actions, and how we will track and report on the work that we are doing in order to measure impact and efficacy of the work we are doing.¹⁶

► GENDER GLOSSARY

Sex refers to biological and universal physical attributes of men and women. For example, only women can give birth; only men have a prostate gland. Here we also acknowledge that there are other categorisations of the third sex, (E.g. people who are born intersex – sharing some or all physical attributes of both men, and women.)

Gender refers to the socially constructed roles and opportunities associated with women, men, girls and boys. These attributes, opportunities and relationships are 'socially constructed' (as opposed to being biologically determined) and learned through social norms, as well as being context and time-specific and changeable. Gender is relational and refers not simply to women or men but to the relationship between them.

Gender-based violence and harassment, in this strategy, is used as an umbrella term for unacceptable behaviors and practices – perpetrated against a person's will – that stem from unequal power relationships and negative gender roles. It includes acts that are likely to result in physical, psychological, or sexual harm or suffering; threats of such acts; and coercion and other deprivations of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.

Gender equality is defined as 'the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of men and women and implies that the interests, priorities and needs of both are taken into consideration equally.' Equality does not mean being the same, nor equal numbers of men and women in all activities, nor does it mean treating them in the same way. Everyone should have equal opportunities and live in a society in which men and women are able to live equally fulfilling lives.

Gender equity means fairness of treatment for women and men, according to their respective needs. This may include equal treatment or treatment that is different but considered equivalent in terms of rights, benefits, obligations and opportunities.

Gender mainstreaming is defined as 'the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action. It seeks to guarantee that the concerns and experiences of individuals of both sexes are taken into consideration in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programs with the aim of achieving gender equality.

Gender-Neutral, Gender-Sensitive, and Gender-Transformative: The primary objective behind gender mainstreaming is to design and implement development projects, programs and policies that:

1. do not reinforce existing gender inequalities (Gender-neutral)
2. attempt to redress existing gender inequalities (Gender-sensitive)
3. attempt to re-define women and men's gender roles and relations (Gender-responsive/transformative)

The degree of integration of a gender perspective in any given initiative can be conceptualized as a continuum.

Gender-neutral initiatives use the knowledge of gender differences in a given context to target and meet the practical needs of both women and men. Gender-neutral initiatives do not disturb existing gender relations.

Gender sensitivity is the ability to acknowledge and highlight existing gender differences, issues and inequalities and incorporate these into strategies and actions. Gender-sensitive initiatives address gender norms, roles and access to resources in so far as needed to reach project goals.

Gender responsiveness is the ability to be proactive, and to consistently integrate gender perspectives. In addition it aims to include gender equality, women's empowerment and men and a masculine lens. Gender responsiveness changes gender norms, roles and access to resources as a key component of initiatives.

Gender-transformative initiatives transform the existing distribution of resources and responsibilities in order to create a more equal relationship between women and men. Women and men may be targeted or one group alone may be targeted by the intervention.

► ABBREVIATION LIST

BFC – Better Factories Cambodia

Better Factories Cambodia is a programme of the International Labour Organization (ILO) and IFC (International Finance Corporation), established in 2001. It aims to improve working conditions in Cambodia’s export garment factories. It combines an independent compliance assessment process with an Advisory model which supports factories to solve issues, along with a wide-ranging training programme. BFC is a programme of the ILO and and works closely with it’s constituents - The Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC), the Textile, Apparel, Footwear & Travel Goods Association in Cambodia (TAFTAC) and Worker Representatives (unions). Better Factories Cambodia works closely with other stakeholders including international buyers and brands.

BWG – Better Work Global

BFC is part of the ILO’s Better Work Global flagship programme, which brings, in partnership with the International Finance Corporation (IFC), diverse international stakeholders like governments, global brands, factory owners, and unions and workers together, to improve working conditions in the global garment industry and make the sector more competitive and sustainable. Better Work has 13 distinct country programmes, and the Better Work Global provides support from Geneva, and Bangkok.

CGTI – Cambodian Garment Training Institute

CGTI is a fashion and textile training institute in Cambodia that aspires to narrow the gap between training needs and existing job matches in the garment sector. It provides long-term training programmes and short-term courses tailored to the demands of the fashion industry and is supported by TAFTAC.

GBVH – Gender-Based Violence and Harassment (see Gender Glossary)

GIZ - Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit

GIZ is the German international development cooperation agency. GIZ’s main commissioning party is Germany’s Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

GFT – Garment and Footwear (Sector)

IFC - International Finance Corporation

IFC is an international financial institution that offers investment, advisory, and asset-management services to encourage private-sector development in less developed countries. The IFC is a member of the World Bank Group and is headquartered in Washington, D.C. in the United States. Since 1956 it is the private-sector arm of the World Bank Group, to advance economic development by investing in for-profit and commercial projects for poverty reduction and promoting development.

ILO – International Labour Organization

The International Labour Organization (ILO) is a United Nations agency whose mandate is to advance social and economic justice by setting international labour standards. The ILO has 187 member states and aims to ensure accessible, productive, and sustainable work worldwide in conditions of freedom, equity, security and dignity.

LGBTIQ+ - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex and, Queer. LGBTIQ+ is an acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer. The plus sign represents people with diverse sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics who identify using other terms.

CSO / NGO – Civil Society Organisation / Non-Governmental Organization: A civil society organization (CSO) or non-governmental organisation (NGO) is any non-profit, voluntary citizens’ group which is organized on a local, national or international level.

PICC – Performance Improvement Consultative Committee

The PICC usually comprised of 8-12 persons, established in factories that participate in BFC’s voluntary advisory services. It consists of an equal representation of management and recognized worker representatives. This committee facilitates improvement activities in a factory to foster a culture of continuous improvement and capacity building within the enterprise.

MOLVT – Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training

The Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training is a government ministry of the Royal Government of Cambodia, and is a constituent of the ILO, working closely with BFC as the main technical counterpart. To extend their collaboration, both parties have signed the renewed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for 2023 – 2027.

TAFTAC - Textile, Apparel, Footwear & Travel Goods Association in Cambodia

TAFTAC is the biggest garment manufacturer trade association in Cambodia. Formerly GMAC (Garment Manufacturers Association in Cambodia), it changed its name in 2022.

TOC – Theory of Change

Theory of Change is a methodology to analyze the consequences of social change. TOC defines long-term goals and then maps backward the different scales of outcomes to identify necessary preconditions and challenges.

TOT – Training of Trainers

The Training of Trainers (ToT) is a building capacity model to engage master trainers on a specific topic that are further on coaching new trainers that are less experienced to increase the scope of impact and knowledge.

WEE – Women Economic Empowerment

1 Introduction: BFC's Gender Strategy

Gender equality is a key component of the Better Work Programme, including Better Factories Cambodia. Women workers represent the majority of workers in garment, footwear and travel goods and bag factories.

In the factories, women workers are often employed in low-skilled, low-value occupations such as sewing machine operators in the production process, whereas men are more likely to be employed in higher wage occupations and in leadership positions. Because of some cultural and gender norms, recruitment and employment in the garment industry is rife with gender discrimination against both women and men. BFC aims at addressing and preventing gender based discrimination and harassment during recruitment and in the workplace, and discrimination against equal wages, conditions of work, benefits (including maternity protection and threat of dismissal upon disclosure of pregnancy status) and promotion.

This focus sharpened over the years with a recognition that gender, as a broad-based and cross-cutting topic needs to have its own strategy and as such the first gender strategy was created. Today, BFC asks where are we at in our work towards gender equality? Are we on the right path? What works? What needs more focus?

This new Gender Strategy 2024 - 2027 for Better Factories Cambodia mirrors strategies from the Global Better Work programme, while also contextualising it to the Cambodian setting. This strategy will become a model to drive changes at factory level, and industry and policy level and we hope to contribute to, and support conversations, through activities and analysis of gender dynamics in Cambodia.

Collectively convening our constituents and partners, BFC is committed to improve working conditions that benefit everyone, including female and male workers, improve business benefits and bridge the gap of gender inequality within the Cambodian garment sector with this new strategy.



2 Gender Analysis of Cambodia

A variety of factors influence, and are influenced, by gender dynamics in Cambodia. From early childhood, many girls, especially in the provinces, do not attend school, and help with housework which give them less capacity to work in formal employment. Furthermore, there is often an expectation for women to manage household responsibilities in addition to their professional duties - a burden that women are often culturally required to bear. Education, marriage, and childbearing are three areas that influence a woman's ability to work and earn, and often lead to women taking on informal employment. When women do work in the formal sector, they are less likely to attain management positions which reduces their earning potential and ultimately their financial status in relation to male counterparts.

► Education

12% disparity in primary education between men and women¹⁹

Education is a key driver of improved access to formal work. Often, women are prevented from accessing education, which has effects for their professional lives. Women's labour participation is restrained by lower levels of schooling compared to men. Girls aged 6-17 were and are more likely than boys to be kept out of school to help in the household.¹³ However, on average women's education levels have increased from 7.8 years in 2014 to 8.15 years in 2019. This closes the gap with men who complete 8.54 years.²² Education impacts women's professional opportunities. Lower-educated women with children are less likely to have a contract, receive training on rights and skills, or to be promoted.¹⁵ Gender disparities in education explains 6% of the gender wage gap, indicating that this withholding of education has follow-on impacts to economic advancement as well.²²

► Labour participation

84% female participation in labour market¹⁹

Labour participation in the economy contributes to changes in social norms, beliefs, and perceptions of gender roles. Female participation in the labour market in Cambodia was 84% in 2019,¹⁹ (4.8% increase from 2016)¹³. Men's participation, for comparison, was 90% in 2016 and 91% in 2019¹⁹, 41% of the female workforce is represented by women in formal employment, as compared to 54% of men in the male workforce.²² The proportion of women in middle and senior managerial positions in the private sector is 24.1%, which is an increase from 2017 and 2019 - specifically within managerial roles, professional roles, and technician positions.^{22,24} While it is not yet equal, it is a step toward improved gender balance in management positions.

A large proportion of women continue to be employed in vulnerable employment. Vulnerable employment includes unpaid contributions to family work, long working hours, low productivity, and a lack of access to social protection.

Family formation is an important factor affecting women's career choices, and in Cambodia, female workers shoulder responsibility for household duties including childcare and other unpaid labour. Women are encouraged to take on dual labour, instead of sharing household labour with their partner.¹ Further, given the Covid-19 pandemic, "20% of women reported more time allocation in unpaid domestic work [... compared] to 10% of men".² Women struggle to balance overtime demands of the factory, with household demands.¹⁵

► Occupational segregation

Across the world, women, regardless of age, are often overrepresented in sectors and positions where pay tends to be moderate for low-paid and low-skilled occupations.²² This is also the case in Cambodia and the overrepresentation of women in low skilled occupations partially explains 4% wage gap.²²

Two types of segregation are evident:

Vertical segregation: Vertical occupational segregation patterns show that women are underrepresented in managerial positions. A high concentration of women work in low-ranking positions (e.g. sewing operator). The majority of factories employed between 75-95% women in lower-ranking positions, while female supervisors can be anywhere from 0-70%.¹²

Horizontal segregation: Horizontal segregation relates to the high concentration of women in sectors such as manufacturing and agriculture. Perceptions around gender, gender norms, work type, and location of jobs create segregation between industries where some are "typically male" and others are "typically female."⁸



► Gender wage gap in Cambodia

19% gender wage gap

In Cambodia, the gender wage gap between men and women is an ongoing challenge that blocks women's economic advancement.²² Gender discrimination is a major contributor to the gender wage gap. On average, the gender wage gap for equivalent work is 19%.²⁸ This has decreased from 24% in 2017.²⁹ This decrease can be attributed to pay scale structures at foreign firms, NGOs, and international organisations (25%), and gap reductions in service and manufacturing industries (5%).²² 48% of women with children earn less than their partners.² This is influenced by a variety of factors, which include discrimination and lack of access to managerial positions. The gender wage gap means that women are being discriminated against and paid less for equal work, which has impacts on their ability to contribute to their household income and a reduction in empowerment through earning.

► Demographics

The Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey 2019 indicated that poverty in Cambodia fell between 2007 and 2019, from about 50% to below 20%. The poverty rate is the lowest in Phnom Penh and highest in rural areas.²⁵ Income is now more often reported as wages or salary as opposed to self-employment a change seen in the last decade. Based on the latest data, two new trends are visible: Cambodians are on the move (rural-to-urban migration) and are getting older (proportion of 15-65/65+). Urban areas are increasing in population and growing, with urban sprawl extending further out from cities. With the ageing population, women in the workforce will be affected, as they usually account for the largest share of care work in addition to their other responsibilities. The out-migration of primarily younger adults in search for jobs and income is resulting in a slowly “greying” rural population. Many parents choose or have no choice but to leave their children with grandparents in rural / provincial areas.



Development & Population Indicator	Cambodia
Per Capital gross national income - GNI per capita	(US Dollars \$1,700 in 2022) World bank data
Gender parity Index	The Gender Parity Index for net attendance rate in all levels of education is about 1% for 2014 and 2019/20. It seems to be virtually unchanged in the last five years.
Gender annual earning gap	The wage gap between women and men for equivalent work, attributable to gender discrimination, is 19%. This is based on CSES data for 2019-20 and correcting for selection bias. (quoted in UNDP wage gap)10 points less than in 2012.
Gender annual earning gap	CSES2019/20 showed that Cambodia's population was estimated to be 15.9 million in 2019. Male and female populations were estimated at 8.2 million and 7.8 million respectively. (CSCE 19 here)
Annual population growth	Data CSES: Overall 2017: 15,848 ; 2019: 15,954 Urban population grow from 24% (2017) to 39.4% (2019) Rural population grow from 76% to 60%
Fertility rate (births per woman)	2.5 in 2020
Poverty (national threshold) line and rates	Cambodian Riels 10,951+ per person per day or the equivalent of US Dollars \$2.70 (at October 2022 exchange rates) • Phnom Penh (4.2 %) • Other urban areas (12.6 %) • In rural areas (22.8 %)
Proportion of population living below the national poverty line (%)	17.7%

► Unpaid work

In Cambodia, the Women's Code of Conduct (Chbap Srey) codifies the traditional role and status of a woman in the home. It is a poem that has been passed down orally or in written form since the 14th century. It was modified and shortened, but children are still taught the central tenets of the Chbap Srey, which still drives societal expectations around a woman's place in the household. Cambodian women are expected to perform domestic duties in the household, while men are expected to go out of the home to earn a living for their family.²⁶

Women and girls aged 15+ spend 12.5% of their time on unpaid care and domestic work, compared to 1.3% spent by men.²⁴ As women enter the labour force, their requirements of household duties do not reduce, in fact they remain with women who perform more hours of unpaid household labour than men. In addition, because of these household duties, women are unable to seek formal work, 64% of women workers are in the informal sector since they need flexible arrangements between home and work.²⁶ Informal work can lead to less rights, lower earnings, and increased exploitation.¹⁰ Marital status is a key determinant of women's paid employment - women who are married are 38% less likely to be in paid employment than those who are not.²²

Childcare is one of the major components of household labour, influences employment seeking behaviours of women 51% of women with children are employed, compared to 87.5% of men with children.²⁶



3 Garment Factory Worker Profile

The Cambodian garment industry provides job opportunities to both women and men, both of whom are affected by harmful gender stereotypes. The income workers earn and their experiences at work have a trickle-down effect on women, men, girls and boys in Cambodian society. Having an income creates agency, which leads to empowerment. Women earning a formal income that is higher than average for low skilled jobs have a bigger say in household decisions than women without an income, and there is also research that demonstrates women's increased political participation.⁹

In this section, the profile of an average garment factory worker will be shared. As BFC's work relates to the garment sector, the following section illustrates some gender-relevant specifics using the example of a generalized and illustrated worker profile. The context in which this worker operates is that she is a member of an industry that is over 80% women. In December 2023, the garment sector provided an average of 640,000 jobs per month in exporting factories, a number that is increasing steadily. Garment and textile factory workers are almost 7% of Cambodia's estimated population, and garment and textile factory households account for 20% of the 3.3 million households in Cambodia.¹⁸



► Demographics^{4,6,15,17,18}



SEX
85% workers are female



AGE
80% of workers are under 35



LOCATION
64-89% of workers are migrants from rural to urban area



LITERACY
94% workers are literate, male workers are more literate than female workers

► Family and household context



RELATIONSHIP
46% Garment Factory workers are married, less than national average



FAMILY
Average garment factory workers' household has 5 members



CHILDCARE
Children are often sent to live with grandparents/ worker's parents in the province
Women with greater childcare responsibilities often don't get trainings or promotions



LIVING SITUATION
59% of garment factory workers are the son or daughter of the head of household



► Work situation



WAGE
Minimum wage of USD\$ 200/month
The average take home pay of the garment, footwear and travel goods workers has been relatively stable. It increased slightly from averaging USD\$ 232 per month in 2019 to USD\$ 234 in 2020 and further increased to averaging USD\$ 256 per month in 2021.



CONTRACT
39% report a short term contract, no difference by gender



BENEFITS
Transportation or accommodation allowance of USD \$7/month
Attendance bonus of USD \$10/month
Food allowance of USD \$0.5/day



EXPENSES
rent
food
clothes
school fees
sending money home



WORK SITUATION
26 days/month; 8 hours/day + maximum 2 hours overtime



FAMILY FINANCES
women workers send home an average of 40% of their salary

4 Gender Equality Issues

Gender equality is defined as ‘the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of men and women and implies that the interests, priorities and needs of both are taken into consideration equally.’ Equality does not mean being the same, nor equal numbers of men and women in all activities, nor does it mean treating them in the same way. Everyone should have equal opportunities and live in a society in which men and women are able to live equally fulfilling lives. To promote this gender equality goal, based on Better Work, Better Factories Cambodia categorised five key areas (Discrimination, Health & Safety, Voice & Representation, Care & Family, Leadership & Skills Development) that need to be addressed in order to implement gender equality and women empowerment in the garment sector. Why it is important to focus on these five pillars within a holistic gender approach is explained in the following abstract.

Gender equity is the process of achieving fairness regardless of gender. Equity leads to equality, which requires equal enjoyment by women and men of socially-valued goods, opportunities, resources and rewards.²³ It means fairness of treatment for women, men, girls and boys according to their respective needs. This may include the same treatment or treatment that is different but considered equivalent in terms of rights, benefits, obligations and creating equal opportunities.

In Cambodia, women are generally in subordinate positions compared to men, many initiatives are focused on women’s empowerment. Empowerment is the process of enhancing the capacity of individuals or groups to make choices and to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes. It implies women, men, girls and boys setting their own agendas, gaining skills, and increasing self-reliance. It is a process and an outcome. Women’s empowerment implies an expansion in women’s ability to make strategic life choices in a context where this ability was previously denied or limited to them.

To sustainably address and transform gender inequalities in societies, engagement of men and boys is crucial. Men have specific obstacles to overcome,

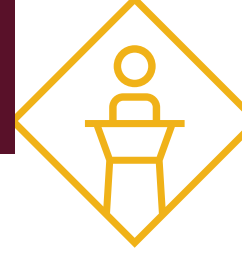
especially the fact that for many a move towards gender equality is against their short-term interests. In most policies that seek to address gender imbalances, men are implicitly present as “the problem”.

When men are present only as a background category in a policy discussion about women, it is difficult to raise issues about men’s and boys’ interests or problems. If large numbers of men are to support and implement gender equality initiatives, it will be necessary to speak in concrete, positive ways to their concerns, interests, hopes and problems.

In contrast to the problem-oriented approach, in which men are implicitly prejudged as a problem, Better Factories Cambodia focuses much more on an integrated and solution-oriented approach, in which the active involvement of men is an essential part of the political, personal and workplace discussion. Based on Better Work’s long experience, the integration of men is a success factor in the promotion of gender equality.



5 Better Work’s key pillars
To promote gender equality

C111 C100 	C155 C187 C190 	C111 C100 	C183 C156 	WEE Women Economic Empowerment 
Pillar 1 : Discrimination ▪ Tackling contractual discrimination; ▪ Bridging the gender wage gap; ▪ Preventing discriminatory Violence Harassment, incl. sexual harassment; ▪ Promoting inclusion of marginalized groups	Pillar 2 : Safety and Health ▪ Mainstreaming violence and harassment prevention in OSH management,; ▪ Promoting gender-responsive OSH mechanisms; ▪ Promoting workers’ psychosocial, sexual and reproductive health and safety, and maternal health	Pillar 3 : Voice and Representation ▪ Fostering representation of women workers in committees and social partners; ▪ Enhancing the voices of women in collective bargaining; ▪ Making social dialogue practices inclusive and gender-responsive	Pillar 4 : Care and Family ▪ Supporting maternity protection; ▪ Promoting employer provided/subsidized childcare; ▪ Exploring childcare solutions to shift the burden of care	Pillar 5 : Leadership and Growth ▪ Promoting an enabling environment for women’s career growth in factories; ▪ Nurturing women’s leadership in constituents’ organizations; ▪ Building technical, transferable and management skills; ▪ Fostering financial literacy and household budget planning

PILLAR 1
Discrimination

► Gender discrimination happens upon recruitment

Gender discrimination and social beliefs around gender norms impact a variety of aspects of garment factory work. Men and women are both impacted by these social norms, with men seen as difficult to manage, and often given riskier and more manual tasks while women are seen as more submissive and obedient, and are therefore overlooked for managerial positions.^{1,4,15} This discrimination is perceived very strongly in factories, with one study showing that 72% of workers reported discrimination in the hiring process.¹¹ Discrimination can be more explicit, with different roles being offered to men and women, or more subtle, with shorter term contracts being offered to the person being discriminated against. Forms of vertical segregation in hiring practices offering specific jobs only to certain genders, limits equal opportunities for development and contributes to increases in the gender wage gap. This is significantly very present in the Cambodian garment sector where short-term contracts can put workers at increased / perpetual risk of job loss and unemployment.

Particular forms of discrimination against workers also persist against minority groups. Those that identify as LGBTIQ+ and / or persons with disabilities, may experience discrimination, especially with getting an interview for a role in the first instance. Another main cohort that experiences discrimination is pregnant women. Pregnant women are often not hired at all, or when they are hired, they are offered short-term contracts that put them in vulnerable positions.¹ In addition, women with lower education and children are often overlooked for training and promotion opportunities.¹⁵ There is also discrimination against older women, with one study showing that women over 37 years old are less likely to be recruited.¹



► High gender wage gap in the factory reveals discrimination

On average, men earn more, both with and without overtime. Women earn 13% less than their male colleagues.¹⁸ This may be in part because women are hired into lower-level occupations such as sewing machine operators and helpers and remain at that level for longer periods of time. Interestingly, garment workers believe that they are paid the same when they hold the same position which is not always clear to the workers themselves that there is a discrepancy in wages.

Knowledge Barrier

- Knowledge gaps on basic maternity benefits.
- Mixed level of awareness among female garment workers about maternity benefits.

Motivation Barrier

- Women garment factory workers believe they are lucky to have a job and are afraid to behave in ways that could get them fired.
- Women perceive themselves as having more to lose than men.
- Men can find jobs in other sectors such as construction (said at workshop).
- Women don't dare to complain (said at workshop).

Systemic Barrier

- More time dedicated to house work / unpaid work
- Maternity benefits are not reaching everyone at the right time

PILLAR 2
Safety and Health

Under this pillar, there is a shift in categorization in comparison to previous years, specifically around gender- based violence and harassment (GBVH). This is now being brought into the new health and safety pillar. This is to reflect more broadly, and acknowledge, that GBVH is, in of itself a major contributor to feeling unsafe in the workplace. It should be seen as a mental and physical health issue, as well as something that factories, and the industry, need to address systemically in order to address it appropriately. It also means that this issue has more of a focus to build effective management systems to break cycles of abuse that are often prevalent in garment factories in Cambodia.

► Gender based violence and harassment

There is a low level of awareness of what can constitute sexual harassment at both worker and manager level.

Although there is a lack of understanding of what sexual harassment is, workers report frequently experiencing behaviours that fall into the category of sexual harassment. For example, in one recent qualitative study, many workers talk of experiencing verbal harassment or unwanted touching based on their gender, and report experiencing sexual harassment over a 12-month period. Workers often feel uncomfortable because of joking or flirting behaviour, which are often perpetrated by their supervisor or manager or sewing machine mechanics.

There are also reports of benefits being offered from supervisors in exchange for sexual favours. Women without children are more likely to experience flirting or uncomfortable jokes, and less educated women with infants were more likely to be exposed to sexual harassment from their manager or supervisor.

► Wage structure leading to violence

Factories' wage structures are factors in determining whether and to what extent workers experience verbal abuse and sexual harassment whilst at work.¹² Sexual harassment is most common in factories where workers are paid by piece rate, and supervisors are paid a fixed salary.³ Sexual harassment and verbal abuse is not only a human rights issue, but also an economic issue. When people do not feel safe or respected at work, they are more likely to leave a workplace, be absent more often, or feel less

productive at work.¹² Sexual harassment and verbal abuse detracts worker productivity and is associated with lower factory profitability.¹²

► General harassment and verbal abuse is perpetrated by managers

Harassment is common in factories, with managers verbally harassing workers for making mistakes, not producing items fast enough, or doing things they don't want workers to do (e.g., looking at mobile phones).

Managers can use aggressive language, throw objects at workers, threaten workers with contract, or other consequences. Women are more likely than men to experience material thrown at them than men,¹⁵ but men receive warning letters more often than women.¹⁵ The main perpetrators of harassment are managers (line supervisors, managers).²¹ However, both men and women were reported being perpetrators.¹⁴

Detection, reporting and receiving adequate data about harassment is still problematic due to power imbalances and ineffective grievance mechanisms. Those traditional imbalances prevent workers from reporting cases of harassment, as they are afraid of losing their job.

Knowledge Barrier

- Lack of understanding and awareness on what constitutes harassment or sexual harassment.

Motivation Barrier

- Fear of losing their jobs or other negative consequences discourage workers from speaking up.

Systemic Barrier

- Inability to mobilise as a collective as GBVH is still seen as a societal taboo.
- Harassment comes from supervisors/ superiors due to pre-existing power dynamics.
- Inability to change hiring practices to be less discriminatory.
- Existing grievance mechanisms are not effectively designed to allow for anonymity and/or fair representation.
- Reporting sexual harassment seems to be an informal process of raising the issue through their team leader or supervisor who then channels the complaint to the HR/Admin staff.
- Women are expected to work at home and at work and expected to select certain jobs so that their household labour is not interrupted.

PILLAR 3
Voice and Representation

► Lack of female representation and leadership positions

Leadership positions in union confederations, federations and factory level unions are dominated by men. More women are increasingly becoming representatives at the factory level, but they are still far from being equally represented. Additionally, factory level unions with female representation still miss out on the higher decision making process if federation level unions are dominated by men.¹ In one qualitative study, it was shown that where factories had unions that were not affiliated with national level federations, garment factory workers were unable to have the freedom to voice their grievances.¹ The importance of Female representation lies in women’s ability to understand and advocate for issues faced by their female peers, who constitute over 80% of the factory’s workforce.

In BFC’s advisory services, voice and representation, or perhaps the lack of equal voice, is highlighted when Performance Improvement Consultative Committee (PICC) congregate to resolve factory issues in a collaborative bipartite manner. What we know is that these committees often have a representative split down gender lines, but often it is male management that speak and suggest, while female representatives (both worker and management) refrain from offering up solutions. In many instances, the ‘space’ is taken up by men, which does not allow for equal representation, which could hinder root cause identification, and sustainable resolutions to a factories’ challenges.

Knowledge Barrier

Garment factory workers do not have the skills to express their opinion in the workplace, especially because they are kept from training and skill-building sessions.

Motivation Barrier

No time to dedicate to unions activities or training to become a representative

Being involved in a union comes with the risk of getting fired or exposed to the factory management. Women have more to lose than men when they lose their job.

Systemic Barrier

Cultural norms, as well as to the reality that women are still expected to assume the majority of childcare responsibilities after they return home, discouraging them from serving as trade union representatives.

Unions and sector associations are male dominant environment. Yet, some women’s unions are created to ease dialogue and debate.



PILLAR 4
Care and Family

► Working hours imply overtime

Cambodian garment factory workers generally work 6 days a week, 7-11am, 12-4pm, and often 2 hours of overtime a day until 6pm. However, even with these long hours, 80% of workers expressed a degree of concern about low wages and a concern around termination if they reject overtime hours. Over 50% of men were concerned about the amount of overtime, compared to 40% of women, and 32% of men believe they will be terminated if they refuse to work beyond the legal limit, compared to 20% of women. Men are more likely to report working on Sundays than women.¹⁵ Women are often unable to work overtime at the same level as men due to unpaid care responsibilities at home. Workers report that their cost of living is continuously increasing, but their salary remains similar which puts pressure on their ability to spend and save.

► Health concerns are mostly expressed by men

Men report OSH concerns more frequently than women - specifically backache, irritation of the eyes, nose, skin or cough.¹²

► Maternity-related healthcare (pregnancy, childcare, breastfeeding) show extensive non-compliance

Maternity payments are paid incorrectly (15% of factories) - with the majority (50%) resulting from incorrect calculation of payments.¹² In 72% of factories, there was no functioning or accessible nursing room for breastfeeding purposes, and/or there was no functioning day care centre at or near the workplace.¹² In 42% of factories, factories report offering a childcare allowance of USD\$5 to USD\$20 in lieu of setting up a day care facility in accordance with the law.¹² However, this was often only offered workers who had returned from maternity leave, as opposed to newly recruited workers who needed childcare. The Labour Law requires factories to provide the child care allowance to all female workers with children between the ages of 18 and 36 months, regardless of whether the children were born while the mother was employed at that factory.¹² One other main issue around barriers to appropriate childcare options

for garment workers is the dangerous journey that garment workers often have to take to and from the factory – sometimes on the back of a flatbed truck that is most likely ill equipped to take passengers safely – so this creates an additional barrier to workers who might otherwise want to utilize childcare /nursing facilities at the factory.

Some barriers to improvement are shared in the table below:

Knowledge Barrier

Knowledge gaps on basic maternity benefits.

Mixed level of awareness among female garment workers about maternity benefits.

Motivation Barrier

Women garment factory workers believe they are lucky to have a job and are afraid to behave in ways that could get them fired.

Women perceive themselves as having more to lose than men. Men can find jobs in other sectors such as construction (said at workshop).

Women don’t dare to complain (said at workshop).

Systemic Barrier

More time dedicated to housework / unpaid work

Maternity benefits are not reaching everyone at the right time

Lack of appropriate and safe transportation for workers and their children



PILLAR 5

Leadership and Growth

Gaps in worker vs. supervisor ratio & supervisory roles

Women hold far fewer management and supervisory roles in general, compared to men, but in Better Work factories, 57% of supervisors are women.

Overall, 4% of female garment workers hold a line leader or office staff role.⁶ Becoming a line leader or production supervisor remains the most realistic avenue of advancement for most female workers⁵ however, male workers are more likely than female workers to achieve promotions in the sector.⁶ There is an intentional preference for female workers in lower skilled jobs,⁶ and as such most high level positions in factories are held by men.

► Skills development competes with productivity

Training, empowering, and upskilling workers can often be at odds with the overall production goals of the factory.¹ Factories generally do not send garment factory workers or staff for off-site training because these trainings directly impact their productivity. There is also not enough training provided on workers' rights, leadership, or management skills for team leaders and supervisors, which effectively perpetuates disempowerment. Workers surveyed as one part of the impact study showed that workers faced unfair obstacles related to training opportunities.¹² Higher performing workers might not be able to access training because they are not allowed to leave the production line and reduce the line's ability to meet targets.¹ There is no statistically significant difference in training opportunities for male and female workers, but women who have greater childcare responsibilities and less education are less likely to receive trainings and promotions than more educated women.¹⁵

Knowledge Barrier

Garment factory workers don't have the skills to express their opinion in the workplace, especially because they are kept from training and skill-building sessions.¹

Motivation Barrier

Skills development competes with work and caregiving duties.¹

They perceive higher-level jobs to be very stressful, requiring more time and effort than they had to give, considering their responsibility to carry out care duties at home.¹

No aspirational career growth opportunities for women garment factory workers at factory.¹

Systemic Barrier

Low levels of education prevent most female garment factory workers from being promoted beyond the team leader or supervisor levels.¹

Their role as mother or wife is seen as being more valuable than being the breadwinner of the family.¹

Women are valued and viewed as the caregiver in the household.¹

Women recruited in factories have a lower education level than men.



5 Our Approach



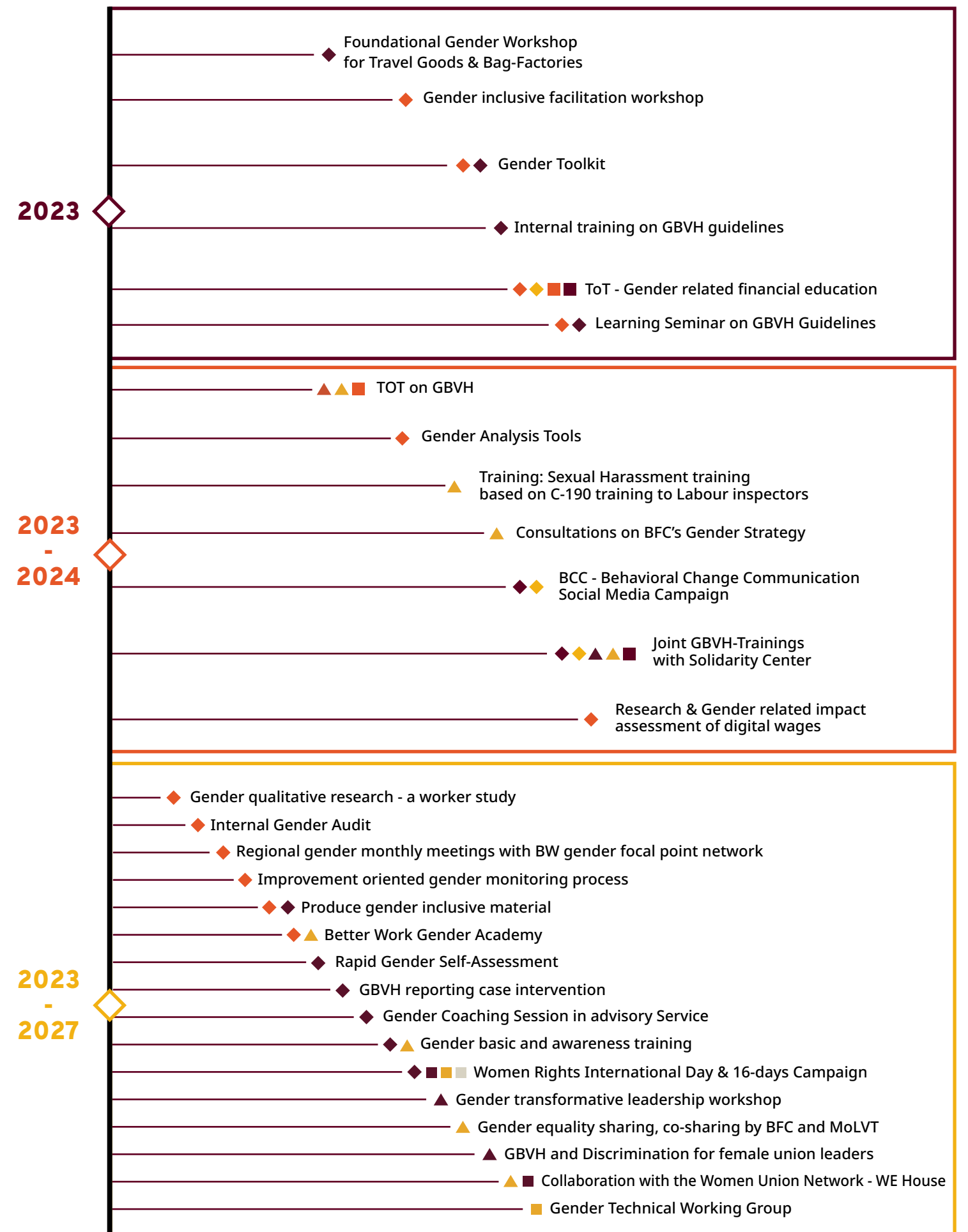
Understanding and acknowledging the gender dimensions in Cambodia and the garment, footwear, and travel goods and bag industry in particular allows BFC to identify key areas of impact for its Gender Strategy. Following the BWG's strategy, BFC set out our understanding of key concepts and activities that need to be addressed to promote gender equality and women empowerment in all aspects of the 5 pillars for the garment sector of Cambodia. Summarizing where we are (based on the outlaid gender analysis) we have identified an Action Plan, of where we want to be and how we can get there.

► What has been done

Since 2016, BFC has increased the focus on addressing gender equality issues in the garment sector. BFC has done this through developing various tools, implementing numerous activities and involving different stakeholders along the way. The following timeline visualizes the different efforts from BFC to promote gender equality and decent work with constituents and partners. As there are many approaches, certain milestones are highlighted that have achieved a broader impact in shaping the BFC's gender equality transformation and will continue to be a part of the gender work in the future.

One of these milestones is the establishment of the male leadership programme in collaboration with the Solidarity Center and its counterpart the female leadership programme in cooperation with UN Women in 2019. In that year BFC, in conjunction with CARE, BFC developed the GBVH Guidelines.

To improve knowledge and awareness on gender themed topics, internal BFC staff now use the "Gender toolkit" to address and to transfer expertise to factories via PICC committees. As part of BFC's joint action plan with Labour inspectors from the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MoVLT) and Trade Union / worker representatives have been trained on gender equality and GBVH dynamics.





► Our approach to future change

Our approach to change is based on a 'Theory of Change'; a foreseen change process for a longer period of time. The impact is linked to BWG and BFC's vision and is likely to become visible longer term - if all intermediate steps of inputs, outputs and outcomes are realised and the assumptions hold true. BFC regularly monitors and evaluates its approaches receiving feedbacks and inputs from participants and partners. Benefitting from the findings of this improvement-orientated learning-experience, new trainings, activities and tools have been developed further and results have been taken into account to update the actual gender strategy and adjust to relevant dynamics in the sector. How BFC is addressing this transformation and which theoretical background is underlying this is described in the following five-pillar strategy.

Impacts are framed through the five-pillars: Discrimination, Paid Work and Care, Voice and Representation, and Leadership and Skill Development. The strategy aims at the transformative design of gender equality.

BFC programme's gender strategy will contribute to the following impact, by pillar:

- **Discrimination:** Women workers experience reduced level of discrimination and violence and harassment and report cases free from negative consequences
- **Paid Work and Care:** Women workers have improved sexual, reproductive and maternity health; improved access to maternity rights and benefits are better and are better able to balance work and care responsibilities
- **Voice and Representation:** Women are more equitably represented among all social partners and can meaningfully engage in social dialogue and collective bargaining at all levels
- **Leadership and Skill Development:** Women workers benefit from career advancement and are more equitably represented in higher-paid occupation and leadership roles

To achieve these long-term effects, BFC will focus on outcomes within various areas of intervention: BFC Internal, in factory services, Constituents (TAFTAC, Unions, Government), Partners (Brands, NGOs, UN and other agencies).

The outcomes will result in BFC's factory engagement services to be conducted through a gender transformative approach. That is to say that the services transform the existing distribution of resources and responsibilities in order to create a more equal relationship between women and men, and to challenge discriminatory norms and practices, especially in how the factory treats female workers. They will also result in factory engagement services to be gender responsive. That is to say that the services have proactive, formal and consistent inclusion of gender perspectives.

For the outcomes to be realised, the TOC is aiming to deliver on a series of outputs. The outputs focus on increasing gender sensitivity. That is to say that our work acknowledges and highlights existing gender differences, issues and inequalities and incorporates these into strategies and actions. A large part of being gender sensitive is about measuring existing situations. After all, you cannot change what you do not measure.

Following is a brief description of each area of intervention's outcomes and outputs as seen in the TOC.

BFC Staff

Within BFC, the organisation will champion gender equality in all areas: factory and constituent engagement, programming, research, monitoring and evaluation and communication. This will happen by ensuring that BFC staff focus on how gendered beliefs, values, and norms affect the delivery of their work and that all factory and constituent engagement material is developed with a gender inclusive lens. In addition, gender responsive monitoring and evaluation will be developed and implemented based on gender specific performance indicators and the gender specific data and analyses produced will be the basis for gender responsive communications materials. Finally, there will be continuous learning related to gender issues for staff, including awareness on C190-Violence and Harassment and C111-Discrimination (Employment and Occupation).

In Factory Services

Factories will establish effective leadership, policies, systems, and capacities that promote and enable gender equality. Factory managers will have the capacity to implement policy and system changes, and model positive norms and behaviours. Factories will establish effective policies and systems to prevent and address gender-based violence and harassment, ensure access to maternity and breastfeeding rights



and protection, and support career advancement opportunities for women. Workers will be exposed to gender and diversity concepts and be confident to raise any gaps they experience. Performance Improvement Consultative Committee (PICC) members and factory ambassadors will proudly spread gender and care knowledge among their peers to contribute to the improvement of their factory working context.

This will happen through the development of a gender inclusive and agile model for factory level engagement implemented with all BFC member factories. Operational gaps such as recruitment, rights and protection, will be identified in assessments and addressed in trainings for workers, supervisors and managers. Awareness trainings and engagements will be scaled among workers, union members, factory ambassadors and PICC members through virtual trainings, trainings in provinces, and better accessibility. Effective communication tools about gender related issues, benefits of care-benefits will be introduced to PICC members and workers. Data on the positive impacts of gender policies will be reported to factory managers - e.g. improvements regarding employee retention, worker wellbeing, and overall productivity.

Factories will develop roadmaps that incorporate improvement on social dialogue, learning, management systems and compliance within a longer- term approach to industry growth and competitiveness.

Constituents (Government, employer and worker organisations)

Government, employer and worker organisations will all have the commitment and capacity to promote gender equality and engage in social dialogue on gender related issues. Overall, this will be done through scaling up gender equality, empowerment of women, diversity, and inclusion by the BFC tripartite constituents and partners.

TAFTAC will co-lead training and industry level capacity development with The Cambodian Garment Training Institute (CGTI) and joint TAFTAC-BFC curricula will be developed with gender sensitivity. For Union constituents, there will be specific capacity building on leadership to strengthen women union members also will be supported to collect data in factories and to produce evidence based and gender sensitive recommendations. The Government, (Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training) will ensure that gender sensitive regulations for the industry are promoted, policies ensuring factory workers' protection are enforced, and awareness is raised among constituents, especially within MOLVT.

Partners: Brands

Garment supply chain actors promote and enable gender equality throughout the supply chain, ensuring responsible business conduct. This will be done by ensuring that brands have access to data based evidence of issues and gaps related to gender questions in their factories. Brands will also understand the benefits of gender-based policy enforcement for their production.

Partners: NGOs / CSOs & UN Agencies

BFC will act as a convening body in the Cambodian context, ensuring that partners and NGOs have access to the BFC factory network, tools, to support to scale gender-related initiatives, and collectively accelerate gender transformation of the garment industry.

A convening body, BFC will engage and facilitate industry stakeholder, NGO, and partner discussions on gender related themes and topics. Lessons from BFC's experience and initiatives on gender equality and women's empowerment will be disseminated and shared broadly. Partners will co-design and implement relevant outreach and campaign messages.

Inputs

For outputs and outcomes to be realised, inputs are a prerequisite for the entire change process to be started. Building capacity of our own BFC staff, to fully understand the meaning of gendered beliefs, values and norms in daily life - which transcends garment factory walls - must be done if BFC aims to have a responsive and ultimately transformative impact.

In summary, the Theory of Change builds upon the 'gender perspective continuum'. From a state of being gender neutral (that is to say that existing gender relations are not disturbed and are not considered relevant to reach programme goals), BFC wants to first become more gender sensitive, then responsive and then transformative.

► How to get there

PILLARS	Pillar 1: Discrimination	Pillar 2: Safety and Health	Pillar 3: Voice and representation	Pillar 4: Care and Family	Pillar 5: Leadership and Growth
IMPACT	There is a workplace culture at enterprise level that promotes and demonstrates inclusive and fair hiring practices and encourages diversity, enabling equal opportunity in role selection.	Differences in gender-specific experiences are considered, to prevent physical and mental occupational safety and health risks to enable a safe and respectful workplace, especially where women workers are safe from any type of violence and harassment.	Women workers are more equitably represented among all social partners. An enabling environment is created and maintained at enterprise level where men understand a workplace dynamic where their influence can empower women to contribute ideas equally, and meaningfully engage in social dialogue and collective bargaining at all levels.	Workers are able to make informed decisions how to balance work and care responsibilities and have improved sexual, reproductive and maternity health knowledge and awareness of their access to maternity rights and benefits.	Women workers benefit from career advancement and are more equitably represented in higher-paid occupational roles. Pathways towards skills development are developed to allow women to contribute their expertise in leadership roles.

AREA OF INTERVENTION	BFC Internal	In factory services	Constituents			Partners	
			TAFTAC	Unions	Gov	Brands	NGO/CSOs and UN Agencies
OUTCOME	BFC champions gender equality in all areas of the programme: factory and constituent engagement, programming, research, monitoring and evaluation and communication.	Effective leadership, policies, systems, and capacities are established in factories which promote and enable gender equality. • Factory managers have the capacity to implement policy and systems change and model positive norms and behaviours. • Factories establish effective policies and systems: - to prevent and address gender-based violence and harassment, ensure access to maternity and breastfeeding rights and protection - to support career advancement opportunities for women • Workers are exposed to gender and diversity concepts and are confident to raise any gap they experience. • PICC members and factory ambassadors proudly spread gender and care-benefits knowledge among their peers to contribute to the improvement of their factory working conditions.	Government, employer and worker organisations have the commitment and capacity to promote gender equality and engage in social dialogue on gender related issues.			Responsible business conduct by garment supply chain actors promotes and enables gender equality throughout the supply chain.	Partners and NGOs have access to BFC factory network, tools and support to scale gender related initiatives and collectively accelerate gender transformation of the garment industry.
OUTPUT	BFC staff focus on gendered beliefs, values and norms in the delivery of their work. All BFC's factory and constituent engagement material is developed with a gender inclusive lens. Gender responsive monitoring and evaluation is developed and implemented based on gender specific performance indicators. Gender responsive communication materials, based on gender specific data and analyses are produced. Continuous learning on gender related issues are conducted for staff, including awareness on C190 (Violence and Harassment) and C111 (Discrimination)	A gender inclusive, agile model for factory level engagement is implemented with all BFC advisory factories (BFC strategy work plan output 1.1). Operational gender gaps such as recruitment, rights and protection, are identified in assessments and addressed in trainings for workers, supervisors and managers. Awareness trainings and engagements are increased (scaled) among workers, union members, factory ambassadors and PICC members through virtual trainings, trainings in provinces and better accessibility. Effective communication tools about gender related issues, benefits of care-benefits are introduced to PICC members and workers. Roadmaps that incorporate improvement on social dialogue, learning, management systems and compliance within a longer-term approach to industry growth and competitiveness are developed by factories (BFC strategy work plan output 2.1). Data on positive impact of gender based policies is reported to factory managers (improve HR retention, workers well-being and therefore productivity).	Gender equality, empowerment of women, diversity and inclusion is scaled up by BFC tripartite constituents, and partners (BFC strategy work plan Output 2.5).			Data-based evidence of issues and gaps related to gender questions are shared with the brands.	Gender topic discussions with industry stakeholders (incl. NGOs, UN agencies and partners) are engaged and facilitated by BFC.
			Trainings and industry level capacity development are increasingly co-led with the TAFTAC/CGTI trainers.	Specific leadership capacity building to strengthen women union members are conducted.	Gender sensitive regulations for the industry. are promoted by the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training.	The benefits of gender-based policy enforcement for their production are understood and supported by the brands.	Lessons from BFC's experience and initiatives on gender equality and women's empowerment are disseminated and shared broadly (BFC strategy work plan Output 4.2).
			Joint TAFTAC-BFC curricula on different topics are gender sensitive.	Unions are supported to collect data in factory and to produce evidence based and gender sensitive recommendations.	Policies ensuring factory workers' protection are enforced.		Relevant outreach campaign and messages are co-designed and implemented with partners.
					Awareness among constituents, especially MOLVT, is raised around C190 and C111.		

► Cross-cutting commitments

Increase knowledge and raise awareness to all stakeholders

A common barrier to improving gender equality in factories is to effectively address the low level of awareness regarding the identification, acknowledgement, and reporting of gender-based grievances. In order to address the knowledge gap, BFC has a variety of strategies.

First BFC will use the large volume of data collected annually in factories, as well as opportunities for data collection during BFC core activities to produce reports and studies that will help to raise recognition of gender-based issues. BFC will carry out studies to understand gender challenges and issues in garment factories to identify areas that require increased focus.

BFC will also leverage workshops, training (on-site and online), and advisory activities to increase the knowledge of the garment industry stakeholders. Capacity building on gender equality related topics including gender-based violence and harassment prevention, OSH, wage digitization, labour law, roles and the responsibilities of trade union leaders, negotiation skills, collective bargaining and results-based management will be provided to workers, constituents, and industrial partners. Specific attention will be given to train future trainers (TOT) or conduct co-training with partners in order to more broadly impact the industry but also to increase advocacy, specifically through Government, TAFTAC and Unions.

Improve motivation and break the fear loop

Workers, specifically women, have difficulties



in expressing issues they experience, from non-compliance of HR policies to serious sexual harassment.

In order to break the cycle of fear, BFC commits to support workers' voices by spreading educational material about workers' rights and responsibilities. BFC will also use behavior change tools and outreach campaigns to build workers' confidence in reporting and guide the path toward more positive and improved reporting mechanisms. BFC will leverage inspiring role models that can promote new behaviors by scaling up the factory ambassador training of trainers (ToT) programme. These activities will be conducted in partnership with other organisations at scale.

Respond systematically and support policy implementation

Factory environments and policy need to adapt in order to enforce a safe and gender positive environment and culture in the garment industry. As such, BFC recommends the systematic application of a gender lens in any proposed content in the industry.

This applies to BFC content, but also any content proposed by other stakeholders in the industry, such as technical training proposed by constituents, CGTI curricula for future factory supervisors, or digital services such as wage applications developed for garment factory workers. BFC commits to the identification and targeting of specific areas of non-compliance identified through factory assessments. By convening key stakeholders around gender, BFC will support the implementation of initiatives and policies necessary for worker rights' protection.

Monitoring activities

During the reporting period, BFC has created a new role for a national Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Officer who has since been recruited. The role of the M&E officer will include the coordination of BFC's data collection and data reporting, supporting clear and understood processes for measuring the programme's work and ensuring M&E data is used to strengthen accountability, stimulate learning and improved performance, and facilitates organizational decision-making. Secondly, the M&E officer will coordinate BFC's research activities, including management of researchers that BFC engages with, and collaborate with the BWG research & impact team for any research that BFC is part of BFC's new strategy (2024-2027) which was finalised during the reporting period has strengthened focus on the impact at the workplace to give stronger emphasis on behavioural and systematic change at the enterprise level, and on its contribution to policy and institutional changes at the national and global levels. This will support the programme to measure progress in challenging areas such as to build stronger, more capable national institutions and governance mechanisms that support garment factories in generating decent

jobs and promoting innovation. Other measurement approaches will be needed to understand BFC's contributions to facilitate a more just transition to new technologies, addressing environmental and demographic trends, measuring the impact of knowledge and data to inform policy reforms, and understanding the impact of the programme's indirect reach through partnerships. BFC in this process will engage with national constituents to improve their access to and capacity to use the programme's own and other sources of reliable data. Monitoring information will be collected to verify that important changes and assumptions marked in the theory of change are happening according to plan, and that progress occurs as expected.



Annex

► Legal context and conventions

ILO's core conventions on non-discrimination are the Discrimination Convention, 1958 (No.111) promoting equality of opportunity and treatment in the world of work, and the Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100), promoting equal pay for work of equal value between women and men. The ILO gives equal weight to economic and rights-based arguments for gender equality. According to the 2009 Resolution of the International Labour Conference on "Gender equality at the heart of decent work", gender equality is both "right and smart". The general principle of equality and non-discrimination was first adopted in 1948 in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. A good practice of the Cambodian (Labour) Law is that it specifically covers direct and indirect discrimination, sexual harassment and "exceptions" to discrimination (i.e. when preference or exclusion is inherent to a job requirement). Source: Asian Development Bank and International Labour Organization, (2013), Gender Equality in the Labour Market in Cambodia.

Discrimination convention, 1958 (no.111)

In 1958, the ILO adopted the Discrimination convention which entered into force in 1960. The Convention defines discrimination, forbidding distinction, exclusion, or preference based on "race, creed, or sex." Parties are required to ensure that current and future policies are aligned with the Convention, ensuring that employer and worker organisations observe the policy, and that vocational guidance, training, and placement services are observed under the policy. The implementation of the Convention is supervised under ILO's Committee of Experts, which also reviews and evaluates State Party reports which must be submitted every three years.

Violence and harassment convention, 2019 (no. 190)

In 2019, the ILO introduced a new Convention, the first international labour standard of its kind addressing violence and harassment in the world of work. In doing so, the Convention uses a definition that covers not just the physical workplace, but commuting to and from work. Recommendation No. 206 and Convention No. 190 provide a clear framework for action and an opportunity to shape a future of work based on dignity and respect, free from violence and harassment. It also recognizes that such behaviours can constitute a human rights violation or abuse and makes direct reference to the impact that domestic violence can have on employment, productivity health and safety. Under the Convention, violence and harassment are defined as, "a range of unacceptable behaviours and practices" that "aim at, result in, or are likely to result in physical, psychological, sexual or economic harm".

► Key equality conventions at a glance

Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100)

It establishes the principle of equal remuneration for men and women for work of equal value. The term "remuneration" is broadly defined to include the ordinary, basic or minimum wage or salary and any additional emoluments payable directly or indirectly, whether in cash or in kind, by the employer to the worker and arising out of the worker's employment.¹

Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111)

It defines discrimination based on seven prohibited grounds (race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction or social origin) and provides for the possibility of extending the list of grounds further after consultation with representative employers' and workers' organizations, and relevant bodies. It covers discrimination in relation to access to education and vocational training, access to employment and to particular occupations, as well as terms and conditions of employment. It also requires ratifying States to declare and pursue a national policy designed to promote, by methods appropriate to national conditions and practice, equality of opportunity and treatment in respect of employment and occupation, with a view to eliminating any discrimination in these fields.²

Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156)

With a view to creating effective equality of opportunity and treatment for men and women workers, the Convention requires ratifying States to make it an aim of national policy to enable persons with family responsibilities who are engaged or wish to engage in employment to exercise their right to do so without being subject to discrimination and, to the extent possible, without conflict between their employment and family responsibilities. The Convention also requires governments to take into account the needs of workers with family responsibilities in community planning and to develop or promote community services, public or private, such as child-care and family services and facilities.³

Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No.183)

It rules for the adoption of national legislation and further builds on earlier conventions (No. 3 and No. 103) by establishing five core elements of maternity protection: maternity leave, cash and medical benefits, health protection at the workplace, employment protection and non-discrimination and breastfeeding arrangements.⁴

Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190)

The first international treaty recognizing the right of everyone to a world of work free from violence and harassment, including gender-based violence and harassment. It provides a definition of such terms and protects workers as well as other persons in the world of work (such as persons working irrespective of their contractual status, persons in training, internships or apprenticeships, volunteers, jobseekers and job applicants, terminated workers and employers). It also takes into account the involvement of third parties both as victims and as perpetrators and acknowledges the diverse and changing nature of the world of work, applying to violence and harassment occurring "in the course of, linked with or arising out of work". It provides for obligations regarding prevention and protection, enforcement and remedies and guidance and training.⁵

Annex

► Limitations

The majority of data come from the most recent Cambodia Socio Economic Survey of 2019 - data from nearly 5 years ago. The most recent data captured was a qualitative study from June, 2022. One key indicator to assess how things have changed in the last 3-5 years is the factory worker's wages: USD\$128 (2015), \$153 (2017), \$200 (2023). Additionally, BFC's scope of work has recently expanded to include travel goods which means the organisation will now focus on 4 apparel segments in total (garment, textile, sports, and travel goods). These new items may bring different data, representation, and experiences on gender among workers. Additionally, data reported here concerns the factories registered in the BFC network, but does not include other factories.

Finally, the COVID-19 pandemic had enormous detrimental impacts worldwide, with women being extremely affected in every aspects. Consequently, any data from 2019 fails to capture these changes. However, in the aftermath of the pandemic, the necessity for a gender-focused strategy and lens remains. Future data will demonstrate the extent to which the pandemic has influenced gender equity.

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