



**NO MORE SILENCE,
NO MORE VIOLENCE!**



**NO MORE SILENCE,
NO MORE VIOLENCE:**

HOW WE PREVENT AND RESPOND
TO VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT
IN OUR ORGANISATION



INTRODUCTION

This manual is based on the principle sections of the Friends of the Earth International Policy on Violence and Sexual Harassment. The key principle of the policy is **ZERO TOLERANCE** for violence, meaning that Friends of the Earth International will not accept, tolerate or condone any form of violence or harassment against women or against anyone in the Friends of the Earth federation or in our societies. This includes all those who suffer from violence due to their ethnicity, nationality, class, economic situation, sexual orientation, gender identity (trans or non-binary people) or special physical or mental health needs who are often targets of violence, the threat of violence and harassment in our patriarchal, capitalist societies.

We highly encourage you to share this manual widely amongst your organisation's staff, volunteers and activists - including external persons who take part in your events - as they all fall under the policy's scope.

GLOSSARY

In order to understand the behaviour and actions that are described in this manual, here are our main grassroots, anti-capitalist feminist terms that we use to analyse and understand our societies and for the constitution of our vision of a just world.

Gender justice refers to a world where everybody enjoys autonomy, freedom and equality, and is able to share equitably in the distribution of power, knowledge and resources. Achieving this means recognising the history of injustice, oppression and subjugation faced by women as a social group. Gender justice actions support the collective autonomy and decision-making power of women in relation to their lives, bodies and work, and actively promote justice in all its dimensions. These actions also support the struggles and demands of all gender identities.

Patriarchy is the name given to the system that oppresses and exploits women, their work and their bodies for the benefit of men as a social group. The patriarchal system organises our societies through the sexual division of labour, and is maintained by traditions, norms, education and material resources. Women's oppression is based on an economic difference between men and women, with women often financially dependent on their husbands or

male family members. Violence, harassment and the threat of violence against women are used as tools of control to maintain patriarchal power relations, especially when women step out of their naturalised roles.

Harassment is any action, conduct or behaviour that a person finds unwelcome, intimidating, upsetting, offensive, embarrassing or humiliating. It can be open or covert. It is important to be aware that it is the impact of the action, conduct or behaviour which is relevant, and not the motive or intent behind it.

Violence and sexual harassment include any unwelcome direct, indirect, physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct that makes a person feel offended, humiliated and/or intimidated. It includes situations of abuse of authority where a person is asked to engage in sexual activity as a condition of that person's employment or participation in an activity, as well as situations which create an environment which is hostile, intimidating or humiliating for the recipient.

Affirmative consent is a knowing, voluntary, and mutual decision among all participants to engage in sexual or other intimate activity. Consent can be given by words or actions if they create clear permission regarding willingness to engage in the sexual or other

intimate activity. Consent is active ongoing participation and can be withdrawn at any point.

For a deeper understanding of our gender justice and dismantling patriarchy principles, please visit <https://www.foei.org/what-we-do/gender-justice-dismantling-patriarchy> and take a look at our booklet *"Why gender justice & dismantling patriarchy? Reflections and stories from the Friends of the Earth International federation"*.

FIVE KEY PRINCIPLES OF THE FRIENDS OF THE EARTH INTERNATIONAL POLICY ON VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT:

1. **Zero tolerance**
2. **Prevention**
3. **Survivor¹ centred**
4. **Confidentiality and protection**
5. **Time-bound, transparent and effective**



¹ We do not understand women or people who suffer violence as passive victims, rather as survivors who have agency and who are fighting back against abuses of patriarchal and other power. We therefore use the word "survivor" throughout the policy to describe the person who makes a complaint or accusation of violence or harassment against them (rather than the more widely used term "victim")

HOW CAN I RECOGNISE VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT?

Violence, aggression and sexual harassment may come in many forms. Conducts or behaviours include, but are not limited to the following:

VERBAL:

- » Making insults or comments or telling jokes or stories of a sexual or intimate nature;
- » Propositioning or requesting non-consensual sexual favours, dates or physical intimacy;
- » Telling lies or spreading rumours about a person;
- » Using job-related threats or rewards to solicit sexual favours;
- » Controlling the behaviour of a person through threats to salary, terms and conditions of employment or job promotion / career of a staff member.

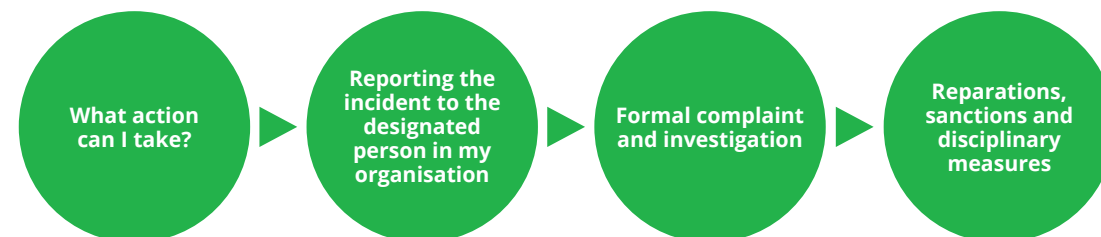
NON-VERBAL:

- » Following or stalking a person;
- » Whistling, leering, sexual gestures, etc;
- » Destruction of another person's personal or professional objects;
- » Actively ignoring or undermining a person;
- » Sending or displaying non-consensual emails, letters or images of a sexual, intimate or personal nature around the workplace;
- » Preventing promotion or participation in a certain activity for the purpose of sexual harassment.

PHYSICAL:

- » Persistent or non-consensual attention or physical contact;
- » Standing close, touching or rubbing oneself sexually against another person;
- » Physical violence including sexual assault and rape;
- » Deprivation of liberty (holding someone against their will).

HOW DO I MAKE A COMPLAINT?



If there is no one available in your organisation or international structure to fulfill this role - due to the size of the organisation or the taboo nature of the issue, for example - an external person(s) of trust and expertise might be chosen. In cases when a member of senior management or the board stands accused (or another person in a position of power), when the organisation has tried and failed to address a situation, or when the survivor makes this request due to lack of trust in the grievance committee of their organisation, an alternative process with external designated persons is also possible. The survivor can ask a trusted person in her organisation to help set up this external process.

Friends of the Earth International recognises that the designated person(s) might receive a complaint of a past situation of violence or harassment that needs to be taken equally as seriously.



WHAT CAN MY ORGANISATION DO TO PREVENT VIOLENCE?

Friends of the Earth believes the best way to respond to violence and sexual harassment is to prevent it from happening in the first place. As a federation we are therefore focused on preventing violence as key to gender justice and the dismantling of patriarchy and power relations in the federation.

We believe that dismantling patriarchy and working for gender justice is the work and responsibility of the full Friends of the Earth

International federation, including regional and international governance structures, national member groups, programme and membership development structures.

This framework incorporates learning on the ways in which patriarchy operates within society and within our organisational structures, as well as the ways in which patriarchy works together with other structures of oppression: racism, capitalism, (neo)colonialism, heteronormativity.



AS A FEDERATION WE ENVISION SOME KEY STEPS THAT NEED TO BE IMPLEMENTED TO ENSURE A JUST FEDERATION AND WIDER SOCIETY:

1. **Build understanding of patriarchy and the need for gender justice across the federation and in our national contexts**
2. **Strengthen leadership, decision-making and protagonism of women**
3. **Address patriarchal behaviour and power relationships within the federation and in our national contexts**
4. **Build alliances and solidarity with anti-racist, anti-capitalist grassroots feminist movements, women's organisations and other social justice movements**

SOME PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS FOR THE PREVENTION OF, AND RESPONSE TO VIOLENCE IN MY ORGANISATION

- Create an action protocol for situations of violence or harassment based on the 5 steps explained in the Friends of the Earth International Policy on Violence and Sexual harassment. This includes choosing a dedicated staff person(s) who is available to deal with issues that might arise (see step 2) and the setting up of a permanent grievance committee to deal with formal complaints and coordinate investigations (see step 3);
- Carry out a risk assessment to understand potential procedures, policies, group dynamics, situations, etc, where patriarchal behaviour might be present or more likely to occur (in order to focus organisational attention);
- Check your own individual and collective awareness of inequality, injustice and power relations;
- Commitment to respectful behaviour and communication, including being aware of the language we use and how we use it and checking your organisation's internal communication to ensure you avoid language and images that perpetuate patriarchal stereotypes.

- Organise an online or in person workshop with the specific aim of introducing all your local members, staff, activists, etc, to the policy and the forms of violence and harassment;
- Regular training, political formation and orientation within your organisation;
- Integrate gender justice analysis and anti-patriarchal struggle, and specifically against violence and sexual harassment, in your programmes and campaigns;

- Being vocal about your commitment to gender and social justice and equality;
- Encourage women staff, volunteers and activists to take part in feminist or women's collectives and / or to self-organise as women within your organisation;
- Ensure gender-balanced panels at your conferences and events;
- Challenge patriarchal behaviour in your meetings and actively create safe and inclusive spaces by:
 - rotating housekeeping tasks such as note taking among all participants, regardless of gender and position in the organisation;
 - acknowledging all contributors to any discussion or initiative, not just the most vocal, and facilitating and encouraging the participation of all those who want to;
 - promoting regular discussions about group dynamics, who speaks for the organisation, etc.

WHAT ELSE CAN MY ORGANISATION DO TO PROMOTE GENDER JUSTICE?

1. **Start a gender justice group in your organisation and/or run workshops to help build our collective understanding of patriarchy, power relations and structural oppressions within our federation and society.**
2. **Actively plan and work towards strengthening the collective power of women, LGBTQ people and people of colour through supporting their decision-making roles and protagonism within your group and networks.**
3. **Speak up and speak out about patriarchal or oppressive behaviour and power relationships within the federation and in your community.**
4. **Build alliances and solidarity with anti racist and anti-capitalist grassroots feminist movements. Our struggles are interlinked.**
5. **Find out more: read the Friends of the Earth International Conceptual Framework on gender justice and dismantling patriarchy, where all these concepts are fully explained.**
6. **Get inspired! Use the Feminism and System Change Strategic Plan of Friends of the Earth International as a tool to support the incorporation of this gender justice and feminist analysis into your actions and your organisation's campaigning and community work.**

! You can read more about our gender justice and dismantling patriarchy work at <https://www.foei.org/what-we-do/gender-justice-dismantling-patriarchy> and send us an email to ask for our key strategic and conceptual documents:

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