

Understanding Gender Disaggregated Data:

A guide for suppliers

This guidance has been developed to help suppliers create safe, fair, and inclusive working environments where all workers, regardless of their gender, can thrive.

It explains the importance of collecting and analysing gender-disaggregated workforce data to better understand working conditions through a gender lens. This data is essential for designing and implementing effective, targeted measures that address the challenges faced by all workers.

This guidance draws on insights from the GIZ-funded project Building Supplier Capacity on Gender-Disaggregated Supply Chain Data, implemented in Tamil Nadu, India, by the Ethical Trading Initiative (hereinafter referred to as the Gender Data Project). The project aimed to demonstrate a proof of concept in which brands and suppliers in the ready-made garment sector collaborate to collect and analyse gender-disaggregated data to inform human rights due diligence (HRDD). This approach ultimately supports a deeper understanding of gender-related human rights risks in the workplace and promotes actions to prevent and mitigate those risks.

Although this guidance has been developed with a focus on suppliers in the ready-made garments sector, it can be used by suppliers in any manufacturing setting.

Objectives of this Guidance

- Provide suppliers with an understanding of gender-disaggregated data and why it is important for addressing gender-related issues in the workplace;
- Provide an overview of gender data indicators, including what they mean and how the data can be collected;
- Provide insights on how the data can be analysed to understand issues that affect workers differently based on their gender and respond effectively.

The end goal is to provide suppliers with a tool that can be used to identify and prioritise actions that prevent and mitigate gendered risks, improve outcomes for women workers and create gender-transformative workplaces.



Key Takeaways

- 1** As an employer, you have a responsibility to protect all workers from harm and to promote equal opportunities for everyone. Achieving this in an effective and sustainable way requires accurate and relevant information to identify barriers and implement measures that meaningfully address them.
- 2** Gender disaggregated data is necessary to identify and prioritise actions that prevent and mitigate risks that affect workers disproportionately based on their gender, improve outcomes for women workers (who are often the more marginalised gender) and create gender-transformative workplaces.
- 3** Gender disaggregated data highlights the similarities and differences in the situations of women, men, and individuals of diverse gender identities within a given context. While it often involves disaggregating data by sex, it goes beyond this to capture the distinct realities, perceptions, and experiences shaped by one's gender. This type of data is essential for understanding how gender influences outcomes in the workplace and beyond.

- 4** There are several business case arguments for investing in gender data systems.

a. Gender disaggregated data is essential for effective decision-making.

Without using gender-disaggregated data to design and implement workplace policies, processes, and programmes, there is a significant risk of perpetuating gender inequalities, ultimately impacting business performance. Operating without this data means making decisions on a gender-blind basis, which can unintentionally cause more harm than good.

b. To address the root causes of issues that women workers face.

Gender-disaggregated data is crucial for uncovering the root causes of issues faced by women workers, who not only make up the majority of the garment sector workforce but are also often among the more marginalised based on gender.

c. To reduce operational costs and improve business performance.

Women and men often experience the workplace differently and may face distinct forms of discrimination. These discriminatory practices can lead to low morale, increased absenteeism, and higher turnover rates. Applying a gender lens to worker welfare helps create more equitable and positive working conditions, thereby contributing to improved employee well-being and better financial performance for your business.

d. To meet the requirements or expectations of your customers.

Having the systems and processes in place to collect this data puts you in a much better position to respond to your customers' requests, which positively impacts your commercial relationships.



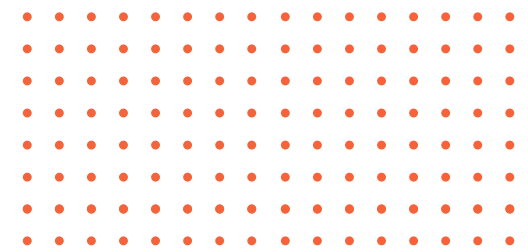
Key Takeaways



- 5 Follow a simple four-step process when embarking your gender data journey.
- 6 Start with Level 1 data. Use the checklist provided to understand what data you already have and what is missing. Assign responsibility to relevant colleagues who can have oversight for data collection, analysis and action planning. This could be a colleague from compliance, human resources or worker welfare. When you have compiled Level 1 data and conducted some preliminary root cause analysis, decide on what further data you need utilising guidance from Level 2 and 3 indicators. Don't forget to consult with workers and their representatives when deciding what actions to take.
- 7 Remember, collecting gender-disaggregated data is only valuable if it is properly analysed and used to inform decision-making aimed at achieving positive outcomes for all workers, especially women and other marginalised groups. By using this data to uncover the root causes of gender-based discrimination in your factory, you can move beyond treating symptoms and begin to address systemic issues at their source.



Definitions



Gender

Refers to the attributes, roles and opportunities that are associated with being women and men. These attributes, roles and opportunities are based on how society understands the value of women and men, and the kinds of characteristics and behaviours that are considered appropriate and desirable for them. Gender does not refer simply to women and men but also to the relationship between them. These social definitions are not fixed; they manifest differently in different contexts, and change over time.

For example, in some societies, a female supervisor in the factory may struggle to receive the same level of respect and recognition compared to a male supervisor because society's acceptance of women taking on leadership or decision-making responsibilities is low.

Sex

Refers to the biological and physical differences between women and men. The term 'gender' is often confused with the term 'sex'. But it is important to remember that different societies may have different understandings about gender, but sex holds the same meaning across the globe.

Gender Equality

An internationally recognised human right that refers to women and men having equal and equally respected rights, and equal access to resources and opportunities. It also means that society values women and men equally for their similarities and differences, and the diverse roles they play.

Unfortunately, in many spheres of life including in global supply chains related to garment production, women face greater risks of discrimination, hence why gender equality is often associated with a greater focus on women.

Data

Refers to any observation that is collected as a source of information. For example, observations about the number of garments produced per day by a specific department; number of new workers recruited over a particular time period. As a garment manufacturer, you most likely collect and use a variety of data points for different purposes within your business. It is important to remember that data is only as good as what insights you can derive and what decisions you can make based on it.

