**Terms of Reference for ETI’s Base Code 7 – Gender and Social Inclusion – Research Component**

The Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) would like to invite applicants to design and implement a research initiative assessing ETI’s Base Code 7– No Discrimination is Practiced – focusing on Gender and Social Inclusion with a view to publish results, according to the Terms of Reference outlined here.

If you are interested, please reply to Ritu Mahendru, ETI Senior Gender and Social Inclusion Adviser, at Ritu.Mahendru@eti.org, with an Expression of Interest (EoI) no later than 22 November 2019 outlining your approach to meeting the deliverables outlined in this ToR.

**Background**

ETI is a leading alliance of companies, trade unions and NGOs that promotes respect for workers' rights around the globe. Our vision is a world where all workers are free from exploitation and discrimination, and enjoy conditions of freedom, security and equity. In 2017 ETI commissioned some research with 10 member companies, to better understand how they approached the issue of gender inequality in their supply chains, and how ETI could support them to ensure improvements in working conditions for women workers are achieved at scale. This research highlighted a gap in understanding amongst the participating companies of how important gender equality is when aiming to achieve decent working conditions, particularly in the garment industry where a majority of workers are women. More importantly, this research also highlighted the need for ETIto provide more focused and strategic guidance to companies to address gender inequality in their supply chains as a critical factor in improving working conditions for both women and men.

At a global level, there continues to be increased focus on gender inequality as a barrier to economic growth and development. The SDGs have placed emphasis on gender equality and women’s empowerment as critical to reducing poverty and ensuring progress for all. Despite the economic opportunities offered by the formal labour market, women are often victims of discrimination and harassment and thus unable to realise the full benefits of employment. ETI plays a critical role in leveraging its 90+ corporate members, which collectively impact millions of women workers through their supply chains, to be more proactive in addressing gender inequality.

**Research objectives**

In order to protect and safeguard the rights of women and girls in the workplace, a law was passed in 2008 to address the issue of sexual harassment at work in Bangladesh by establishing Sexual Harassment Complaint Committees (SHCC) in the workplace. However, recent research shows that female garment workers report higher rates of Intimate Partner Violence and are also vulnerable to workplace violence (WPV), especially at suppliers’ level (tier 2 and 3). Experience of violence puts women at increased risk of developing depressive symptoms, which are related with low self-esteem, lower life satisfaction and lower productivity.

To our knowledge, there has been no mixed methods research that has assessed the effectiveness of SHCC and the impact of sexual harassment and violence on girls and women in workplace in Dhaka. ETI would therefore like to conduct a targeted research in Bangladesh (Dhaka). It is proposed that this research would cover the Apparel & Textile industries and would collect data at workplace level in factories with the aim to make a clear case for senior company executives to increase investment and resources made available by companies and their suppliers to address barriers to gender equalities in the workplace.

inform ETI’s future programming as week . The specific objectives of the research are to assess the:

1. effectiveness of Sexual Harassment Complaints Committee in 5-10 Ready Made Garment (RMG) factories in Dhaka
2. impact of sexual harassment and violence in workplace on girls’ and women’s sexual, reproductive and mental health
3. how and why IPV increase girls’ and women’s vulnerability to further inequalities and violence at workplace.

The findings of this research will complement the already rich set of good practice examples that ETI has collected over the past year. It will also help solidify the business case with companies and their suppliers to focus more on addressing sexual harassment and violence, gender inequalities and social exclusion in the workplace. ETI expects to disseminate the findings through an event and publication across the industry and in countries where we have a strong presence and established local platforms. It is envisaged that the data from this research will provide suppliers with the necessary evidence to invest more in gender equality in their factories to the benefit of millions of girls and women workers.

**Proposed Methodology**

The successful applicant/company will be expected to propose and design the research by gathering rich data using feminist methodology. The successful applicant may propose a mixed-method approach making sure the research targets a range of stakeholders, including female and male workers, the ones listed below:

1. Supervisors and managers at 5-10 RMG factories in Dhaka

2. Girls and women working in RMG factories (also ensure engagement of boys and men)

3. NGOs and UN agencies, Trade Unions and Federations, and other relevant stakeholders such as IndustriALL and the Fareware foundation.

International applicants are encouraged to work with national staff in Bangladesh and will be required to travel to Bangladesh, including field visits.

**Deliverables and Timeline**

The successful applicant’s field research time will be spread across a maximum of 1 month. The expected start date for the assignment is December 2019 / January 2020. The research must be completed by 29/02/19 and the final submission should entail a written report of not more than 60 pages (excluding annexes) including a description of results/findings, observations and recommendations. In collaboration with the ETI Senior Gender and Social Inclusion Adviser and ETI’s External Relations team, the consultant will also be responsible for the preparation of a four-page brief suitable for decision-makers, and an infographic.

**Proposal Requirements**

The following information must be submitted as part of an EoI:

* The CV of the Principle Investigator should not exceed the maximum of three pages, stating qualifications and relevant experience to this study. CV should explicitly identify the following qualifications:
  + Previous appropriate experimental, quasi-experimental and/or mixed-method research in and/or South Asian context, especially Bangladesh if appropriate.
  + Demonstrated experience designing gender-responsive research capturing sensitive data related to sexual violence and harassment ideally in the supply chain
* Based on the available information in the ToR, propose an outline and rationale for appropriate research design(s) including:
  + Proposed research question(s)
  + Data collection techniques
  + Describe explicitly how the research will be responsive to age, sex and gendered roles and relations as well as other intersections and vulnerabilities.
  + Describe any innovative aspects of the proposed approach
  + Note any proposed qualifications to the ToR and any identified risks to implementation identified
  + Workplan / Gantt chart outlining sequencing and effort required for proposed activities
* Provide a summary of how you will develop a research communication plan that will include engagement with key stakeholders, including project beneficiaries, implementers and decision-makers throughout the study period. The summary should indicate types of activities and what products will be produced. It should include a dissemination plan for the study findings. At least 10 per cent of the study budget will go to these activities and products
* Provide details of the institutional review board (IRB) from which ethical approval will be sought and the likely time this may take. ETI can also support in identifying the IRB.

The proposed consultancy budget should include;

* Consultant fee rate should not be more than 30 working days proposed for completion of assignment or as a combined total cost for deliverable, whichever is lowest.
* Costs of anticipated travel, including visas, vaccinations, airport transfers, per diems and accommodation
* Costs for study implementation
* Costs for research participants (that meet ethical standards for participation compensation)
* Costs of the research communication plan, including communication product costs

Please also state where you saw the terms of reference advertised and disclose any potential conflicts of interest in your engagement with ETI.

**Selection process**

ETI will review all applications for adherence to the criteria set out in this ToR. A review panel will then select a shortlist of applications based on the cost-effectiveness of their proposed approach, as well as its technical / methodological merits in meeting each of the objectives above.

**Contact details**

Please email your application by latest COB GMT on 22 November 2019 to Dr Ritu Mahendru, ETI Senior Gender and Social Inclusion Advisor o ritu.mahendru@eti.org.uk