



Spotlight
Initiative



10 Things to Know About Violence against Women Migrant Workers

- What do I need to know about women migrant workers?
- Do I have what I need?
- How do I keep technologies safe?
- What are DO's and DON'Ts to follow survivor-centred principles?
- How do I speak with survivors?

bit.ly/10tips4wmw



1. About survivors of violence

- Survivors may be impacted in many ways from the abuse they have experienced.
- They may be feeling afraid, ashamed, stigmatized, powerless and even blame themselves for what has happened to them.

Avoid Judgement and Build Trust



Spotlight Initiative



2. About women migrant workers

Additional challenges and worries of women migrant workers

- Isolation from informal support (e.g. family and friends)
- Lacking knowledge of their rights
- Fear of reporting to police due to possible deportation
- Language barriers
- Fear of being discriminated by service providers
- Fear of losing jobs and incomes
- Fear of being separated from and/or losing custody of children
- Fears of being rejected by her home community if she returns

3. Do I have what I need?

A **reference guide** on migrant women workers to help understand her situation

Health fact sheets tailored to migrant women (language considerations and no mandatory reporting) that can refer her for medical needs

Knowledge and connections to **social-emotional support groups for migrant women survivors**, such as peer-networks

A list of **partners to deal with common labour violations**, such as labour attachés, trade unions, embassies, or migrant resource centres

A **safety planning** template for migrant women workers: where she can go w/o reporting to authorities; if she is isolated/trapped in a home; etc.

A sheet with details on **laws and regulations** related to migrant women workers who arrived through both formal and irregular channels

Referral pathways and protocols that are updated with information friendly to women migrant workers

A roster of **interpreters** and cultural mediators and their contact information

4. How do I keep technologies safe?

Employ **multiple options** (phone, SMS, website chat, apps) for survivors to access support using languages spoken by migrant women workers

Use methods that are used by women migrant workers that are free or affordable, easy to access and that do not require multiple steps (e.g. app downloads with system requirements; creating an account; signing/logging-in or authentications)

Do not use automatic translation, which can be problematic

Test, monitor and adjust the methods being used on a regular basis to ensure you are meeting survivor's needs with the highest standards of privacy and security available

Use equipment supplied by the organization/agency and receive training on their use. **Do not use personal devices** and do not download personal items or software on work devices

Ensure you/your agency has control over the technology being used to **maintain the highest standards of security** and privacy to avoid interception. Third parties should not have access to information transmitted (e.g. databases, files, saved chats or images, recordings, etc.)

Provide information to survivors on how to erase communications, strengthen privacy settings, improve their safety and security and best methods to document abuse

5. Survivor-centred principles do's and don'ts

DO's

- ✓ Explain to her how you will maintain privacy and confidentiality
- ✓ Explain to her how to reconnect if the call drops
- ✓ Ensure privacy when interacting with survivors
- ✓ Keep records in a locked cabinet or in an anonymized database with password protection
- ✓ Respect women's individual circumstances and their right to make their own informed decisions
- ✓ Reflect on your own biases and learn from the survivor's cultural and social experiences
- ✓ Take steps to maintain self-care. This is critical for you and in service to other women

DON'Ts

- ✗ Share any information without the survivor's consent
- ✗ Call her back if the call drops
- ✗ Work in a space where others can see or hear your communication
- ✗ Leave paper records in places that are visible or accessible
- ✗ Tell survivors what to do or coax them into any decisions
- ✗ Assume you know her background and circumstances
- ✗ Neglect your own well-being

6. Active Listening

- **Paraphrase and summarize** what the survivor says, as needed, to show that you are listening and understanding
- **Clarify** when necessary
- **Reflect** content and/or feeling. Help the survivor focus if they drift into another topic
- **Use non-verbal communication techniques** and allow time for silence and thoughts
- **Focus on what the person is saying**, rather than guess, or prepare what you yourself will say next

Let me see if I have this right....

It sounds like you were very scared in the moment when he yelled and raised his fist.

When you say he was threatening, can you tell me more about what he was doing?

You said earlier that you were walking home, and then ... he surprised you on the path...

7. Effective Questioning

Three types of questions:

1. **Open questions:** these motivate the survivor to talk and expand on what she is saying. Use these questions often.
2. **Closed questions (yes/no):** these can inhibit the survivor from talking. Use these questions only when specific information is needed.
3. **Questions starting with 'Why':** These can sound like blame to a survivor. **Avoid** using these questions.

If there is an interpreter, make sure they follow these points as well. Be cautious of sentences such as why didn't you seek support in the destination country? Why didn't you get official documents? These sentences will blame her.

How were you able to get to a safe place?

Tell me more about how that happened.

Would you like to see a doctor?

~~Why did you do that?~~

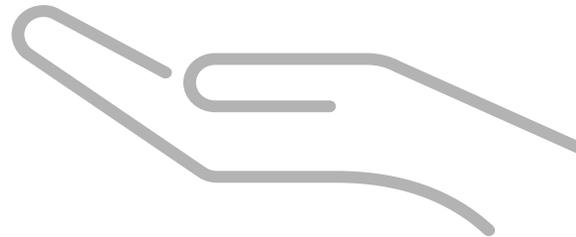
8. Validate Feelings

Allow the survivor to feel what they are feeling
– and let them know that it is okay and that it is normal. This helps the survivor feel safe with you.

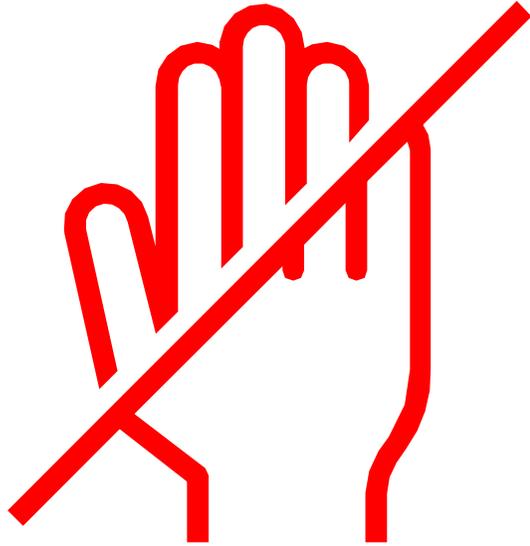
It's okay to cry;
crying is an expression
of emotion.

Many women in your situation
would also feel angry.

“It is normal for you to
feel so upset after what
you have been through;
many people who
have had similar
experiences as you also
feel upset.”



9. Challenge Self-Blame



- As we have heard, survivors will often feel guilty and blame themselves for the abuse
- **It is never the fault of the survivor**
- If someone is feeling guilty or blaming themselves, state that this is a normal reaction, but assure them that it is never the fault of the survivor
- Always be respectful in challenging self blame and avoid arguing with the survivor

- Make sure that she knows her legal status and migration are not a cause of violence. It is never the fault of survivor no matter her circumstance.
- Acknowledge the challenges related to seeking support in a destination country (new place).

10. Healing Statements

Builds relationship

Thank you for telling me

Validates and empowers

You are very brave for telling me

Builds trust

I believe you

Reassurance and non-blaming

What happened was not your fault

Expresses empathy

I am sorry this happened to you.



Spotlight
Initiative



The Safe and Fair: Realizing women migrant workers' rights and opportunities in the ASEAN Region Programme, is part of the Spotlight Initiative to eliminate violence against women and girls by 2030, a global, multi-year initiative between the European Union (EU) and United Nations (UN). Safe and Fair focuses on ASEAN countries and is implemented through a partnership between the ILO and UN Women, in collaboration with UNODC, and is delivered at both local and national levels through governments, trade unions, employer organizations, civil society organizations and women's organizations, and at the regional level through ASEAN institutions.

The Spotlight Initiative is the world's largest targeted effort to end all forms of violence against women and girls. Launched with a seed funding commitment of €500 million from the European Union, the Spotlight Initiative represents an unprecedented global effort to invest in gender equality as a precondition and driver for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. As a demonstration fund for action on the Sustainable Development Goals, the Spotlight Initiative is demonstrating that a significant, concerted and comprehensive investment in gender equality and ending violence can make a transformative difference in the lives of women and girls.

For matters related to the Safe and Fair Programme please contact:

Deepa Bharathi
Chief Technical Adviser
Safe and Fair Programme
ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
E-mail: bharathi@ilo.org

Valentina Volpe
Ending Violence against Women Specialist
Safe and Fair Programme
UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
E-mail: valentina.volpe@unwomen.org

Twitter: @GlobalSpotlight
Instagram: @spotlightinitiative
Facebook: @TheSpotlightInitiative
Youtube: Spotlight Initiative
www.spotlightinitiative.org/safe-and-fair

