# VIOLENCE IS AT WORK!
# WE CAN STOP IT.

**UNI global union**

equal
opportunities

Below, you will find a series of questions that make reflection and discussion about work violence smoother by using concepts and examples that appear in the video.

The aim is to discuss and reflect on the necessary elements for work violence to exist, and detect ways in which organizations provoke its presence.

The trade union movement is a key player in stimulating the necessary changes.

**Reflecting on the structure that promotes work violence helps develop action plans towards reverting and fighting it.**

## Resources

Work environments are social organizations that function through rules, roles and hierarchies. In this mechanism, a series of resources are distributed among members.

Hierarchy and wages are two of the resources.
What other resources do you think there are in the workplace?
Who is in charge of distributing them?

In your organization, or sector within the organization, is this distribution equitable or is there discrimination against certain members? That is, is there any member or group of members in your organization who receives more resources with no apparent justification?

## External agents

The first examples the video shows deal with a particular kind of work violence: the one that is exercised by people who do not belong to the organization.

Think of examples in your own sector, or cases that you have heard or know of.
Are these cases usual?
What are the aggressors' resources in each case?
Is the use of those resources recurrent?

What resources do workers have to face these situations?
Is the quantity and quality of workers' resources similar?

## Internal agents

The examples below deal with cases of violence among members of an organization.

There is a great variety of situations that should be considered as work violence. However, these situations are often seen this way only when they have become extreme, as in the case of physical violence.

This is why we must remember that violence appears between two elements of any relationship when one has more resources than the other and uses these resources to physically or psychologically harm or threaten the victim.

## Mobbing

Think of cases of violence within your organization or work sector. What behaviour was shown by the aggressor?
Do you think these cases are detected on time?
What should be done to get group members to detect cases of violence faster and then act accordingly?

In the cases discussed above, who were the aggressors and who were the victims?
What resources did each of them have?
Are there more cases of violence among members of the same rank or among members of different hierarchies?
How did the other members react in these cases of violence?

How did your company react? Was the aggressor sanctioned/dismissed or was there any other action taken? If this did not happen, why do you think it didn't?

Did the appearance of these cases bring about any change in the organization's working environment or in the relationship among members as a whole? Which ones?

## Gender inequality and sexual harassment

We know difference in resources causes inequality, and the more the inequality the higher the probability that violence may appear.

In many cases, inequality in organizations is reinforced when gender inequality is also present. This means that resource distribution in organizations is unequal, depending on whether the members are men or women.

In your sector or workplace, is there unequal resource distribution because of gender differences? What resources are denied, or distributed to a lesser extent, due to gender differences?

In the cases of violence discussed, is there any case of sexual harassment? What was the aggressor's behaviour?

Do you think these cases were detected in a timely manner?

Who were the aggressors and who the victims?
What resources did each of them have?
Was hierarchy present as a resource in those cases? Or was it mainly between colleagues of the same rank?
How did the other members of the organization react?
Was the aggressor sanctioned or dismissed or was there any other measure taken? If not, why do you think no action was taken?

Has the appearance of these cases produced any changes in the organization's work environment or in the relationship among members as a whole? Which ones?

## Stress

Considering the cases we have been discussing, what are the effects the violent situations had on the victims?

Was there any effect on the other members of the organization?

Was there any mechanism to mitigate those effects (medical care, human resources, etc.)?

Did the company make any changes after these cases appeared? What were they? Did they help prevent further cases?

## Unions' actions

The video suggests certain actions to prevent and fight against work violence.
According to the characteristics of the cases of violence that have taken place in your sector or organization, write an action plan based on the aspects analyzed:

**-  The resources and their distribution**

Are they unfair and do they result in inequality?
Do company policies stir up violence through a leadership system that allows for power abuse?
Does it have security systems and mechanisms to prevent cases of violence from outsiders?
Do they promote security measures and a good working environment among employees?

**-  Dialogue and negotiations**

Do company policies contribute to inequality? What are those policies? How can they be modified?

Was there any attempt to open dialogue with the companies in order to deal with these matters?

How can they improve and increase dialogue?

Are all types of work violence included in company negotiations?

Do negotiations and actions take into account gender roles and gender inequalities when they are designed and put into practice?

What is the company's reaction when confronted with cases of violence?
Are aggressors sanctioned?
What can unions do?

**- Information and training**

Do employees have any institutional mechanism to resort to if they are assaulted or attacked at work? Are they aware of the existence of such mechanisms?

Do workers know what kinds of behaviours should be considered abusive or violent?
Do they have training tools to react to these problems? Who supplies them? Do unions take part in their design and setup?

Are there union committees in charge of employees' health and security?

Do workers know that their unions can help them in case of violence or harassment at work?

Do they know the benefits of unionizing?

Have they been informed of their union and labour rights?

**-  Tripartite dialogue**

Are there state policies that deal with these issues (legislation, job inspections, etc.)?

Are those policies obeyed?

Do workers know about their existence? What can be done to ensure their compliance?