Global Fund for Women and C&A Foundation collaborate to end gender-based violence in the garment industry

DECEMBER 6, 2016—Global Fund for Women is pleased to announce a new initiative with C&A Foundation and Gender at Work to eradicate gender-based violence and empower women garment workers in Asia.

Women comprise about 80% of the global workforce in the garment industry; an industry in which discrimination and violence against women are endemic. C&A Foundation will invest 1.5 Million Euro for a multi-year learning collaborative with women’s rights organizations to advance gender justice in the apparel industry.

The collaboration will find, fund, and strengthen organizations working to end gender-based violence against women workers in South Asia, with a focus on major apparel sourcing countries including Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Myanmar, and Vietnam. The initiative will support women garment workers to learn about their rights, realize their own power to secure these rights, and become leaders to create systemic change, which is critical to preventing violence.

“We believe in the power of women to change their own lives and to drive sustainable change in the garment industry. Together, we can end gender-based violence, ensure safe and equal working conditions, and empower women workers. We’re thrilled to have found such strong partners in C&A Foundation and Gender at Work and we are excited to work together to carry this initiative forward,” says Musimbi Kanyoro, President and CEO of Global Fund for Women. “By amplifying the voices of women workers and bolstering their leadership skills, this initiative seeks to ensure every woman can feel safe and free from violence—not only in the workplace, but also in the communities in which they live.”

“We are excited to join forces with Global Fund for Women and Gender at Work, and invite other donors, retailers, brands, industry associations, and governments to partner with us to scale proven strategies for transforming gender norms and empowering women,” says Brandee Butler, Head of Gender Justice and Human Rights at C&A Foundation. “For us, this also includes engaging organizations that are working with men and boys. As men dominate positions of authority both throughout the industry and beyond, engaging them is crucial to changing attitudes and behaviors and improving policies.”

The initiative’s worker-centered, rights-based approach is at the heart of Global Fund for Women’s work as a grantmaker and advocate for women’s human rights. It also aligns closely with Gender at Work’s expertise in learning and collaboration to end discrimination and drive equality. At the same time, the initiative’s goal of advancing workers’ wellbeing and promoting their leadership for social change works towards C&A Foundation’s strategic focus of empowering women to create sustainable change and improve their livelihoods across the apparel supply chain.
Global Fund for Women will share a Request for Proposals in mid-December 2016 to initiate an application review process, and will award initial grants to initiative partners in June 2017. With a long-term focus on stronger partnerships, systemic workplace and community change, and learning and evaluation, this initiative will significantly build upon Global Fund for Women, Gender at Work, and C&A Foundation’s work to end gender-based violence and drive women’s human rights in the garment industry.

About Global Fund for Women
Global Fund for Women is one of the world’s leading foundations for gender equality, standing up for the human rights of women and girls. It campaigns for zero violence, economic and political empowerment, and sexual and reproductive health and rights.

Global Fund for Women uses its powerful network to rally advocates, raise money, and get support to where it’s most urgently needed. It funds and partners with women-led groups who are courageously fighting for justice in their own communities. This rights-based approach gets to the root of gender inequality and is the most effective way to create permanent social change.

Since 1987, Global Fund for Women has invested in nearly 5,000 grassroots groups in 175 countries, helping to win rights for millions of women and girls.

About C&A Foundation
C&A Foundation is a corporate foundation, here to transform the fashion industry. We do this by providing financial support, expertise, and networks to enable brands, NGOs and other changemakers to make the fashion industry work better for every person it touches.

Our work is focused on four areas that we believe will have the biggest impact for people: accelerating organic cotton and other sustainable materials, improving working conditions, eradicating forced and child labour, and strengthening communities. We believe that advancing the rights of women is fundamental for industry transformation.

About Gender at Work
Gender at Work is a transnational network of individuals and organizations that build knowledge and practice to end discrimination against women and advance cultures of equality. We focus on building individual capacity, collective capacities and consciousness, and a robust field that bridges knowledge and theory from multiple locations and contexts to deepen and strengthen efforts to uncover and change informal norms and rules. We work with a wide range of organizations, networks and movements to help them make visible, challenge and change these norms embedded in their foundations, to build internal cultures of equality and contribute to
transformation of cultural norms that support the achievement gender equality and social justice. We do this through knowledge building and capacity development, gender action learning, strategic evaluation and learning, and by building partnerships that bring the development world and other sectors (academia, women’s networks, private sector, etc.) together.

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