

# "Drawing the Line": A tool to assess women's economic resilience in the workplace

## Bringing Women's Voices to the Forefront

Addressing women's economic resilience is both complex and nonlinear. Women Win is grounded in the belief that women should have the opportunity to be involved in and share their perspective on matters which directly impact them. The 'Drawing the Line' (DTL) tool aims to identify key issues that women face in the workplace, taking a women-centered approach as their perspective is crucial for determining a sustainable solution. This tool was developed by Women Win and has been contextualized and implemented in multiple countries and in various settings.

**Methodology** - DTL follows a play-based and participatory approach meaning that it is intended to be fun and interactive, rather than formal and mundane. DTL invites all participants to play an active role in sharing their opinions and experiences in identifying what is most important to them as a female worker. We apply the integrated lens of the 8 'building blocks' for women's economic empowerment, as outlined in ICRW's paper<sup>1</sup>. Topics include emotional and physical safety, growth & development opportunities, control of finances and more. Trained facilitators will guide the overall process, while the discussion and the results of the assessment are driven by the participants. DTL should not be seen as an audit, but rather as a practical tool that allows for valuable information to be gathered from those who play a critical role in the workplace.

**Preparation** - Women Win works closely with women's rights organisations (WROs) that are familiar with the workplace context in order to contextualize the cards appropriately. We also ensure that facilitators (WRO staff) receive a complete training to be able to deliver the sessions effectively. As direct contact with workplace management (farm, factory, etc.) is required for planning purposes, WROs are also briefed on appropriate engagement in this type of partnership. We acknowledge that this activity asks workers to be away from daily tasks and therefore we greatly appreciate management's commitment and support in allowing for this. When coordinating logistics, the WRO will ensure that the activity does not interfere with high-production periods and will remain flexible and respectful of the farms' core business. Oftentimes a supporting brand or external stakeholder is involved to support the overall engagement and process.

**Implementation** - A DTL session requires approximately 2 hours per group. Each group is comprised of 10-15 women, representing various roles in the workplace (i.e. sewer, cutter, quality control, etc.). Typically, we aim to involve 30-40 workers per site so that there is decent representation of the overall workforce. This means 3-4 groups/sessions per site. The session should take place in a quiet and private space where the participants feel safe to share opinions and experiences.

The DTL tool is comprised of a set of approximately 20 statement cards. Each card has a statement and a corresponding drawing. One at a time, each statement is read out-loud and discussed within the group. Participants are asked to share their thoughts and align on whether that particular statement is something that is either very important to them or not so important. They then share whether it is something that they already have at the workplace or do not have. For example, participants may discuss the statement, "When something goes wrong, I know someone I trust and can talk to freely." They will discuss this and ultimately decide whether it is important for them to have at work or not. If the conclusion is that it is very important, they will inform whether or not they currently have this at the farm; whether they do in fact have someone they can speak with openly.

**Results** – Participant's safety and privacy is of our utmost concern during DTL sessions. We therefore request that no external viewers are present. All of the results will be shared with workplace management and related stakeholders after the sessions. Women Win analyses the data collected and presents a complete DTL report highlighting key learnings, which is presented in-person/via phone and in hard copy form.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.icrw.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/The-Business-Case-for-Womens-Economic-Empowerment.pdf>