

NONPROFITS

Kering Foundation brings awareness to women's issues on global, local scales

April 11, 2019



The Kering Foundation was established in 2008. Image credit: Gucci

By SARAH RAMIREZ

CAPE TOWN, South Africa Preventing violence against women around the world is at the heart of the Kering Foundation, while also being a smart business decision for the luxury group.

Subscribe to **Luxury Daily**
Plus: Just released
State of Luxury 2019 **Save \$246 ▶**

Vogue International editor Suzy Menkes and a board director of the Kering Foundation discussed how the luxury industry is bringing awareness to social issues during an intimate conversation at the Cond Nast International Luxury Conference on April 10. With a focus on preventing violence against women, the Kering Foundation supports initiatives that help both men and women, according to the director.

"Unless you tackle the prevention aspect, it's not going to be good," said Rosario Perez, board director at the **Kering Corporate Foundation**. "That's why we have decided to focus on young boys and men, too, not just the women.

"What I think the foundation has done extremely well is raise the awareness and visibility of a topic that has been a problem for a long time," she said.

Foundation focus

The Kering Foundation was established by the luxury conglomerate in 2008.

Since an estimated 80 percent of Kering's customers are women, tackling issues that harm women is the right and smart thing to do, according to Ms. Perez. Sixty percent of the group's employees are also women.

"Violence against women happens across social classes across the entire world," Ms. Perez said.



Teaching young boys to rethink masculinity is part of the Kering Foundation's work. Image credit: Kering

Worldwide, one in three women is a victim of violence.

Among the Kering Foundation's primary objectives is preventing genital mutilation and gang violence, as well as domestic and sexual violence. Recognizing that change is possible on smaller scales, the foundation focuses on providing long-term, flexible funding and support to local initiatives and nonprofit organizations.

Many of the organizations the foundation supports are located in Italy, France and the United Kingdom and help displaced populations, particularly women of color. Economic empowerment and education are focal points of these organizations.

For instance, Italian social enterprise Colori Vivi helps refugee women learn tailoring skills required to land quality jobs to provide for their families. Additionally, Colori Vivi provides psychological support and other services.

Another program in Mexico, Genedes, teaches young boys and men some of whom may have even committed domestic violence how to prevent violence against women. The organization, which is soon expanding to New York, also encourages young men to rethink harmful cultural norms regarding masculinity.



#IDontSpeakHater is an anti-bullying social media campaign. Image credit: Kering

Ms. Perez explained that the Kering Foundation looks to educate and support its own workforce on the topic of violence against women. About 1,500 employees have already participated in a training program about domestic violence.

"That engagement, that dialogue has helped them become aware of an issue that was not necessarily on top of their minds," Ms. Perez said.

Luxury impact

Kering is one of many brands to have joined a mission to stop gender-based violence and abuse.

Seven CEOs gathered at Balenciaga's headquarters in Paris on Nov. 9 to sign a commitment charter to bring an end to abuse. The commitment is named One in Three to symbolize the number of women who have been exposed to physical or sexual abuse in their lives, according to *Women's Wear Daily*.

The goal of the initiative is to help and support women who have been affected with a variety of tools including training and a series of events. The group hopes to establish a network of shareholders to support the endeavor ([see story](#)).

Another issue the foundation is hoping to combat is cyberbullying.

Through social media, the Kering Foundation shared a variety of images aimed at Gen Z users in the hopes to stop cyberbullying. A variety of content from social influencers was also be shared, along with the hashtag #IDontSpeakHater and information on the dangers.

Images featured a number of influencers and campaign models in content to promote an end to the problem, such as holding a cell phone up to the camera with the hashtag #IDontSpeakHater written across it ([see story](#)).

Ms. Perez also praised figures who publicly discussed women's issues through movements such as #MeToo and Time's Up.

In support of a Hollywood-led movement to combat sexual harassment, a number of celebrities leveraged the 2018 Golden Globes red carpet as a platform for protest.

More than 300 women who work in film, television and theater launched Time's Up at the start of 2018, joining together to help women in their own industry and those who are less privileged fight abuses of power in the workplace ([see story](#)).

"I think when you have actresses speak up about the subject of sexual harassment, the topic becomes much more mainstream," Kering Foundation's Ms. Perez said.

"The luxury industry is a very influential industry," she said. "It has a very wide impact."

© 2020 Napean LLC. All rights reserved.

Luxury Daily is published each business day. Thank you for reading us. Your [feedback](#) is welcome.