



# What Works? Preventing & Responding to Sexual Harassment in the Workplace

*A Rapid Review of Evidence*

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Cover page photo: The cover image shows an HR manager from one of CARE's partner factories in Cambodia who has shown leadership in preventing and responding to workplace sexual harassment.

Image: CARE/GMB Films



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## Glossary

<b>Discrimination</b>	Discrimination is rooted in prejudice and occurs when a person or a group of people, is treated less favourably than another person or group because of their race, colour, national or ethnic origin, sex pregnancy or marital status, age, disability, religion or sexual preference.
<b>Sexual Harassment</b>	Sexual harassment is any unwanted, unwelcome or uninvited behaviour of a sexual nature which could be expected to make a person feel humiliated, intimidated or offended.
<b>Gender-Based Violence</b>	Any act that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life. The violence is specifically 'directed against a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately' (CEDAW, Article 1).
<b>Gender harassment</b>	A broad range of verbal and nonverbal behaviours not aimed at sexual cooperation but convey insulting, hostile, and degrading attitudes based on one's gender (Leskinen, E & Cortina, L., 2014).
<b>Gender norms</b>	A subset of social norms (see below) about socially shared expectations about behaviour that apply to individuals based on socially identified sex.
<b>Harasser</b>	Person or people who sexually harasses another person.
<b>Organisational Culture</b>	A set of shared assumptions that guide what happens in organisations by defining appropriate behaviour for various situations. Organisational culture affects the way people and groups interact with each other, with clients, and with stakeholders. It can also affect how much employees identify with their organisation.
<b>Social norms</b>	Social norms are behavioural rules constructed and shared by a group and are different from individually held beliefs and attitudes. A social norm is made up by one's beliefs about what others do and by one's beliefs about what others think one should do.
<b>Target</b>	Person or people who have experienced some form of sexual harassment. The word victim is problematic as it perpetuates stereotypes about lack of agency or resilience of people targeted by these behaviours.
<b>Workplace</b>	A workplace covers any site or location that a person attends to carry out their work or trade. A workplace includes any online activity which relates to work, including on- and off-site work-related events including social events, emailing, texting, tweeting or other social media activity, and any other activities that have a connection to the workplace.

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## Executive Summary

This evidence review occurs at a time of change and a movement globally to stop sexual harassment. Harassment, abuse and exploitation, and their denial, have a significant impact on women and men of diverse races, gender identities, expressions and sexual orientations, on people with the courage to speak out, on the many individuals who have been unable to take action.

Sexual harassment adversely impacts people and business, it results in significant physical and mental health consequences, costs to business operations, and can affect all employees in the workplace. This rapid review seeks to gain and share insight on promising global approaches to addressing harassment in the workplace. It is hoped that robust evidence of what works to address this sensitive and pervasive issue will guide the practice, and accountability of employers to workplace health and safety.

The evidence shows significant convergence around several themes, including:

- The importance of sustained leadership engagement and commitment;
- Broader efforts to prevent sexual harassment by shifting social norms;
- 'Whole of organisation' approaches that include formalised governance approaches and policies, effective complaints mechanisms and ongoing staff training; and
- Embedding organisational approaches in a broader commitment to gender equality.

Table 1 below contextualises the findings within a whole-systems (ecological) approach and articulates how leadership can address sexual harassment in the workplace through systemic and sustainable efforts.

Society	Community and Stakeholder	Organisational Policies	Organisational leadership	Workplace Norms and Practices
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Organisations have a societal obligation to prevent/address sexual harassment.</li><li>• Social movements like #metoo can help organisations contextualise the issue and gain support.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Work with policy makers to develop comprehensive legislation to protect against sexual harassment.</li><li>• Nurture academic and other partnerships to build needed evidence.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Widely share new workplace policies and practices.</li><li>• Utilise 'whole of organisation' approaches to prevention.</li><li>• Centre leadership capacity to design prevention approaches.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Promote leadership buy-in.</li><li>• Develop clearly communicated policies.</li><li>• Work with informal leaders to shift organisational norms.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop comprehensive trainings.</li><li>• Promote positive bystander models.</li><li>• Provide opportunities to build new norms, beliefs, and behaviours.</li></ul>

*Table 1: Summary of findings within a whole systems approach*

This review and its recommendations are intended to provide evidence-based design principles to guide work in stopping sexual harassment in the workplace. Where evidence is lacking, we point to promising practice. Documenting and building on these recommendations and continually reframing good practice approaches will inform greater efforts to improve working conditions globally.

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### *Review limitations*

There are several limitations to this review. Firstly, the underreporting of violence in the workplace impacts the capacity to assess the prevalence, and measure the effectiveness of interventions to address it. Secondly, a large proportion of existing research comes from developed country contexts; these settings are different from the setting of garment factories in Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam (Mekong countries). However, despite limited evidence from Mekong countries, we believe many of the findings, specifically as they relate to social norms, can inform strong programming in the region. Finally, this is a *rapid* review of evidence and does not purport to be comprehensive coverage of all available literature.

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## Introduction

### Enhancing Women's Voice to Stop Sexual Harassment

The Enhancing Women's Voice to Stop Sexual Harassment (STOP) project is operating in Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam (2017-2021).<sup>1</sup> The project is working with the garment industry and government in the Mekong to design and implement workplace models and mechanisms for preventing and responding to sexual harassment. The project builds on a model developed by CARE in Cambodia, the Sexual Harassment Prevention Package for Garment Factories which includes a workplace policy, an implementation guide and multi-media training designed to engage women workers.

The STOP project has three objectives:

1. Supporting garment factories to develop effective workplace mechanisms to respond to sexual harassment;
2. Supporting female garment factory workers to feel safe to report sexual harassment, and through engaging with garment factories, to do so free from negative consequences; and
3. Strengthening the national regulatory environment of factories to promote laws, policies and mechanisms to address sexual harassment in the workplace

### Reviewing the evidence: what works?

CARE is committed to evidence-based programming. This rapid review was conducted to identify evidence from across disciplines to answer the question, what works to prevent and respond to sexual harassment in the workplace.

The rapid review is not an investigation into the prevalence and types of sexual harassment in the Mekong region. This information will be developed by CARE in project locations through legal and situational analyses. The review synthesises the literature on sexual harassment specifically and draws on broader public health evidence regarding the prevention of violence. It draws on literature from social psychology in addressing and changing social norms, and from organisational development and psychology on changing workplace culture and practices. It looks at evidence from development studies on gender transformative programming.

This rapid review seeks to answer the question  
*What works to prevent and respond to sexual harassment in the workplace?*

The report has two parts:

**Part A** – Locates workplaces *within* a socio-ecological model of violence and reviews the evidence regarding prevention of violence against women, and models for prevention of sexual harassment in workplaces. It explores literature from various disciplines that address sexual harassment in the workplace and good practice advice for workplaces.

**Part B** – Looks *inside* the business and reviews evidence and promising practice to guide the organisation's response. It assesses existing knowledge about organisational leadership, workplace strategies and policies, practices and norms and learning and capability. It also identifies evidence

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<sup>1</sup> The project is funded by the Australian Government through Australian Aid and in particular through the Gender Action Platform and the Australian NGO Cooperation Partnership.

gaps. This section provides executable actions that can inform workplace programs to address sexual harassment in garment factories.

The evidence in this review will inform the adaptation of CARE's model for sexual harassment prevention in Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam.

PART A: FRAMING SEXUAL HARASSMENT			
What is sexual harassment?	What works to prevent violence against women?	Sexual Harassment in the Workplace	Models for addressing sexual harassment in the workplace
PART B: REVIEW OF EVIDENCE OF WHAT WORKS			
What works to reduce sexual harassment in the workplace?	What steps can organisations take to prevent sexual harassment?		

*Table 2: Framework for the report*

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## Part A: Framing Sexual Harassment

### What is Sexual Harassment?

Sexual harassment is a continuum of sexual and/or sexist behaviours which negatively impact on the person or people who are harassed. Sexual harassment shares common drivers with violence against women. This section explores evidence supporting approaches to understand and address violence against women, and the role of workplaces within those efforts.

### Definitions of sexual harassment

Most definitions of sexual harassment focus on behavioural elements of the harassment (Fileborn, 2013). A 2012 review of evidence on sexual harassment in the workplace summarised that it could take several forms. These are:

- Explicitly sexual verbal and nonverbal behaviours;
- Insulting verbal and nonverbal behaviours that are not sexual but drawing on gender-based beliefs, including sexist hostility (Fitzgerald et al., 1997);
- Unwanted sexual attention; and
- Sexual coercion (requests or threats for sexual cooperation in return for job security or benefits) (O'Leary-Kelly et al., 2012; Chung et al., 2012).

Sexual harassment is any unwanted, unwelcome or uninvited behaviour of a sexual nature which could be expected to make a person feel humiliated, intimidated or offended (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2008).

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) defines sexual harassment as sex-based and sexual behaviour that is unwelcome, unreasonable and offensive to its recipient (ILO, 2015). The ILO's conceptualisation of sexual harassment as a serious form of discrimination links to sex-based social policies and labour market norms, sex segregation of workplaces, the location of workers in particular occupations and specific contract types (McDonald et al., 2015).

### Sexual harassment creates hostile work environments

Sexual harassment creates a hostile work environment for individuals and groups of employees who are the targets of harassment, and often, for those who choose to report harassment. Sexual harassment is not always understood as a form of violence against women (Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission, 2015). For example, workplaces, where sexist jokes and comments create and perpetuate a sexist organisational climate (sexist hostility), are not always viewed as sites of sexual violence. However, research shows more frequent though less intense workplace experiences (sexist jokes, remarks, ignoring women during meetings) can negatively affect occupational wellbeing as much as less frequent yet more intense forms of mistreatment at work (sexual coercion or physical forms of sexual harassment) (Fitzgerald et al., 1997). Evidence shows that over time, the impact of the less intense experiences can have similar effects on individual employees as experiences of less frequent but more serious forms of sexual harassment (Sojo et al., 2015).

Women who experience sexually harassing behaviours often do not label or name their experiences as sexual harassment *per se* (Holland & Cortina, 2013), and are often less able to recognise the broad spectrum of behaviour that constitutes unlawful sexual harassment – such as offensive banter,

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jokes and unwelcome sexual advances (Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission, 2015).

Attitudes about violence against women influence perceptions about the seriousness of different forms of sexual harassment. Violence against women, including sexual harassment, can be implicitly or explicitly condoned by social norms that trivialise the impact of specific acts towards women (Chung, et al., 2012; Our Watch, ANROWS & VicHealth, 2015).

In the workplace, sexual harassment may also take the form of 'quid pro quo' behaviours resulting in a hostile environment for the target and bystanders. Quid pro quo behaviours occur when:

- Benefits, such as employment, promotion, salary increases, shift or additional work, performance expectations and other conditions of employment, are made dependent on the provision of sexual favours, by an employer, supervisor or agent of the employer who has the authority to make decisions about employment; or
- The rejection of a sexual advance or request for sexual favour results in a tangible employment detriment, a loss of a job benefit of the kind described above.

Quid pro quo sexual harassment can result in specific employment actions or economic disadvantage, such as being fired, demoted or having changed terms of employment.

In summary, common elements in the definitions of sexual harassment in the workplace are that it:

- Occurs in the place of work or a work-related environment;
- Occurs because of the person's sex and/or it is related to or about sex;
- Is unwelcome, unwanted, uninvited, not returned, not mutual; and
- Affects the work environment itself (hostile work environment sexual harassment) or terms or conditions of employment (quid pro quo sexual harassment).

## Sexual harassment as a form of discrimination

In addition to being a form of violence and/or creating a hostile workplace, sexual harassment is a form of discrimination. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), requires countries to take appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in a range of settings, including in workplaces (UN General Assembly, 18 December 1979).

According to the CEDAW Committee, the term 'discrimination' includes gender-based violence as it is a violation of human rights. Violence against women is defined in the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (1993) and CEDAW's General Recommendation 19 and 35 as:

*any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to when, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life (UN General Assembly, 20 December 1993).*

Sexual harassment is considered a form of violence against women as women are the most likely targets of sexual harassment.

Protecting sex-based social standing and power can motivate sexual harassment (McDonald et al., 2015) and is linked to gender norms associated with sexual bravado, posturing and sanctioned

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denigration of feminine behaviours (Holmes & Flood, 2013). Hence, men may be punished for differing from heterosexual norms and gender roles (McDonald et al., 2015) with the use of sexual harassment as a tool to police 'appropriate' ways of 'doing gender' and penalising gender non-conformity. Such gender policing occurs between members of the same gender, and individuals who challenge gender norms or power dynamics are particularly targeted (McDonald et al., 2015).

Similarly, women may act as 'honorary men' to fit in with the dominant gender culture (McDonald et al., 2015). For example, applied research into attitudes of policewomen about other policewomen noted that adopting the behaviours of men was the way they 'fitted in' and were able to survive in the organisation (Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission, 2015). Women managers, who act as 'honorary men,' are likely to use non-physical harassment such as sexualised language towards women subordinates.

The risk of experiencing sexual harassment is higher for some people because of their identities, attributes or circumstances. In a study on race and citizenship status, women of colour consistently mentioned experiencing a 'mix action', where sexualised harassment was not simply sexual harassment (Welsh et al., 2006). For example, a Filipino live-in care giver described her experience as *'a mix. It's a mix action. You don't know if the person is doing it to you because of the colour of your skin and the type of job that you have, you're doing a dirty job in the house so you don't know if it is harassment or sexual harassment'* (Welsh et al., 2006). The Our Watch National Framework, notes that 'other forms of social, political and historical discrimination and disadvantage intersect with, and affect the relative influence of drivers and reinforcing factors in any one context' (Our Watch et al., 2015).

#### Insight for the STOP project:

CARE's research into the prevalence and cost of sexual harassment in Cambodia found that 1 in 4 men were the subject of sexually harassing behaviours. In Myanmar, early assessments of sexual harassment suggest female to female harassment, which sits within the framework of the gender harassment, is more common. Gender policing / gender harassment require attention in behaviour change programs.

Sexual harassment reflects an abuse of power, in other words 'having and maintaining control over women in either an intimate or working relationships, with the overall consequence women's social status remains relatively unequal to that of men' (Chung et al., 2012). While the way in which the abuse of power occurs varies across communities, ethnicities, countries and class, men throughout the world are associated with greater power and authority (Our Watch et al., 2015).

The socio-ecological model (Figure 1) frames causes and responses to violence against women (see Appendix 1 for further information). The concentric circles place individuals at the centre, with violence against women (including sexual harassment) being experienced individually and interpersonally, in the context of community and societal attitudes, practices and structures (Michau et al., 2015).

The implication of this is that organisations, workforces and workplaces can play a tangible role in transforming the experience of women and having positive impacts on gender equality beyond the workplace.

The following section examines the available evidence for relevance and implications for workplaces at each level of the model, as well as research gaps which program and policy stakeholders may be best placed to address.

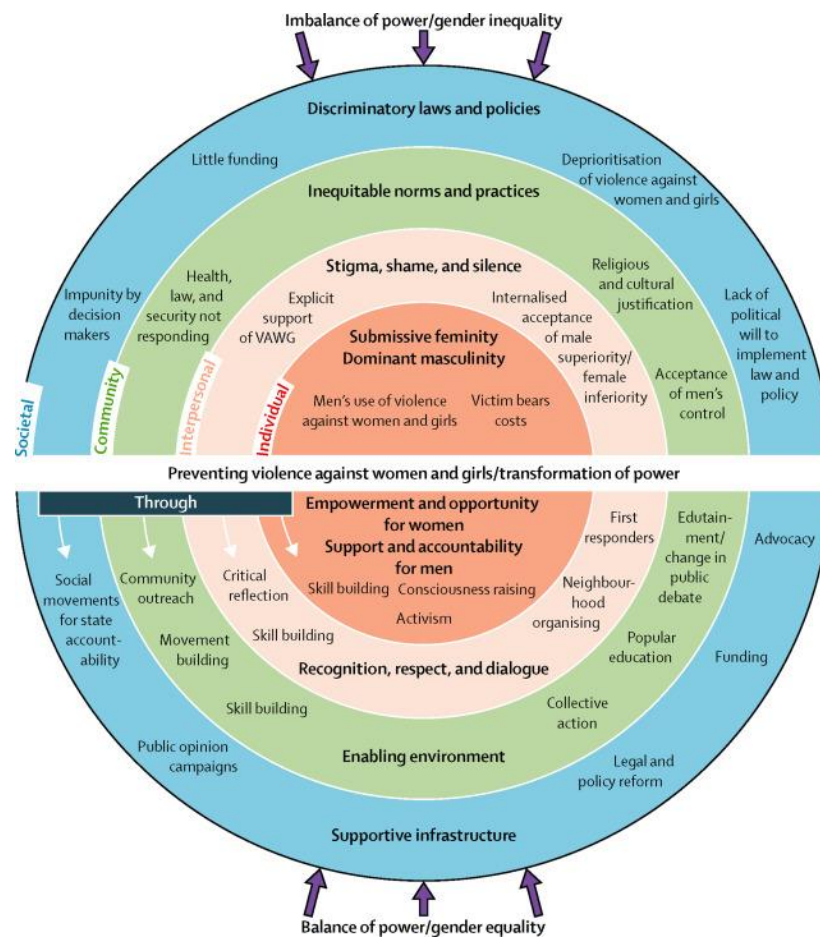


Figure 1: Transformation of power across the ecological model from Michau et al (2014), p. 4

## Understanding sexual harassment within a socio-ecological model

Individuals, their attitudes and beliefs, are at the core of the ecological model. This includes attitudes and beliefs about women and men, their identity, their roles and how they should behave between and amongst one another. These attitudes can drive gender inequality, a precondition to violence against women, of which sexual harassment is a form.

Attitudes that support violence include (VicHealth, 2012):

- Justifying violence against women;
- Excusing violence by attributing it to external factors;
- Trivialising the impact of violence, based on the view that the impacts of violence are not serious or are not sufficiently serious to warrant action by women themselves, the community or public agencies;
- Minimising violence by denying its seriousness, denying that it occurs or denying that certain behaviours are indeed violence at all; and
- Shifting blame for the violence from the perpetrator to the victim or holding women at least partially responsible for their targeting or for preventing targeting.

*Attitudes are “an individual construct. It is an individually held belief that has an evaluative component – suggesting that something is good, bad, exciting, boring, sacrilegious, disgusting etc.” (Heise, 2016).*

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Building on the work of Heise (2016), the Our Watch Framework places individual attitudes in the context of social ecology to frame ‘individual behaviour in a social context’. The framework highlights the *interrelationships* between people’s attitudes, social norms, practices and structures noting, ‘this inter-relationship is crucial, because attitudes and behaviours are not always consistent, people may hold a pro-gender equality attitude but not intervene in discrimination or violence, similarly, they may hold sexist beliefs but not perpetrate sexual harassment’ (Our Watch et al., 2015). Also, each level influences and is influenced by other levels. Women experience violence at an individual level, but the experience and its impacts also have social and broader implications (Webster & Flood, 2015) as gender-based roles are carried into the workplace (Kabat-Farr & Cortina, 2013). There are three ways in which community-level understandings influence the extent to which violence against women is or is not tolerated. These include (Webster & Flood, 2015):

- **Social practices** – individual and collective patterns of behaviour, including everyday interaction, sexual behaviour, child-rearing practices, gendered divisions of labour and patterns of decision-making in families, in organisations and at the societal level. Evidence suggests that working with social norms offers the most promise for bringing change;
- **Social norms** – implicit or explicit rules of conduct and models of behaviour expected by a society or group. These might include norms or expectations about the acceptability of wife beating in different circumstances, social stigma for divorced or single women, linking male honour to women’s sexual purity, or men’s right to control and discipline women; and
- **Social structures** – at the relationship, organisational and institutional levels. Social structures are patterned social arrangements in a given context. Structures can be formal (such as legislation) or informal (such as the gender hierarchy in a family).

## Sexual harassment and social norms

The term ‘social norm’ is used widely across disciplines. Heise (2016) defines a norm as:

*a social construct. It exists as a collectively shared belief about what others do (what is typical) and what is expected of what others do (what is appropriate). Social norms are generally maintained by social approval and/or disapproval.*

The Our Watch National Framework defines social norms as the ‘rules of conduct and models of behaviour expected by society or social group. They are ground in the customs, traditions and value systems that develop over time in a society or social group’ (Our Watch et al., 2015). Similarly, CARE International defines norms as ‘behavioural rules constructed and shared by a group that are different from individually held beliefs or attitudes’ (CARE International, 2017). Practices, norms and structures, internalised in individual psyches, attitudes, beliefs and behaviours are reflected in decisions to use violent or disrespectful behaviour towards women, and influence how individuals respond to those behaviours (Webster & Flood, 2015). Families, organisational and community cultures and society-wide institutions such as the media transmit norms. Social norms can be informal (such as a widely held expectation that women will perform childcare) or formal (such as a law stating that physical forms of violence are a crime).

Beliefs about what others typically do, or a perceived consensus about patterns of behaviour (for example, men typically hit their wives), are called ‘descriptive norms’. ‘Injunctive norms’ articulate what is appropriate or what individuals ought to do (Cooper et al., 2014). Table 3 below summarises the difference between social norms and individually held attitudes or behaviour.

	Terminology	Definition
	Attitude	What I think
	Behaviour	What I do
Social Norms	Empirical Expectations	What I think others do (or descriptive norms)
	Normative Expectations	What I think others expect me to do/what I should do according to others (or injunctive norms)
	Social sanctions / rewards for non-compliance <sup>2</sup>	What I think others will do to sanction or reward behaviour

Table 3: Distinguishing Social Norms, Attitudes, Behaviours

The UK Department for International Development (DFID) points out that social norms exist within 'reference groups'. Reference groups are the group of people who are important to a person when they are making a decision (Alexander-Scott et al., 2016). An individual's desire to meet the social expectations of their reference groups, to avoid implicit or explicit sanction can be a powerful motivation for people to 'fit in' whether or not they agree with those norms (Paluck & Ball, 2010). DFID further notes that social approval, or avoiding disapproval, can be more important to people than formal sanctions (Alexander-Scott et al., 2016). For example, a barrier preventing men from taking action when they encounter violence against women is their concern about social costs and their status within a group (Powell 2014). Similarly, loss of face is a deterring factor for Asian American men to prevent harassment (Hall et.al., 2006).

Norms are dynamic and can change over time. Norms about the behaviour of people within a reference group can be informed by observation or through conversation, and institutional signals, that is workplace policies, expectations or informal rules can impact these norms (Tankard & Paluck, 2016). The challenge for programming is to harness change opportunities and discussed in Part B of this review.

## The role of social norms in addressing violence against women

Both the attitudes of individuals and social norms may contribute to perpetuating gender inequality. Commonly held assumptions or beliefs, implicit and explicit rules or expectations about the 'way we do things' (VicHealth, 2012) can either perpetuate or prevent sexual harassment and other forms of violence against women. Cooper et al., (2014) note that clinical psychological approaches theorise violence against women as learned behaviour and see it as 'errors of judgement in thinking and focuses on skills training and anger management'.

Norms about gender (gender norms) influence how men and women see themselves and each other as men and women, their sexuality, and allocation of power and resources. A recent DFID report, states:

*Violence is often, although not always, a part of dominant constructions of masculinity in many societies. If there are social expectations that men control women, then physical and sexual force are often seen as 'legitimate' ways to exert this control. This control also extends to punishment and sanction of those who resist, rebel or transgress gender norms, such as public shaming of female adulterers, homophobic and anti-lesbian violence. This helps to explain why men are the primary perpetrators of violence and why women are so often the victims, but also why sexual minorities are frequently the victims of gender violence. (Alexander-Scott, Bell, & Holden, 2016).*

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Some researchers argue that violence against women is a reflection that violence, in general, is a learned social practice (Our Watch et al., 2015). The Our Watch Framework (2015) asserts that:

*this (social learning theory) does not explain the specifically gendered patterns of violence against women. Studies show that people learn about violence not in isolation, but in the context of learning about and experiencing social norms about gender and gender (in)equality, particularly masculine gender identities.*

The following expressions of gender norms are associated with higher levels of violence against women: (Our Watch et al., 2015):

- Condoning of violence against women;
- Men's control of decision-making and limits to women's independence;
- Rigid gender roles and identities; and
- Male peer relations that emphasise aggression and disrespect towards women.

Figure 2 maps the intersecting factors and the relationship between violence supportive attitudes and gender inequality (Webster & Flood, 2015).

Examples of social and gender norms that support violence against women and girls (Alexander-Scott et al., 2016):

- A man has a right to assert power over a woman and is considered socially superior;
- A man has a right to physically discipline a woman for "incorrect" behaviour;
- Physical violence is an acceptable way to resolve conflict in a relationship;
- Intimate partner violence is a 'taboo' subject;
- Divorce is shameful;
- Sex is a man's right in marriage;
- Sexual activity (including rape) is a marker of masculinity; and
- Girls are responsible for controlling a man's sexual urges.

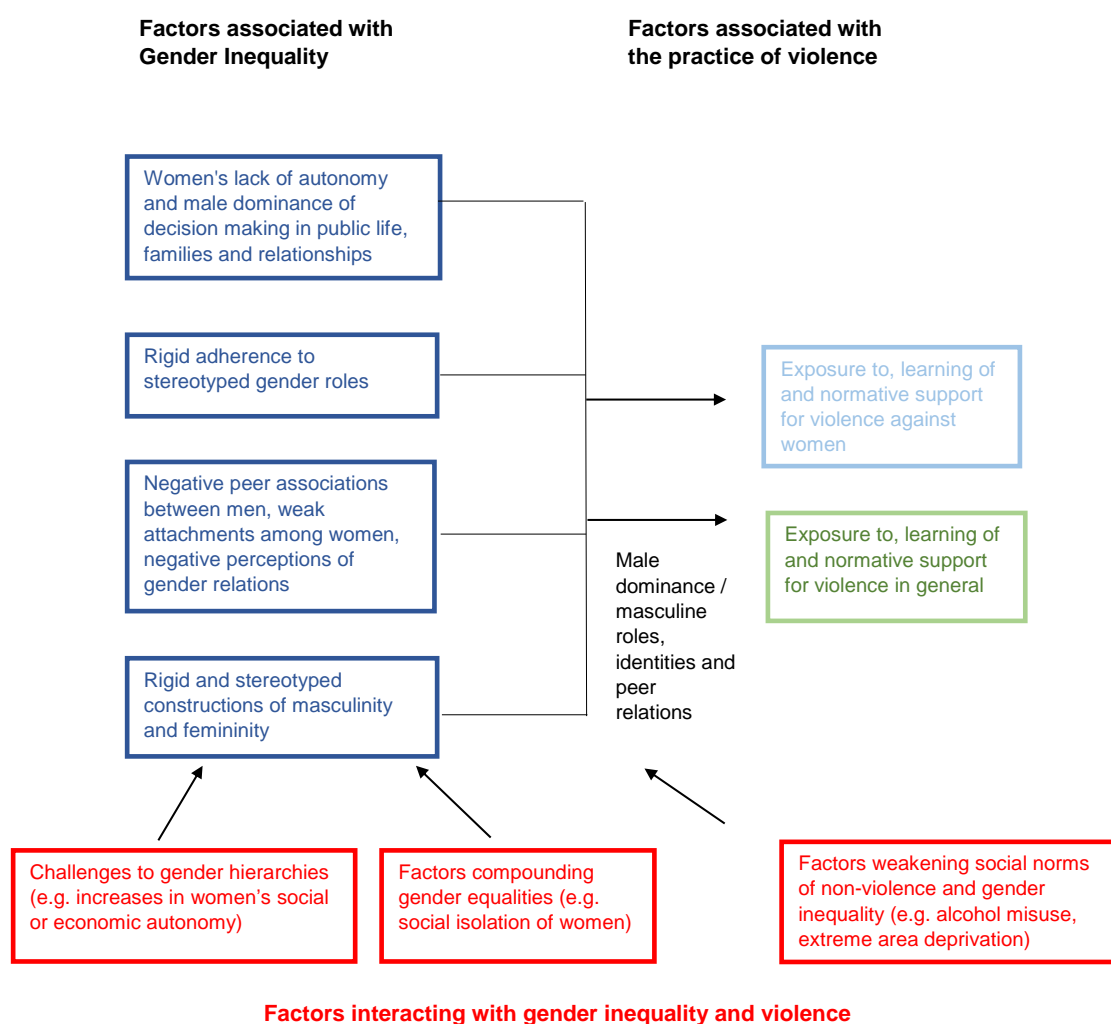


Figure 2: Correlates of violence against women: Webster & Flood, 2015 (reproduced)

Importantly for programs in workplaces, norms are properties of a situation itself. Two different norms can operate about how men behave within the context of a family and in the context of their workplace (Paluck & Ball 2010).

In the workplace, there are connections between men's identity and paid work. Paid work is central to the way in which men define their value and being, reflecting social norms that men support their families economically, and equating the 'breadwinner role' with full masculine and adult status (Holmes & Flood, 2013). This is consistent with the international evidence (Gender and Development Network, Gender Action for Peace and Security and UK SRHR Network, 2015):

*almost everywhere men are still seen as the primary income earners or 'breadwinners', and the main decision makers. Meanwhile, women are expected to be obedient and caring and to do the majority of unpaid care work and household duties. Discriminatory norms around 'women's work' continue to entrench occupational segregation in the workplace, even when new employment opportunities arise, leading to the concentration of women in low paid and vulnerable employment.*

When violence supportive community attitudes become embedded in the social framework, they influence the perpetration of violence, the way in which women and those around them respond to it and inhibit broader efforts to eliminate violence (Webster & Flood, 2015).

Social norms theory proposes that certain behaviours (e.g. violence and disrespect of women) are more common when formal and informal sanctions against them are weak (Webster et al., 2014).

Attitudes and social norms that excuse, justify or trivialise the use of violence against women can undermine efforts to hold perpetrators to account. Webster and Flood note implications for women seeking support or justice, citing evidence that 'men who use violence against women have been found to be particularly likely to justify and excuse their violent behaviour' (Webster & Flood, 2015). Webster and Flood's findings are consistent with findings that negative social norms about violence against women can result in a 'culture of silence' where targets are blamed, and violence is justified, excused, trivialised, denied, minimised or hidden from view (VicHealth, 2012).

Conversely, to develop and maintain social norms *against* violence, it is important to 'demonstrate that individuals who use violence will be held accountable' (Webster & Flood, 2015).

Not all individuals may hold (personal) attitudes that agree with harmful social norms. However fear of negative social outcomes increases barriers for taking steps to address specific incidents of violence or disrespect. This has implications for targets reporting such incidents, or, for bystanders to intervene. Intervention takes courage. If the weight of consensus lies with the negative norm, social norms shifts are particularly challenged. For example, Cooper et al. (2014), research on social norms about female genital mutilation (FGM) found, where the weight of social norms was in support of the practice of FGM, families were still having their daughters cut *even if they privately disagreed with the practice*.

Evidence provided by members of Victoria Police to the Independent Review into Victoria Police demonstrated police work was significantly affected by dominant attitudes and norms about:

- Gender identity or commonly held ideas about the characteristics and qualities that men and women are expected to have. For example, the attitude that women are best suited to looking after children because they are innately nurturing;
- Gender role norms or commonly held ideas about the roles women and men should take in public and private life, such as women as carers and men as breadwinners, or, in the context of policing, women should hold support roles to men's roles as physical, tough police members; and
- How men interact with other men (such as the 'brotherhood' or 'boys club'); how women interact with other women and how men and women interact with each other in public and private life.

The Independent Review's findings concluded that:

- Victoria Police employees' perceived that being a 'good police [member]' required individuals to be tough, resilient, strong, and sexually assertive, attributes that reflect gender-related social norms about being a man;
- Consequently, women employees were regarded as less competent and committed to the job because of their caring responsibilities and many felt the need to 'prove themselves'; and
- Victim-blaming attitudes were widely held about women who experienced or reported sexual harassment.

Source: Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission, 2015

## The role of bystanders in addressing violence against women

In relation to violence against women, bystander actions are those that respond to violence and prevent it (Powell, 2014). Bystander approaches are based on the view that it is the responsibility of individuals *not* to use violence, rather than the responsibility of targets to *avoid* it. The rationale behind the action is that there is a shared community responsibility to do so. Powell (2014) describes the focus of bystander approaches as:

- **Intervention**—Intervening to stop an incident of sexual violence that is occurring, by calling the police, reporting the incident to security or an authority figure (such as a manager at a workplace);
- **Tertiary prevention**—Supporting a target (or confronting a perpetrator), to respond to the physical, psychological and social harms of sexual violence, by validating their disclosure of an incident (or following up with them after having witnessed an incident) and assisting them to make contact with appropriate support services;

- **Secondary prevention**—Recognising and addressing a situation where the heightened risk of violence is present. Examples might include: keeping an eye out for the safety of friends, peers, colleagues or family members and being aware of, and taking action in response to, what is happening in one's surroundings (such as offering to take a drunk friend home); and
- **Primary prevention**—Strengthening work preventing violence, promoting gender equity and challenging sexist, discriminatory, violence-supportive attitudes and behaviours in peer groups, organisations and communities. Examples might include: challenging a friend on their use of sexist slang, expressing discontent with a colleague for telling a sexist joke, or getting involved in a review of hiring and promotion practices at work or a local community group.

There is some debate about the use of the word 'bystander' as minimising perpetrators' responsibility for their use of violence. Also, some see the concept as minimising the fact that all people exist within cultures or communities that implicitly or explicitly condone violence against women. The discourse and evidence on effectiveness of bystander approaches is still development (McDonald et al., 2016). However, the bystander concept is increasingly understood as a potential vehicle to promote a shift in social norms and behaviours, as it offers the potential for public and visible demonstrations of alternate positive behaviours, in addition, it is an accessible concept (Powell, 2014).

In one example of promising practice, applicable in workplace contexts, Green et al., (2018) developed a mass media experiment in Uganda aimed at constructing new public norms regarding bystander intervention in intimate partner violence situations. Green et al., (2018) found an increasing willingness to report as a new public norm *reduced judgement against bystanders*, resulting in a reduction in the number of households experiencing violence against women, even though there was little evidence of attitude change regarding the acceptability of violence. Women were less likely to believe they would be labelled a gossip if they were to report an incident of violence against women, and their willingness to speak out increased substantially (Green et al., 2018).

## What works to prevent violence against women?

As the problem of violence against women is understood to be multi-layered and multi-faceted, there is growing evidence that its prevention requires similarly multi-layered interventions. Michau et al. (2015) summarise a consistent theme in the literature on addressing the prevention of violence against women:

*Programmes often opt to work with a single population group (e.g. men or women experiencing violence) or sector (e.g. health care, police or judiciary), without making the necessary connections with other groups, issues, and institutions.*

This review considers evidence most relevant to an employer's sphere of influence within workplaces and workforces and explores principles that may be adapted to workplace settings. Our Watch conducted a review and rating of interventions across a broad range of sites and themes. Table 4 summarises a list of primary prevention programs, from that review, that have the potential to be adopted or adapted by employers/workplaces (for example adapting school-based programs to a workplace context). The ratings are as those of Webster and Flood (2015), where interventions are considered:

- **Effective** – if they have been shown to be effective in preventing violence against women
- **Promising** – if found to have an impact on risk factors, but not on violence directly
- **Conflicting** – where some evaluations show the interventions to be effective and others show that they are not
- **Ineffective** – when current studies have not established a positive impact on violence against women or its risk factors.

<b>Community mobilisation and strengthening</b>	
Community mobilisation, involving community-driven, participatory projects that engage multiple stakeholders to address gender norms.	Effective (evidence from low and middle-income countries only)
<b>Organisational development</b>	
Whole-of-school programs involving teachers and other school staff, pupils, reporting mechanisms, parents and the local community, along with national advocacy. A variety of strategies are used such as curriculum and group-based programs, policy reform, advocacy.	Promising
Organisational auditing processes to identify and address structures and practices contributing to gender inequality and violence against women. Involves developing audit tools and processes for engaging staff, community members and volunteers in using these to reflect on organisational cultures and processes and plan reform. Inducements may be used to encourage or support compliance (funding, awards).	Successfully implemented but not yet evaluated for impact on violence/precursors to violence
<b>Advocacy</b>	
Skills training and capacity-building for organisations and community members advocating for gender equality and the elimination of violence against women.	Successfully implemented but not yet evaluated for impact on violence/precursors to violence
Leadership programs that identify and support influential, non-violent individuals to speak out and play a leadership role regarding gender inequality and the elimination of violence against women. These may be targeted to prominent individuals or delivered through informal peer groups (such as among young people) or organisational settings (such as workplaces). These are based on social norms theory which proposes that the views of prominent others are influential in shifting social norms (Webster et al., 2014).	Successfully implemented but not yet evaluated for impact on violence/precursors to violence
<b>Individual or group, direct participation programs, providing education, support and skills development</b>	
School or community programs to improve women's and girls' agency. Can include other components such as safe spaces, mentoring and life skills training.	Effective
<b>Individual or group, direct participation programs, providing education, support and skills development</b>	
School or community programs to improve women's and girls' agency. Can include other components such as safe spaces, mentoring and life skills training.	Effective
Economic empowerment and income supplements plus gender equality training.	Effective
Collectivisation. Supporting women's and girls' empowerment by strengthening supportive links to other women and girls in similar circumstances (such as a collective for sex workers).	Effective
Peer education - Supporting individuals from particular sub-populations to educate their peers on gender norms and violence against women.	Successfully implemented but not yet evaluated for impact on violence/precursors to violence
School programs and community workshops with men and boys to promote changes in social norms and behaviours that encourage violence against women and gender inequality.	Effective
School and community workshops to promote changes in norms and behaviour that encourage violence against women and gender inequality, which in contrast to the above, involve both men and women.	Effective
Programs to strengthen individual skills and knowledge to take positive or pro-social action about attitudes and behaviours supporting violence (such as the belief that women deserve violence) and precursors to violence (such as sexist attitudes). Often referred to as 'bystander' programs'. Typically implemented as part of a broader program of community/organisational mobilisation.	Conflicting evidence (emphasis in many current evaluations is on bystander responses to violence, as opposed to its precursors, and on bystander approaches as 'stand-alone' interventions) Successfully implemented in Australia

Table 4: Evidence for primary prevention programs, derived from Webster and Flood (2015), pp65-66

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Assessments of the effectiveness of emerging practice in addressing violence against women have consistently noted that all programs should be developed with the understanding of its multi-level and interrelated context, drivers and implications. This is the case for both responding to violence against women, such as initiatives to reduce intimate partner violence, as for initiatives designed to prevent violence by working to enhance gender equality in different ways. Part B of this review sets out the elements of programs that have proven or promising results in workplace contexts.

Cooper et al. (2014) recommend that programs:

*conscientiously develop a theory of the specific form of violence they aim to reduce and intervene by examining the individual, situational, and societal factors that support the most frequent instances of that violence. For example, a program to address power asymmetry within an ongoing relationship should be conceptualised differently than a program to encourage help-seeking behaviour.*

Similarly, McDonald et al.,’s (2015) extensive research and evaluation of work to ‘change attitudes, behaviours and social norms which prevent other forms of interpersonal violence’ confirms the need for a comprehensive suite of strategies rather than individual, unconnected initiatives’.

## Examples of long-term programs to support the prevention of violence

Significant practice and recommendations exist around pathways for shifting behaviours, which flow from deeply entrenched norms (McDonald et al., 2015). Addressing gender inequality as a driver of violence against women is a broad approach that can be taken. For example, In 2016, UN Women published a *Compendium of Good Practices in Training for Gender Equality*. This publication offers in-depth information on ten different good practices of feminist programming, including detailed outlines of training courses, examples of dealing with challenges that arise in training for gender equality and a collection of tools and activities for use in such training initiatives. It gives insights into the modalities of training and how this affects outcome, participatory planning considerations, examples of how theories of gender effect training, and the need to embed training in long-term programs for change. The Compendium underlines the importance of adapting training to cultural, political, and sectoral context (UN Women Training Centre, 2016).

CARE’s approach to transformation through methodologies such as Social Analysis and Action (SAA), which operates through a five-step process, starting with staff capacity, and going on to reflect with the community, plan for action, implement plans, and evaluate. The approach surfaces and stimulates reflection on social norms, and has evidence of success in Ethiopia on economic and sexual reproductive health outcomes for adolescent girls, in Kenya and Rwanda with family planning programs. Results from project monitoring and evaluation have shown reduce intimate partner violence as one of many outcomes of programs adopting SAA. (CARE International, 2016).

Another example is the successful Indashyikirwa Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) prevention program implemented by CARE in Rwanda which seeks to build skills to manage triggers of IPV. Indashyikirwa is a 5-month, 20-session curriculum designed to identify the causes and the economic, emotional, physical and sexual consequences of IPV. One of the underlying themes is that raising awareness of power inequalities that underpin all forms of IPV is useful for raising awareness of the consequences of violence (Stern & Niyibizi, 2018). The curriculum is structured to address knowledge, attitudes, skills and behaviours, and moves from intensive self-reflection to community actions (Stern & Nyiritunga, 2017).

The norms element of Indashyikirwa includes the SASA<sup>3</sup>-adapted community activism component. In the program evaluated, twenty-five per cent of trained couples implemented this through public discussion and debate. Adapted SASA activism tools exposed groups of people to the opinions of

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<sup>3</sup> SASA! Is a community mobilization approach developed by Raising Voices for prevention of violence against women and HIV [www.raisingvoices.org](http://www.raisingvoices.org)

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others, and people could change together, or just become aware that others didn't agree with (or were changing their minds about) established harmful norms around relationships and household roles. This affected people's perceptions about what behaviour was common and appropriate by others in their community, especially their peers and neighbours.

The major limitation for applying these proven approaches in workplaces is that of time and resources. The UN Women compendium notes the depth and length of engagement required to challenge gender norms that perpetuate sexual harassment. *'A four to five-day training never provides enough time. Gender transformation is a journey, and in five days you only scratch the surface of content to be covered'* - Jane Kato-Wallace, Senior Programme Officer, Promundo-US (UN Women Training Centre, 2016). The time-constrained factory environment does not provide space for training that operates at these depths and lengths of time. It is therefore essential to adapt the strongest aspects of these approaches and packages to a workplace setting.

#### Insight for the STOP project:

Program staff and participating workplaces should be supported by appropriate policies and principles to support decision making in response to disclosures, confidentiality, appropriate referral pathways and risk considerations, including when a program participant is in serious and/or imminent danger.

Program staff and participating workplaces should receive training in trauma informed responses to disclosures of sexual harassment and sexual assault, as well as training to avoid collusion with harassers.

Program partnership with local services responding to sexual violence may be appropriate.

## Shifting social norms

This section examines the process by which social norms have shifted in practice and the tools used to achieve this shift. There has been promising work done to shift violence supportive social norms as part of an ecological approach.

It is important to note that much of this work was done in community contexts and not yet tested within a workplace setting. There is evidence on the effectiveness of shifting workplace norms in non-academic (grey) literature, but there is a less academic/rigorous analysis of the effectiveness of these efforts. The effectiveness of shifting workplace norms is something that the STOP project could contribute to when sharing learning.

Tankard and Paluck (2012) identify five conditions under which norms and behaviours are *most likely* to shift.

1. When individuals identify with the source of the normative information;
2. When new norms are believable representations of group opinions and behaviours;
3. When the individual's personal views are closer to the new normative information;
4. Where the new normative information is widely shared within the reference group; and
5. When new normative descriptions are contextualised.

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### 1. When individuals identify with the source of normative information.

The source of information for norms may be an individual, group or institution. Where individuals do not identify with the source of normative information (person, group or institution), they are less likely to be influenced by it. Tankard and Paluck (2016) identify two important implications of this. First, identifying the correct reference group is vital. Secondly, identifying which individuals, groups or institutions that are influential within the group is central to shifting norms.

This evidence provides important background to Part B of this review as part of the discussion on leadership. In the context of a factory workplace, shared status as employees may help individuals to identify as part of a group. The physical proximity of employees to each other can also be a factor in supporting work to shift norms. As Tankard and Paluck (2016) note, 'physical proximity can affect the number of opportunities people have to observe how group members behave'.

#### Insight for the STOP project:

Influential individuals and groups are important in their capacity to influence positive norm shifts of the broader group. Early identification of the social norms held by influencers is important to identify support and capacity building is required for them to undertake this role. Careful assessment of the likelihood they will engage positively will be an important precursor to successful workplace efforts (VicHealth, 2012).

### 2. When new norms are believable representations of group opinions and behaviours.

Presented norms do not have to be accurate, but they do have to be believable or plausible. They can also be presented at the early stages of change or gaining of momentum, for example, 'more and more people believe that ...' (Tankard & Paluck, 2016). Further research is needed to assess the ideal 'distance' between a current norm and a norm that is presented and the level of ambition presented norms can represent without losing credibility (Tankard & Paluck, 2016).

### 3. When the individual's personal views are closer to the new normative information.

As well as assessing the distance between their perception of the current norms and presented norms, individuals also assess how closely the presented norms align with their attitudes. Where presented norms align with individual attitudes, they are seen to 'licence' or validate those attitudes. Where presented normative information is more closely aligned, norm change interventions are more likely to be successful.

Conversely, where presented norms do not support individuals' attitudes and perceptions of current norms, individuals may be motivated to comply with presented norms if they think there will be negative social consequences for not doing so. Tankard and Paluck (2016) note:

*The requirement of a strong norm to overcome personal opinions presents a challenge for norm change interventions: the normative information must persuade recipients that they might feel socially isolated, awkward, or rejected for deviating from the norm.*

Tankard and Paluck (2016) note that further research is required to understand how norm change interventions can operate when individuals oppose them. Individuals may separate themselves from a reference group if they strongly oppose presented norms. This presents real challenges to address sexual harassment and underlines the importance of understanding existing social norms to inform programming.

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#### 4. *Where the new normative information is widely shared within the reference group*

Where the new normative information is widely shared within the reference group, awareness that others are receiving the same information can serve as proof that the norm is recognised, enacted or endorsed within a group. In Mexico, a fictional radio program that rejected violence against women strengthened perceptions of social norms rejecting violence against women only when the program was transmitted socially (to groups or through community loudspeakers). It did not have the same effect when transmitted individually (CDs) (Tankard & Paluck, 2016).

#### 5. *Where normative descriptions are contextualised*

Norms are more likely to shift when normative descriptions are contextualised by giving positive feedback for behaviour in line with norm (rather than raising awareness about prevalence and risk reproducing problematic norms); or; emphasising the dispersion or difference of accepted behaviours, or indicating the general direction in which norms are moving (Tankard & Paluck, 2016). Paluck and Ball (2010) provide a thorough assessment of what works in social norms marketing to different communities and provides useful principles for consideration in designing such campaigns. At an organisational level, educational resources and social norms campaigns targeted such as poster/website campaigns, staff newsletter articles, workplace forums or events may have promise (Chung et al., 2012).

#### **Evidence gap**

The STOP Project has an opportunity to document progress and build evidence around the acceptable distance between existing and presented norms and whether this changes over time or program stage. Research might also consider the mechanism built into programs to give participants 'permission' to change their perceptions over time to align with new norms.

### Shifting social norms through looking at social ecology

The DFID Guidance Note on Social Norms (Alexander-Scott, Bell, & Holden, 2016) provides a framework for shifting social norms that focuses on a social ecology of factors that drive and sustain harmful behaviours. Social norms exist within a broader political, social, economic, relationship and community context in any approach to addressing all forms of violence against women (Michau et al., 2015), including sexual harassment. DFID proposes a framework that draws on some of the evidence outlined above. Conditions 2-5 of Tankard and Paluck (2016) are reflected in the DFID model and conditions 1 and 3 can be considered as necessary steps before building an approach using the DFID model (Alexander-Scott et al., 2016).

The DFID Framework is summarised in Table 5 below and discussion below provides evidence of good practice against this framework. Key findings from this section include:

- Social norms are dynamic, subjective and public
- Social norms can be shaped by sharing information about what others do or believe
- Socially powerful individuals can be key to modelling new norms
- New norms need to be shaped by avoiding reinforcing old norms
- Social sanctions and social rewards are powerful levers for change

Change social expectations	Dispel misconceptions and reframe issue
	Shift individual attitudes towards harmful behaviours
	Promote public debate and deliberation about the norm
	Promote a positive alternative
	Provide opportunities for public and collective change
Publicise the change	Publicise role model and benefits of new behaviour
	Avoid reinforcing negative behaviour
	Develop a strategy to extend norm change beyond people directly involved in the program.
Catalyse and reinforce new positive behaviours and norms	Provide opportunities for new behaviour (social practices)
	Create new rewards and sanctions

*Table 5: The DFID Framework for implementing programs to change social norms*

## *Change social expectations*

### **1. Dispel misconceptions and reframe the issue**

Social norms are not necessarily objectively correct. The concept of pluralistic ignorance (where a majority of individuals within a reference group assume a norm that they do not personally support, assuming that others' compliance with it show majority support) is one way in which to effect norms shift (Alexander-Scott et al., 2016; Tankard & Paluck, 2016).

Changing perceptions and building new social norms can in part be achieved by presenting summary information about current behaviours or norms to a group, for example, '94% of people who see sexual harassment report it to their line manager'. This summary information is intended to replace an individual's personal and subjective norm perceptions with new information (Tankard and Paluck 2016), in this example, a subjective belief that no one reports it is replaced by information showing the opposite preferred behaviour is actually taking place.

This kind of intervention could take the form of social norms marketing which includes media such as posters, online or newspaper advertisements, community events, television advertisements, flyers, email, or other mass communication materials (Tankard & Paluck, 2016). In developing the content and messaging of such communications, consideration of Tankard and Paluck's condition 2 (believable) and 3 (license and/or motivating) is important. Returning to the example, if 94% is not believable it would need adjustment.

### **2. Shift individual attitudes towards harmful behaviours**

The DFID Framework notes that where social support for a norm is strong, a preliminary focus on attitude change may be required to enable subsequent attempts to weaken and replace the norm. It sets out some ways to do this (Alexander-Scott et al., 2016). One way is to prioritise normative influences (presenting descriptive norms) as people's normative perceptions can be more malleable than their attitudes (Tankard & Paluck, 2016). Tankard and Paluck's condition 3 (motivating norm described above) suggests that in these instances, messages will need to consider how interventions motivate individuals to comply with a norm which they disagree.

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### **3. Promote public debate and deliberation about the norm**

Reflecting research that distinguishes between individual's personally held attitudes and perceptions about existing social norms, interventions that provide information to people individually (such as written communications) may influence their perceptions about what other people think. It is important that there are opportunities for people to interact to learn what others in the reference group think. This can be done at a group level, such as in discussions, direct participation or workshops, or on a broader scale such as through edutainment programs (Alexander-Scott et al., 2016). This is underpinned by the understanding that social norms are dynamic, and that perceptions about social norms can be influenced by individuals, new summary information about the group or 'institutional signals' (Tankard & Paluck, 2016).

### **4. Promote a positive alternative**

Harmful social norms are more likely to be recur if not replaced with positive norms (Paluck & Ball, 2010). The benefits of the new behaviour should be clear. The sections below, 'Publicise the change' and 'Catalyse and reinforce new positive behaviours and norms' cover this in depth.

### **5. Provide opportunities for public and collective change**

Tankard and Paluck (2016) note that the source of the new norm can be other people's public behaviour, summary information about a group and institutional signals. Part B of this review outlines ways in which organisations can give 'institutional signals' through leadership, workforce capability, communications, bystander intervention and workplace culture and practices.

## *Publicise the change*

### **1. Publicise role model and benefits of new behaviour**

Building on debate and deliberation can be used to shift social norms. This approach is consistent with Tankard and Paluck's condition 4 (widely disseminated new norms) to reinforce the awareness that others are receiving the same information as a proof of recognition, enactment or endorsement of behaviour or opinion.

To shift social norms, 'interventions must create new beliefs, within an individual's reference group, so that the collective expectations of the people important to them allow new behaviours to emerge'. This new belief need not be a new attitude, such as, 'I believe that sexual harassment is wrong'. It can be a belief about the social norm such as 'I believe that the community will now sanction me for this behaviour, I will lose face if caught so I will desist' (Alexander-Scott et al., 2016).

Chung et al., (2012) citing Banyard et al., (2004) note the importance of presenting anti-violence messages in ways that 'do not alienate people and make them less likely to engage. Anti-violence messages can be perceived as accusatory of men and assuming that all women are victims without agency'. This is addressed further in Part B of this review, including in the sections on leadership, learning and capability.

An unintended consequence of presenting new descriptive norms is where individuals are already 'outperforming them' and feel they are 'ahead' of the norm. Tankard and Paluck (2016) cite a controlled study in which individuals began to use more electricity if they learned that they were consuming less than their neighbours.

### **2. Avoid reinforcing negative behaviour**

The DFID Framework notes that the way in which information is presented to raise awareness can have unintended consequences that can strengthen perceptions that a norm is typical. Careful messaging is required to ensure that it doesn't unintentionally reinforce stereotypes, such as that men should protect women, and women are the weaker sex (Alexander-Scott et al., 2016).

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Tankard and Paluck (2016) explain that while it may be understandable to wish to ‘call out’ bad behaviour, the social norms perspective suggests that doing so can inadvertently describe the behaviour as descriptively normative (or typical) and thereby license it.

### **3. Develop a diffusion strategy to catalyse broader societal change**

Given resource limitations, developing strategies to extend the impact of programs beyond direct participants and scaling up should be included in program planning. There has been little research about how norms change efforts can be scaled up to change community perceptions (Tankard & Paluck, 2016) although recent research by Green et al. (2018) may provide some insights (page 17).

#### *Catalyse and reinforce new positive behaviours and norms*

##### **1. Provide opportunities for new behaviour (social practices)**

The DFID Framework notes research by Paluck and Ball (2010) that finds that interventions are more likely to be successful if they provide clear guidance on the new or presented norm and also provide opportunities for people to put it into practice (Alexander-Scott et al., 2016). This has implications for the type and content of training offered as set out in Part B of this review.

##### **2. Create new rewards and sanctions**

As noted above, social norms are dynamic and evolve. As norms begin to shift, the DFID Framework points to the need to establish appropriate rewards. For individuals who are adopting new norms, their reward might be a personal sense of self-esteem and belonging, or there might be external recognition of their contribution. For sanction, the DFID framework references legal and policy changes that might create sanctions, as well as send a signal to recalcitrant individuals (Alexander-Scott et al., 2016).

#### **Insight for the STOP Project:**

Principles underpinning social norms approaches should be incorporated into both organisational change processes and the messaging, training, capacity building and communications efforts designed to bring change to effect.

### **Bystander approaches**

As noted above, bystander approaches can ‘build shared individual and community responsibility for responding to and preventing sexual violence by encouraging people not directly involved in violence as a victim or perpetrator to take action’ (Powell et al., 2015). All individuals can influence norm perception and behaviour by calling attention to the existing norm in a situation, and, either reinforce it with the positive observation of compliance with the desired norm, or, punish a person deviating from the expected norm (Tankard and Paluck, 2010). For example, in Kenya, passengers’ heckling of unsafe minibuses was effective as a social punishment to enforce the safe driving norm (Tankard & Paluck, 2016).

Adopting a bystander approach broadens the possibility of roles that may be played by a group – from either target or perpetrator to provide a positive role and identity for participants. Highlighting the diversity of possible roles may reduce backlash (Powell et al., 2015). There are generally two types of bystanders – active and passive. Active bystanders intervene or take action in response to an observed situation, while passive bystanders do not intervene or take action when observing a situation.

Research on bystander approaches in the area of violence against women is limited and has mainly focused on university and education settings. While bystander approaches have been introduced in some workplaces, they have not been the subject of rigorous evaluation or research. Table 6 outlines work by Taket and Crisp (2017) to summarise the available evidence about the impact of bystander approaches at individual and community/organisation levels.

Enablers	Barriers
Individual level	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of what constitutes violence against women</li> <li>• Awareness of harm caused by violence against women</li> <li>• Perception of responsibility to intervene</li> <li>• Perceived ability to intervene – skills</li> <li>• Perceived confidence to intervene</li> <li>• Desire to educate perpetrator</li> <li>• Empathy for and desire to support targets</li> <li>• Self-validation, catharsis – expressing anger, disapproval etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Challenge of motivation and engaging</li> <li>• The ambiguous nature of some everyday sexism and heterosexism</li> <li>• Exclusive group identity; male peer groups based on violence/aggressive masculinities</li> <li>• Fear of violence or being targeted by the perpetrator; fear that masculinity will be called into question; fear of other consequences of being proactive (e.g. fear of being punished for underage drinking)</li> <li>• Perception that action would be ineffective/lack of confidence to act effectively</li> <li>• Lack of knowledge about how to intervene</li> <li>• Rigid adherence to traditional gender roles; attitudes supporting male dominance</li> <li>• Impression management, preserving interpersonal relations</li> <li>• Younger age in relation to the prospective perpetrator</li> <li>• Lower position in relation to organisation hierarchy</li> </ul>
Community/ organisation level	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modelling of respectful behaviour by senior groups in the setting</li> <li>• Key groups in the organisation/ community have prosocial norms</li> <li>• Policies supporting prosocial norms and accountability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modelling of disrespectful behaviour by senior groups in the setting</li> <li>• Antagonism to the programme from key groups in the organisation/community (e.g. parents or teachers for school-based programmes)</li> </ul>

*Table 6: Enablers and Barriers to Bystander Action*

While bystander intervention in sexual harassment is complex, there are opportunities for intervention. McMahon and Banyard (2012) have framed bystander interventions in relation to sexual assault by using a violence prevention framework (which share the same framing as those used by McDonald et al., (2015) and Hunt et al., (2010) in education settings.

Reactive Bystander Opportunities	Primary Prevention (before the assault)		Secondary Prevention (during the assault)	Tertiary Prevention (after the assault)
	Low risk	High risk		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Friends make a sexist joke or use sexist language to describe women and girls</li> <li>Activities or rituals are held where women's bodies are ranked or rated</li> <li>Pornographic or sexualizing posters of women and girls are displayed</li> <li>Friends make rape or abuse jokes</li> <li>Friends or classmates blame a victim of sexual violence in conversation or class</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A friend is bringing an intoxicated woman to his room</li> <li>A friend says he plans to intoxicate a woman to have sex</li> <li>A woman is being harassed by a group of men</li> <li>A woman who is passed out on a couch is being approached or touched by a man</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Witnessing a group rape</li> <li>Hearing cries for help or distress</li> <li>Walking in on a situation where an individual appears to be either physically forced or verbally coerced into sex</li> <li>Directly observing an intoxicated victim being sexually assaulted by a perpetrator</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A friend or classmate discloses that she is a survivor</li> <li>A friend is seeking information for herself or another person on where to go for help for an assault</li> <li>There is suspicion that a friend or classmate is a perpetrator</li> <li>Authorities or residence life are looking for information on a possible sexual assault</li> <li>A police or judicial investigation needs corroboration</li> </ul>
Proactive Bystander Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Taking a course on gender based violence</li> <li>Joining a peer education group</li> <li>Participating in Take Back the Night</li> <li>Volunteering at a local sexual assault organization</li> <li>Arranging an educational program on sexual assault for a dorm or student organization</li> <li>Changing student organizational policies to address sexual assault</li> </ul>			

Figure 3: Bystander opportunities for the prevention of sexual violence

McDonald et al., (2015) suggest four categories of intervention based on the immediacy of the situation (high or low) and the involvement of the bystander (high or low).

High immediacy interventions occur in an ongoing incident and focus on interrupting the ongoing incident:

- Low involvement: involve private support without public connection to the incident, e.g. redirection of harasser attention, removal of the target, interruption without judgement; and
- High involvement: strong involvement publicly and socially, e.g. challenging harasser to stop harassment, publicly naming the conduct, publicly encouraging the target to report or other actions, taking an active and identifiable role.

Low immediacy interventions occur at a later point in time and represent an attempt to prevent future harassment:

- Low involvement: involve private support without public connection to the incident (s), e.g. covert efforts to separate target/harasser, giving private advice to target, social support behind the scenes; and
- High involvement: strong social involvement in a public and social scene, e.g. reporting on target's behalf, offering to accompany target when they report, confronting the harasser after an incident.

#### Insight for the STOP project:

- Understanding norms about reporting sexual harassment require careful assessment and should inform project design
- Bystander intervention can take a range of forms which can be acknowledged in policy and/or procedures
- Bystander intervention approaches can be embedded in training and other engagement opportunities to staff
- Bystander intervention in higher risk incidents may need a nuanced approach and should be trained separately to standardised policy and procedure training
- Support for bystanders can be built into the program and/or considered in partnership with specialist organisations

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People need to be supported to challenge behaviours (Powell et al., 2015) because there are perceived costs to intervening and because there can be uncertainty about what to do. Steps identified for bystanders, in a workplace context, need to be realistic, achievable and appropriate to the personnel level in the organisation, their roles and responsibilities and ability to effect organisational and attitudinal change. Active bystander training is crucial for successful intervention and support (Powell et al., 2015). Evidence on the impact of bystander intervention (from dating violence and sexual assault evidence) reinforces this need for support, particularly in high risk or secondary prevention circumstances. Witte et al., (2017) found that helping is associated with positive outcomes for people who intervene, however, they also found symptoms of vicarious trauma where events are perceived to be traumatic. In other research, those with less experience in helping, or, who have experienced harassing behaviours are more likely to experience vicarious trauma (Baird & Jenkins, 2003 as cited by Witte et al., 2017).

The target of harassment may also experience repercussions from bystander intervention. Closer analysis of applying whistle-blower analysis to efforts to improve responses to sexual harassment complaints, including preventing such targeting may be beneficial, as 'both whistleblowing and sexual harassment complaints processes can be viewed through justice theories, particularly procedural and distributive justice in organisational models' (McDonald et al., 2015).

### **Evidence Gap**

Further research might include one or more of the following areas:

- Impact of bystander approaches in workplaces on perceived norms about the point, on continuum of behaviours, at which sexual harassment becomes unacceptable and bystander intervention acceptable;
- The conditions in which bystander intervention is consistent with social norms (such as nature of employment, rank, gender, social position)
- Types of bystander actions that are permissible under existing norms
- Repercussions for the target following bystander intervention; and
- Impact of bystander approach on norms and behaviour or the role that bystander action can play in shifting descriptive norms.

## **Working within a socio-ecological model**

Businesses operate within markets, communities and sectors, they employ people, sell products, buy materials and make investments. This locates businesses, and consequently workplaces in a complex web of relationships that can support and reinforce efforts to prevent and respond to violence against women, and in particular, sexual harassment.

### *Workplaces within the community*

The socio-ecological model, locates workplaces at the community level. Workforces may overlap with multiple communities depending on the organisation's employee profile, the location of housing and the nature of the employment relationship with the organisation.

When working with organisations and workplaces, it is important to have an understanding of structural and external contextual factors as well as an organisation's policies, processes and practices. This understanding must include the extent to which they have enabled, left unchallenged or supported gender inequality as the key driver of sexual harassment.

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For example, experimental research randomly assigned men who had a high likelihood of sexually harassing behaviours to two conditions: one where the environment was professional and one where the environment was suggestive of sexual behaviour. While both groups of men had similar baseline propensity to harass, the *likelihood of harassment was much greater in the environment which had a harassing authority figure*<sup>4</sup> (Cooper et al., 2014).

In its National Framework, Our Watch highlights the need to work with ‘industry and employer networks, unions, employment agencies and the public and private sectors’ at the organisation level. This is supported by findings from the Royal Commission into Family Violence in Victoria, which found that workplaces provide an opportunity to reach people in their communities and can be an important setting for social change alongside other local, community and societal settings.

Organisations and organisational culture have the potential to influence social norms, by modelling gender equitable workplace processes, practices and policies. They can also build confidence capacity of their workforce to challenge sexist and inappropriate sexual behaviour they have individually experience or on others’ behalf (Chung et al., 2012). However, while ‘theoretical ideas about how institutions can signal new norms are intriguing, empirical support for causal change is currently lacking’ (Tankard & Paluck, 2016).

### **Evidence Gap**

The STOP project is well placed to build evidence on the effect on social norms regarding: the conditions required for ‘institutional signals’ such as the development and implementation of a sexual harassment policy to result in a positive shift of employee norms about sexual harassment, its prevalence, the point along the continuum of sexually harassing behaviours at which it becomes unacceptable, when and who is permitted to be an active bystander, and the implications of norms for disclosure in the workplace.

In its National Framework, Our Watch<sup>5</sup> notes that workplaces may provide unique engagement opportunities with men and groups who were vulnerable or otherwise difficult to engage with through other settings (such as education, sports or healthcare). A range of strategies have been employed in workplaces, predominantly in developed countries, to shift men’s gender relations in workplaces (Holmes & Flood 2013). Evidence about the effectiveness of these strategies is very limited. The strategies include:

- Raising men’s awareness (discussed in Part B, Workplace Practices and Norms);
- Addressing sexist and disrespectful behaviours (discussed in Part B, Workplace Strategies and Policies, Workplace Practices and Norms);
- Disrupting the masculine status quo (discussed in Part B, Leadership);
- Educating male professionals (discussed in Part B, Capacity and Capability);
- Fostering male advocates in the workplace (discussed in Part B, Leadership);
- Involving men in shifting the structures and systems that produce inequality (Discussed in Part B, Leadership, Workplace Practices and Norms); and
- Men’s work in the home (for example seeing flexible working as an issue equally for men and women).

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<sup>4</sup> Emphasis added

<sup>5</sup> These findings drew on earlier research undertaken by VicHealth which noted the influence of employers on individual and group behaviour and their potential role in modelling non-violent, equitable and respectful gender relations.

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Organisational development strategies can also support primary prevention efforts. Concerning social norms, Tankard and Paluck (2016) write that an 'institution's decisions and innovations can signal which behaviours or opinions are common or desirable in a group. Institutions may change perceptions of norms directly, as when individuals make a direct inference about norms based on an institutional signal'. Workforce development can involve building the skills of relevant workforces to implement primary prevention activity either informally and opportunistically, or, at a more formal level (VicHealth, 2012). The implication of this framing is significant for three key reasons (Webster & Flood, 2015):

1. Firstly, it implies that organisations and workplaces can play a **significant and shared** role in responding to preventing violence against women, and specifically sexual harassment;
2. Secondly, it provides a **framework to guide** organisations and workplaces in their efforts to respond to and prevent sexual harassment from occurring in the first place; and
3. Thirdly, it provides scope to **engage with people at all levels** of the social ecology.

### *Workplaces within society*

At a societal level (Figure 1 Society circle), structural factors relating to violence against women include national legal and policy frameworks as they apply to business and employment conditions, as well as public health, education and service provision. Laws can 'establish the public unacceptability of violence against women and girls, and serve as practical methods of legal recourse for women and girls, [but] they are insufficient as prevention and response mechanisms' (Michau et al., 2015). As discussed previously, there is a substantial body of international law and national laws to address sex discrimination and sexual harassment worldwide.

Applied research into an Australia workplace (Victoria Police) focussing on sex discrimination and sexual harassment, noted that legal approaches, based on behavioural definitions of sexual harassment had not, by themselves, been sufficient to see the reduction of sexual harassment in workplaces. The Independent Review into Sex Discrimination and Sexual Harassment (2015) noted:

*Historically, Australian organisational responses to sexual harassment and sex discrimination and initiatives to improve gender equity have been based on legislative, and compensation requirements set out in the Equal Opportunity legislation. These responses have been progressed without considering the principles that underpin this legislation more broadly, including a need to proactively address the drivers of discrimination and systemic inequality.*

*In short, laws have required organisations to show they have taken reasonable precautions, over time, demonstrated through the development and implementation of policy, training and complaint processes. However, these initiatives have not been successful in achieving gender equity.*

*The Review notes that these approaches were not derived from an understanding of the drivers of sexual harassment and sex discrimination. Experience of the sectors engaged with the issue of violence against women, which acknowledge the drivers of systemic inequality and harm, provide effective lessons and evidence on action needed to reduce sexual harassment and sex discrimination (VicHealth, 2012).*

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This conclusion is supported by Tankard and Paluck's (2016) finding that 'institutional support for or denouncements of certain behaviours are not necessarily enough to influence perceptions of norms, or indeed to change actual rates of behaviour'. While laws may send important signals about the acceptability of particular behaviours, they are most likely to be effective when they are consistent with social norms and shifts in laws alone are insufficient to shift social norms (Alexander-Scott et al., 2016). McDonald et al. (2015) notes the absence of discussion of broader employment and social policies in the literature on sexual harassment and propose future research could focus on the links between gendered concerns at the organisational level and broader social and labour market policies.

### **Evidence gap**

The STOP project provides an opportunity to conduct field research on the role that employment security, employment conditions have on workplace descriptive norms related to the prevalence and tolerance for sexual and gender harassment; and the impact of the STOP project on shifting norms; the extent to which current legal and regulatory requirements are perceived (in existence or relevant) by employees and their perceptions of what constitutes sexual harassment; pervasiveness of sexual harassment; the extent to which it is tolerated and the conditions in which it is tolerated.

Customary or indigenous laws and religious practice may exist alongside formal legal frameworks. The attitudes of health policy makers and service providers about whether violence against women is a private matter between individuals or a matter for the criminal justice system may reinforce dominant cultural norms and expectations of attitudes to the use of violence against women (Michau et al., 2015).

Unions can play a role in promoting change for workers and supporting staff who experience sexual harassment. They can also support prevention initiatives through awareness raising, providing formal and informal leadership for shifting workplaces strategies, practices and norms. Canadian unions provide 'comprehensive anti-violence programs that include kits to be used by union locals, handbooks on building safer communities and workplaces (with instructions about how to conduct workplace safety audits) and training workshops for union leadership, members and union staff about the problems of violence against women' (Premier's Action Committee on Family Violence Prevention 2001). Furthermore, the Union for Canadian Auto Workers runs a Women's Advocate Program in workplaces to provide tailored responses and support for female workers experiencing violence and harassment in the workplace (Chung et al., 2012).

### **Evidence gap**

There is a lack of evidence on the impact of unions engaging in efforts to shift social norms within a workplace including at a leadership level to 'set the agenda' and leadership directions on sexual harassment, and/or influencing social norms with the broader workforce.

In order to engage with unions, businesses may commence a process of 'social dialogue' which is a 'process involving representatives of workers, employers and/or governments, that can take the form of collective bargaining, workplace cooperation and undertaken as tripartite or bipartite social dialogue'. The ILO and OECD present a business case for social dialogue,<sup>6</sup> pointing to several benefits that are relevant to sexual harassment prevention and response:

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<sup>6</sup> The ILO/OECD identify key factors facilitate effective social dialogue: Respect for freedom of association; Legal and institutional support; Independent and representative Workers and employers organisations; Commitment to engage; Technical capacity, knowledge and access; Processes for effective coordination of bargaining; Frameworks for workplace cooperation; and Effective coordination by trade unions in multi-union contexts. The ability to access these facilitating factors is crucial to a decision whether or not to pursue a social dialogue approach.

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- Social dialogue can manage conflict for fair and stable workplaces
  - Social dialogue helps improve the design of training systems and retention of skills
  - Social dialogue creates and contributes to the wider enabling environment for enterprise sustainability
  - Social dialogue can play a role in improving transparency and accountability, thus offsetting the risk

The most successful, societal level interventions to prevent violence against women appear to be those that sought to 'transform gender relations rather than simply changing attitudes and behaviours' (Webster & Flood, 2015). Gender transformative approaches:

*encourage critical awareness of gender roles and norms. Transformative approaches included ways to create more equitable gender norms, in order to foster more equitable power relationships between women and men, and between women and others in the community. They promote women's rights and dignity; challenge unfair and unequal distribution of resources and allocation of duties between men and women; and consider specific needs of women and men (Webster & Flood, 2015).*

Some businesses have operated with this intent, working with community organisations in a number of ways. This includes:

- Making donations to organisations responding to intimate partner violence;
- Establishing partnerships to access expertise and knowledge about violence against women to inform workplace strategies, policies and build understanding amongst their workforces; or
- Lending their voices to public causes or campaigns to raise awareness about violence against women.

Public-facing initiatives promote responsible business behaviour. However, it is important that they are linked and embedded in internal workplace changes and improvements (Chung et al., 2012).

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## Defining Sexual Harassment in the Workplace

Workplaces are not homogenous, differing by sector, ownership, size, work environments and work itself (Powell et al., 2015). The geography of workplaces and where their employees live also differ. The rapid review has located sexual harassment:

- As a form of violence against women, that shares common cause with other forms of violence against women, and
- Within a socio-ecological model.

This section reviews evidence on sexual harassment within the workplace context. The section focusses on efforts within the workplace context and is largely located within the individual, interpersonal and community levels of the socio-ecological model (Figure 1).

At the level of the organisation, there has been a considerable exploration of the factors that enable or constrain sexual harassment from being reported when it occurs in workplaces. Reviewing evidence about the prevalence and reporting behaviours for sexual harassment in workplaces is outside the scope of this rapid review. However, it is important to note that underreporting is considered widespread. For example, Hunt et al., (2010) note that the UK Industrial Society found that only 5% of people who experienced sexual harassment at work had ever made a formal complaint against their harasser.

In their evidence review, McDonald et al., (2015) note considerable evidence 'that procedures for raising a complaint of sexual harassment do not adequately translate to effective voice mechanisms and often undermine reporting'.

### *Workplace incivility*

Sexual harassment is more than 'incivility', bringing with it the dynamics of gendered violence. However, the study of incivility underlines the role of management direction and guidelines on mistreatment levels amongst staff. That is, incivility arises from patterns of social interaction that are implicitly sanctioned by the management environment (Leiter et al., 2011).

Workplace incivility may be described as rude or discourteous behaviour that conveys disrespect toward others (Leiter et al., 2011). Schilpzand et al., (2016) distinguish workplace incivility, from other negative interpersonal behaviours by its low severity (unlike bullying or other forms aggression), unclear intent to harm, or the formal power differentials between people. However, incivility is positively related to sexual and gender harassment, and is negatively related to all facets of job, life and health satisfaction and well-being (Schilpzand et al., 2016 citing Lim and Cortina, 2005).

McDonald et al (2015a) reviews and summarises evidence as follows:

'Indeed, there is strong evidence to suggest that employees often perceive grievance processes to be:

- Adversarial and hostile (Marshall 2005; Vijayasiri 2008);
- Lacking confidentiality (Marshall 2005);
- Risky in terms of isolation or reprisal from the workgroup (Bowen & Blackmon 2003; Vijayasiri 2008); and
- Likely to fall on deaf ears (Harlos 2001).

Men in particular, who are less likely than women to name sexually harassing behaviours as sexual harassment (Nielsen et al., 2010), appear to be less willing to engage with formal complaint processes because doing so calls attention to their nonconformity to a traditional masculine stereotype (Stockdale et al., 1999; O'Leary-Kelly et al., 2000).

Grievance procedures in sexual harassment are often ineffective because the dual discourses of legal compliance and risk management in corporate policies (Charlesworth 2002; Thornton 2002) do more to protect employers from liability (a 'bureaucratic vaccine against lawsuits') than to protect or assist complainants' (Edelman, Erlanger and Lande 1993; Marshall 2005; Dobbin and Kelly 2007).

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In the context of the socio-ecological model, workplace incivility can be explored at the level of interpersonal relationships where research has found that organisations can influence the way in which employees interact. For example, Leiter et al., (2011) sought to quantify the effectiveness of ‘an organisational, unit-level intervention aimed at improving social relationships and civility as a means of improving employee and organisational outcomes’.

Consistent with a discussion about what works to shift social norms, having a focus on developing new social norms about what is appropriate (injunctive norms) is important. Leiter et al., (2011) propose that effective interventions addressing workplace incivility enable participants to interrupt negative exchanges and promote positive exchanges, inspiring ‘reciprocal action and building goodwill throughout the group’.

### *Workplace power*

‘Sexual harassment tends to be prevalent where there are increased power differentials between men and women’ (Hunt et al., 2010). Across the literature concerned with workplace sexual harassment – organisational psychology, social psychology, feminist discourse, prevention of gender-based violence – there is agreement that power, and in particular, power inequality between men and women is a significant contributing factor to harassment.

CARE’s work in factories has shown that the power and hierarchy dynamics in relation to sexual harassment in garment factories are myriad and complex. Factories are typically hierarchical with distinct power relations between levels of employees. High power differentials between men and women are known to be an environmental factor that contributes to sexual harassment. Kabat-Farr and Cortina (2013) refer to a ‘think manager—think male’ mindset which has informed rejection of women in positions of power and notes that stereotypes about masculinity (such as those of leadership and rationality) explain why men benefit where workplaces are predominantly women.

Conversely, research suggests women in positions of leadership are likely to be harassed **because** they are in leadership, that is, sexual harassment is a way of enforcing appropriate gender behaviour by those who view their supervisory power as illegitimate or easily undermined. Harassment acts to take away the power of women in supervisory roles by equating them with lower ranking employees. Harassment programs must include the possibility that the target of harassment is of higher rank in the organisation than the harasser.

### *Roles of organisations within a community*

Individual and social norms can be enabled or disabled in workplaces by the organisation’s operating environment. VicHealth’s *More than Ready Report* (2012) emphasises the role of organisational policies and culture as an enabler or constraint on social norms that allow violence against women, including sexual harassment to proceed uninterrupted. This section reviews research into the framing and mechanisms within organisations that can be used to understand, and ultimately prevent or respond to sexual harassment.

### *Organisational climate*

Sexual harassment in organisations can be understood ‘at the level of group culture - an organisational climate’. At an organisational level, **sexual harassment<sup>7</sup>** is a function of two conditions (Fitzgerald et al., 1997):

- Organisational climate; and
- Job gender context.

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<sup>7</sup> Emphasis added

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The organisational climate dimension of Fitzgerald et al., (1997) refers to organisational characteristics that communicate tolerance of sexual harassment. Women employees experienced considerably higher levels of harassment when they thought their organisations tolerated sexual harassment (for example complaints not being taken seriously), were concerned about making complaints, or that there were unlikely to be consequences for perpetrators, (Fitzgerald et al., 1997). The concept of 'organisational climate' is similar to that of workplace culture. Within the ecological model, it can be understood to be at the community level and be informed by the social norms that exist within a particular workplace ('the way we do things around here').

The job context dimension identified by Fitzgerald et al., (1997), relates to the gendered nature of the workgroup, for example, ratios of male to female workers, the level of security, the type of work being undertaken, including the level of skills required (Fitzgerald et al., 1997). Job context is consistent with the socio-ecological model's individual, interpersonal and community levels. It sets out social norms relating to occupational gender roles and the value placed on the type of work done by men and women, and the level of skills and job security of those roles.

Thinking about work and the workplace in terms of organisational climate and job context may provide a useful and accessible reference point from which to engage organisations and employees. As Chamberlain et al., (2008) point out:

*Although individuals act out sexual harassment, they do so within the context of organisations, which have been assigned a shared burden of responsibility...*

Further according to McDonald et al., (2015):

*... a focus on organisational and work-group level dynamics offers more comprehensive and nuanced explanatory potential... than do notions of attraction, occupation sex relations or roles, or exploitative or coercive power.*

## Models for addressing sexual harassment in the workplace

Models to inform organisational approaches to sexual harassment have been developed. These have evolved to reflect the growing evidence base about the drivers and the context in which sexual harassment occurs.

Drawing from their literature review of sexual harassment in the workplace, Hunt et al., (2010) developed an intervention model for workplaces to address sexual harassment. The model draws on the work of Fitzgerald et al. (1997) with the view that sexual harassment should be seen as an issue 'which needs to be addressed by the organisation, rather than simply increasing and improving and individuals' skills to deal with harassment' (Hunt et al., 2010).

A workplace's decisions and innovations can signal the commonly accepted or desirable behaviours or opinions expected from employees. This can be explicitly through policy, or implicitly, through organisational changes that affect behaviour and therefore norms (Tankard & Paluck, 2016). Addressing the explicit organisational context requires considering all the visible and practical elements of an organisation's operations.

Hunt et al., (2010) propose an organisational intervention model to address sexual harassment with interventions, which in summary are implemented in the following stages:

- Primary level – effective policies and procedures including education about sexual harassment and responding to it in a workplace
- Secondary level – effective complaints procedures and employees support, and
- Tertiary level – rehabilitation and follow-up stage.

In this framing, Hunt et al., (2010) propose a framework in which primary interventions refers to activities which take place before any injustice occurs, secondary interventions are immediate responses after an incident of sexual harassment has occurred, and tertiary prevention refers to long-term recovery responses. This approach differs from the socio-ecological model for violence against women discussed earlier in the definitions of primary, secondary and tertiary preventions.

McDonald et al., (2015) also adopt this approach and propose a workplace model for effective sexual harassment prevention which sets out the ideal components for workplaces to adopt in implementing a model. The work adopts a prevention strategy typology originating from the violence prevention literature, comprising primary, secondary and tertiary prevention (McDonald et al., 2015). Figure 4 shows the elements proposed: message, management and monitoring. In this proposed workplace model, each element would be formalised or otherwise included in the policy, guidance material and training activities of an organisation.<sup>8</sup> The authors note the importance of an integrated approach as ‘a written policy on its own is insufficient. A policy that is not implemented through communication, education and enforcement will be of little or no use’. Also there is a need for ‘effective high-level management and modelling, including the formulation and communication of policies relevant to sexual harassment as well as to *gender equality*<sup>9</sup> more broadly, and the allocation of appropriate resources for policy and training as a success factor’. Training should ‘explicitly address gender-relevant cultural issues’. The authors point to a study by Ely & Meyerson of workplace safety initiatives that broke down ‘gender stereotypes that conflate displays of masculinity with competency, thereby disrupting the gender status quo (‘undoing gender’) which often supports sexual harassment and other gendered workplace harms’ (McDonald et al., 2015). Unlike earlier intervention models, McDonald et al., (2015) include a commitment to broader gender equality as an essential element of an effective sexual harassment policy.

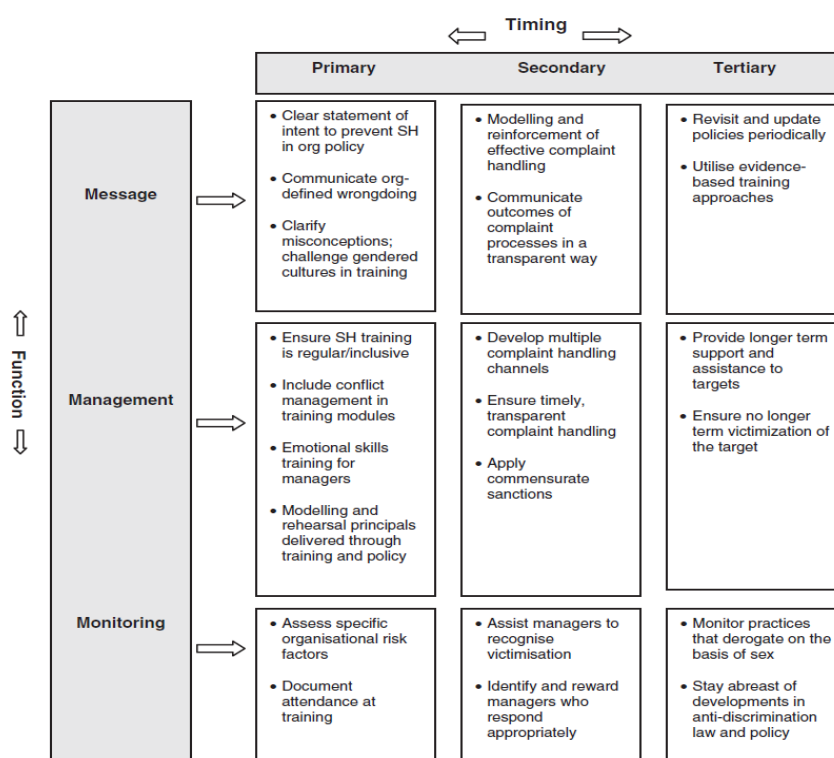


Figure 4: McDonald et al., (2015) Model for sexual harassment prevention

<sup>8</sup> This definition of primary, secondary and tertiary prevention differs from the general public health approach which is used in violence against women prevention literature, which is: Primary: whole of population initiatives that address the underlying drivers of violence; Secondary: aims to change the trajectory for individuals at higher than average risk; Tertiary: support survivors and holds perpetrators to account. (See Our Watch (2017) *Putting the Prevention of Violence Against Women into Practice: How to change the story*, Victoria Health, 2017 at 34.). In McDonald's formulation the classification reflects the timing of the intervention in relationship to an anticipated or actual incident of sexual harassment. This aligns with the work of Paluck.

<sup>9</sup> Author's italics

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### Evidence gap:

There has been little research into complex and multi-component interventions to transform masculinities within workplaces. The STOP Project could focus on masculinities in workplace contexts, working with men as managers, bystanders and employees separately and together with women to shift social norms about men and women at work.

The Australian Human Rights Commission lists five steps to prevent sexual harassment, which it argues are non-negotiables in a sexual harassment prevention model (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2008):

- Get high-level management support;
- Write and implement a sexual harassment policy;
- Provide regular training and information on sexual harassment to all staff and management;
- Encourage appropriate conduct by managers; and
- Create a positive workplace environment.

The work of McDonald et al., (2015) supports these steps, which reinforces the need for a strong understanding of what constitutes injustice and wrongdoing by senior management and throughout the organisation, high visibility of expected behavioural norms, organisational resourcing for message communication and training and incentives for good practice and commitment to broader gender equality goals. This organisational model has the greatest overlap with the socio-ecological model discussed earlier.

Powell et al., (2015) argue that positive organisational change occurs in the broader context of creating gender equity. This has significant implications for the scope of work within workplaces as it entails other organisational functions about sexual harassment such as workplace employment practices, remuneration, workplace flexibility, promotion pathways and so on.

It also noted that primary prevention (of violence against women) programming could be integrated into a workplace setting (Powell et al., 2015). Six key features (Casey & Lindhorst, 2009) underpin organisational approaches:

- **Comprehensiveness or a 'whole-of-organisation' approach:** utilising multiple strategies designed to initiate change at multiple levels within an organisation (e.g. individual, colleagues and management), and for multiple outcomes (e.g. staff knowledge and attitudes, formal policy and practices, as well as informal culture and behaviours);
- **Addressing structural factors:** targeting structural and underlying causes of social problems for change rather than focusing only on individual behaviour or the 'symptoms' of larger problems;
- **Contextualised programming:** designing intervention strategies that are consistent with the broader social, economic and political context of the workplace/organisation;
- **Health and strengths promotion:** simultaneously working to enhance existing workplace/organisational resources and strengths while addressing risk factors;
- **Staff engagement:** collaborating with workplace/organisational members in the process of identifying targets for change and designing change strategies; and
- **Theory-based:** grounding strategy design in a sound theoretical rationale.

The review undertaken by Powell et al., (2015), informed Our Watch's development of the *Workplace Equality and Respect Standards* (2017) and accompanying tools for workplaces to prevent violence against women. Powell et al., (2015) summarised examples of interventions across the spectrum from primary prevention (building gender equality in workplaces) to responding to violence against women in the workplace after it occurs, these are set out in Table 7.

Model	Area of focus	Example Activities
Responding to Violence	Knowledge / Attitudes	<b>Awareness-raising</b> communications across organisation about the extent and nature of intimate partner violence and how to support staff who may be experiencing it. <b>Leadership is active</b> in speaking about intimate partner violence. <b>Support/referral Information</b> for potential targets and perpetrators made available throughout the workplace.
	Behaviours / Informal Culture / Practices	<b>Managers</b> and key contact staff trained to recognise the signs of family violence, respond appropriately to disclosures, and refer to services.
	Structures / Formal Policies / Procedures	<b>Family Violence Leave Provisions</b> , and <b>Flexible Work Policy &amp; Safety Planning</b> in addition to legislative requirements (e.g. Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth), and Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 (Cth)).
Preventing Violence Against Women	Knowledge / Attitudes	<b>Awareness-raising</b> communications across organisation about the extent and nature of violence against women, and the connection between sexism, rigid gender-roles and gender stereotyping in supporting violence against women. <b>Leadership is active</b> in speaking about violence against women, and challenging sexist cultures and practices within workplaces.
	Behaviours / Informal Culture / Practices	<b>Managers</b> and key contact staff trained in recognising and responding to sexism and discriminatory or exclusive gendered practices. <b>Staff</b> trained in taking pro-social action as bystanders when they witness sexism and discriminatory or exclusive gendered practices.
	Structures / Formal Policies / Procedures	<b>Employee Codes of Conduct</b> and/or Values Statements commit to intolerance of sexism, discrimination and violence against women, in addition to meeting legislative requirements (e.g. Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth), and Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 (Cth)).
Promoting Gender Equity & Respect	Attitudes / Norms	<b>Awareness-raising</b> communications across organisation about the foundations and causes of gender inequality, sexism, discrimination, unconscious gender bias and promoting respectful relationships. <b>Leadership is active</b> in speaking about valuing females and males equally, promoting the same rights, opportunities and rewards across the organisation including women's equal participation in decision-making and pay structures.
	Behaviours / Informal Culture / Practices	<b>Managers</b> are trained to recognise and address unconscious gender bias in workplace decision-making and practice. <b>Leadership training</b> for women to encourage and promote women in leadership positions.
	Structures / Formal Policies / Procedures	<b>Reporting</b> to the Workplace Gender Equality Agency. <b>Building</b> a gender equality strategy in consultation with staff. <b>Review</b> of hiring and promotion policies and practices to attract and retain quality women employees.

Table 7: Table of the spectrum of activities from primary prevention to responses to violence against women, including sexual harassment (Powell et al. 2015)

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Unlike the models proposed by Hunt et al., (2010) and McDonald et al., (2015a), the Our Watch model is framed around business functions required to build gender equality (reduce gender inequality as the driver of violence against women) rather than the points at which different types of interventions are required (prior to individual incidents of sexual harassment or after it has occurred). Earlier models give greater weight to responding to incidents of sexual harassment, and focus on preventing individual incidents of sexual harassment without addressing its root causes or factors outside the workplace. McDonald et al., (2015) note in proposing their model that there is a significant opportunity for new research:

*The conceptual framing of sexual harassment as an individual problem, rather than one with causes and consequences at a systemic level (McCann 2005; McDonald & Charlesworth 2013), has limited the development of effective organisational responses. The development of comprehensive response frameworks that address workplace sexual harassment has also been conceptually limited in that the sexual harassment literature has developed as largely distinct from other potentially relevant perspectives on workplace misconduct and injustice. That is, while the sexual harassment literature is cross-disciplinary, underpinned by concepts from sociology, psychology, organisational and feminist studies, and law, it has evolved in a relative silo from other perspectives on organisational wrongdoing that could provide useful insights in preventing and redressing sexual harassment.*

McDonald et al., (2015), propose organisations undertake approaches that are consistent with those proposed in broader primary prevention literature to reduce gender inequality. Powell et al., (2015) note that 'stakeholders identified different entry points into the development of a workplace program...Promising practice in the sector means working with organisations to see where they are at and what topics and issues they are comfortable with and slowly working together to transform attitudes and facilitate organisational and cultural change' (Powell et al., 2015).

At the same time, the interventions proposed by Powell et al., (2015) require whole of organisational approaches with closely overlapping elements (for example leadership, capability, effective policies and communications). Our Watch's proposed five standards are discussed in more detail in Part B:

1. Secure the commitment of leaders and staff;
2. Ensure conditions support gender equality;
3. Reject sexist and discriminatory culture;
4. Support staff and stakeholders who experience violence; and
5. Integrate gender equality into your core business.

#### **Insight for the STOP project:**

Consider leadership and employee starting points, existing norms and understanding where an organisation is on its pathway to respond better and ultimately prevent violence against women, starting and sequencing work to support believable and iterative changes to workplace norm and processes will need to be done on a case-by-case basis. For example, individual leaders may have family members who have been sexually harassed and feel committed to begin work at the response end, or there may be union focus on workplace safety. For others, talking about sexual harassment may be distasteful and focusing upstream (such as on setting standards of behaviour or focusing on emerging customer requirements) may be a more conducive starting point.

Using the Our Watch self-assessment tool as a framework for Table 8 makes it evident that approaches suggested by Hunt et al., (2010) and McDonald et al., (2015) can be understood as a subset of the model proposed by the Our Watch standards. Against each of these standards, organisations can focus on leadership, strategy and norms and practices. To support implementation of these standards, Our Watch has developed a toolkit for workplaces which include a self-assessment tool, an implementation guide, a staff survey, as well as other resources such as templates, good practice examples and guidance on communications, engaging leaders and dealing with backlash (Our Watch et al., 2015).

Our Watch Standards				Elements of workplace primary, secondary and tertiary intervention models
Standard	Element	Element	Element	
	<i>Leadership</i>	<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Norms and Practices</i>	
Secure commitment of leaders and staff in preventing violence against women	•			Partially indicated although note a feature of intervention models. McDonald et al (2015) indicate that sexual harassment policies should be implemented alongside broader gender equality policies.
Ensure conditions support gender equality				Not required. The literature on best practice sexual harassment policies defines sexual harassment behaviourally. Maybe a feature of other workplace policies such as workplace discrimination or equal opportunity
Reject sexist and discriminatory culture				Not required in sexual harassment policies. Maybe a feature of other workplace policies such as workplace discrimination or equal opportunity
Support staff and stakeholders who experience violence	•			Leadership required to initiate and maintain and enforce whole of organisational processes.
		•		Development, implementation and communication of workplace sexual harassment policies and complaints mechanisms.
		•		Provide regular training to employees to ensure they understand their rights and responsibilities concerning workplace policy, its implementation and complaints mechanism.
			•	McDonald et al (2015) suggest communicating outcomes of complaint processes in transparent ways. (See figure 4)
Integrate gender equality into your core business		•		Not required for gender equality. Maybe a feature of other policies such as workplace discrimination or equal opportunity. The whole of organisational approaches recognised as necessary to lead and sustain sexual harassment policy positions and processes. McDonald et al (2015) note requirements to monitor training attendance, identify and reward managers who respond appropriately, monitor practice, and stay ahead of practice in anti-discrimination law and policy.

Table 8: Mapping the Our Watch framework against alternate models

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## Part B: Review of the evidence – what works to reduce sexual harassment in the workplace?

The framing of prevention and resulting models may differ. However, all models reviewed imply that any attempt to address sexual harassment must take a whole of organisation approach. In choosing an approach, leaders should consider organisational readiness to engage with the practical measures that can be taken and the learning required to make the shift. Organisations should aim to shift understanding upstream linking sexual harassment to violence against women and ultimately to gender equality and equity.

This section of the rapid review explores the evidence about the elements comprising these models. Rigorous evidence about the longer term impact of primary prevention interventions (those that address gender inequality) in workplaces is very limited. The section discusses promising examples of practice. Notwithstanding the complexities of operating within a workplace context (resourcing, time commitments and so on), the underpinning principles remain relevant.

Chung et al., (2012) point to the need for review and evaluation of initiatives to support a growing evidence base for what works in practice and to achieve outcomes. One avenue is that programs ‘examine gender equity and violence prevention [through] workplace audits and surveys [that] could be combined to include both related components in research, monitoring and evaluation’.

### Insight for the STOP project:

A policy and process audit is a useful starting point to gain leadership’s insights and expectations about workplace processes and behaviours and terms and conditions of employment. Where policies are non-existent, the STOP project will need to understand the mechanisms through which these expectations are set and how they are communicated within workplaces, and what feedback mechanism leadership has about their implementation and performance.

Audits can include a gender analysis of the workforce profile, recruitment, rates of progression, opportunities for learning and development opportunities, organisation culture and environment, and workplace policies and procedures. In Australia, publicly available reports on such audits include independent reviews into Victoria Police, South Australia Police, Australian Federal Police and others.<sup>10</sup>

This section looks at four components for successful workplace interventions to prevent and respond to sexual harassment:

1. Leadership commitment;
2. Policies, planning and strategies;
3. Workplace practices and norms; and
4. Training, learning and capacity.

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<sup>10</sup> These can be seen at <http://www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au/index.php/component/k2/item/1056-independent-review-into-sex-discrimination-and-sexual-harassment-including-predatory-behaviour-in-victoria-police>, <http://www.eoc.sa.gov.au/eo-resources/EOC-Independent-Review>, <https://www.afp.gov.au/culturalchange>

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## Leadership Commitment

Effective workplace measures need a visible and proactive stance by organisational leaders against sexual harassment (Gruber, 1998; Hunt et al., 2010; McDonald et al., 2015).

Experience in gaining leadership commitment in Australia involved pitching this as either a business case, a moral case, or both, and in doing so compelling corporate and business sectors to recognise the costs of violence. Not surprisingly, however, research has identified that the diverse contexts of organisations have implications for the rationale that will motivate leadership and clarify the best pathway for them to begin work. Convincing leaders that the benefits to the organisations (business case) will also benefit the leaders themselves underpins most approaches to change (Holmes & Flood, 2013). For success, such approaches to change requires men who are leaders to recognise and relinquish their power as men, which may be intertwined with their professional profile and character, in a very public way. Holmes and Flood (2013) note a range of leadership responses from outright hostility, passive resistance (acknowledgement without commitment) to supporting initiatives to prevent violence against women in the workplace (including sexual harassment and gender harassment). A later section provides more information about responding to resistance.

Engaging male leaders and men as champions of change to buy into the work of preventing sexual harassment recognise that men are predominantly responsible for perpetrating sexual harassment (Holmes & Flood, 2013). The independent review into Victoria Police noted that 'it will be important for all managers to be mindful of the individual and collective credibility of their leadership and to reflect deeply on their experiences and accountability when advocating for change' (Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission, 2015).

Strategies to engage men reflect the varied gendered context of workplaces, as well as the different stages of readiness for leaders and their organisations to engage. Powell et al. (2015) point to the need for research on the effectiveness of increasing leaders' awareness of gendered power relations, at different stages of change (Powell et al., 2015). Following an organisational change process (discussed in Policies, Planning and Strategy) sends the message that leadership support the development and introduction of a policy to prevent and respond to sexual harassment (McDonald et al., 2015). Building senior management and executive level support requires consistent focus and effort.

In addition to understanding the existing gender norms, an understanding of leadership norms and practices is necessary to frame engagement with leadership. Applied research into leadership approaches (in reviews of police forces within Australia, military services in Australia and US) point to a command and control approach to leadership and management. Holmes and Flood (2013) characterise leaders as 'tough, take-no-nonsense, authoritarian...careful not to show any weakness, and expects no dissent. Looking mainly to consolidate his power, this leader consults minimally if at all and is not interested in empowering other people' (Holmes & Flood, 2013). This leadership style creates a workplace culture in which managers learn or perceive it as the only management option. Importantly, two types of leadership - authoritarian and laissez-faire styles – are associated with increased likelihood of harassment and bullying taking place in an organisation (Hunt et al., 2010). Identifying motivating starting points to engage with such leaders can be challenging. Tankard and Paluck (2016) note that leaders can influence behaviour 'without directly asking employees to change their behaviour'

Working with bodies outside an individual workplace to sponsor and support men's change is one way of engaging male leaders through less threatening entry points, one example may be through industry bodies, or through management training programs (Powell et al., 2015). Engaging male leaders effectively should ensure that survivors are adequately supported, and, should not detract from wider efforts to improve the number of women in leadership. Male Champions of Change programs have provided a platform for CEOs to engage in dialogue and shared a commitment to improving gender equality in their workplaces.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> See for example <http://malechampionsofchange.com/>, <http://malechampionsofchange.com/male-champions-change-fire-emergency/>

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### Insight for the STOP project:

Consider both personal and organisational motivations for leaders to engage with the Project. For example, notwithstanding the literature regarding the benefits of diversity for organisational performance, many men in leadership talk about their daughters' career prospects as driving their personal commitment to improve diversity.

## Framing change

Developing the right messages is critical. Chung et al., (2012) suggest promising approaches include working with local women's service providers in a partnership and, testing prevention messages with a representative group of employees to consider how the language and messaging will be perceived across the workforce (Chung et al., 2012). VicHealth (2018) guidance on framing interventions encourages designing interventions based on social norms theory by identifying existing norms and understanding the reference group. VicHealth guidance identifies the elements required to frame messaging as:

*continually articulate the rationale and benefits, noting the benefits to men as well as to women offer clear, compelling accounts of the problem and the solutions – real-life stories and personal accounts from within our organisations and settings are extraordinarily powerful acknowledge that gender is personal, interpersonal and structural and that it involves unequal relations of power.*

In Vic Health's discussion of framing gender equality in a union context, framing of gender equality in terms of the shared values of an occupational health and safety issues, one of 'standing together' and 'leaving no one behind' had particular resonance. VicHealth also produced a toolkit based on pilot activities in eight diverse Victorian workplaces, which provides tools for organisations to start the engagement, whatever their starting point is. The toolkit provides messaging tested in Victorian workplaces and indicates program design principles that may be relevant in other contexts (VicHealth, 2012).

## Formal leadership focus on implementation

In choosing a starting point for work, the program will need to consider where it is most likely to gain traction (Powell et al., 2015). Historically, legal requirements in many jurisdictions such as the U.S and Australia have meant organisational strategy and its implementation has been guided by legal requirements. Consequently, approaches have focused on responding to sexual harassment in the first instance.

The Australian Human Rights Commission outlines ways employers can use sexual harassment policy development to signal their intention to take action against sexual harassment. The Commission suggests employers officially launch the policy, gain endorsement from the highest senior manager, distribute the policy widely, include the policy in induction, request employees to sign that they have understood the policy, display the policy, and assign responsibility for circulating and reviewing the policy (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2008). In doing so, it is important to note that middle management can be perceived as the group most resistant to change (Powell et al., 2015).

Individual champions or key figures are critical to creating change. Research in Australia recommended that champions be in leadership and middle management and that a person should have key responsibilities to address sexual harassment. That person should be supported appropriately to minimise the risk of their burn out. The same research noted that there was a risk of key responsibilities to address sexual harassment falling to the relatively few women in leadership, even though, senior and mid-level managers are overwhelmingly men (Powell et al., 2015). Where possible, avoid shifting responsibilities to address sexual harassment to women in a leadership position.

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In designing interventions, consider workplace performance imperatives that drive middle management. Workplace performance imperatives can support framing the shift of behaviour and norms required. Some middle managers may be interested in engaging in efforts to prevent and respond to sexual harassment; their performance measures can constrain or enable those efforts.

## Perceptions of commitment

A range of factors undermines employees perception of an organisation's commitment to addressing sexual harassment. Chung et al. (2016) note evidence from North American workplaces emphasised that senior employees with decision making power must promote policies and changes if they are to create change in the workplace, and that as the issue moved outside the human resources function this was particularly important, as complaints individualised and could become a private issue for individual workers.

Good work can be undone where complaints are not 'seen' to be fairly addressed. For organisations who fail to gain and maintain leadership support, there are risks. In a study of the US military, Vijayasiri (2008) found organisations that encourage employees to report sexual harassment through policy dissemination and training can fail them in implementation, potentially due to a lack of leadership commitment.

This lack of meaningful follow-through of an organisation's public 'commitment' can make people less willing and confident to report. In other words, if employees perceive a disconnect between the protections promised by the sexual harassment policy and the effectiveness of complaint handling in practice, this could discourage employees from making further reports of sexual harassment. In the long term, this is likely to undermine organisational change. Sexual harassment training is less successful when employees are cynical towards an organisation's commitment to change and value of staff and believe that their workgroup is unethical (Cheung et al., 2017).

## Informal leadership

In work on changing perceived social norms, models have identified the concept of social referents, people who are particularly influential over others' perceptions of norms. In the development discourse, these people may be called 'changemakers', or, 'agents of change'. They need not be high in status or leaders to be effective, their relevance to driving norm change comes from personal connections to targets and their number of connections throughout the group. Where an individual within a reference group is influential or popular, individuals will look to that person to understand a social norm and will assume that others do too (Tankard & Paluck, 2016).

In work in schools in which individual (social referents) were trained to model anti-harassment behaviours, students with multiple points of connection to the referent were more likely to perceive harassment as not desirable (Tankard and Paluck, 2016). How social referents engaged through anti-harassment work included, public speaking about the importance of not harassing, performing skits, talking to peers, and selling merchandise with anti-harassment messages (Tankard & Paluck, 2016).

Informal leaders can play a role in building perceptions that work to prevent and responding to sexual harassment is an ongoing priority, not only a temporary promotion. One example is that a network of workplace advisers can support employees to build their knowledge and confidence about the issue and their role (Chung et al., 2012).

There is little evidence about the effectiveness of engaging informal champions of change for gender equality in workplaces. Organisations such as White Ribbon in Canada and Australia provide tools for engaging men, through a public pledge for men 'never to remain silent about violence against women', the appointment of ambassadors, organising events for White Ribbon Day and workplace accreditation process. At this stage, there is no evidence regarding whether or not these are effective initiatives. The implications of public scrutiny of the value of branded programs such as White Ribbon, such as publicity

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around the poor screening of ambassadors, should be considered in the context of efforts to shift social norms as discussed in the section on Workplace Practices and Norms.

Holmes and Flood (2012) cite a report from the United States that listed three characteristics that enabled men to be more gender aware and have greater potential to act as informal leaders. Those characteristics were defiance of some masculine norms, having women mentors and having a strong sense of fair play. They suggested where there is no formal leadership engagement; these characteristics may help guide identification of informal leaders (Holmes & Flood, 2013).

**Insights for STOP the project:**

- Identifying ways to engage organisational leadership to support change and sustain ongoing commitment to implementation is a critical early step.
- Engagement strategies need build from the starting point of leaders' and organisational readiness (start where it's warm) and support their evolution.
- Leadership can be engaged through internal and external mechanism and platforms.
- Informal leaders, including men, will be important to identify and influence workplace norms.

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## Policies, planning, and strategies

### Strategy and planning

Organisations will vary in their readiness and motivation for change. Figure 5 describes one view of a process of organisational change from the 'awareness pre-contemplation' stage, when knowledge and awareness needs to be raised for the benefits of change, to the 'reinforcement maintenance' stage, when organisational change is internalised, and new behaviours are substituted for old ways of working (Powell et al., 2015).

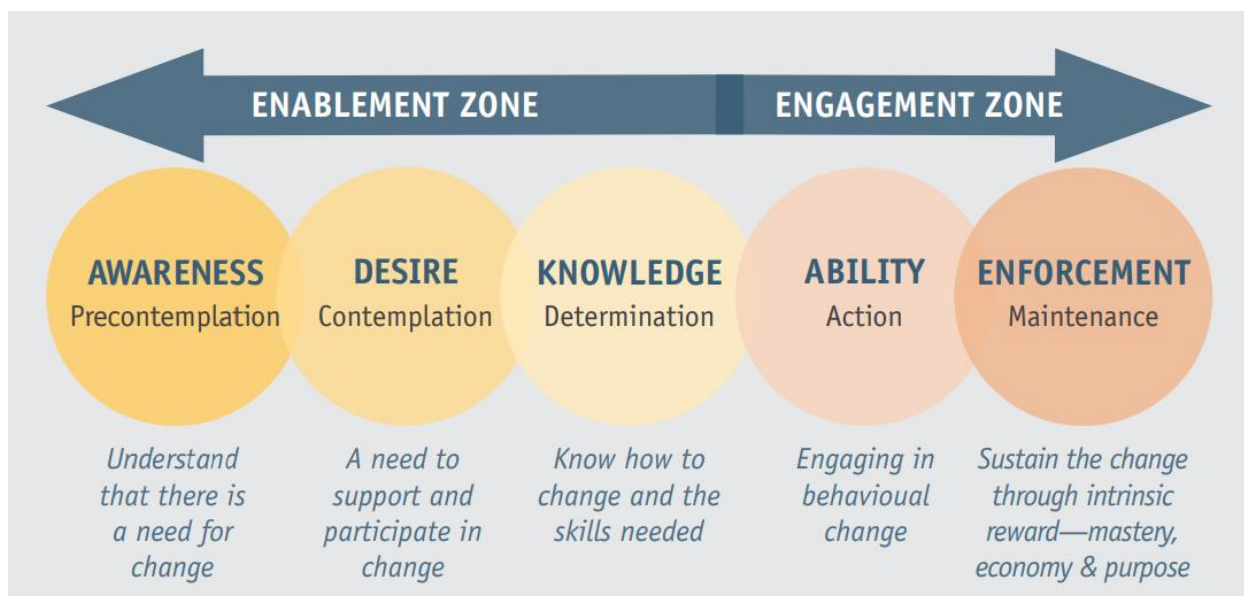


Figure 5: Organisational change process (reproduced)

Understanding where an organisation is in this process is essential for planning a relevant and achievable program of work. Chung et al., (2012) cite research that classifies organisational culture into three types – compliant, reactive and proactive - to indicate why some workplaces can work to address sexual harassment more easily than others. Workplaces with compliant and reactive organisational cultures are more likely to be motivated by 'regulatory requirements and management direction' while proactive organisational cultures are more likely to support diversity as being productive and valuable. Chung et al., (2012) suggest identifying the culture will be key to identifying starting points for work.

Workplace surveys, assessments and audits can provide useful information about worker experiences and can commence a process of engagement. There is a range of tools available such as the Occupational Health and Safety Council of Ontario model (2010), or the Our Watch Framework provides a self-assessment tool (Chung et al., 2012). Should employees be engaged in a benchmarking exercise, whether in the form of a survey, assessment or audit, it is important to communicate ensuing planning or intended activities so that, employees do not become disengaged from or cynical about the process.

### Policies

Sexual harassment is routinely under-reported (Vijayasiri, 2008), and so it is likely that the effectiveness of a policy is linked to the systems and culture in which it is implemented, as well as workplace and broader social norms.

As mapped against the Our Watch standards in Table 8 sexual harassment policies can be seen as part of an organisation's efforts against Standard 5 (Support). There may be other workplace policies in place,

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such as anti-discrimination policies, equal opportunity policies or diversity and inclusion policies that complement the sexual harassment policy. For example, recruitment and promotion processes or workplace flexibility provisions.

While designed to equip sporting associations to implement comprehensive and well-supported bystander program, the VicHealth *Stepping in* bystander action toolkit provides useful guidance for small organisations to consider the policy and programming requirements to promote gender equality (VicHealth, 2012).

The sexual harassment policy is a core component of the explicit organisational environment, sending a clear message about what is expected in the organisation. Research suggests that workplace sexual harassment policies do affect both men's and women's behaviour (Gruber, 1998). However, research documenting the effect of policies on preventing or reducing sexual harassment is scarce (Hunt et al., 2010).

## Policy content

Sexual harassment policies have traditionally focused on responding to sexual harassment and providing information to employees about what individuals should expect from their employer if they experience sexual harassment.

Chung et al., (2012) note that while their intent should be to say that sexual harassment (as a form of violence against women) is unacceptable, zero-tolerance policy approaches have been criticised. As we will see in our discussion of evidence about what works to shift social norms, zero-tolerance statements alone are not sufficient if they do not create a dialogue about why violence against women is important to address. Zero-tolerance approaches can also make a target fearful of making a complaint (Chung et al., 2012). Where the target or others see the consequences for the harassers as not proportionate to the seriousness of complaint, reporting may represent an unnecessarily high social cost for the target.

A policy should be based on principles of procedural fairness and aligned with principles of natural justice (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2008). A complainant should perceive the process to be fair, even if they do not agree with the outcome (McDonald et al., 2015). Gruber (1998), McDonald et al., (2015), and the Australian Human Rights Commission identify core content for sexual harassment policies:

- The inclusion of a statement of intent to enforce the policy seriously and promptly, with specifications of penalties;
- An outline of the organisation's objectives regarding sexual harassment;
- An unambiguous definition of sexual harassment;
- Examples of sexual harassment that may be relevant to the particular working environment;
- A statement that sexual harassment is against the law;
- The circumstances in which sexual harassment may occur;
- The consequences / penalties for policy breach;
- Responsibilities of management and staff;
- Information on where individuals can get help, advice or make a complaint;
- A summary of the options available for dealing with sexual harassment;

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- Outline of grievance mechanisms - these should be perceived to be accessible, and in ones in which employees can have confidence and provide some choice to potential targets of harassment, for example, the Australian Human Rights Commission recommends both an informal complaints procedure and a formal complaints procedure for flexibility;
  - Offer multiple reporting channels - for example, a supervisor, another manager or a designated complaints officer;
  - Outline the process that will take place following a report of harassment – this should be safe and credible processes which follow principles of procedural fairness; and
  - Outline support and follow up after a decision is made on the complaint.

McDonald et al., (2015) cite research that asserts that sexual harassment policies should take into account gender power differentials and policies should be defined in gender-specific terms.

## Policy development

In part, social norms and perceived power relationships between employees and their employer influences the development of workplace policies.

Hunt et al., (2010) proposed that policies should be based on empowerment principles, not protectionist principles to avoid increasing sex segregation or prohibition of all relationships (Hunt et al., 2010). Experience in Bangladesh in export processing zones found very low sexual harassment, but this was accompanied by minimal worker freedom, restrictions on all communications between workers and minute regulation of worker movements (Siddiqui, 2009).

Developing workplace policies in consultation with employees may be one opportunity for organisations to build workforce engagement with the policy if it is perceived safe by employees to engage in that way. Consultative processes are considered to result in better policies. Consultation enhances buy-in at all levels of organisations because sexual harassment is portrayed as a ‘community concern’ rather than an individual problem resulting in reactive, disciplinary procedures (McDonald et al., 2015). Further, consultation to develop sexual harassment policies may also act to protect those who would seek to make a complaint from further negative consequences.

Including discussion of other forms of engagement with employees as part of policy development processes can be an opportunity to initiate a broader conversation about gender equality. Assessments of current norms and organisational readiness of each workplace will inform the appropriateness such efforts. The section below on workplace practices and norms discusses the importance of drawing on evidence about what works to shift social norms in any engagement process.

## Communication of sexual harassment policy

Gruber (1998) notes that the message of sexual harassment policies and procedures may be as important as the content. That is ‘What an organisation does regarding creating and implementing policies and procedures may change the climate of the organisation if these efforts are perceived to be credible’ (Gruber, 1998). Communication and launch of the policy is a key step in overall change efforts.

Communication about and the launch of the policy provides a platform to demonstrate:

- Leadership commitment – communication about and launch of the policy is an ideal space to show leadership backing and support for the policy;

- The process of development – a consultative process in which employees were involved is likely to enhance the credibility of the policy;
- Employee confidence – the launch of the policy can outline how the mechanism works and its fairness, therefore increasing confidence to use it;
- Training and Implementation Plans –outlining expectations and requirements about training (see section on Training, Learning and Capacity) and timelines for policy implementation; and
- The broader workplace environment – modelling the changes sought in the wider workplace environment so that it reinforces the desired norms in the workplace

The discussion and evidence about what constitutes a good sexual harassment policy highlight the need to articulate what sexually harassing behaviours are, expected standard of behaviour, what the organisation will do to build an understanding of its policy, and how the organisation will respond to reports of sexual harassment.

At an organisational level, educational resources and targeted social norms campaigns such as poster/website campaigns, staff newsletter articles, workplace forums or events have promise (Chung et al., 2012). It is critical for organisations to understand that the development and implementation of sexual harassment policies are a **necessary but not sufficient** condition to embark on a broader effort to shift norms about violence against women in the workplace.

## Complaints management

Complaints management is a cornerstone of sexual harassment policies. Guidance on sexual harassment complaint handling acknowledges the complexity and sensitivities that are often present in complaints of sexual harassment (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2008; McDonald et al., 2015). Those reporting sexual harassment face barriers such as perceptions of an adversarial and hostile process, lack of confidentiality, risk regarding isolation and reprisal, and concerns about the lack of a result once a complaint is made (McDonald et al., 2015).

Appropriate, transparent and fair systems are essential to support policy implementation. Ideally, this will include independent stakeholder engagement or oversight. However, there are other means to achieve transparency. Systems to support the policy need to take barriers and sensitivities into account: clearly articulating policy and process, and, providing supporting guidance material so that there is clarity for all staff.

### Informal complaints

Informal complaints procedures emphasise resolution rather than proof of wrongdoing. This method of resolution might be more suitable for less serious complaints and where the parties are likely to continue to come into contact with one another at work. Information resolution can include a supervisor or another person of some authority conveying privately that sexual harassment behaviours are unacceptable and must stop.

### Formal complaints

Undertaking a formal investigation may be more appropriate if the allegations are serious, the power imbalance is great, there is fear of retaliation, and/ or informal procedures have not worked. According to the Australian Human Rights Commission, formal complaint procedures usually include:

- Investigation of the allegations;
- Application of the principles of procedural fairness;
- Making a finding as to whether the harassment occurred;
- Submitting a report with a recommended course of action to a decision-maker; and
- Implementation of the outcome.

**Source:** Australian Human Rights Commission - Options for Informal and Formal Complaints, p. 33

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As noted above, procedural fairness is a key component of an effective system. Procedural fairness refers to the basic elements required in a complaint process to ensure a just outcome, including (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2008):

- Notice of the complaint to the alleged harasser so they can respond to the allegations;
- Notice to the complainant if the alleged harasser has a different version of events so they too can respond;
- A chance to be heard given to all parties; and
- The decision maker is impartial and acts honestly, without bias.

Procedural fairness can be embodied in broader systems, and according to the Australian Human Rights Commission and McDonald et al., (2015), these include the following elements.

- **Multiple reporting channels** - for example, a supervisor, another manager or a designated complaints officer (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2008); and
- **Flexibility in the formality of procedure** - the Australian Human Rights Commission recommends both an informal complaints procedure and a formal complaints procedure for flexibility, refer to the text box below.
- **Timely investigations** - some studies say that this less important than safety and credibility (McDonald et al., 2015).
- **The option to access mediation** - some evidence shows that the use of an 'outside' mediator is effective in resolving workplace disputes (McDonald et al., 2015) and studies have also found that universities with a more consultative approach in managing complaints had higher reporting rates (Hunt et al., 2010).
- **A safe process that manages the fear of and potential for retaliation** - retaliation is regularly and reasonably feared (Bergman et. at. 2002). There is a correlation between a greater fear of reporting and a higher prevalence of harassment (Reese & Lendenburg, 2003). Vijayasiri's (2008) study found that a fear of co-worker mistreatment due to complaining about harassment was a reason for the lack of reporting. Longer term oversight may be needed to support a person who has experienced harassment and to ensure there is no retaliation or further targeting (McDonald et al., 2015). Studies have shown that people who report sexual harassment are perceived as 'less feminine and not likable' and 'less trustworthy' than those who did not report (Signal et al., 2003).
- **Commensurate sanctions** - weak sanctions indicate 'a climate of tolerance' (McDonald et al., 2015).
- **Acknowledging an evidence deficit in formal investigations** - often the behaviour takes place in private, without witnesses. Even if evidence cannot substantiate a complaint, it does not mean that the harassment did not occur or the person making the complaint is not telling the truth. The finding may be that the evidence was inconclusive (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2008; McDonald et al., 2015).

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## Continuous improvement

Complaint handling should not end with a finding or not of harassment, a report and action taken. An organisation's workplace policy and guidance material should address this. McDonald et al., (2015) state:

*Longer-term interventions in particular have been largely neglected in the extant literature, highlighting the need to balance the current emphases on policy and training (primary prevention) and short-term responses (secondary preventions) with strategies that address some of the significant longer term damage caused by sexual harassment.*

### Insights for the STOP project

- Where possible, empowerment principles should underpin policy development.
  - Policy content needs to balance best practice and legal obligations with what will be deliverable and be supported by ongoing leadership commitment.
  - Policies need to be clear about objectives, processes and penalties – policies can change and evolve over time as organisations' approaches become more sophisticated.
  - Communicate and launch the sexual harassment policy for widespread awareness and contribution to change efforts.
  - Ensure the communication of policy builds in leadership accountability for its implementation, outlines action plans for training, and supports messaging about expected norms in the broader workplace environment.
- Set out a complaints process that is characterised by:
- Flexible entry points
  - Procedural fairness
  - Monitoring and continuous improvement
  - Communication of summarised complaints data
  - Safe and appropriate referral pathways to service providers with expertise in sexual harm should be identified.
- Consider whether or how policies addressing sexual harassment interact with other policies and strategies that are designed to address gender inequality.
  - Consider partnering with a women's service to support process (as noted in the section on framing change) to seek content expertise and/or develop referral pathways (see complaints section).

Organisations should incorporate responsibilities for revisiting records and processes for improvement over time, including:

- Proper complaint recording systems (with confidentiality);
- Analysis of complaints to alert the organisations to patterns of unacceptable behaviour so prevention strategies can be targeted (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2008);
- Learning lessons from and improving training; and
- Revisiting and improving the sexual harassment policy and guidance material, especially if there are legal changes.

By gathering information, consolidating and reviewing it, organisations can gain insight into the particular organisational norms and practices that are shaping occurrences of sexual harassment. Shifting the focus from the aberrant behaviour of individuals to a systemic level allows effective challenging of the status quo (McDonald et al., 2015).

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Summary information about matters such as sexual harassment complaints and their handling can be used to model the explicit organisational context and shape norms. Tankard and Paluck (2016) find that sharing summary information can help to shift people's perception of a norm (of what is typical among their reference group).

## External referrals

Where an issue of sexual harassment has the potential to escalate to criminal matter (such as sexual assault and/or has significant impacts on an individual's health and well-being), there is a need to engage service providers in supporting survivors and providing them with appropriate information regarding law and justice actors. Hunt et al., (2010) include referral and psychosocial support as part of secondary and tertiary interventions for workplaces. While ideal, this may not be practical in many settings. For engagement with law and justice agencies, specialised law enforcement units are increasingly being established, such as women's police stations and specialised domestic violence courts. These seek to create standards and spaces where reporting is encouraged, and responsiveness prioritised (Paluck & Ball, 2010).

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## Workplace practices and norms

Organisational culture is a set of shared assumptions that guide what happens in organisations by defining appropriate behaviour for various situations (Ravasi & Schultz, 2006). As discussed in Part A, workplace culture gives expression to social norms about leadership, work and gender, among other things. There is a significant body of research examining organisational identity and culture which is outside of this review's scope. However, research on preventing sexual harassment in workplaces, consistently, include organisational culture as a critical element of any effective program of work.

Research in social psychology finds that strong norms of equal opportunity and job and diversity training can motivate organisations 'to behave in non-discriminatory ways (Correll, et al., 2007), and not merely to be negatively influenced by their implicit associations (Mitchell & Tetlock, 2008), and even explicit evaluations' (Al Ramiah et al., 2010).

Bell et al. (2002), cited by Hunt et al., (2010) argue for a strong organisational culture, which aims to show intolerance of sexual harassment. McDonald et al., (2015) and the Australian Human Rights Commission also underscore the importance of the wider workplace culture.

Undertaking interventions in the workplace environment to change perceived norms can be integrated into wider workplace settings, such as through:

- Building employees shared understanding about sexual harassment (employee understanding);
- Addressing management approaches and styles of leaders (see sections on leadership and training for supervisors and managers);
- The use of social referents or informal leaders to lead wider campaigns regarding norms change Embedding organisation responses to bystander intervention (see training for bystanders section); and
- Having a responsive complaint system and sharing summary data about outcomes of complaints.

As discussed in Part A, in workplaces where women experience a low-level culture of jokes, being belittled or demeaned, or being stereotyped by their gender, can create a hostile workplace for women and this can have significant impacts on them. Wood (2012) suggested a no 'just joking' policy, in which bystanders would name sexist or inappropriate jokes in the workplace.

The Centre for Workplace Leadership, at the University of Melbourne, highlights the role of the organisation in creating workplace norms and culture where individuals are empowered to speak out against harmful workplace behaviours. The Centre suggests the following actions can foster the creation of a workplace that empowers individuals to speak out against harmful workplace behaviours.

**Normalizing bystander action:** Organisational policies and practices should communicate the idea of maintaining shared responsibility to keep a respectful organisational culture.

**Bystander pledge:** The organisation can have employees sign a pledge to act as a bystander.

**Consistency:** The organisation should demonstrate consistency in its stance on workplace behavioural norms through regular messages and communications.

**Educate employees:** Sometimes employees fail to confront harmful workplace behaviours simply because they do not recognise the actions as such. The organisation should educate its employees on these harmful behaviours and how to be a bystander in an accessible, clear, and non-threatening way.

**Leading by example:** All levels of management must demonstrate a genuine commitment to the program. A genuine commitment can be demonstrated by clearly adhering to workplace behavioural norms and by offering support to victims and fostering trusting relationships, so people will feel comfortable reporting their negative workplace experiences.

**Accessible information:** Educational information regarding harassment and incivility (including additional resources) should be readily available to all employees.

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## Training, Learning, and Capacity

A sexual harassment policy needs to be supported by training and education for staff and leaders (VicHealth, 2012). Sexual harassment training increases people's understanding of what sexual harassment is. VicHealth (2012) included teaching and learning strategies as a key step in preparation for initiating and maintaining progress in initiatives to prevent violence against women and build respectful workplaces.

Sexual harassment prevention training is one way of demonstrating an organisation's commitment to addressing harassment and ensure that there is a collective understanding of expected workplace behaviours and processes.

Training which aims to raise awareness and clarify myths about sexual harassment, inform about policies and procedures, and challenge organisational and societal gender norms, has a significant amount of content to cover. However, research shows that individuals with prior training about sexual harassment reject sexual harassment myths, such as that women have ulterior motives for reporting, more than untrained individuals do.

Much of the literature has focused on training, training outcomes, methodologies and so on which is discussed as 'formal training'. However, as set out in Part A, there is considerable evidence about other approaches to identify and shift social norms that might be considered in the context of employee capability and linked to their role and workplace.

### Training Interventions

Managers and employees are required to understand what is expected of them, and, what their options are with respect to responding to and preventing sexual harassment. There is a range of roles that employees can be expected to play - including as a complainant, bystander, manager or peer.

McDonald et al., (2015) propose that training should be tailored to the organisation and account for broader issues such as culture, context, legal frameworks and gender dynamics within society. They identify four principles in the development of training content:

1. Training should be organisation specific, taking into account situations where harassment is likely to occur, women's role, status and positions in the organisation;
2. Training should raise awareness and clarify misconceptions and highlight and reinforce acceptable behavioural norms;
3. Training should challenge gendered organisational norms; and
4. Training for managers should include conflict management, communication and emotional skills.

### *Does sexual harassment training work?*

Evidence shows that sexual harassment training works when it is part of a holistic approach to address sexual harassment in workplaces. Where workplaces used holistic approaches that included policies, complaints management and training, Gruber and Smith (1995) found that women responded more assertively to unwanted sexual attention. Gruber (1998) also found that men's behaviour was affected by policies and procedures and that the form of harassment affected depended on the strategies used in the workplace. Gruber (1998) found that both informational and proactive methods helped to curtail 'harassment generally and, in particular, environmental forms of sexual harassment such as denigrating sexual comments about women or pornographic posters and pinups'. For more serious forms of harassment, information alone was not effective, but proactive strategies for dealing with harassment were (Gruber, 1998).

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## A holistic approach

Participation in sexual harassment training can encourage people to seek organisational interventions (Vijayasiri, 2008). As discussed earlier, employees will be less likely to seek support or make a complaint if they do not think it will be treated seriously or if they are concerned about repercussions for doing so. Where the conditions are supportive though, there is evidence that training can have positive impacts on the workplace. Reese and Lendenburg (2003) found in their study of the US public service that sexual harassment training is critical for change:

*training is the critical link between sexual harassment policies and perceived positive outcomes. In short, even the best policy, absent a commitment to training, is unlikely to have the desired workplace outcomes.*

Holmes and Flood (2013), citing Antecol and Cobb-Clark (2003), note that various studies have shown that workplace training can improve attitudes towards sexual harassment. For example, a 2014 study of sexual harassment training outcomes in the US Federal government found the proportion of agency staff having received sexual harassment training is positively related to the probability that a federal employee considers unwanted sexual behaviour at work to be a form of sexual harassment (Antecol & Cobb-Clark, 2003).

## Targeting Training

Different employees will require different knowledge, understanding and competencies to perform their roles. Buckner (2014) and McDonald et al., (2015) state that training to women should reflect employees specific role with an organisation and their potential experience of sexual harassment so that it is relatable and useful.

### Training for managers and supervisors

Training should be targeted differently to managers. If a goal is to equip managers with specific skills to respond to sexual harassment, which should be an overt focus of the training, then informing them of their role and responsibilities (Hunt et al., 2010) is essential. Role-playing scenarios and focusing on attributes, such as empathy, and skills, such as listening could raise awareness of role and responsibilities.<sup>12</sup> Chung et al., (2012) list training and development for management and leadership staff to identify and respond to violence as an important element of promising practice.

As discussed earlier, two leadership styles - authoritarian and laissez fair – are associated with increased likelihood of harassment and bullying taking place in an organisation (Hunt et al., 2010). If a goal is to avoid these styles then focusing on improving leadership and management styles must be a priority.

### Universal training

Evidence at an organisational level suggests that training should be conducted regularly and universally, across all levels, and be included in induction processes. Training should not be targeted only to certain groups or be limited to those who attend voluntarily (McDonald et al., 2015).

There is evidence to suggest that universal training is the best way to change organisational culture and that the more employees trained, the more effective the training is overall. A study in the US found 'widespread training with the agency has an effect over and above that attributable to individual training

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<sup>12</sup> In a 2014 study of managers who had received sexual harassment training, Buckner et al found that while training does sensitise people to sexual harassment, it also results in "false positive" identifications. Managers who had received more training were more likely to perceive a situation to be sexual harassment when it in fact was not. However, the authors of that study state that "managerial overreaction might be an effective component of an organisation's prevention and correction program".

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*itself*<sup>13</sup>, ... the overall agency training rate is more important in predicting individual views than is the training status of the individual' (Antecol & Cobb-Clark, 2003).

The Our Watch Framework notes that the aim of a comprehensive suite of strategies to prevent violence should reach everyone. However, reaching everyone does not mean that everyone gets the same intervention. Tailored strategies for 'different communities, contexts and audiences are needed to ensure relevance across a diverse population. Each strategy should be carefully tailored to ensure it is appropriate and meaningful for the group of people it aims to engage' (Our Watch et al., 2015). The need for tailored training is reiterated in VicHealth's (2012) toolkit which notes the diversity of reference groups, ranging from supportive of the change to the entrenched opposition, identifying influential individuals who will help to persuade the 'movable middle' with whose increasing support, may lead to the intended shift in social norms (VicHealth, 2012).

### *Gender-specific training*

Researchers have asserted that training should be tailored to the experiences of men and women (Bingham & Scherer, 2001). Training for women, who are more likely to experience harassment, is often focussed on increasing awareness and confidence about how to make complaints. Neglecting men's concerns about issues such as false accusations and due process risks making male training recipients defensive and unreceptive. A focus on empowering the person who experiences sexual harassment 'might heighten men's expectations of being accused, leading them to attribute more blame to victims as a psychological defence against being blamed in the future' (Bingham & Scherer, 2001).

Holmes and Flood (2013) note that training focused on men's role in primary prevention of violence against women and building gender equitable workplaces has been limited. Most commonly, social marketing campaigns have been used. Holmes and Flood (2013) note the rise of workplace-based strategies to raise men's awareness of gender issues.

Bingham and Scherer (2001) studied the outcomes of sexual harassment training in a university, comparing a group of people who received training with those who did not. Their findings show that training can have a negative effect on the attitudes of men and that 'some male participants appear to have responded defiantly to the university's intent to constrain and punish overt sexual harassment'. The men who took part in the training were less likely to view coercion of a subordinate as sexual harassment, less willing to report sexual harassment and more likely to 'blame the victim'. The training style and content focussed on 'power-coercive strategies' where participants were given information about punishment for perpetrators of sexual harassment. The authors hypothesise that a different approach may have better results and they recommend 'normative re-educative techniques' as more conducive to change (Bingham & Scherer, 2001 ).

Holmes and Flood (2013) identify some barriers to engaging men in workplace training to positively change their attitudes and behaviours:

- Men are not as receptive as women to organisational efforts to eliminate gender bias (Prime, Moss-Racusin, & Foust-Cummings, 2009);
- Men are less supportive of diversity program for minorities (affirmative action programs) and more likely to respond with backlash than women; and
- Lack of clarity about whether men can say 'no' to violence against women without saying 'yes' to gender equality).

In broader forms of knowledge development (i.e. beyond formal training), there is potential for unintended negative consequences in relation to how men and boys react to programs. Interventions may, in the name of awareness raising, promote perceptions of descriptive social norms that gender based violence

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<sup>13</sup> emphasis added

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is typical and too common or inevitable to resist. Such perceptions may promote backlash, for example, men may react to interventions seeking to empower women by increasing their political opposition to women's rights and their efforts to control individual women's lives (Paluck & Ball, 2010). Language usage may be a critical concern, particularly in male-dominated work environments, where men participating may feel immediately confronted.

Men-only programs may address these challenges where they promote honest and reflective discussion among men which challenge socially constructed views of masculinity. Our Watch notes that oversight by or partnership with women can help ensure that the impact of gender norms is addressed (Our Watch et al., 2015). A core feature of these programs is providing alternative scripts and behaviours for participants to identify new behaviour options. In practice, this may mean workplaces develop prevention materials and messages in consultation with local violence-against-women service providers (partnership approach) and/or pilot-test prevention messages with a representative working group or committee of staff to consider how the language used will be more broadly received or interpreted across the organisation (Chung et al., 2012).

The broader evidence regarding workplace practices have not been addressed in this review. However, Holmes and Flood (2013) suggest one way to engage men in conversations is to pose questions about 'processes and habits' of how men and women interact in the workplace. For example, do employee consultation policies require an appropriate balance of representation of men and women? Do men always chair meetings? Are meetings scheduled at times that are more difficult for caregivers? Questions about such practices can be considered in the context of work to identify and shift social norms. Identifying the right questions requires care, as work practices may reflect a range of norms beyond gender, such as those about leadership, work and so on (Holmes & Flood, 2013).

### *Unconscious bias training*

Holmes and Flood (2013) refer to the growing attention given by workplaces to unconscious bias and the way in which workplaces make decisions. In the workplace context, this attention has focused on unconscious bias during recruitment and promotion processes. Unconscious bias training has been provided to a growing number of workplaces in developed countries (Holmes & Flood, 2013) and is seen as a promising 'vehicle through which they raise awareness of the informal cultures and practices shaping and structuring workplaces' (Powell et al., 2015). As Holmes & Flood (2013) note 'to date, informal cultures and practices remain the most challenging area to address in prevention work'. However, the evidence on its effectiveness of reducing sexual harassment, in particular, is extremely limited.

### *Training for bystanders*

Bystander training is crucial for supporting people to develop the skills and tools needed to intervene. As discussed earlier, most attention on bystander training has been bystander interventions at the time of an incident. VicHealth, in partnership with organisations, has piloted workplace interventions to build the capacity of employees to intervene when comments in the workplace are sexist (Powell et al., 2015). This training is premised on the understanding that bystanders understand when their colleagues are sexist or derogatory.

Holmes and Flood (2013) note that where 'men do not believe or accept that they are sexist... there may be a place for an educative strategy that invites men to reflect on the way language functions to reinforce stereotyping and unequal power, or to explore the relative respectfulness of various situations' (Holmes & Flood, 2013).

The Centre for Workplace Leadership suggests the below framework for bystanders in taking action about workplace incivility. Many of these may be useful in addressing situations that are regarded as having low risks, such as interrupting gender harassment or unwanted sexual attention. More specific training and

support about sexual harassment would be needed to support bystander intervention on higher risk behaviour of harassers or at the point at which harassment is occurring such as:

- Training should be designed to be universal, contextualised to the organisation and focus on the roles that people are expected to play as managers, bystanders, or targets;
- Training may be tailored to increase engagement of specific cohorts of people to achieve universal reach;
- Training to men should avoid potential negative outcomes of alienation and defensiveness and equip them to engage constructively;
- Drawing on social norms theory, consider the development of believable norms on which to base alternative scripts and behaviours for participants to identify new behaviours; and
- Developing prevention materials and messages in consultation with local violence-against-women service providers (partnership approach).

### Training design

As outlined in Part A, much of the workplace based sexual harassment training literature focuses on its impact on reporting or the outcomes of organisational responses to sexual harassment. VicHealth (2018) summarises the key aspects of teaching and learning strategies as depicted in Figure 6 following (VicHealth, 2012).

Environment	Content	Teachers	Teaching Practice	Innoculate against misinformation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safe space</li> <li>• Respectful and supportive learning</li> <li>• Small rather than large groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Framing strategies</li> <li>• Conceptual framework that builds awareness of social structures and power relations</li> <li>• Use personal accounts and live experiences</li> <li>• Storytelling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content experts</li> <li>• Knowledgeable and skilled educators</li> <li>• Authentic, credible and empathetic</li> <li>• Self-reflective</li> <li>• Open-hearted and compassionate</li> <li>• Led by managers and supervisors (if organisational training)</li> <li>• Draw on mentors, female or male</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address risk factors</li> <li>• Sufficient length and intensity</li> <li>• Participatory (role-plays, simulations, interactive learning, storytelling, discovery)</li> <li>• Engage emotions</li> <li>• Foster empathy</li> <li>• Appeal to values of the group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employ sound arguments with fact / myth / fallacy approach</li> <li>• Acknowledge doubts and fears</li> </ul>

Figure 6: VicHealth (2018) Summary Teaching and Learning Strategies (reproduced)

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## Trainers

Another consideration is the importance of the trainer. The gender of the trainer may be important to create an environment where people can participate freely. Women may feel more comfortable talking about sexual harassment without the presence of men, either in training or as the trainer. Additionally, training is more successful when trainers mitigate against hierarchies of power and privilege that distance them from participants. Trainers should be trained so that they are aware of and responding to power inequalities and addressing their own biases (UN Women Training Centre, 2016).

Training should be provided by trainers who are content experts, authentic and empathetic. As a precursor to this work, VicHealth (2018) reminds program managers and practitioners of the importance of being able to recognise and respond to resistance and indicated helpful tools to support these efforts (VicHealth, 2012).

Similarly, engagement in training or other program activities may give employees the confidence to disclose their own experience of sexual harassment or other forms of sexual violence directly to members of the STOP project. Staff should have the capacity to respond appropriately to such disclosures.

### Insight for the STOP project:

Ensure program staff have access to learning to support them to respond appropriately to disclosures of sexual harassment or other forms of sexual harm, as well as responding to resistance in the training context, as well as through broader engagement in work to shift social norms.

CARE employees may disclose experiences of sexual harassment or other forms of sexual violence to the project. Staff capacity to respond to disclosures should be developed to include this scenario.

## Training Approaches & Resistance

Holmes and Flood (2013) propose that 'education programs that are intensive, lengthy, and use a variety of teaching approaches have been shown to produce a positive and lasting change in attitudes and behaviours related to violence against women' (Holmes & Flood, 2013).

Paluck and Ball (2010) suggest that a possible way to soften resistance is to ensure that discussions can occur over long time frames so that those opposed to the idea have time to reconsider their positions (Paluck & Ball, 2010). Longer time frames for discussions has implications training design and framing of messages to ensure that people can 'change their minds' without losing face.

VicHealth (2012) reiterates the need for training that is sufficiently long, intense, framed to engage people emotionally and foster empathy in ways that are relevant to the group. In the context of training to shift social norms, Paluck and Ball (2010) note research in many contexts has found face-to-face delivery is likely to have the most social influence. This influence can 'powerfully boost and can significantly undercut the messages of the program' (Paluck & Ball, 2010).

Practitioners in workplace initiatives to prevent violence against women and build gender equality consistently experience resistance. VicHealth has developed an evidence-based tool for practitioners (*En)countering resistance: Strategies to respond to resistance to gender equality initiatives* (VicHealth, 2012). The tool sets out the forms of resistance and approaches to prepare for and respond resistance.

These are set out in Figure 7 below.

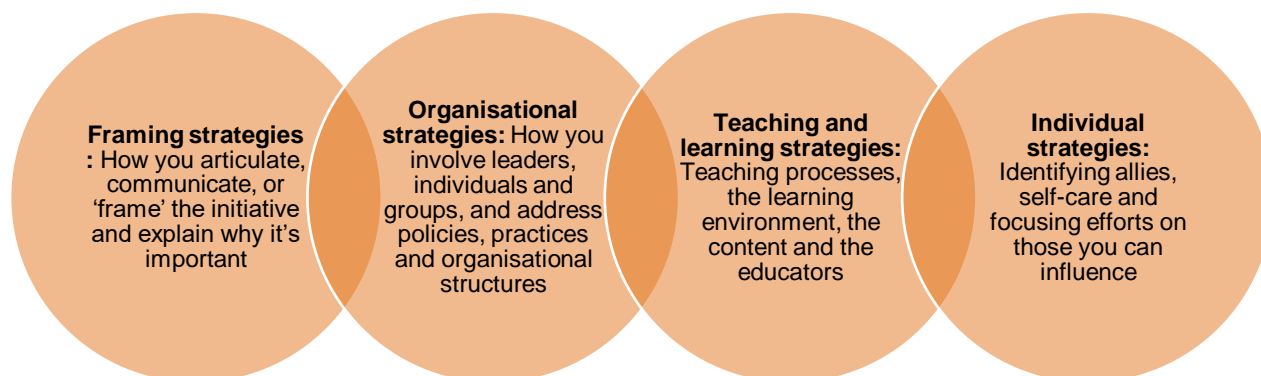


Figure 7: VicHealth Strategies to prepare for and respond to resistance, p.5

### Training techniques

Training that is interactive and participatory can support developing new norms and shared meanings, changes in attitudes, values, skills and new ways of relating (Bingham & Scherer, 2001). VicHealth (2018) notes that messages should be framed by leading with the facts, noting and debunking myths, and then explain the fallacy that the myth uses to distort the fact (Our Watch et al., 2015).

There is evidence from social psychology of approaches that can reduce prejudice and which are relevant to training technique. Research has identified five ideal conditions for reducing prejudice, and notes, that positive changes may occur despite not meeting all ideal conditions.

The first step in reducing prejudice is to increase contact between members of different groups. Interventions which increase contact between different groups can reduce prejudice to wider groups - extending to members of other groups seen as 'different' - not just reducing prejudice between individuals or between specific groups.

Evidence around techniques and approaches for training approaches in relation to violence prevention includes the following techniques:

- **Modelling and Rehearsal** - McDonald et al., (2015) note that techniques such as modelling and rehearsal are useful to clarify misconceptions about sexual harassment. Interactive approaches such as rehearsal allow participants to practice interpersonal skills in challenging situations (McDonald et al., 2015). Modelling is a lower risk and useful tool where participants learn from observation (Hunt et al., 2010).

#### **Designing training to reduce prejudice and discrimination**

Prejudice, drawing conclusions about a person, group of people, or situation, prior to evaluating relevant evidence, drives discrimination. Contact between groups should meet five ideal conditions in order to reduce prejudice and discrimination:

- Groups should cooperate towards shared goals;
- Contact between groups should be enjoyable;
- Groups should be of roughly equal status;
- Group members should disconfirm each other's negative stereotypes; and
- Group members should have the potential to become friends.

- **Expressive Writing** - Kirk et al., (2011) found that expressive writing reduced workplace incivility compared to employees who did not undertake expressive writing (20 minutes per day for three days in a row). Expressive writing assumes a level of literacy in participants that may not be present in a factory context.
- **Multi-media** – inclusion of multi-media may increase engagement and can draw on increasing evidence of the effectiveness of 'edutainment' which is developing in several contexts in Africa such as Rwanda, Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda (Tankard & Paluck, 2016). Such educational entertaining incorporates characters who model healthy, respectful, or safe behaviours. Educational entertaining markets the normative behaviour to a large audience in a subtle non-intrusive way that parallels the way individuals observe the behaviour in real life.
- **Case studies, for role play and role negotiations**, can be effective in training programs to enable participants to practice communication skills in challenging situations and state their expectations of supervisors and co-workers (Hunt et al., 2010). Role play and role negotiations can help address culture and norms regarding how individuals are treated in the workplace and may offer the potential for addressing power imbalances in a safe space.
- **Draw on evidence to enhance user experience in digital communications** – these offer principles for engaging users based on psychological principles and may be applicable in a training manual, course or context.
- **Contribute to reducing underlying prejudice and discrimination** – by increasing contact between individuals and designing training activities based on evidence from social psychology

Social modelling techniques may also be of use. Male facilitators in Program H in Latin America and the Caribbean, communicate through role play, videos, group discussions, 'brainstorming' and reflection. Program H that focuses on attitude change, and aims to communicate gender equitable social norms and transfer relationship skills in peer-to-peer educational sessions (Paluck & Ball, 2010).

#### Insights for the STOP project:

- Training should be intensive and provide opportunities to take participants on a long learning journey.
- Training content should include work that addresses underlying attitudes and provides opportunities to build new norms and behaviours.
- Audience engagement is key to successful training outcomes – choosing the right starting point is critical.
- Design methodology with underlying issues of prejudice and discrimination in mind including for example, shared problem solving, fun activities and opportunities to get to know others in greater depth
- Consider aligned communication and engagement strategies, such as social marketing to reinforce learning outcomes.

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## What steps can organisations take to prevent sexual harassment?

In this final section, we make recommendations on the steps organisations can take to prevent and respond to sexual harassment. These recommendations are subject to the limitations of this rapid review outlined at the start of this report.

### Using an ecological model to design interventions

The socio-ecological model was central to the development of early violence prevention work, and has become the widely accepted theoretical and programming model by international practitioners addressing violence against women (Michau et al., 2015). As a framework, it centres individuals and considers the various factors that impact on their lives.

Figure 8 shows the concentric circles of an ecological model that illustrates the communal, social, and structural factors that can impact a person's experience of violence, including sexual harassment, and translates the model of Michau et al. (2015) into a workplace setting.

In Figure 8, this framework is translated for organisations, and implies that incorporating multifaceted approaches to addressing violence in the workplace is essential and can have a ripple effect in transforming the experience of employees beyond work.

Drawing on insights from the promising practices outlined in this review, we adapted the socio-ecological model (Figure 1) and reframed it to centre organisations and their commitment to preventing sexual harassment in the workplace. Beginning in the innermost circle, we condense recommendations as follows (Figure 8).



*Figure 8: Adaptation of the ecological model for prevention of sexual harassment in the workplace*

### Workplace practices and norms

Shifting workplace practice and norms requires continued and concerted efforts from leadership. Although changing workplace norms can be slow, organisations can earnestly begin the process of norms change through developing comprehensive training. Training should be:

- Intensive and provide opportunities to address underlying attitudes and build new norms and behaviours;
- Contextualised to the organisation and focused on the roles that people are expected to play as managers, bystanders, or targets; and
- Achieve universal reach and provide safe and respectful training environment, training may be tailored to increase engagement of specific cohorts of people.

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## *Organisational and program leadership*

Within the organisation, leadership is critical to developing and supporting workplace approaches to prevent violence against women. Workplaces can enact the following steps to strengthen organisation and leadership engagement:

- Employ and train on a ‘whole of organisation’ approach to ensure systemic prevention and response to sexual harassment.
- Consider both personal and organisational motivations for leaders to engage with proposed approaches and models.
- Allow leadership to play a strong role in designing prevention approaches, including policy directions, content, systems for supporting the policy, and communications regarding its launch and intended impact.
- Identify and work with informal leaders to shift social norms, to reduce tolerance for sexual harassment, to reduce the perceived costs of bystander action, and build safe and respectful workplaces.

## *Organisational strategies and policies*

Strategies and policies play an important role as an ‘institutional signal’ if appropriately conceived, communicated, monitored, and enforced. In working to develop these signals, organisations should consider the following:

- Planning for new policies and strategies should explore existing norms and organisational readiness. Change processes need to start where real and iterative changes to workplace mechanisms can happen;
- A policy and process audit can be a useful way to begin to gain leadership’s insights and expectations about workplace processes and behaviours. Where policies are non-existent, understanding the mechanisms which set expectations and how expectations are communicated within workplaces will be important, as will understanding what feedback mechanisms leadership has about their implementation and performance;
- Sexual harassment policies serve a range of functions and can evolve. Policy content needs to balance best practice and legal obligations with what will be deliverable and be supported by ongoing leadership commitment. Policies should include a good practice complaints function and be clear about objectives, processes, penalties, and include referral pathways to specialist sexual assault services; and
- Ensure the communication of policy builds in leadership accountability for its implementation, outlines action plans for training, and supports messaging about expected norms in the broader workplace environment.

## *Community and Stakeholders*

The community external to the workplace is where social norms are shaped and reinforced. Social norms about sexual harassment exist across people’s working and non-working lives. In addition to employees, other key stakeholders operate at this level, including policymakers. Consider the following when thinking about the community and other stakeholders:

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- Opportunities to work with policymakers and other stakeholders to develop comprehensive legislation to protect against sexual harassment in the workplace; and
  - Academic partnership or other approaches to build rigorous and much-needed evidence about what works to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace.

## *Society*

Organisations have legal obligations to prevent and/or respond to sexual harassment to avoid liability for injuries sustained at work. Social movements, such as #metoo or publicity about workplace safety issues and incidents also impact the markets in which organisations operate. Consider partnering with policy and movement partners to engage in larger dialogues and identify intersectional and systematic approaches to addressing sexual harassment in the workplace.

### **THE #METOO MOVEMENT**

#metoo is a social media movement looking to share and respond to individual instances of sexual harassment. A primary part of the campaign was to highlight the prevalence and scope of sexual harassment, providing opportunities for solidarity around the world. The movement has grown to capture stories from particular industries (#aidtoo #metoomilitary). While confined to social media with a focus on promoting empowerment through empathy (as articulated by founder Tarana Burke), the attention given to sexual harassment through the campaign is resulting in changes to workplace policies and practices.

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## Annex 1: The evolution of a socio-ecological approach to violence against women

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At a population level, violence against women is caused by and reinforces gender inequality. Gender inequality reflects the unequal distribution of power, resources, and opportunities between women and men. These inequalities are often reflected in laws or policies which have disadvantaged women and are reinforced through informal means by individuals, communities, organisational or societies (Our Watch et al. 2016).

As described above, early definitions of sexual harassment focused on behavioural typologies and the extent to which they had a detrimental impact on individual targets. These definitions have informed legislative efforts to frame sexual harassment across many jurisdictions, including in international law. Cooper, Paluck and Fletcher (2014) note that the fields of legal research (and clinical psychology) have focused their efforts at the individual level, and different jurisdictions around the world have sought to focus on individuals' experiences of sexual assault.

Definitions that describe the form of behaviour of individual harassers do not reflect the underlying social, cultural and gendered elements of sexual harassment (Fileborn, 2013). Internationally, there has been an increased focus on primary prevention of violence against women that aims to stop violence before it starts, rather than only responding to it after it has occurred.

### *An integrated and holistic approach to preventing violence against women*

There is a consensus that the factors operate in society across various levels of the socio-ecological model to create and reinforce violence against women. First developed to understand and respond to child development (Bronfenbrenner 1994), the socio-ecological model has since been used to explain many complex social phenomena and has been used widely in public health research and policy.

It is based on the idea that the causes of such phenomena lie at multiple and interrelated levels of the social ecology. While these levels are conceptualised differently by different theorists, in the literature on violence against women three levels are commonly distinguished – individual and relationship, organisational and community, and societal.

In 2002, the World Health Organisation published the World Report on Violence and Health (WHO Report). The WHO Report recommends that violence prevention initiatives should be based on public health approaches to evidence. It also noted that '[t]he public health approach does not replace criminal justice and human rights responses to violence, rather it complements their activities and offers them additional tools and sources of collaboration' (Krug et al., 2002).

FIGURE 1.3  
Ecological model for understanding violence

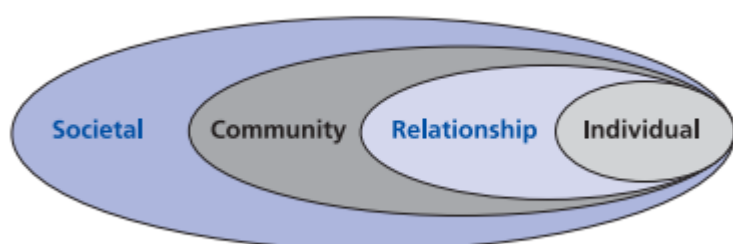


Figure 9: The ecological model of understanding violence: Figure 3 from WHO 2002 Report, p. 12

Application of this model to violence against women was first proposed by Lori Heise in 1998 (co-author of the WHO Report 2002), who has since refined her work. The model is probabilistic and sets out factors that increase the probability of violence against women in a society, and this is increased further where multiple factors are present at multiple levels (Heise 2012; Webster & Flood, 2015).

Michau et al., (2014) note the evolution towards an ecological approach to prevent violence against women and the particular experiences and insights of women's groups in low and middle-income countries. They noted that individual attitudes and community norms that helped to sustain violence against women and girls required intervention at other levels of the social ecology Michau et al (2014). The concentric circles of Figure 1 (reproduced full size on the following page) place individuals at the centre, with violence against women (including sexual harassment) being experienced individually and interpersonally, in the context of community and societal attitudes, practices and structures Michau et al (2014).

Consequently, to prevent violence against women, Michau et al., (2014) and other research undertaken (Heise 2012; Fulu et al., 2013, 2014; Webster & Flood 2015) suggests that interventions are most likely to be successful when they combine multiple strategies and target more than one level of the community or organisation.

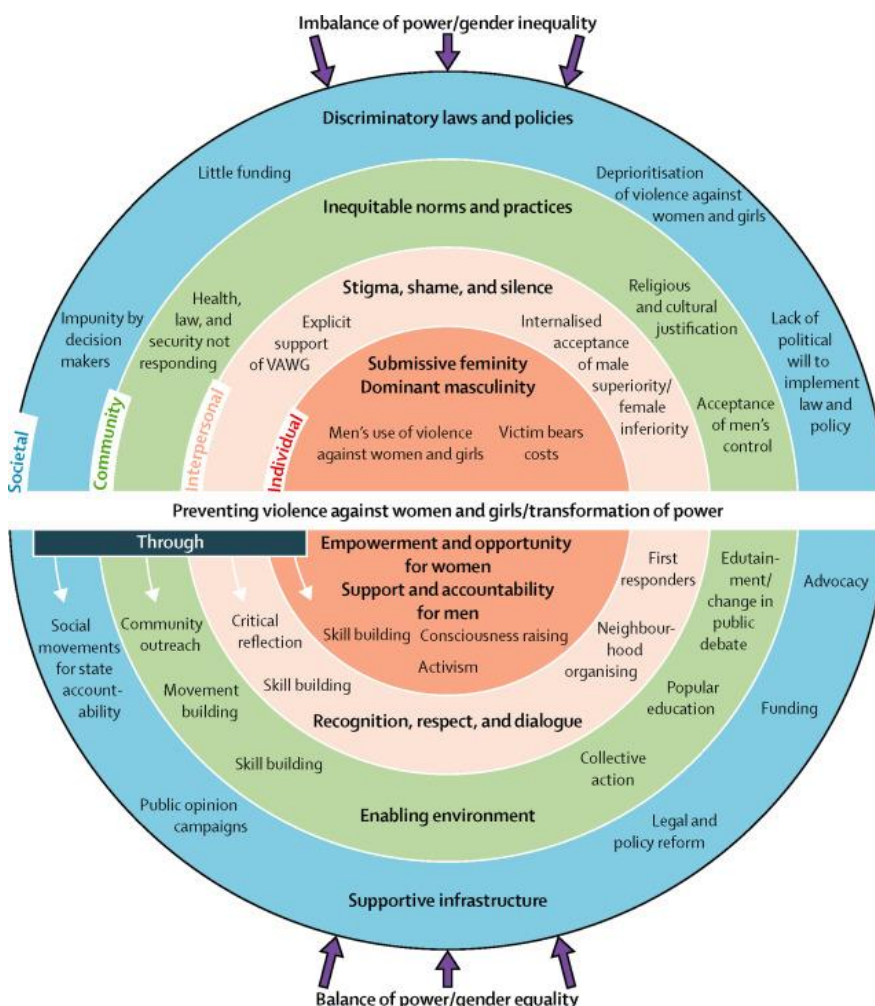


Figure1 (full size image): Transformation of power across the ecological model from Michau et al (2014), p. 4

Michau et al (2014) note that the socio-ecological model has become the widely accepted theoretical and programming model. It was central to the development of early work in Australia lead by VicHealth. In

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developing the VicHealth Framework the authors note that ‘factors underlying and contributing to violence against women and the means of prevention lie in a range of environments (such as schools, sports settings, faith-based institutions) and at multiple levels of influence – individual/relationship (including families), community and organisational, and societal’ (VicHealth 2007).

The VicHealth Framework informed the development of the Victorian Government’s *A Right to Respect: Victoria’s Plan to Prevent Violence Against Women 2010-2020*, the first such public policy commitment and investment in primary prevention of violence against women working at individual, community and societal levels. Primary prevention was subsequently prioritised in the *Australian National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their children 2010-2022*. VicHealth reviewed its Framework and partnered with Our Watch and the Australian National Research (ANROWS) in 2013 and developed an Australian national framework to prevent violence against women and children, published in 2016.

## Annex 2: What works in to prevent violence against women

What works from Webster and Flood (2015) evidence review. The ratings are as assessed by Webster and Flood (2015), where interventions are considered:

- Effective – if they have been shown to be effective in preventing violence against women
- Promising – if found to have an impact on risk factors, but not on violence directly
- Conflicting – where some evaluations show the interventions to be effective and others show that they are not
- Ineffective – when current studies have not established a positive impact on violence against women or its risk factors.

Interventions to prevent violence against women – the current state of evidence for effectiveness	Assessment based on available evidence of effectiveness
<b>Policy, legislative and institutional reform</b>	
Macro-level reforms designed to address specific aspects of human rights and gender inequality established in research to be strongly linked with violence against women (for example, ensuring women's economic autonomy through reform of superannuation policy)	Successfully implemented but not yet evaluated for impact on violence/precursors to violence
Efforts to reform the media's representation/reporting of gender relations, women and violence against women (including self-regulation)	Successfully implemented but not yet evaluated for impact on violence/precursors to violence
Strengthening infrastructure and transport, for example by improving the safety of public transport and street lighting (prevention of non-partner sexual assault only)	Successfully implemented but not yet evaluated for impact on violence/precursors to violence
<b>Community mobilisation and strengthening</b>	
Community mobilisation, involving community-driven, participatory projects that engage multiple stakeholders to address gender norms	Effective (evidence from low and middle-income countries only)
<b>Organisational development</b>	
Whole-of-school programs involving teachers and other school staff, pupils, reporting mechanisms, parents and the local community, along with national advocacy. A variety of strategies are used (such as curriculum and group-based programs, policy reform, advocacy)	Promising
Multi-strategy approaches with media outlets to promote the responsible portrayal of women, girls and violence against women in the media (such as involving advocacy, training, guidelines)	Successfully implemented but not yet evaluated for impact on violence/precursors to violence
Organisational auditing processes to identify and address structures and practices contributing to gender inequality and violence against women. Involves developing audit tools and processes for engaging staff, community members and volunteers in using these to reflect on organisational cultures and processes and plan reform. Inducements may be used to encourage or support compliance (funding, awards)	Successfully implemented but not yet evaluated for impact on violence/precursors to violence
<b>Communications and social marketing</b>	
Social marketing campaigns or edutainment (that is, education built into entertainment such as a drama series) plus group	Promising

Interventions to prevent violence against women – the current state of evidence for effectiveness	Assessment based on available evidence of effectiveness
education. Long-term programs engaging social media, mobile applications, thematic television series, posters, together with interpersonal communication activities	
Single component communications campaigns (such as a campaign with advertisements through television and print media)	Ineffective
Advocacy	
Skills training and capacity-building for organisations and community members advocating for gender equality and the elimination of violence against women	Successfully implemented but not yet evaluated for impact on violence/precursors to violence
Leadership programs that identify and support influential, non-violent individuals to speak out and play a leadership role regarding gender inequality and the elimination of violence against women. These may be targeted to prominent individuals or be delivered through informal peer groups (such as among young people) or organisational settings (such as workplaces). These are based on social norms theory which proposes that the views of prominent others are influential in shifting social norms (Webster et al., 2014).	Successfully implemented but not yet evaluated for impact on violence/precursors to violence
Individual or group, direct participation programs, providing education, support and skills development	
School or community programs to improve women's and girls' agency. Can include other components such as safe spaces, mentoring and life skills training	Effective
Economic empowerment and income supplements including micro-finance, vocational training, job placement or cash or asset transfers (such as land reform)	Conflicting evidence
Economic empowerment and income supplements plus gender equality training	Effective
Collectivisation. Supporting women's and girls' empowerment by strengthening supportive links to other women and girls in similar circumstances (such as a collective for sex workers)	Effective
Peer education - Supporting individuals from particular sub-populations to educate their peers on gender norms and violence against women	Successfully implemented but not yet evaluated for impact on violence/precursors to violence
School programs and community workshops with men and boys to promote changes in social norms and behaviours that encourage violence against women and gender inequality	Effective
School and community workshops to promote changes in norms and behaviour that encourage violence against women and gender inequality, which in contrast to the above, involve both men and women	Effective
Programs to support young people to engage critically with media and popular culture representations of women and gender relations often referred to as strengthening media literacy. Based on the theory that the negative influences of the media on constructions of masculinities and femininities and behaviours can be lessened by encouraging young people to engage in a critical way with the media	Successfully implemented but not yet evaluated for impact on violence/precursors to violence
Programs to strengthen individual skills and knowledge to take positive or pro-social action in relation to attitudes and behaviours supporting violence (such as the belief that women deserve violence) and precursors to violence (such as sexist attitudes). Often referred to as 'bystander' programs. Typically	Conflicting evidence (emphasis in many current evaluations is on bystander responses to violence, as opposed to its precursors, and on bystander approaches as 'stand-alone' interventions)

Interventions to prevent violence against women – the current state of evidence for effectiveness	Assessment based on available evidence of effectiveness
implemented as part of a broader program of community/organisational mobilisation	Have been successfully implemented in Australia
Programs to support the skills of parents (both men and women) to promote gender equality and non-violence in their parenting practices (noting that these programs differ from the parenting programs below which have the goals of preventing child abuse)	Not yet systematically assessed
<p>Group or relationship-level interventions for equitable and respectful relationships</p> <p>Couple interventions to support them to maintain equitable and respectful relationships have been successfully implemented (e.g. among couples expecting a first child). There may be some potential in such programs as preventive measures at the population or sub-population level. However, relationship level interventions without a gender transformative approach may inadvertently compound gender inequality and hence be harmful to women.</p>	Conflicting evidence
Protective behaviours programs. Group programs teaching women and girls how to modify their behaviour to reduce the risk of sexual assault and/or to defend themselves in the event of being threatened with assault.	<p>Conflicting evidence.</p> <p>Such programs may increase victim-blaming (itself contributing by way of social norms to sexual violence). If they encourage women and girls to curtail their movements and divert attention from perpetration as a human rights violation, such programs would be incompatible with a rights-based approach. Promoting self-defence in the absence of comprehensive skills training has been found to increase risk. Ideally these programs would be implemented alongside those promoting changes in norms pertaining to gender and violence among men and boys.</p>
Collaborating with other policy settings to address issues of common concern	
Nurse home-visiting programs aimed to strengthen parenting attitudes and skills, noting that the primary purpose and benefits of such programs are the prevention of child abuse. These programs are distinguished from those above which have an emphasis on promoting skills to raise children in ways that promote gender equality and non-violence.	Promising for intimate partner violence (effective for reducing child abuse and neglect)
Regulation to reduce the density of alcohol outlets or reduce alcohol consumption (through taxation, rationing, regulating trading hours)	Effective, although optimally should be implemented alongside other interventions addressing normative support for violence against women

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## Annex 3: Collated Insights for the STOP Project

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### Insight 1:

- Program staff and participating workplaces should be supported by appropriate policies and principles to support decision making in response to disclosures, confidentiality, appropriate referral pathways and risk considerations, including when a program participant is in serious and/or imminent danger.
- Program staff and participating workplaces should receive training in trauma informed responses to disclosures of sexual harassment and sexual assault, as well as training to avoid collusion with harassers.
- Program partnership with local services responding to sexual violence may be appropriate.

### Insight 2:

- Influential individuals and groups are important in their capacity to influence positive norm shifts of the broader group. Early identification of the social norms held by influencers is important to identify support and capacity building is required for them to undertake this role. Careful assessment of the likelihood they will engage positively will be an important precursor to successful workplace efforts (VicHealth, 2012).

### Insight 3:

- Principles underpinning social norms approaches should be incorporated into both organisational change processes and the messaging, training and capacity building and communications efforts designed to bring change to effect.

### Insight 4:

- Understanding norms about reporting sexual harassment require careful assessment and should inform project design
- Bystander intervention can take a range of forms which can be acknowledged in policy and/or procedures
- Bystander intervention approaches can be embedded in training and other engagement opportunities to staff
- Bystander intervention in higher risk incidents may need a nuanced approach and should be trained separately to standardised policy and procedure training
- Support for bystanders can be built into the program and/or considered in partnership with specialist organisations

### Insight 5:

- Consider leadership and employee starting points, existing norms and understanding where an organisation is on its pathway to respond better and ultimately prevent violence against women, starting and sequencing work to support believable and iterative changes to workplace norm and processes will need to be done on a case-by-case basis. For example, individual leaders may have family members who have been sexually harassed and feel committed to begin work at the response

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end, or there may be union focus on workplace safety. For others, talking about sexual harassment may be distasteful and focusing upstream (such as on setting standards of behaviour or focusing on emerging customer requirements) may be a more conducive starting point.

#### **Insight 6:**

- A policy and process audit is a useful starting point to gain leadership's insights and expectations about workplace processes and behaviours and terms and conditions of employment. Where policies are non-existent, the STOP project will need to understand the mechanisms through which these expectations are set and how they are communicated within workplaces, and what feedback mechanism leadership has about their implementation and performance.

#### **Insight 7:**

- Consider both personal and organisational motivations for leaders to engage with the Project. For example, notwithstanding the literature regarding the benefits of diversity for organisational performance, many men in leadership talk about their daughters' career prospects as driving their personal commitment to improve diversity.

#### **Insight 8:**

- Identifying ways to engage organisational leadership to support change and sustain ongoing commitment to implementation is a critical early step.
- Engagement strategies need build from the starting point of leaders' and organisational readiness (start where it's warm) and support their evolution.
- Leadership can be engaged through internal and external mechanism and platforms.
- Informal leaders, including men, will be important to identify and influence workplace norms.

#### **Insight 9:**

- Where possible, empowerment principles should underpin policy development.
- Policy content needs to balance best practice and legal obligations with what will be deliverable and be supported by ongoing leadership commitment.
- Policies need to be clear about objectives, processes and penalties – policies can change and evolve over time as organisations' approaches become more sophisticated.
- Communicate and launch the sexual harassment policy for widespread awareness and contribution to change efforts.
- Ensure the communication of policy builds in leadership accountability for its implementation, outlines action plans for training, and supports messaging about expected norms in the broader workplace environment.
- Set out a complaints process that is characterised by:
  - Flexible entry points
  - Procedural fairness
  - Monitoring and continuous improvement
  - Communication of summarised complaints data
  - Safe and appropriate referral pathways to service providers with expertise in sexual harm should be identified.

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- Consider whether or how policies addressing sexual harassment interact with other policies and strategies that are designed to address gender inequality.
  - Consider partnering with a women's service to support process (as noted in the section on framing change) to seek content expertise and/or develop referral pathways (see complaints section).

#### **Insight 10**

- Ensure program staff have access to learning to support them to respond appropriately to disclosures of sexual harassment or other forms of sexual harm, as well as responding to resistance in the training context, as well as through broader engagement in work to shift social norms.
- CARE employees may disclose experiences of sexual harassment or other forms of sexual violence to the project. Staff capacity to respond to disclosures should be developed to include this scenario.

#### **Insight 11:**

- Training should be intensive and provide opportunities to take participants on a long learning journey.
- Training content should include work that addresses underlying attitudes and provides opportunities to build new norms and behaviours.
- Audience engagement is key to successful training outcomes – choosing the right starting point is critical.
- Design methodology with underlying issues of prejudice and discrimination in mind including for example, shared problem solving, fun activities and opportunities to get to know others in greater depth
- Consider aligned communication and engagement strategies, such as social marketing to reinforce learning outcomes.

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## About CARE

CARE works with poor communities in developing countries to end extreme poverty and injustice.

Our long-term aid programs provide food, clean water, basic healthcare and education and create opportunities for people to build a better future for themselves.

We also deliver emergency aid to survivors of natural disasters and conflict, and help people rebuild their lives.

We have 70 years' experience in successfully fighting poverty, and last year we helped change the lives of 72 million people around the world.

