How to Address and Prevent Sexual Harassment in the World of Work

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Lis Meyers
Moderator
Nathan Inc.

Manuela Tomei
ILO

Robin Runge
Solidarity Center

Trang Nguyen
Independent Consultant

Agenda

1. Welcome and Agenda
2. Manuela Tomei
3. Robin Runge
4. Trang Nguyen
5. Wrap Up and Closing

Sexual Harassment in the World of Work

- Sexual harassment is prevalent across the world
- Migrant women, younger women, domestic workers, and women working in male-dominated industries or in client-oriented service sectors, are at greater risk
    - Higher risk in tight or unregulated workspaces, as well as those that lack strong labor inspection services.
    - Higher risk in language-impaired, in isolated positions, or lack job security.

Costs of Workplace Sexual Harassment

Negatively affects women's employment, job retention, and career trajectory

- Causes negative psychological and physical health consequences for survivors
- Women may feel pressured or forced to tolerate sexual harassment if it means a "tradeoff" for a job offer, pay raise, or promotion
- Can negatively affect women's career trajectories in that male managers are increasingly exhibiting discriminatory behavior to female colleagues in attempt to avoid sexual harassment liability.
- Undermines the long-term earning capacity of women workers and contributes to the gender wage gap

Costs of Workplace Sexual Harassment

Has significant costs to firms and economies:

- Explicit costs of sexual harassment to employers: legal expenses and settlements; an increase in insurance costs; and a compromised reputation affecting recruitment, investment, and future performance.
- More implicit costs: loss in employee productivity, devolved team performance, and problems with retention
- Declines in entire workgroup productivity.

It is estimated that eliminating workplace sexual harassment entirely in the Philippines could result in a savings of nearly US$57 million.

Sexual Harassment in Transportation

- Women cannot safely get to and from work when there is high prevalence of sexual harassment in public transportation and in public spaces such as streets and transit stops and stations
- When common, women often modify or restrict their travel, with women's travel patterns strongly influenced by the need to mitigate risk and avoid danger
- Might forgo night work or employment in locations with limited safe, accessible, and affordable transportation options, thereby reducing women's labor force participation.
- The majority of sexual harassment that women experience on public transportation is unreported
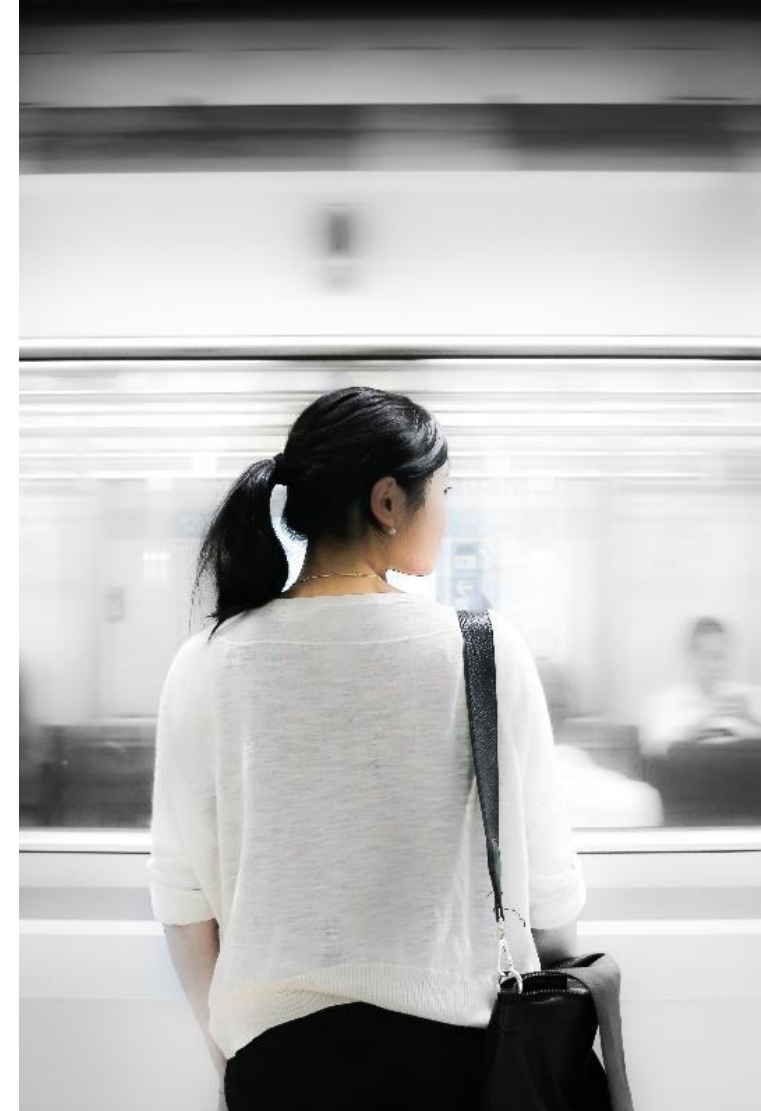
Practical implications of ILO Convention No. 190 on violence and harassment in the world of work

Manuela Tomei

International Labour Organization (ILO)

tomei@ilo.org

C.190: A global call for ending violence and harassment at work

- Adopted by a large tripartite majority of the International Labour Conference

- First intl. treaty that defines violence and harassment, and stipulates the measures to be taken and by whom

- It articulates the right to a world of work free from V+H

C.190: A global call for ending violence and harassment at work

- It covers not just employees, but e.g. also interns, apprentices, and persons exercising the authority of an employer

- Its scope includes but goes beyond the physical and time boundaries of the traditional workplace

- Requires employers to adopt workplace policies on V+H , and inclusion of related factors in risk assessment and management systems

Protection and prevention

«Gender responsive, inclusive and integrated approach»

Enforcement and remedies

Guidance and training

C.190 and gender-based violence and harassment

- It acknowledges that gender-based violence and harassment, including sexual harassment, is pervasive

- It requires that both its causes and symptoms be tackled

- It recognizes that in certain sectors, occupations and work arrangements persons are at greater risk of V+H

- It stipulates that domestic violence becomes a world of work issue when it affects work, and requires mitigation measures

Relevance of C.190 to the COVID-19 pandemic

- COVID-19 has exacerbated V+H in health and social work, emergency services, cleaning sector

- Generalized teleworking arrangements has resulted in spikes in domestic violence and higher risk of cyber bullying

- Policies to prevent and address V+H need to be adjusted in the light of COVID-19

- Measures to mitigate domestic violence do not need to be onerous or costly and can be woven into other concerns, i.e. teleworking

- Adoption of workplace policy that defines and prohibits sexual harassment within a broader policy against V+H

- Prevention, information and training on sexual harassment

- Dismantlement of culture of impunity

- Inclusion of sexual harassment in workplace risk assessments and safe, fair reporting and complaint procedures

- Promotion of the ratification of C. No. 190

Gender-Based Violence and Harassment

Robin Runge
Solidarity Center
rrunge@solidaritycenter.org

What is Gender-Based Violence and Harassment?

Gender-based violence and/or harassment is violence or harassment directed at persons because of their (actual or perceived) sex or gender or affecting persons of a particular sex or gender disproportionately and includes sexual harassment.

Gender-based violence and harassment is rooted in unequal gender-based power relations between (and among) women and men, which both reflects and reinforces the subordinate status of women in many societies.

Gender-Based Violence and Harassment

It is a social rather than an individual problem, requiring comprehensive responses, beyond those to specific events, individual perpetrators and victims/survivors

Gender-Based Violence and Harassment

GBVH encompasses violence against women and girls as well as against men and boys, people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI), and other individuals who do not conform to dominant perceptions of gender. Gender-based violence and harassment includes sexual harassment, domestic violence, and sexual violence.

How Best Prevent and Address Gender-Based Violence and Harassment at Work?

An integrated and gender-inclusive approach that addresses underlying causes and risk factors, including gender stereotypes, multiple intersecting forms of discrimination, and unequal gender-based power relations is necessary to effectively end gender-based violence and harassment in the world of work.

What is Gender-Based Violence and Harassment in the World of Work?

- Gender-based violence and harassment (GBVH) in the world of work is a global problem affecting tens of millions of women workers across all sectors, causing them economic, emotional and physical harm, and undermining their economic security.

- While both men and women can be victims of GBVH at work, women are most frequently targeted.

- Deeply harmful to individual victims, GBVH at work reflects and perpetuates the skewed gender power relations that are at the root of much social and economic inequality.

What do we know about what works to prevent and address gender-based violence and harassment?

- Legal compliance is necessary, but often unachievable and does not eradicate gender-based violence and harassment

- Changing climate and culture is necessary to prevent and effective address gender-based violence and harassment

- Education and awareness about gender, root causes, impact, and scope and incidents

What have we learned?

- Those most impacted must be integrally involved in developing the solutions
  - Education and awareness addressing root causes
  - Independent, confidential information line
  - Accessible reporting mechanisms
  - Transparent investigation processes
  - Enforced and communicated accountability measures
  - Support for victims/targets

Deep dive: an effective approach to "training"

Trang Nguyen
Ethos Advisors LLC
trang@ethosadvisorsdc.com

Organizational action plans to address and prevent sexual harassment need to be comprehensive, e.g.

- **Strong policy framework** (explicit policy on sexual harassment, code of conduct, values statement)
- **Prevention efforts** (training, awareness raising, communication)
- Clear **grievance/reporting mechanisms**
- **Investigative processes** that are not intimidating
- Appropriate, transparent **sanctions**
- **Support** for those experiencing harassment

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Deep dive: an effective approach to "training"

- Training is absolutely necessary, **but not sufficient**

- If not done well, training can have negative effects

- "Good practice" training on preventing and addressing sexual harassment should:

  - ✓ Provide information on policies and grievance mechanisms, **but focus much more on fostering a positive work culture**

  - ✓ Engage mixed groups of employees in ongoing conversation, not one-off "tick the box" exercises

  - ✓ Emphasize the role of colleagues as bystanders, witnesses and support

  - ✓ Reinforce the role of leaders in setting the tone

Deep dive: an effective approach to "training"

Two-pronged delivery of training

Virtual mandatory training

- Developed and rolled out quickly as mandatory training to **26,000 staff across 130 countries**
- **30-minute** module
- Covered policies, definitions, reporting mechanisms, resources
- Contained **8 case studies** that were purposefully vague – did not "right or wrong" answers
- Received very positive feedback "for mandatory training"

Team-based conversation

- Facilitated conversation, **not a training**
- Held with **intact teams** ~40-50 people
- Focus on what **each individual can do** to contribute to a culture of civility and respect
- **Critical role of leaders:** organize, open, close, carry on dialogue; many continued with range of follow-on activities
- As of Dec 2019, **over 4000 participants in 50+ locations**

Deep dive: an effective approach to "training"

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## Facilitated conversation on *civility and respect in the workplace*

Topics to cover

- Aspiration: a culture of civility and respect

- Definition of harassment and sexual harassment

- Culture considerations

- Strategies for handling unwelcome behaviors from 4 perspectives: perpetrator, receiver, bystander, manager

- Support and resources

Methods and tools

- Polling – get live, real time perspectives in the room

- Breakout small groups – encourage participation

- Case study – consider different perspectives, discuss "what could you do?"

- Role play – provide opportunity to put yourself in the situation, while in a safe environment

- Communication techniques – tips
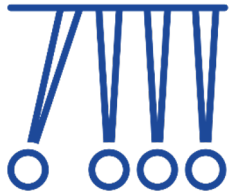
Outcomes and impact

- Extremely positive feedback: overall rating of **6.3 out of 7**
- ~2-4 requests for individual consultation after each session, several incident reports overall
- Some leaders took ongoing commitment seriously and took range of follow-up actions with their teams (additional training, regular communication newsletter and videos, etc.)
- Created momentum for organization-wide dialogue

Considerations for the post-covid workplace

- Explore possibility of virtual format (Zoom, Teams, Webex, etc.)
- Strengthening organizational culture more important than ever

Q & A

Lis Meyers
Nathan Inc.

Manuela Tomei
ILO

Robin Runge
Solidarity
Center

Trang Nguyen
Independent
Consultant

Thank You!

Lis Meyers
Nathan Inc.
Lmeyers@nathaninc.com

Manuela Tomei
ILO
tomei@ilo.org

Robin Runge
Solidarity Center
rrunge@solidaritycenter.org

Trang Nguyen
Independent Consultant
trang@ethosadvisorsdc.com

For more information about SEEP's WEE Working Group contact Lis Meyers: **Lmeyers@nathaninc.com**

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SEEP Announcements

Upcoming Webinars

Savings Groups in the Age of COVID
May 20, 2020

COVID-19: How the Dairy Sector Can Support Resilient Food Systems in East Africa
May 28, 2020

Virtual Roundtable

On June 2, the Women's Economic Empowerment Working Group and FinEquity will host a 90-minute virtual roundtable discussion on COVID-19 and Women's Economic Empowerment, with a focus on employment and entrepreneurship.

Resource Spotlight

awef

AWEF Practitioner Learning Brief

Making Digital Finance Work for Women in the MENA Region:
Eight Lessons from the Field