



Illustrated Conceptual Framework

**Fighting violence
against women is a
business issue too!**



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Abstract

Violence against women (VAW) is not a private matter; it is a crime and a serious violation of human rights. It is also a serious problem for companies that are beginning to discover the enormous economic damage it causes them.

A series of pioneering studies show that companies lose millions of dollars annually because of the decreased productivity of victims, aggressors and coworkers who witness the violence, either directly or indirectly. Consequently, preventing and combating violence against women becomes a matter of vital importance for companies.

With a growing awareness of this reality, more and more companies have begun to take measures to prevent and combat violence against women. Operating from a win-win philosophy, they are generating good practices that are shared so others can take action in an innovative and proactive way.

Foreword

As in its first edition, this document firmly and clearly calls attention to a reality that we often avoid seeing, as if this could make it disappear: the fact is that societies that are violent toward women still exist.

This gender-based violence against women impacts across many different areas of life: the home, the workplace, the community, in the state services themselves and, in general, in any personal or social sphere where they are found.

Evidence shows that women are more frequently affected by gender violence, even in the place many consider the safest for everyone, their home. The Demographic and Family Health Survey of Peru (2014) indicates that, at a national level, 72.4% of women who once had a relationship, suffered some type of violence from their husbands or partners.¹ Other studies reveal the same problem in other Latin American countries. According to a survey conducted in 2010 by the National Institute of Statistics (INE) and the Vice Ministry of Equality of Opportunities (VIO) of Bolivia, of every ten people who attended the Municipal Legal Services (SLIM) due to having suffered some kind of domestic violence, nine were women.² In Ecuador, the National Survey of Family Relations and Gender Violence against Women

(2011) indicates that six out of ten women have experienced an episode of some type of violence.³ According to Latinobarómetro (2012), 41.0% of women in Paraguay suffer or have suffered some type of violence from their partner or ex-partner.⁴

This violence has serious consequences and directly affects companies, which lose billions due to the reduction in productivity of victims, aggressors and colleagues who witness violence either directly or indirectly. This fact has also been demonstrated by several studies that are mentioned in detail, later in this document.

With knowledge and understanding of these consequences, pioneering and innovative companies, in dialogue with their stakeholders, propose and implement actions that prevent and promote the eradication of violence against women (VAW), both within the company and in society.

Unlike its predecessor, this second edition collects figures, data and examples from the region, especially from the countries where the ComVoMujer Regional Program works, because since 2010 there has been evidence and results that position the business sector of Bolivia, Ecuador, Paraguay and Peru, as a very important agent for the prevention of

violence against women. Many companies and business associations in these countries have already adopted prevention as a priority of their corporate social responsibility strategy, based on a win-win philosophy.

People gain from this approach since these actions directly benefit their quality of life, communities in the company's sphere of influence gain, but there is also a positive impact on the company's bottom line itself, as will be shown below.

This paper presents some of the best business practices in this regard to be used as a guide. They include, among others, the establishment of internal policies, aware-

ness-raising actions, training, campaigns, public messages, support for organizations that combat violence and the setting up of networks. However, in the last five years the involvement of regional companies in preventing violence against women has grown so much that it will not be possible to mention all of them here.

We invite you to share this vision and win-win philosophy, to disseminate it and take concrete measures in your companies, with the intention of achieving safer companies, free of violence against women, and thus contributing to the construction of fairer societies where these situations are never again tolerated.

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Relevance of the subject

1

Violence against women is not a private or individual matter, but a serious violation of human rights. Without doubt, economic activity is a space for personal fulfillment and work is a fundamental right. In this space, men and women interact to contribute to a common goal, that of the company, entity or institution in which they work. However, when interacting in the workplace, there are problems that affect women in a specific way, one of them being violence perpetrated against them for reasons of gender.

Violence against women is still a scarcely recognized phenomenon, despite the fact that it often happens right in front of the family members, friends and coworkers of those who are affected.⁵ Therefore, it is rarely the subject of public discourse. Another important reason, undoubtedly, is that the assaulted, out of shame or fear of social sanctions, prevent third parties from learning about violent acts. This was confirmed by a study carried out in Peru by the Universidad San Martín de Porres (USMP) in 2010, which sought to identify issues of importance to

managers in the field of social responsibility. The subject of violence was not mentioned once during the interviews.⁶

Have you ever wondered:

- Why Mrs. Martínez is missing at least twice a month, even though her presence in the company is essential?
- Why the labor quality of your (woman) production manager dropped rapidly during the last few months?
- Why is there high turnover among your female staff, affecting the overall productivity of your company?
- Why is Mr. Rojas's company telephone bill so high?
- Why was Mr. Rodriguez was distracted and had that labor accident?
- Why did Ms. Gonzales suddenly and without apparent cause quit her job?
- Why doesn't Ms. Pérez pay back the loan for her micro-enterprise?

All these questions may be connected with violence against women. Throughout the text we will answer them, demonstrating their significant relevance to the private sector and explaining why violence against women is also a business issue.



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Impacts and socio-economic cost of violence against women

2

In Latin America, as in almost all regions of the world, violence against women continues to be one of the most deeply-rooted problems women endure just for being women. This violence causes negative and significant individual and socio-economic impacts on society, companies, families and individuals. Different studies and statistics clearly show this.

Macroeconomic facts and figures

The State, the power monopoly, also has the responsibility to take measures against violence against women in intimate relationships. It does so through a system of prevention, attention, protection and sanction. All the measures, interventions and state services that are part of this system, generate high costs.⁷ But it is not only the State that pays these costs; companies also bear the costs, mainly in the form of financial losses, due to diminished labor productivity or staff turnover, both of the victims and aggressors and even among direct or indirect witnesses of such violence.

The following figures give a good idea of the economic-financial magnitude of the problem:

- A 2009 study conducted in Australia showed that, without the implementation of an efficient government action plan against domestic violence, the loss of productivity caused by this violence would reach USD 609 million in one year. This would include short-term costs, such as temporary absence from work and administrative costs of the company, as well as long-term costs, such as the permanent loss of female labor caused by homicide or premature death.⁸
- A 2013 study by the Department of Justice of Canada indicates that the economic cost of violence against women in relationships amounted to USD 4.8 billion in 2009.⁹ However, as many cases go unreported, these costs may be underestimated.
- A 2013 Peruvian study, carried out by Universidad San Martín de Porres and German cooperation, implemented by GIZ, through its Sectorial Gender Program and its Com-VoMujer Regional Program,¹⁰ on a national representative sample of 211 companies, calculated that violence against women causes an annual loss of more than USD 6,744 million due to 70 million lost work-days. This considerable figure is equivalent to an annual loss of 3.7% of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP).
- In Great Britain, the macro-economic costs caused by violence against women in relationships amount to EUR 13,732 million. Extrapolating the results from Great Britain to Germany, the figure amounts to about EUR 17,372 million. Consequently, for the entire European Union the cost of violence against women in relationships amounts to EUR 109,125 million.¹¹
- According to studies by the Copenhagen Consensus Center, the global cost of domestic violence amounts to USD 8 billion¹² per year, or 50 times more expensive than civil wars and 6.5 times more expensive than the total number of homicides.¹³

Data and figures about the situation of women in different countries

According to the data available worldwide for 2013, approximately 35 % of women have experienced physical or sexual violence perpetrated by their partners or other people.¹⁴ For example, in Germany 37% of women have experienced physical violence after the age of 16 and 58% of women reported various forms of sexual harassment.¹⁵

Violence against women also continues to be a very common phenomenon in the countries of the Andean region and Paraguay:

- **Bolivia** is one of the countries with the highest levels of violence against women (VAW) in Latin America.¹⁶ Considering all

forms of violence, seven out of every ten Bolivian women have been violated.¹⁷

According to official data of the FELCV, in a span of 4 years (between 2009 and 2012) there were 144,000 cases of violence against women, of which 86 were classified as femicides.¹⁸ In other data provided by the 'Manuela' Observatory of CIDEM, 182 murders of women were registered from January to December 2014: 114 femicides, 66 violent deaths and two homicides/suicides.¹⁹

- In **Ecuador**, six out of ten women have experienced some type of gender violence. Of the total of women who have experienced some type of gender violence, 76 % have been violated by their partner or ex-partner. Physical violence (87.3 %) and psychological violence (76.3 %) are the most recurrent forms of violence against women, by their partners or former partners.²⁰
- According to 2008 data from the National Survey of Demography and Sexual and Reproductive Health (ENDSSR) of **Paraguay**, in 52.6% of the cases of Paraguayan women who experienced some form of forced sex, the aggressor was her partner or ex-partner.²¹
- In **Peru**, 25 out of 100 male workers reported having attacked their intimate partners and 23 out of every 100 female workers reported having been affected by intimate partner violence in the last year. Extrapolating these results to the national level results in an estimated 450,000 victims and 910,000 assailants in the last year. Moreover, an additional



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15 % of workers said they had been victims of violence in their relationships in previous years, although not during the last year.²²

Data and figures at the company level

Violence against women also causes serious economic damage to companies in the countries of the Andean region and Paraguay, as revealed below:

- In **Peru**, the aforementioned USMP study shows that violence against women in relationships causes an amazing loss of 3.7 % of GDP - almost USD 7 billion - due to 70 million working days lost due to absenteeism and presenteeism (low performance of personnel who are physically present in the workplace). It should be noted that these costs are not only caused by the victim, but also by the aggressors who are much more expensive in terms of presenteeism, even using the company's assets to violate their partners or former partners.²³
- In **Ecuador**, a 2013 investigation established that owners of microenterprises lose a total of 6.7 million working days a year due to violence, generating a loss of USD 8.7 million per year.²⁴
- The same study shows that women incur out-of-pocket expenses to address the consequences of this violence, generating an annual loss of USD 23 million, equivalent to 9 % of all income generated by those affected by violence in a year. These expenses directly result in the decapitalization of the microenterprise, increasing the risk of delinquency.²⁵

- In **Peru**, the business costs of violence to owners of formal microenterprises range between USD 1,982 and USD 2,417 million per year, considering out-of-pocket expenses and opportunity costs. This represents between 1 and 1.2 % of GDP, according to a recent 2015 study.²⁶
- **Bolivian** companies lose almost USD 2 billion annually due to violence against women, i.e., 6.5 % of their Gross Domestic Product (GDP), according to a 2015 study by the German Cooperation, implemented by GIZ, through the Com-VoMujer Regional Program and the Bolivian-German Chamber of Commerce and Industry (AHK).²⁷
- In the same year and with the same methodology, the study carried out in **Paraguay**²⁸ showed that the cost of VAW for companies is almost USD 750 million, from about 21 million lost work days, representing 2.39 % of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

These examples clearly show the importance of the issue of violence against women at the business level. Primarily, because many female workers are affected by violence, thus impairing their quality of life in general and their job performance in particular. But as we have seen, it is not only the victims who generate negative impacts; the aggressors also cause huge costs to companies and contribute to insecurity in the work environment. The work climate and the reputation of a company are harmed by accepting employees who are perpetrators of violence.

From the aforementioned data, it can be deduced that gender-based violence against women has a significant impact at the individual, family, community and company level, as well as in society in general ²⁹, because:

- it affects the physical and mental health of women and their families as well as increases infant mortality;
- it increases the costs of medical and legal care;
- it drains resources from public services and the private sector;
- it decreases the human capital development and the labor productivity of paid and unpaid work; ³⁰
- it reduces national and private economic performance due to job loss and reduced income of affected women as well as perpetrators (e.g. incarceration); ³¹

- it leads to the cancellation of employment contracts and high turnover of personnel within companies; ³² and
- it produces other hidden business costs such as the occurrence of work accidents due to presenteeism, the emergence of interpersonal labor conflicts and general demotivation.

This clearly shows that violence against women and its consequences not only represent a personal problem, but also a socio-economic one, and it is also clear that companies take on a large part of the resulting costs. Therefore, committing to its prevention and eradication is an option in which all social sectors win. Entrepreneurship can make a difference and, as we will see below, it is already doing so.



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Corporate social responsibility

3

In regards of corporate social responsibility (CSR), one of the key stakeholders of a company is its employees. The application of internal CSR policies implies first respecting the rights of a company's staff, but also providing them with healthy work environments and favorable conditions for their personal and professional development. This means that a company must not only comply with the legal benefits to which its employees are entitled, but should go beyond strict compliance with legal regulations.

A socially responsible company considers the impacts that its decisions and activities have on society and the environment, through transparent and ethical behavior that:

- contributes to sustainable development including the health and well-being of society;
- takes into consideration the expectations of its stakeholders;
- provides healthy and safe conditions for its staff;³³
- is integrated into the community, knows and participates in its desires and needs, as well as its problems;³⁴ and
- complies with applicable legislation, which is consistent with international standards of behavior, which is integrated throughout the organization and which is carried out in its relationships.³⁵



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The social standards that a company should meet should be geared primarily toward its own staff. That means it should not only provide a fair remuneration system, but also include in the corporate social responsibility compensation the professional, personal and family needs of its staff.

In this sense, a commitment to prevent and combat violence against women is an integral part of the aforementioned social standards. This is part of the ethical responsibility framework of companies and should not be considered an expense but an investment since the company, by executing concrete measures to prevent and combat violence, not only serves women and their families, but also serves its own interests.³⁶ It is well known that a positive work environment, a

motivated staff, a sense of personal safety, etc., have positive economic effects: they increase productivity and profits.

This even generates other non-economic positive effects, such as improving the work climate or greater social acceptance which, in turn, has an economic dimension: because a company that has a good reputation (e.g. is considered to be ethically committed), acquires customers more easily and attracts qualified personnel, etc.³⁷

Finally, compliance with social standards is not achieved merely by implementing a country's laws on prevention and punishment of violence against women and sexual harassment at work. In accordance with the interpretation of the ISO 26000 Committee, compliance with the applicable legislation is one part of ethical behavior and, therefore, a prerequisite for a socially responsible company. However, this legal compliance alone does not make a company to be considered socially responsible. In this regard, the prevention and combat of violence goes beyond the law and therefore have the potential to contribute to a company being considered, by all stakeholders, as socially responsible.

From concepts to good practices in action

4

At a global level, companies are beginning to recognize and become aware of the fact that violence against women has a significant and socio-economically negative impact on their own development and on the quality of life of their staff and the population of places where they operate. As a result, more and more companies are actively involved in the fight against violence against women.

Next, we will mention some ³⁸ of the good practices that have been successfully developed.

First, two international examples which have nothing to do with the work of ComVoMujer, followed by companies that have developed their practices in the countries where we operate.

The Body Shop: Since 1994, this international cosmetics company has been working on the issue of domestic violence, either through public awareness campaigns or through donations to its counterparts that work to prevent VAW. ³⁹ Additionally, The Body Shop created an internal corporate policy against VAW, which offers direct, adequate and individual assistance to its affected personnel. ⁴⁰

Gerhard Rösch GmbH: This German family garment company established a work policy that strives for equity and has a commitment to prevent violence against women. It offers advisory telephone lines, sensitizes and guides its employees on the subject and offers help in cases where an employee is affected by VAW. ⁴¹ For its performance with high respon-


sibility for gender issues, Rösch GmbH has repeatedly won awards at the state and national level in recent years. ⁴²

Although the list of companies that work against VAW in Bolivia, Ecuador, Paraguay and Peru has risen to more than 100 and the practices developed to an even greater number, we can only show some brief examples going forward.

We are very aware that what we present below does not do justice to everything that has been done by these companies, but even so, we consider that it constitutes a source of great inspiration for others who embark on this path: ⁴³

Expoflores: 23 flower farms of Expoflores of Ecuador carried out training programs in prevention of violence against women for more than 1300 employees. Medical and human resources personnel received specialized training for the proper referral of cases to the state services. In this way, Expoflores managed to engage an entire sector that established support routes for affected women and created the campaign 'Woman FlorEc without Violence', ⁴⁴ using the white rose as a symbol against violence against women on November 25 of each year at the national level. Finally, they included indicators against violence against women in their Flor Ecuador certification.

Bagó Pharmaceuticals, Peru: Bagó promotes its business philosophy of preventing violence against women through internal agents among



its employees, suppliers, partners and allies. Not only has it incorporated business policies for the prevention of violence against women in its organizational procedures, it has also linked its product Anaflex Mujer with the campaign 'For women who are healthy and free from violence',⁴⁵ which reached 3.6 million television viewers and almost 50,000 fans on Facebook. It also organizes activities such as the 'Walk for families free from violence' to raise public awareness on the subject.

El Mejor: This Paraguayan cleaning company, with 967 employees (645 women and 322 men) and 307 clients in 45 cities throughout the country, has prepared training guides and trained its administrative and supervisory staff so that they could then train all personnel. In addition, they created a support route within the framework of their program 'a life clean of violence against women'.⁴⁶ They conducted an internal diagnosis about attitudes and needs of the staff in relation to violence against women and they have maintained, since 2014, their permanent institutional campaign: 'Life clean of violence against women'. Their example has generated a chain reaction, since another cleaning company is also involved in the prevention of violence against women.

Water and sanitation utilities of Peru, Bolivia, Paraguay and Ecuador, since 2012, have carried out the 'Close the pipe / faucet / tap / key of violence against women' awareness cam-

paign every November, reaching more than 16 million of users. Since 2014, this campaign has also been replicated in Nicaragua.

Luz del Sur and Electro Oriente: Following the previous example, these Peruvian electricity utilities, carry out a similar campaign with allusive messages such as 'generate light, distribute respect and extinguish violence against women' or 'enlighten your life and extinguish violence against women.'

Telefónica VIVA: This Bolivian company assigned a toll-free telephone number for state attention to cases of violence against women. Since 2013, it has carried out the campaign 'Against all forms of violence'⁴⁷ in social media and business fairs. It has conducted training workshops for employees and managers, at a national level, between 2012 and 2014. In addition, the company has a promotional line of T-shirts and other products with allusive messages specifically aimed at adolescents and young people. The company conducted a diagnosis on how violence against women affects the costs of the company. In 2015, it co-organized the La Paz 10k Race Against All Forms of Violence, benefiting a shelter for assaulted women.

Provemundo: This company from the Ecuadorian business group ENDESA-Botrosa promotes the positioning of men in favor of non-violent masculinities, both in the work environment and private life, training other trainers to facilitate workshops for its mostly male staff. They

have also formed a drama group to dramatize the problem within the company and in its neighboring communities.

International Bakery: This Wong Group company in Peru has established a policy of eradication of violence against women and discrimination, endorsed by its general manager and has been communicated by various means to all stakeholders. Considering that the non-fulfillment of stereotyped roles (such as the attribution of care tasks to women), can generate conflicts, measures aimed at better reconciliation of work, domestic, family and personal life, explicitly addressed to both sexes, can help to prevent VAW.⁴⁸ To that end, International Bakery launched the Bakery Coupon Book that includes 1 paid day off work per year for male staff, more than 350 employees, provided that they commit to spend that day with the family, in gender equity, sharing the housework and the care of their children. For female employees, a lactation room has been built, inaugurated and is in full operation. Finally, the company is about to finalize an agreement with a local nursery to care for its employees' children.

Corporación Nacional de Telecomunicaciones (CNT): This Ecuadorian company chose to enhance the visibility of VAW, using traditional tools (training, public service announcements, materials) and innovations. It developed an application for smartphones that allows accessing information, resources and asking for help, in a simple and safe way. It also offered

the idea of an online certification program, which allows training numerous personnel in a fun and cost-efficient manner.

Swissôtel Quito: This company offers emergency care services and adequate referral channels for its female employees affected by violence. These support routes were developed with staff participation, as one of the products generated during training for management, administrative and operational personnel. They were able to identify workplace situations and involve people in the workplace who could serve as points of immediate support in cases of VAW. That is followed up by administrative support for referral of cases to the external institutional network for care and protection of rights.

The Global Compact Network in Paraguay and the Bolivian-German Chamber of Commerce and Industry (AKH Bolivia): They have been promoting, among their associated companies, studies of individual and confiden-



Photo: © CNT

tial costs caused by VAW. This encourages each of them to take measures to prevent violence against women.


In the case of the Global Compact, in coordination with the Center for Regulation, Rules and Studies of Communication (CERNECO), the Chamber of Advertisers of Paraguay (CAP) and the Paraguayan Industrial Union (UIP), work breakfasts and round tables were held between different actors to promote preventive initiatives against VAW.

Pro Mujer Bolivia: This organization has carried out trainings for its employees and managers on the subject of VAW through participatory methodologies that specialize in adult learning. To this end, they applied the 'Safe Company: Leader in zero tolerance of violence against women' training module, adapting it specifically for the staff of a financial institution. They also created the drama group Kory Warmis (women of gold), composed of 23 Bolivian client-members, who performed the theatrical production of the group 'Kusisita', which deals with what it means to be a woman in current Bolivian society and was presented several times.

The Ministry of Women and Vulnerable Populations (MIMP): It established the 'Safe Company Seal: Free of Violence and Discrimination against Women' recognition in Peru to highlight those companies that implement VAW prevention and eradication measures. In its first edition, seven companies were recognized, namely Laboratorios Bagó del Perú SA, Maple Etanol SRL, IBM del Peru SAC, Higher Institute of Technological Private Education Norbert Wiener SAC, Institute of Higher Education Technological Private



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Daniel Alcides Carrión SAC, CEYESA Ingeniería Industrial SA and International Bakery SAC (Wong Group). It also gave honorable mentions to 16 other private companies.

In addition to the previously mentioned Laboratorios Bagó and International Bakery, other practices developed by some of the companies that earned the seal include:

Maple Etanol: It established a protocol for the attention of cases of VAW within the company, which includes a file for the registration and adequate follow-up of cases. In addition, it created a Disciplinary Committee in charge of determining sanctions for aggressors.

Sodimac: In its sustainability report for 2013, it publishes and disseminates the initiatives implemented by the company, indicating the definition of a policy for the prevention of VAW, which was communicated to all stakeholders. The electrical engineering company CEYESA provided support to the Regional

Federation of Ashaninkas Women Nomat-siguengas and Kakintes (FREMANK) for their projects to reduce violence against women in the central jungle of Peru.

The practices described above do not constitute a definitive list of possibilities; rather they are in the process of construction and constant updating and, therefore, can be used selectively or adapted according to the interest and context of each company.

Of course, the possibilities depend on the size of the company and its scale of production, as well as on the level of qualification of the workforce, the dynamism of the productive sector in which it operates, and the specific conditions of the labor market in that sector.⁴⁹ In addition, it should be emphasized that the execution of any measure depends, ultimately, on the will and level of commitment of the company's top management and its executives.

Principles of German Cooperation on collaboration with private companies

5

The Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) of Germany supports cooperation with private companies that are committed to the implementation of social and human rights standards, in general, and women's rights, in particular.

For this reason, it has commissioned GIZ, among others, to implement projects of mutual benefit with private companies (public-private partnerships). These include the training of local collaborators, the use of climate-friendly technologies or social standards in the production units, since on many occasions the objectives of private companies and development cooperation actors are aligned. One of the modalities to promote these projects is the [develoPPP.de](http://www.developpp.de) program, which identifies possible public-private partnerships, which have both economic benefits for the company, and benefits for the promotion of sustainable development in the counterpart countries; and combine the specific knowledge and resources of the parties.

GIZ plans, co-finances and implements these projects jointly with the identified companies, with a series of mandatory criteria. More information about this program is available at: <http://www.developpp.de/en>.

Within the framework of this program, the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (GESOREN) Program and the Regional Program ComVoMujer, successfully collaborated with the business group **ENDESA-BOTROSA** in Ecuador, to implement the project 'Women and Business together for development and gender non-violence'. The objective was to prevent violence against women and promote gender equity, both within their industrial plants and in the communities in their areas of intervention. The project, which is now maintained and continues as a program of corporate social responsibility of the company itself, included technical advice, awareness and training for employees and the community through the March 4 Women's Association and Women's

Craft Workshops Communities (TAMCO), as well as the publication and dissemination of informational material.

Another example is INTI S.A. that, with the technical assistance of an integrated expert (GIZ/CIM) in the Bolivian-German Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the ComVoMujer Regional Program, developed a project to implement a Management Model to Prevent Violence against Women that affects its entire business strategy and places VAW prevention at the very center of the business. This company wants to prove, with strong arguments, that prevention of VAW will not only reduce productivity costs but will strengthen its business function and can be a strategic opportunity to optimize the value chain and prepare for new markets sensitive to gender equity. It also proposes a proactive prevention model, which can revolutionize the current concept, since until now, when talking about primary prevention, initiatives are mostly reactive, i.e., responding to violence without addressing its structural causes. Instead, this model clearly aims to control employers' inequitable management patterns to achieve lasting positive real changes in gender equity.



Photo: © AHK Bolivia

Conclusion

6

Throughout this document, sufficient arguments have been given to clarify why a business commitment to prevent, combat and eradicate violence against women is important, relevant, reasonable and an excellent investment opportunity.

It has also been clear that companies that commit themselves to contributing to a safe environment free of violence against women and, more generally, to good treatment and peaceful solutions to conflicts, can only win. Therefore, it is not a matter of philanthropy or just doing it because it is the right thing to

do, but because the prevention of violence against women is good business built on a win-win philosophy, which benefits companies and all their stakeholders.

The interventions and initiatives presented throughout the document are just some examples of how to get engaged. If you are interested in learning more about these initiatives or if your company is already committed to eradicating violence against women, do not hesitate to contact:

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Annex



Violence against Women

Definition of Violence against Women for Gender Reasons

Violence against women has been defined and redefined in different ways and by different regional and local institutions worldwide. The challenge when choosing a definition is that no one definition is perfect due to the complexity of the problem.

The United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women⁵⁰ defines it as:

'(...) any act of violence based on belonging to the female sex that has or may result in physical, sexual or psychological damage or suffering for the woman; as well as threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether they occur in public life or in private life.'

Types of Interpersonal Violence

Violence against women manifests itself in different ways. Women of different backgrounds, ethnic origins, cultures, social classes, ages, religions, sexual orientations, civil states, may experience various types of violence.⁵¹

This typology of violence, which is presented in the sphere of relationships between people (interpersonal), is the most commonly used for pedagogical purposes, but it should be noted that violence against women is an

extremely complex phenomenon and that, in general, the different forms of violence are interrelated, overlapping and, in most cases, simultaneous:⁵²

Physical violence: Physical violence is the intentional use of physical force, or the use of an object or weapon to harm or injure the body and the health of the woman. It includes shoving, slapping, kicking, hitting with or without objects or other weapons, which can go as far as death, called femicide or feminicide.

Psychological violence: Psychological violence can be very subtle, but it is no less serious. It consists of acts tending to control or isolate the woman, as well as to humiliate or embarrass her. It includes threats, intimidation, blackmail, contempt, shouting, insults, harassment, isolation of other people or relatives, devaluation and even silence (ignoring the person or their opinions), among others. Many times, it may not even be recognized as violence, precisely because of subtleties hidden behind jokes or popular sayings, but which in reality only manifest prejudices and devaluation of the feminine.

Sexual violence: Sexual violence is defined as sexual acts without consent or forced, sexual innuendo or groping, harassment, verbal comments or innuendos, gestures, offering of some benefit for sexual purposes or other promises of economic advantages or another nature.

Economic violence: Economic violence is defined as the control, management and restriction of women in the access and disposition of her own, the family's or the couple's resources, money, or property.

Impacts of violence

The impacts of violence against women can be observed, without one being more important than another, at various levels:

1. socio-economic,
 2. family and social and
 3. individual.
1. The socio-economic impacts that violence causes are, on the one hand, macro-economic direct costs, such as direct costs for services in the health sector, in the judicial sector, etc. On the other hand, it must be taken into account that the economic activity index of women increases every year. If, at the same time, violence against women cannot be reduced, there will be negative consequences at the macro-economic level and in private enterprise because it is affecting a larger group of economically active women every day. ⁵³
 2. Violence against women affects not only their personal life, but also their families and social life. Studies showed that the children of women who have suffered some type of violence or have seen their mothers violated experience emotional problems and disturbed behavior. ⁵⁴ These children also suffer from depression, from states of fear and often replicate the violence against other children and, later, against their own partners, thus producing an effect of intergenerational transmission. ⁵⁵
 3. At the individual level, women who experience violence show a decrease in their self-esteem, are more exposed to health problems, show symptoms of frustration and depression; and they have difficulties expressing themselves and communicating with other people. In many cases, violence prevents them from continuing with (or undertaking) academic, work and community activities. When the situation of violence is extended over a long period of time, suicide may result (induced in these cases).

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