



# The Business Case for Workplace Responses to Domestic and Sexual Violence in Fiji

July 2019

AN INITIATIVE OF THE FIJI PARTNERSHIP



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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

<b>DV</b>	Domestic violence
<b>DSV</b>	Domestic and sexual violence
<b>FBoS</b>	Fiji Bureau of Statistics
<b>FWCC</b>	Fiji Women's Crisis Centre
<b>GBV</b>	Gender-based violence
<b>HR</b>	Human Resources
<b>IFC</b>	International Finance Corporation
<b>ILO</b>	International Labor Organization
<b>SPC</b>	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization



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## Executive Summary

This study, which identifies the impacts of domestic and sexual violence on Fijian employees and employers, has been conducted to inform the development of tailored solutions for the business community in Fiji. The study is part of an ongoing IFC initiative to develop workplace responses to domestic and sexual violence in the Pacific, which supports employees experiencing violence and reduces impacts on the workplace.

Fiji has one of the highest rates of domestic and sexual violence in the world with almost two-thirds of the country's women experiencing domestic or sexual violence during their lifetime.<sup>1</sup> This has serious negative impacts on individuals, families, communities, and workplaces. For the three companies included in this study, the high rates of domestic and sexual violence translate into lost staff time and reduced productivity that is equivalent to almost 10 days of lost work per employee each year.

This study includes three private sector companies, collectively employing 1,701 employees as of December 2018. The companies were selected to ensure sector diversity and based on their commitment to supporting staff affected by domestic and sexual violence. A total of 563 staff completed the staff survey, representing 33 percent of all employees. The study also included individual and group interviews involving 43 women and 43 men in both supervisory and non-supervisory roles.

Key findings from the study include:

- One in three employees — including half of ever-partnered women<sup>2</sup>, — participating in the survey had experienced domestic or sexual violence in one's lifetime. Forty-four percent of women and 22 percent of men reported they had experienced some form of domestic or sexual violence in their lifetime; and 21 percent of women and nine percent of men had experienced violence in the last 12 months.

**34% of survey participants experienced domestic or sexual violence in their lifetime**



- The most common form of violence — reported by both men and women participating in the survey — was emotional abuse, harassment, or intimidation by a family or household member (71 percent of women and 63 percent of men), followed by physical violence (59 percent of women and 30 percent of men).
- Twenty-nine percent of women and 23 percent of men who experienced violence reported that the violence occurred at least once a month.
- Few people reported that violence was acceptable. Eight percent of women and 16 percent of men reported that they thought domestic violence was acceptable in some circumstances. This is much lower than the level of acceptance recorded in the study of violence against women in Fiji (Fiji Women's Crisis Centre 2010/2011), where 43 percent of women surveyed agreed with one or more reasons that justified wife beating.<sup>3</sup>

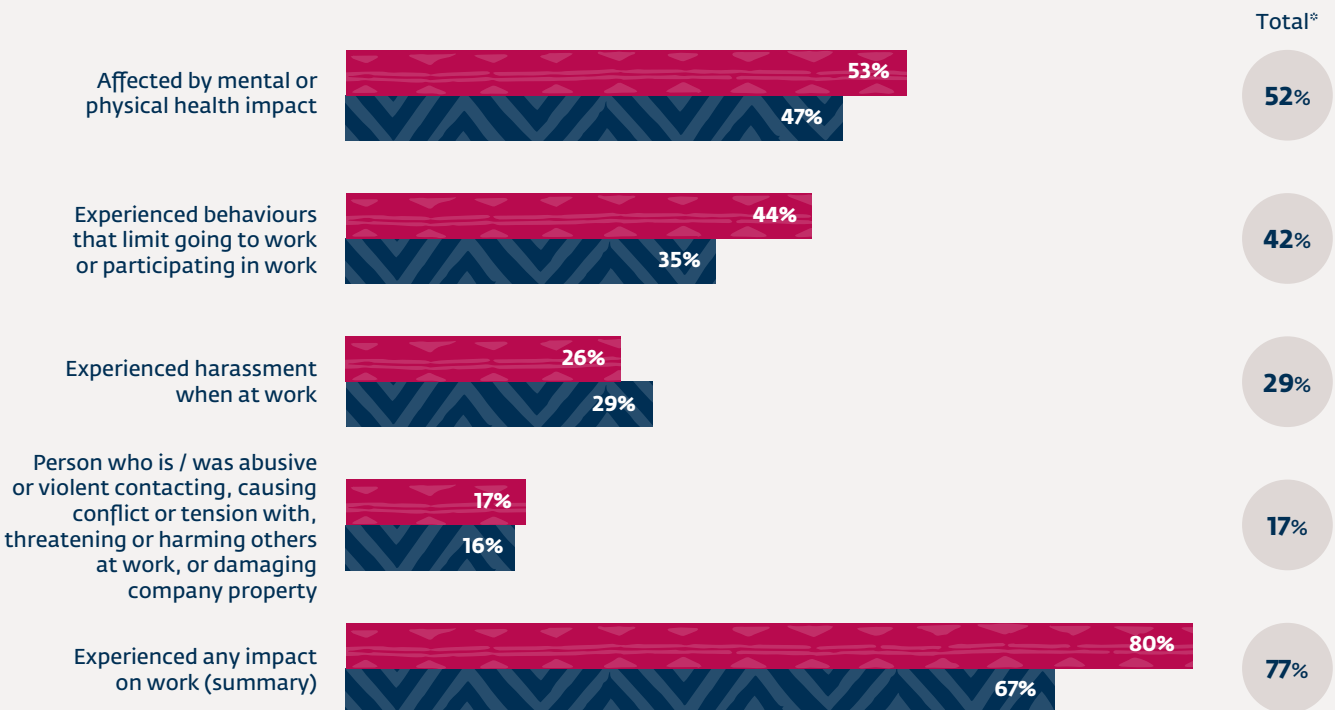
<sup>1</sup> FWCC (2013) *Somebody's Life, Everybody's Business! National Research on Women's Health and Life Experiences in Fiji (2010/2011)*. Suva: FWCC; and UN Women (2012) *Violence against Women Prevalence Data: Surveys by Country Compiled by UN Women*. Available at [http://www.endvawnow.org/uploads/browser/files/vawprevalence\\_matrix\\_june2013.pdf](http://www.endvawnow.org/uploads/browser/files/vawprevalence_matrix_june2013.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Ever-partnered women are women who have ever been married or in a de facto or other intimate relationship.

<sup>3</sup> FWCC (2013) *Somebody's Life, Everybody's Business! National Research on Women's Health and Life Experiences in Fiji (2010/2011)*. Suva: FWCC; and UN Women (2012) *Violence against Women Prevalence Data: Surveys by Country Compiled by UN Women*. Available at [http://www.endvawnow.org/uploads/browser/files/vawprevalence\\_matrix\\_june2013.pdf](http://www.endvawnow.org/uploads/browser/files/vawprevalence_matrix_june2013.pdf)

- Three quarters of those who had directly experienced domestic or sexual violence acknowledged some impact on work. Of those who had experienced violence, 53 percent of women and 47 percent of men reported impacts on their mental and physical health; 44 percent of women and 35 percent of men reported that the abusive or violent person had done something to stop them from going to work or participating at work; 29 percent of men and 26 percent of women reported that the violent or abusive person harassed them when they were at work and 17 percent of women and 16 percent of men reported impacts on others at work or the company.
- Further, 63 percent of all survey participants responded that they had friends or family affected by domestic or sexual violence, and 63 percent of women and 56 percent of men in this situation said it impacted them in some way at work. This may be because of worry or stress, or due to providing some form of support such as assisting the person to access services or helping them to look after their children or other dependents.
- This means that just under half (47 percent) of all the survey participants experienced at least one related impact on work, either because of their own experience, that of a close friend or family member, or both.

**Percentage of women and men affected by violence reporting different impacts on work in the four weeks prior to the survey**



<sup>o</sup> Total includes not stated/other gender (n=2). Expressed as a percentage of participants that reported of ever experiencing domestic or sexual violence.

**Average days lost per employee**  
(whether they have experienced domestic or sexual violence or not) **per year, due to:**

**Feeling tired, distracted or unwell**



**4**  
days

**Being late or absent from work**



**1.8**  
days

**Supporting colleagues who are experiencing domestic or sexual violence**



**4.1**  
days

- These impacts affect employees negatively, translating into significant costs to businesses. Each year, the equivalent of just under 10 work days are lost per employee (whether they have experienced violence or not) due to employees feeling distracted, tired or unwell, being late for work, being absent, or helping others respond to domestic and sexual violence.
- Just over half of women and 28 percent of men who have experienced domestic or sexual violence said that they had spoken to someone at work about the violence, most commonly to another colleague (75 percent of women and 50 percent of men).
- Forty-two percent of women and only eight percent of men had spoken to someone at work in a formal capacity, such as their supervisor or manager. Overall, those who went through formal channels were more likely to have better outcomes (63 percent compared to 50 percent).

**Recommendations**

This study demonstrates how important it is for employers to support staff affected by domestic and sexual violence. Based on the findings of this study and IFC's work to address domestic and sexual violence elsewhere in the Pacific, the report recommends possible actions for employers to support staff impacted by domestic and sexual violence. These include:

- Developing a policy and program to guide their workplace response to domestic and sexual violence and publicizing it to all employees. The policy should also outline the company's approach to allegations of domestic and sexual violence perpetrated by employees — this should reinforce the nonacceptance of violence in any form.
- Establishing small cross-department teams of women and men who are adequately trained and supported to assist employees affected by domestic and sexual violence.



With a formal and structured workplace response to domestic and sexual violence, Fijian companies can support affected employees, remove barriers to help employees achieve their full potential, mitigate productivity losses, reduce turnover costs, position themselves as an employer of choice, and contribute to their corporate social responsibility. This makes good business sense.

IFC initiatives on workplace responses to domestic and sexual violence are generating results in other countries. In Solomon Islands, for example, employees in the nine companies that have implemented workplace responses and participated in IFC's survey on the impact of domestic and sexual violence on the workplace, are less accepting of domestic and sexual violence, compared to previous studies. Further, employees accessing various forms of support in these companies are finding it helpful<sup>4</sup>. Workplace responses to domestic and sexual violence make good business sense as they improve employee well-being which subsequently, improves the business bottom line through increased employee performance.

<sup>4</sup> IFC (2019) The Impact of Domestic and Sexual Violence on the Workplace in Solomon Islands – Survey Report. Sydney: IFC.

# 1. Introduction

Fiji, like many of its Pacific neighbors, has among the highest prevalence of violence against women and girls in the world (see Table 1) with almost two-thirds of women experiencing domestic or sexual violence during their lifetime.<sup>5</sup> Men and boys can be affected too; however, unequal power, differences in physical strength, and often fewer options to leave make women more vulnerable to more severe forms and more regular violence.

Workplace responses to domestic and sexual violence are a priority for IFC as they benefit individuals affected by violence, businesses that implement them, and economies as a whole. They are an integral part of community response to reduce the acceptability of violence and to support those who experience it. Further, employers are often in a unique position to support employees experiencing problems at home, as the workplace may be the only place where one can ask for help.

IFC has been working with the private sector in the Pacific since 2014 to develop and implement workplace responses to domestic and sexual violence. To date, IFC has undertaken business case research in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands and worked with 18 companies to develop and implement workplace responses. IFC plans to develop similar workplace responses in 2019 for employers in Fiji and the small Pacific Island countries.

This report provides a compelling case for Fijian businesses to support staff who are affected by domestic and sexual violence.

Table 1 - Prevalence of intimate partner and/or non-partner physical and/or sexual violence for Fiji and regional comparators<sup>6</sup>

	Fiji (2011) <sup>(a)</sup>	Samoa (2000) <sup>(b)</sup>	Kiribati (2008) <sup>(b)</sup>	Vanuatu (2009) <sup>(b)</sup>	Solomon Islands (2009) <sup>(c)</sup>	Global <sup>(d)</sup>
<b>Intimate partner physical or sexual violence:</b>						
Last 12 months (%)	24	22.4	36.1	44	41.8	-
Lifetime (%)	64	46.1	67.6	60	63.5	30
<b>Intimate partner and/or non-partner physical or sexual violence</b>						
Lifetime (%)	31 <sup>°</sup>	75.8	73	48 <sup>°</sup>	64	-

<sup>°</sup> Vanuatu and Fiji lifetime prevalence of physical and/or sexual violence is non-partner violence only.

<sup>5</sup> FWCC (2013) Somebody's Life, Everybody's Business! National Research on Women's Health and Life Experiences in Fiji (2010/2011). Suva: FWCC. This study replicated the World Health Organisation (WHO) methodology developed to enhance the credibility and comparability of violence against women data globally. The research was conducted by FWCC with the Fiji Islands Bureau of Statistics over 2010 and 2011.

<sup>6</sup> (a) FWCC (2013); (b) UN Women (2012) Violence against Women Prevalence Data: Surveys by Country Compiled by UN Women. Available at [http://www.endvawnow.org/uploads/browser/files/vawprevalence\\_matrix\\_june2013.pdf](http://www.endvawnow.org/uploads/browser/files/vawprevalence_matrix_june2013.pdf); (b) Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), Ministry of Women, Youth & Children's Affairs, National Statistics Office (2009) (c) Solomon Islands Family Health and Safety Study: A study on violence against women and children. Honiara: SPC; (d) WHO (2013) Global and Regional Estimates of Violence against Women: prevalence and health effects of intimate partner violence and non-partner sexual violence. Geneva: WHO. Global and Regional Estimates of Violence against Women: prevalence and health effects of intimate partner violence and non-partner sexual violence. Geneva: WHO.

## 2. Study Methodology

Three companies, collectively employing 1,701 employees as of December 2018, participated in this study. The companies were selected to ensure sector diversity<sup>7</sup> and based on their commitment to supporting staff affected by domestic and sexual violence.

This study was informed by a desk review of literature on domestic and sexual violence in Fiji and comprises two main data sources:

- Individual and group interviews involving 43 women and 43 men in both supervisory and non-supervisory roles in three companies.
- A survey on ‘How problems at home affect you at work’ that was completed — online or with the assistance of an enumerator in a one-on-one interview — by 563 staff across the three companies<sup>8</sup>.

The study was conducted in accordance with the established World Health Organization ethics protocols for researching violence against women<sup>9</sup> and also drew on lessons from conducting related surveys in Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, and other settings.

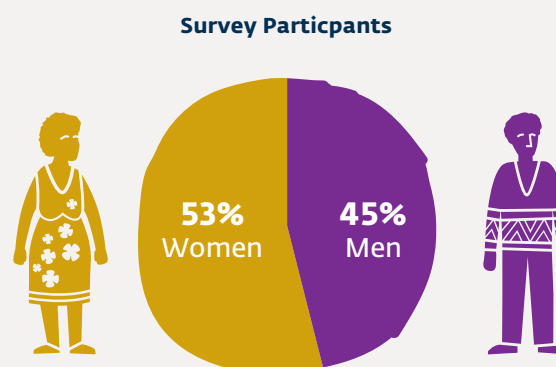
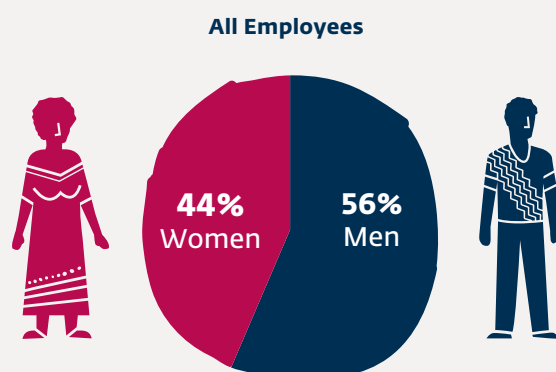
Further details on the study methodology are included in Annex 1.

“ When there is domestic violence, it drains both the perpetrator and the victim. So when they come to work, it affects them mentally as well as physically. It takes a lot out of a person.”

*(Company 2 group discussion, male staff member)*

### Proportion of Employees and Survey Participants

The survey was completed by 563 employees, representing 33% of employees



<sup>9</sup> Graph does not include the nine survey participants that did not specify their gender or identified as ‘other’

<sup>7</sup> Fiji has a population of approximately 900,000 (2018 census estimate) with a labour force participation rate of 63% (77% men; 38% female) (ILO estimate). 174,833 were in paid employment at a registered establishment as at June 2017 [FBoS (2019) Annual Paid Employment Statistics 2017. Suva: FBoS]. In 2017 there were 194 large businesses in Fiji (with over 100 employees), employing 87,837 men and 52,030 women (FBoS private correspondence). The companies that participated in this study, all employ more than 100 employees and were from the following sectors: wholesale and retail, repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles representing 17% of paid employees, administrative and support service activities representing 4% of paid employees, and financial and insurance activities representing 3% of paid employees.

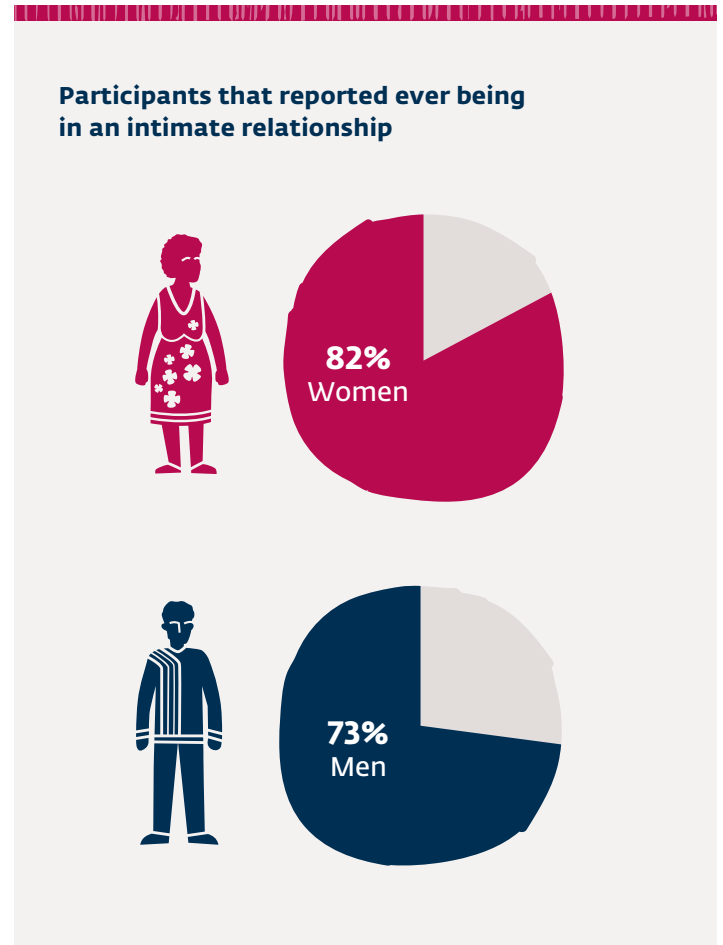
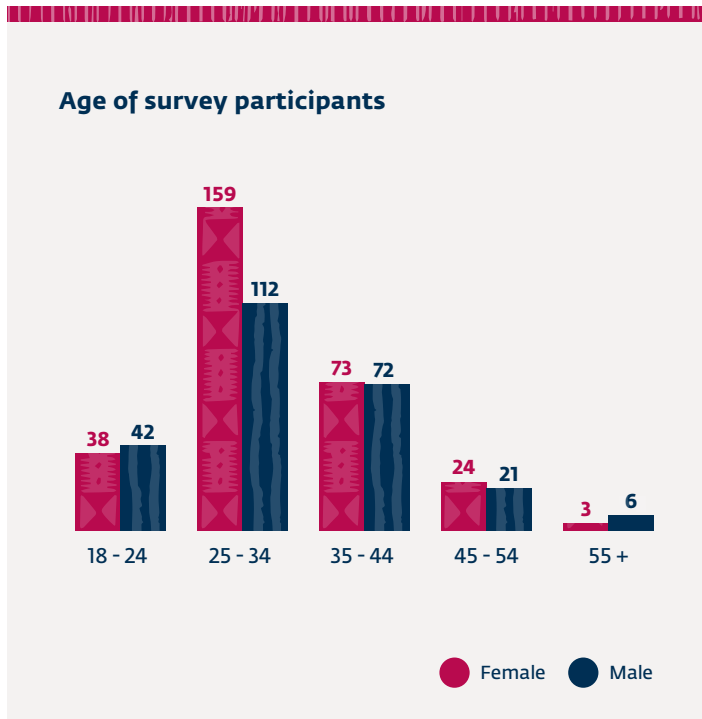
<sup>8</sup> Because the survey completion protocol did not require that survey participants answer every question, not all questions were answered by all participants. Throughout this report, percentages are expressed as a proportion of the full survey sample (rather than the number answering the question) unless otherwise stated. Survey responses that included answers up to and including the filter question regarding personal experience of violence were retained, even if the participant did not answer all relevant questions beyond this point. Survey responses that were incomplete to this point and/or did not answer the filter question and beyond were discarded.

<sup>9</sup> Particularly Ellsberg M, and Heise L (2005) *Researching Violence against Women: A Practical Guide for Researchers and Activists*. Washington DC: WHO/ PATH; Fulu & Lang (not dated) *Ethical and Safety Guidelines for Research on GBV*. Thailand: Partners for Prevention.

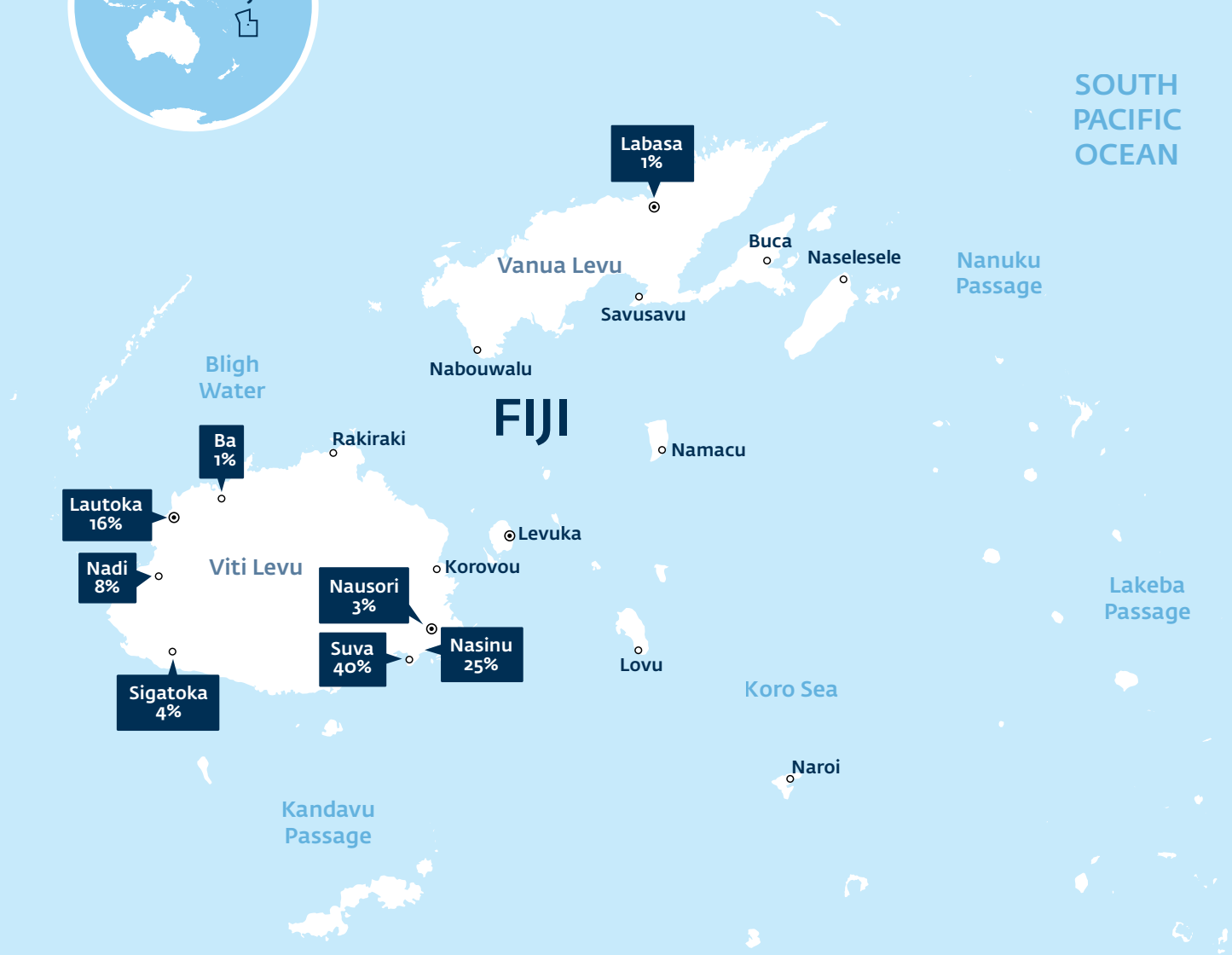
### 3. Demographics

The survey was completed by 300 women, 254 men, and nine respondents who either did not state their gender or identified as 'other'. Half of the survey participants (53 percent of women and 44 percent of men) were in the 25-34 age group, and one-quarter (24 percent of women and 28 percent of men) were in the 35-44 age group. Three percent identified as having a disability.

Eighty-two percent of women and 73 percent of men reported that they have ever been in an intimate relationship, whether currently living together with a partner (married or de facto), in a relationship but not living together, or separated, widowed, or divorced.

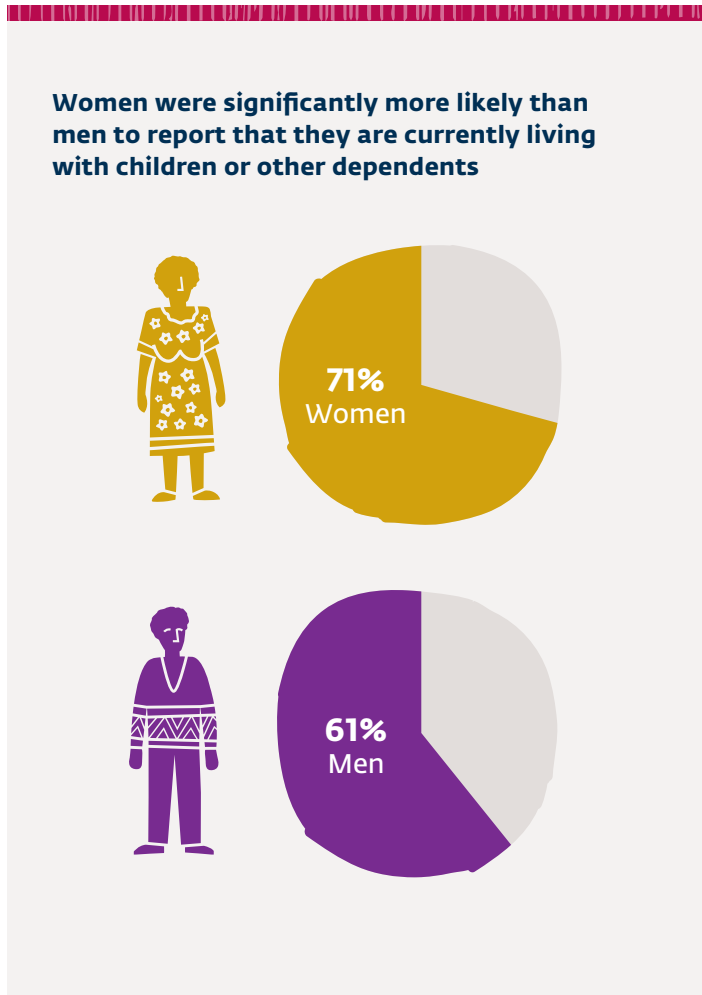


### Fiji - Municipality of work of survey participants



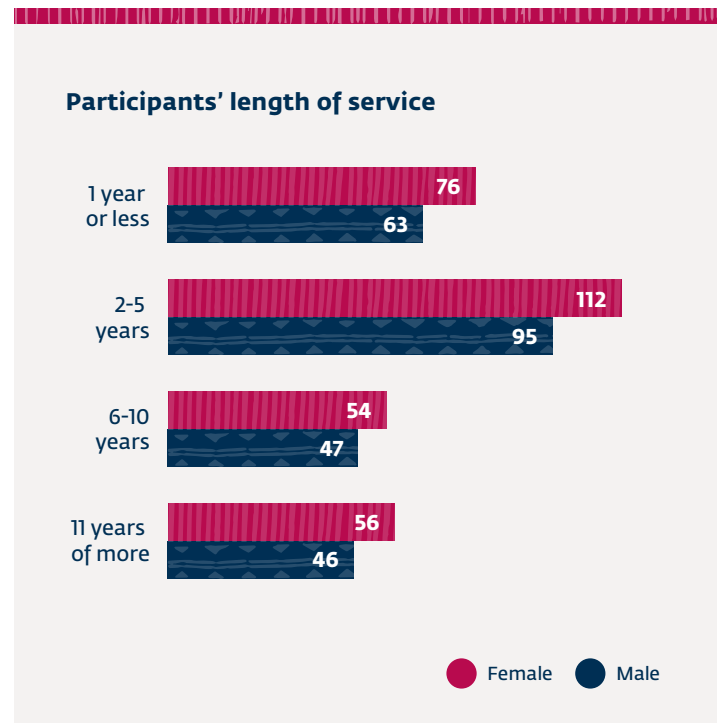
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Women were significantly<sup>10</sup> more likely than men to report that they are currently living with children or other dependents (71 percent and 61 percent respectively).



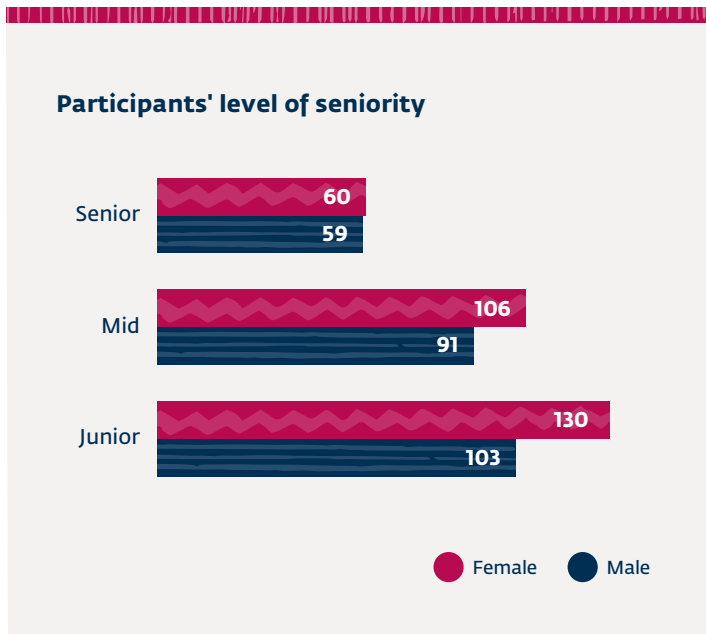
Forty percent of survey participants work in Suva, 25 percent in Nasinu, and 16 percent in Lautoka, with small proportions of survey participants working in Ba, Labasa, Nadi, Nausori, and Sigatoka.

A quarter of the participants had worked at their current workplace for one year or less. Just over one-third had been with the same company for between two and five years, 18 percent between six and 10 years, and 19 percent for 11 years or more. Almost all (86 percent) participants were hired from within the local area; 11 percent of the participants were hired from somewhere else in Fiji and moved to take up the position.



<sup>10</sup> Throughout this report significant differences are those with a p-value <0.05. The group of 'not stated/other' gender is too small to use in statistical tests of association.

Forty-two percent of participants were at a junior level, 36 percent at mid-level, and 22 percent at senior level in their companies. More than one-third (37 percent) of them manage or supervise other staff. Women participants were more likely than men to be in permanent full-time positions (85 percent compared to 79 percent). Otherwise, no significant differences between men and women were observed across these employment related variables.



## 4. Key Findings

### 4.1 Experience of Domestic and Sexual Violence

One in three employees, including half of ever-partnered women, participating in the survey had experienced domestic or sexual violence in their lifetime.

The survey found that 44 percent of women and 22 percent of men had experienced some form of domestic or sexual violence in their lifetime; 21 percent of women and nine percent of men had experienced violence in the last 12 months. Of those experiencing violence, just over half are at mid or senior levels in their companies, and a third in management or supervisory roles. Seventy-one percent have been at their company for two years or more.

These prevalence rates<sup>11</sup> are lower than those found in the FWCC study conducted in 2010/2011 (64 percent of ever-partnered women have experienced intimate partner physical or sexual violence)<sup>12</sup>. However, it is important to note that this does not necessarily reflect a change in prevalence in the relatively short period since the FWCC was implemented. This is due in part to the geographical area of focus in this study and the inclusion of only those engaged in wage employment.<sup>13</sup>

Nevertheless, the prevalence found in this study is high and substantially higher than the global average. A large percentage of survey participants (69 percent of women and 56 percent of men) also indicated that they have a close friend or family member affected by domestic or sexual violence — another indication of its prevalence in society.

Table 2 - Current and lifetime prevalence of domestic and sexual violence among survey participants in Fiji

	Women	Men	Other/not stated	Total
<b>Current prevalence</b>				
Experienced in the last 12 months	21%	9%	22%	16%
Experienced more than 12 months ago	23%	13%		18%
Lifetime prevalence	44%	22%	22%	34%
Current prevalence – <b>ever partnered</b>	24%	10%	25%	18%
Lifetime prevalence – <b>ever partnered</b>	49%	21%	25%	37%
Have friends or family affected by domestic or sexual violence	69%	56%	56%	63%

<sup>11</sup> Noting also that the prevalence rates in Table 2 refer to experience of any of the forms of violence encompassed in the definition of domestic violence (physical, sexual, emotional or psychological, and economic violence, along with threats of any of these forms of violence).

<sup>12</sup> FWCC (2013) Somebody's life, everybody's business! National Research on Women's Health and Life Experiences in Fiji (2010/2011). Suva: FWCC. The FWCC study found that all forms of violence are more prevalent in rural areas compared to urban areas, and that in general, women in the lower socio-economic cluster have a greater likelihood of experiencing violence than those in the medium or higher socio-economic clusters.

<sup>13</sup> The IFC survey was conducted in urban settings and all survey participants are employed and therefore less likely to be in the lowest socio-economic strata. The FWCC survey also follows the World Health Organization methodology (discussed in Annex 1) which is designed to maximize disclosure.



## 4.2 Understanding Domestic and Sexual Violence

About one-third of survey participants and very few participants in the group interviews have attended any form of awareness raising session or training on domestic and sexual violence. In general, when asked to define domestic violence, participants were familiar with physical and sexual violence, and stated that emotional or psychological abuse was also starting to get recognized as a form of domestic violence.

Participants in the group interview attributed this growing recognition to increasing levels of education, the role of social media, and the introduction of the Domestic Violence Decree in 2009.

Economic violence or financial abuse was not well-understood, particularly in the context of Fijian culture — both indigenous and Indo-Fijian — because of the numerous demands made on family members who have an income. Common definitions were a variation of ‘Financial abuse is over-committing the family because of community commitments... It is because of the high expectations’.

While over commitment can certainly trigger tension in a domestic relationship, it does not in itself constitute economic or financial abuse. This requires an element of unreasonable control, with one party attempting to coerce another to become financially dependent, ‘by obstructing their access to or control over resources and/or independent economic activity’.<sup>14</sup> It includes acts such as denying funds, refusing to contribute financially, denying food and basic needs, and controlling access to health care, employment, and so on. Financial abuse can also include taking away money from someone with an income or savings.<sup>15</sup> Feedback from group interviews suggests that this can be to an extreme extent. For example, some employees do not even have the bus fare to go to work or to buy a snack or drink when at work, significantly hindering their ability to stay in their job.

“ Maybe 20 years ago, back in school, we would have said domestic violence is just physical. Now we are seeing the psychological impacts, not just physical injury, it is broader than that.”

*(Company 3 group discussion, male staff member).*

<sup>14</sup> UN Women (2010) Glossary of Terms. Programming Essentials for Monitoring and Evaluation (webpage). Available at <http://endvawnow.org>

<sup>15</sup> In the FWCC study, 14 percent of those who experience violence have husbands/partners who have taken their earnings or savings against their will. This compares with only 3% of women who never experienced partner violence. FWCC (2013) p.107.

### 4.3 Acceptance, Triggers, and Justifications of Violence

Participants in the group interviews unanimously agreed that domestic and sexual violence was not acceptable. In the survey, men were significantly more likely than women to agree that domestic violence is acceptable in some circumstances (16 percent of men, compared to eight percent of women). This represents a significantly lower level than the FWCC study, in which 42.6 percent of women surveyed agreed with one or more reasons that justified wife beating.

**Table 3 - Women and men survey participants' views on the acceptability of domestic violence**

Personal view of domestic violence	Women	Men	Total
Domestic violence is never acceptable	91%	82%	87%
Domestic violence is acceptable in some circumstances	8%	16%	12%

This considerably lower level of reported acceptance or justification of violence — compared to the FWCC study — could again reflect differences in the sample, with urban and employed people less likely to find violence acceptable.<sup>16</sup> However, it may also reflect the growing impact of work done so far by the civil sector and government in Fiji. It is also much lower than the findings of the IFC's 2019 Solomon Islands study, where 36 percent of men and 27 percent of women reported that domestic violence is acceptable in some circumstances. Many interviewees acknowledged and attributed the decrease in acceptability of violence to messaging in mainstream and social media, through education, by local organizations, and the introduction of the domestic violence decree.

“ There has been a change – now women can speak and say that it is not OK. Earlier, people would just accept that it happens and not do anything. There has been a lot of awareness about what people can do and so now people know they don't have to just put up with it.”  
(Company 3 group discussion, male staff member).

This study also found a significant association between participants' own views on the acceptability of domestic violence and their perceptions about what others in their workplace thought. Women and men who thought that domestic violence was never acceptable (the majority of participants) were more likely to believe that no one or not many in their workplace found it acceptable some of the time.

The World Health Organization reports: ‘*Women are more likely to experience intimate partner violence if they have low education, exposure to mothers being abused by a partner, abuse during childhood, and attitudes accepting violence, male privilege, and women's subordinate status*’ (emphasis added).<sup>17</sup> Risk of violence goes hand in hand with acceptance of violence and of controlling behaviors. As one interviewee said, ‘The acceptance drives the behavior of the men’ (Company 3 group discussion, female staff member). Therefore, a lower level of acceptance is expected to reduce this risk.

A low level of accepting domestic violence indicates the existence of a protective social norm. To re-enforce this norm, when raising awareness about domestic violence and work, companies should emphasize that only a few employees think domestic violence is acceptable.

<sup>16</sup> See Annex 1: Methodology details and limitations

<sup>17</sup> World Health Organization (2017) Key facts: Violence against women (update November 29, 2017). Available at <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/violence-against-women>

“ You can't justify. There is no justification... If something is wrong, you have done wrong, you can't say 'this is my mitigation' for this domestic violence, because my wife said this to me ... Even though there will be circumstances where people will try to justify.”

*(Company 3 group discussion, male staff member)*

Nevertheless, there are some common explanations or excuses for 'blowups' within families and peer groups. Affairs and jealousy are major triggers of and justification for domestic violence. They are considered to be a growing feature of a changing cultural landscape where gender roles and power structures in relationships are being redefined.

Work stress also features as a trigger of and justification for violence. A number of interviewees suggested that additional demands at work resulting from low productivity of some team members — at times attributable to their experience of domestic or sexual violence — adds to this stress and lengthens the work hours. Some employees take this stress back home or their partner is unhappy with these additional demands, thereby triggering and justifying violence.

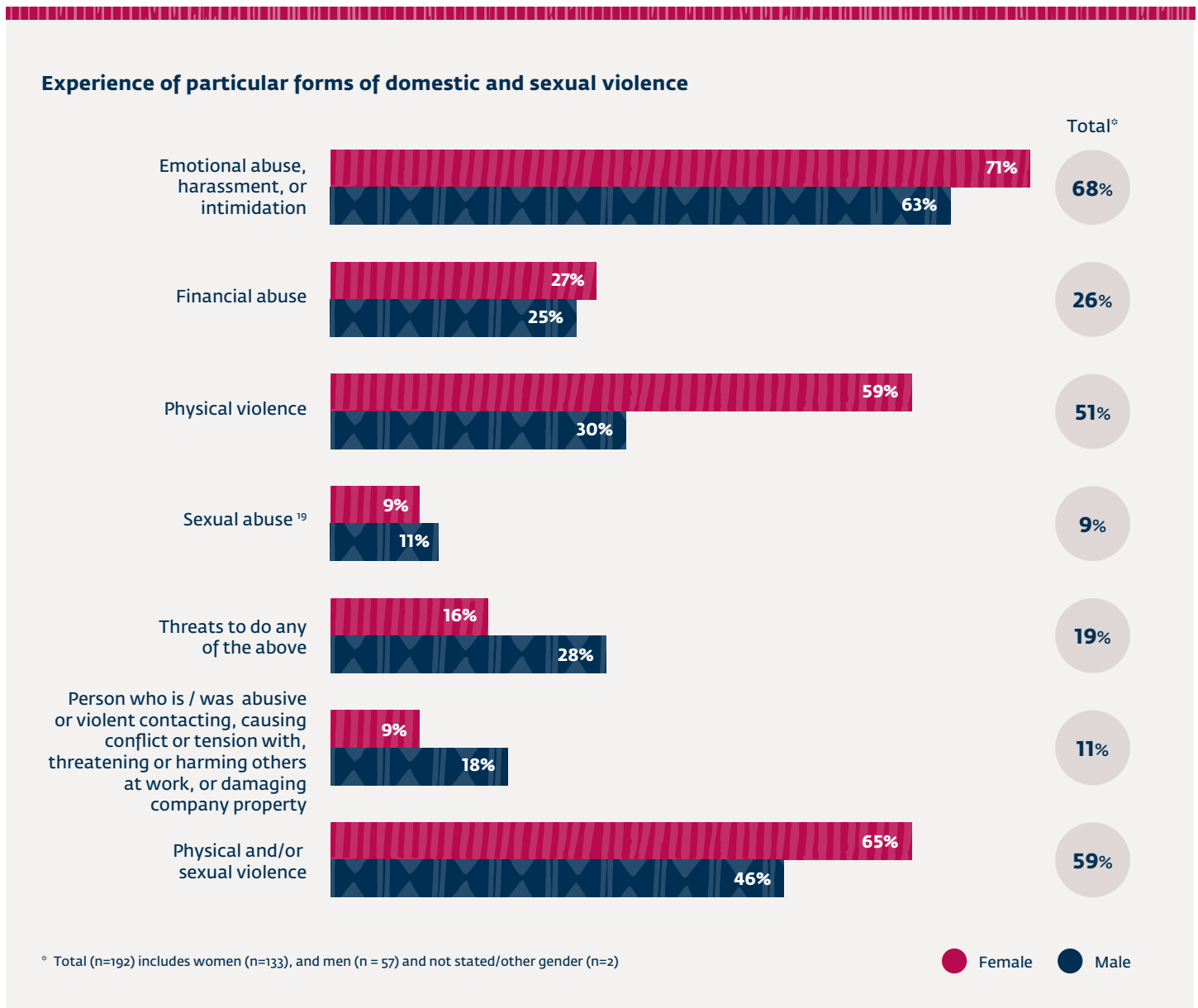
“ It does happen to an extent ... for example, if there are some pending deadlines for reports or targets that day ... we have to do it, just do the work. Gradually, people become more burdened. That is where the work stress comes in. You take it out on your wife. You take it home because you can't take it out on your boss.”

*(Company 1 group discussion, male staff member)*

### 4.4 Types and Frequency of Violence

The most common form of violence reported by both men and women in this study was emotional abuse, harassment, or intimidation by a family or household member<sup>18</sup> (71 percent of women and 63 percent of men who have experienced violence).

This was followed by physical violence (59 percent of women and 30 percent of men). Twenty-four percent of all survey participants who experienced violence, with no difference in the proportions for women and men, have experienced three or more forms.



<sup>18</sup> Emotional abuse, harassment, or intimidation by a family or household member was defined in the survey as 'ongoing abusive, cruel, inhumane, degrading, provocative or offensive treatment. This can include causing fear or unease by following someone; loitering outside a person's workplace or other place they often go, entering or interfering with a person's home or other place they spend time, or keeping a person under surveillance'.

<sup>19</sup> The absolute number of survey participants reporting sexual abuse was small so survey findings on sexual abuse cannot be taken to be representative.

One in five survey participants reported experiencing some form of physical or sexual violence in one's lifetime and 32 percent of ever-partnered women — that is women who have ever been married or in a de facto or other intimate relationship — have experienced physical and/or sexual violence.

Twenty-nine percent of women and 23 percent of men who experienced violence reported that the violence happens at least once a month.

It is important to recognize that psychological or emotional abuse can be just as damaging as physical violence. A number of participants in the group interviews recognized that a characteristic of psychological or emotional abuse is the effect that the belittling, shaming, and threats can have on a person's self-confidence and sense of self-worth. It is difficult to perform well within a workplace when you are being told repeatedly by the abusive or violent person that you are worth nothing.

For a majority of women who experienced violence, the offender was either their current or ex-husband or boyfriend (75 percent). For men who experienced violence, it was usually their current or ex-wife or girlfriend (33 percent), but a number of them also reported their father or step-father (21 percent). For 37 percent of men and 79 percent of women who experienced violence, the perpetrator was a male family or household member. Forty-five percent of women and 39 percent of men who have experienced violence, live with the person who was or is abusive or violent. Half of these women and a third of the men would like to live separately. Fourteen percent of survey participants who have experienced violence — with no difference between women and men — either currently work or have previously worked in the same workplace as their abuser.

“ In most cases, people can see manifestations of physical abuse in bruises and all that. But, there is also another part. The verbal abuse, which is worse — where husbands don't punch their wives, but hurt them with the words they say. And this can affect them when they come to work. No matter how much the person tries to put it behind her, it creeps up in the workplace. We have noticed a lot of people complaining about physical abuse but not that many about verbal abuse.”

*(Company 2 group discussion, female staff member)*

### 4.5 The Effects of Domestic and Sexual Violence on Workplaces

Sixty-eight percent of employees surveyed thought that domestic and sexual violence has an impact on the workplace, and a further 12 percent thought that violence could have an impact, but they had not seen it themselves. In all group interviews, employees agreed that there are visible impacts at work.

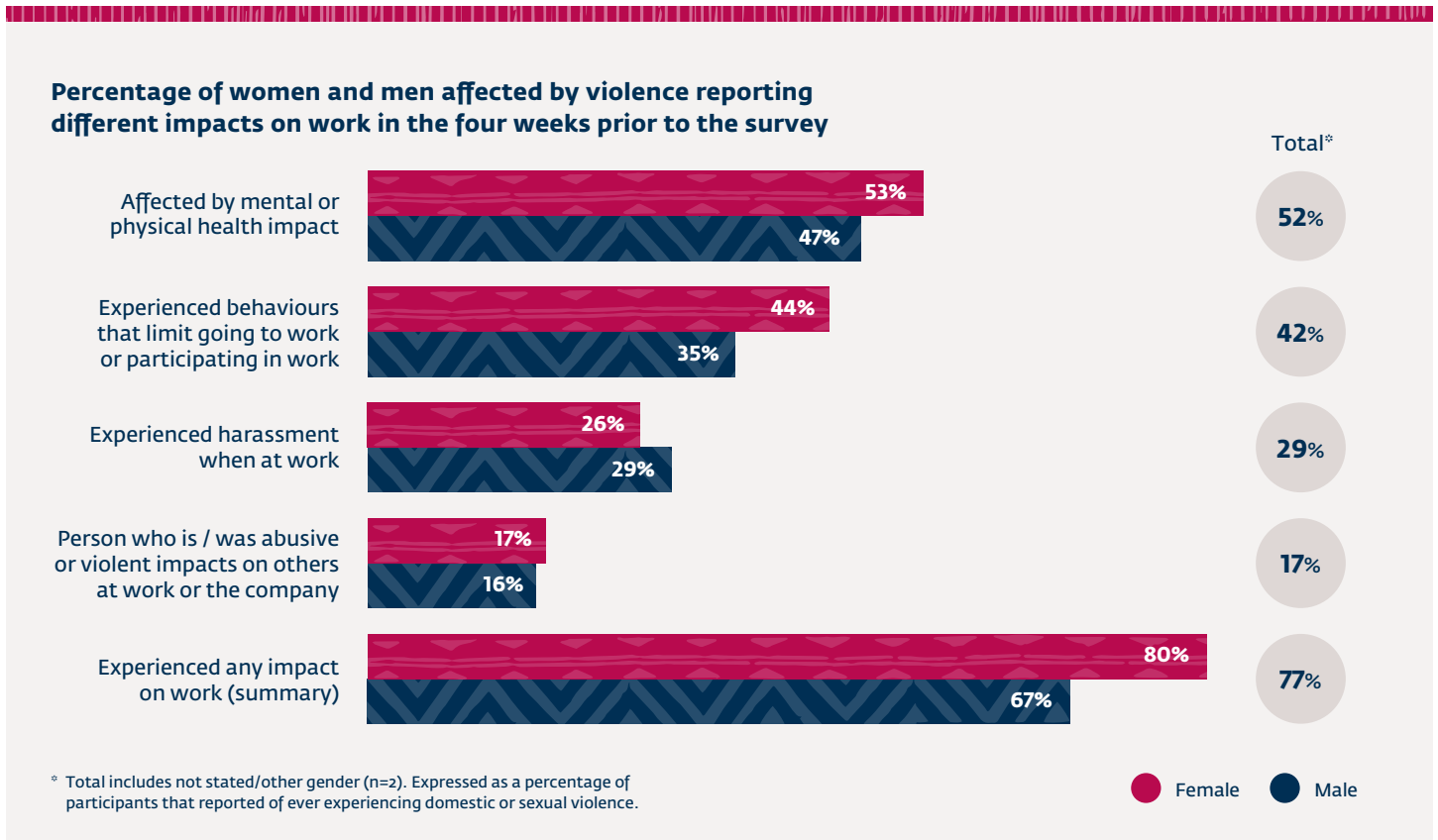
The survey asks about a range of impacts that domestic or sexual violence can have on employees and workplaces as below.

- **Mental or physical health impacts**, including anxiety, depression or shame and/or physical injury;
- **Being constrained from going to work or participating at work**, such as being stopped from leaving home or being delayed for work; the person who was or is abusive or violent refusing

or failing to show up to care for children or hiding, stealing, damaging or destroying work issued uniforms, ID cards; being stopped from applying for or accepting work opportunities, or being unreasonably pressured not to stay back at work or participate in work events;

- **Being harassed at work** via phone calls, emails, or social media messages; or the person who was or is abusive or violent turning up at the workplace or its surrounding;
- **Impact on others at work or the company**, including the person who was or is abusive or violent contacting, causing conflict or tension with, threatening or harming colleagues, supervisors or clients, or damaging company property.

The share of survey respondents reporting these impacts are outlined below<sup>20</sup>:



20 Impacts on employees' ability to get to and focus at work are described in the next section on 'Estimating the cost to businesses'

“ When I argue with my husband at home it affects me at work. I am thinking about it all day and my work is not done. If that is the fallout of an argument, imagine what it would be like if it is violence”

*(Company 1 group discussion, female staff member)*

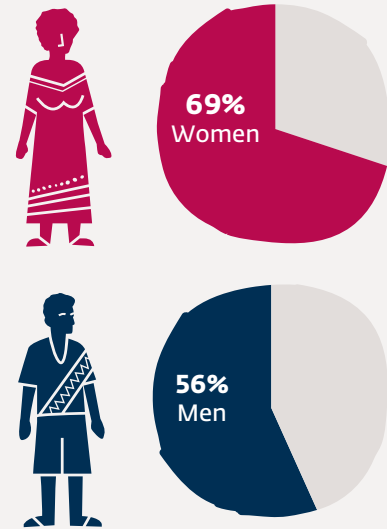
Of those who reported experiencing domestic or sexual violence, 77 percent reported at least one related workplace impact. This represents 26 percent — or one in four — of all employees who participated in the survey.

Furthermore, 63 percent of all survey participants responded that they had friends or family affected by domestic or sexual violence, and 63 percent of women and 56 percent of men said this has some impact on their work. This may be because of worry or stress, or due to their providing some form of support such as assisting the person to access services or helping them to look after their children or other dependents.

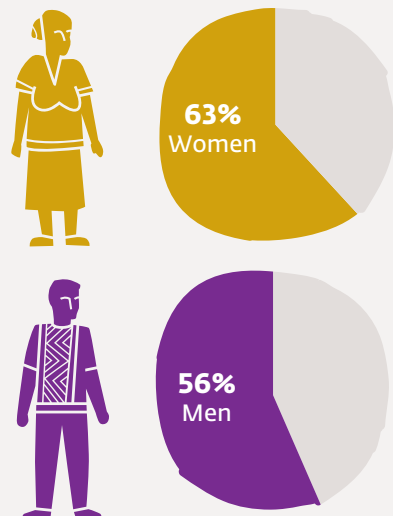
“ It does affect a number of people — especially friends who may be aware of it and are supporting them. It also affects the person sitting next to them because of the negative effect they have on that other person, the impact that they have on the productivity and delivery at the end of the day of meeting their target. Since most of it is team work, if the team is not reaching its target, it affects the whole team.”

*(Company 3 group discussion, male staff member)*

**Proportion of employees that have friends or family affected by domestic or sexual violence**



**Proportion of employees that have friends or family affected by domestic or sexual violence who reported that this has some impact on their work**



**Just under half (47 percent) of all survey participants report at least one related impact on work, either because of their own experience, that of a close friend or family member, or both.**

The most frequently reported impact was anxiety, depression or being ashamed at work (44 percent of women and 42 percent of men who have experienced domestic or sexual violence). Twenty-three percent of respondents who have experienced domestic or sexual violence reported feeling unsafe at work at least 'sometimes' in the past four weeks; almost one-third reported that the violence has affected their ability to get to work, stay at work or their work performance 'a few times' in the past four weeks.<sup>21</sup>

Impacts of domestic or sexual violence on individuals have ripple effects across teams, something that was recognized in all group interviews.

“ If I am missing, then there are others who do the job. But, there comes a time when it starts affecting the flow. For example, if I am a victim of domestic violence at home, I may miss work, or even if I come to work I will still be missing. I may be in the bathroom crying my eyes out. Everybody will be saying: don't worry about it, we are here for you, but it still affects the general flow of work, and when that happens too often it has consequences ... [team] productivity gets low because whatever [I am] supposed to do, [I] cannot because they are trying to cover for me. So it has an impact on the workplace, not only on the person who is suffering but also those who come to know.”

*(Company 1 group discussion, female staff member)*

The absence or poor performance of a team member has ramifications for everyone: *'It is a huge impact. The productivity level of the department is not 100 percent — if one leg of the table is missing the table becomes unstable. The pressure is more on other staff members. They have to double up and it builds up'* (Company 2 group discussion, male staff member). Colleagues may initially be understanding, but if the situation continues, resentment can grow — affecting overall morale but also further victimizing the affected person. As will be discussed below, this also discourages people from seeking help.

<sup>21</sup> We have used the past four weeks with the expectation that this represents a period that will be remembered. However, we recognize that because of the cyclical nature of violence, whereby incidents are often followed by temporary periods of calm and remorse, this time period may not include the experience of all respondents who have experienced domestic or sexual violence.



## 4.6 Estimating the Cost to Businesses

“ The impacts of DSV at work include employees not concentrating, absenteeism — in 2018 most absenteeism was around DV. Employees were missing from work for five to 10 days, many employees lived with DV and did nothing about it, key people in the business were helping employees with DV and spent a lot of time on it, there were some risky situations... For the employee, it can be quite unsafe. We have had people turn up and cause physical harm”

*(Company 3 interview 1)*

For individuals who experience violence, there is a personal toll. Beyond the recognized physical consequences, violence can cause severe emotional distress, anxiety, and worry about all aspects of home and family life. It can create self-doubt, shame, disbelief, and disappointment in what should be the most trusted and supportive relationships. This can affect employees at work, resulting in a cost to business.

To calculate this cost, the survey asked participants a short series of questions about how often their focus or presence at work had been affected by domestic and sexual violence in the four weeks preceding the survey. Questions included how often had they felt distracted, tired or unwell, how many times had they been late, and how many days had they missed work. The survey also asked participants how much time, on average, did they spend during work hours per week supporting other staff who are experiencing domestic or sexual violence.

Based on this analysis<sup>22</sup>, we estimate that in one year, for every employee, whether they have personally experienced violence or not:

- Four person days are lost due to employees feeling distracted, tired or unwell
- 1.5 person days are lost due to employees being absent from work
- 0.3 person days are lost due to employees being just one hour late each time violence affects their ability to get to work
- 4.1 person days are lost due to employees getting involved in responding to domestic and sexual violence in a largely unstructured way.

This equates to just under 10 work days — or almost two weeks of full-time work — per employee per year being lost due to domestic and sexual violence.

Employees affected by domestic or sexual violence may have difficulty concentrating at work — nearly half (48 percent) of survey participants who experienced domestic or sexual violence reported that they felt distracted, tired or unwell in the previous four weeks due to the violence. Employees who experience violence may also be late for or absent from work — a quarter of the survey participants who experienced violence reported that they were late at least once in the previous four weeks due to domestic or sexual violence. Some had been late eight times or more. Fifteen percent reported that they missed at least one day of work in the previous four weeks due to domestic or sexual violence. A small number of survey participants reported very frequent absences.

<sup>22</sup> See Annex 2: Methodology Used to Estimate the Cost of Domestic and Sexual Violence to Businesses for a full description of how costs were estimated.

### Average days lost per employee (whether they have experienced domestic or sexual violence or not) per year, due to:

#### Feeling tired, distracted or unwell



4  
days

#### Being late or absent from work



1.8  
days

#### Supporting colleagues who are experiencing domestic or sexual violence



4.1  
days

Responding to the effects of domestic and sexual violence also takes up staff time, either discussing the issue, assisting the affected person to access support services or addressing the consequences of staff absenteeism, being late for work or low productivity. An unstructured approach, involving various employees with inadequate information and limited knowledge of referral processes, is likely to drive up the cost to business, while not providing the best response to affected employees.

In addition, when employees encounter a difficult personal situation, they may decide to resign or may be pushed out — ‘Most of them resign on the spot. For many female staff, their partner has told them to resign’ (Company 2, interview 3); ‘We have lost quite a number of good people because of domestic violence’ (Company 3, interview 1). Such staff are costly to replace. As one manager who was interviewed recognized, ‘There is advertising, recruiting, training, support on the floor, leadership... The company has put in substantial support, we can’t just let them go ... It is about business continuity and humanity and meeting somewhere in the middle’ (Company 3, interview 3)<sup>23</sup>.

The costs to businesses are lower, but still comparable to what IFC found in Solomon Islands (17 days), where the prevalence of violence reported by employees participating in the survey was higher — 49 percent of women, and 38 percent of men had experienced violence in their lifetime<sup>24</sup>.

<sup>23</sup> See also IFC (undated) Case Study: Addressing Gender-Based Violence With Companies in Papua New Guinea.

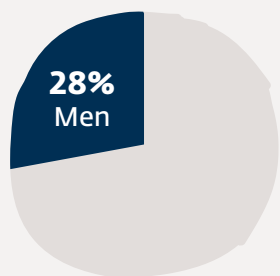
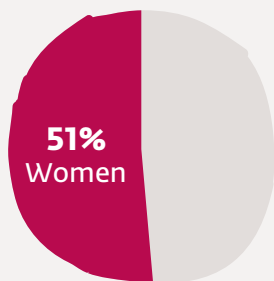
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<sup>24</sup> In the Solomon Islands, we calculated that seven days are lost due to employees feeling distracted, tired or unwell, 4.2 person-days are lost due to employees being absent from work; 0.6 person-days are lost by employees being late; and 5.6 person days are spent responding to the effects of domestic and sexual violence in the workplace in an unstructured way — just under 17 days in total per employee per year.

## 4.7 Help Seeking

Eighty-six percent of survey participants said they thought that employers should help employees who experience domestic or sexual violence. However, without a structured workplace response in place, employees affected by domestic or sexual violence do not know who to talk to. As a result, they either do not talk to anyone or turn to friends and colleagues who do not necessarily know what to do.

### Participants who have experienced domestic or sexual violence and who said that they had spoken to someone about it at work



Just over half of women and 28 percent of men who have experienced domestic or sexual violence said that they had spoken to someone at work about it. Men may face additional barriers to seeking help as men are not commonly portrayed as potential victims of domestic and sexual violence and therefore help seeking may challenge gender norms. Workplace responses to domestic and sexual violence should be gender sensitive and encourage both women and men affected by violence to seek support, noting that men may face additional barriers to seeking support.

Seventy-five percent of women and 50 percent of men who had spoken to someone at work spoke with a co-worker. Participants in group interviews indicated that this was more likely to be in an informal context rather than as a formal request for assistance or to explain what is happening.

Forty-two percent of women and just eight percent of men who had spoken to someone at work had spoken to someone in a potentially formal capacity, such as a supervisor or manager, human resources officer or union official. Overall, those who went through formal channels were more likely to have better outcomes (63 percent compared to 50 percent).

“ Shame stops people from coming forward, there is also a fear of being picked on or stigmatized. This happens generally in our culture. Everyone is talking about everyone else. People might stay in violent relationships because it is in the best interest of their children. There is also a lack of understanding on what will be provided if they do ask for help.”

*(Company 1, interview 3)*

Sixty-one percent of women and 14 percent of men who had spoken to someone at work about the domestic or sexual violence they experienced had received at least one form of support from their employer. For women, this was most commonly counselling<sup>25</sup> (27 percent), followed by paid time off (23 percent) — though most likely this was as part of existing leave provisions. Thirty-eight percent of men indicated that they had received something other than the long list of options included in the survey;<sup>26</sup> 25 percent had accessed counselling.

For women who did not speak to anyone at work, the most common reason (for 24 percent of this group) was that they were worried about gossip. For men, they did not know who to talk to (46 percent), and/or did not think it would help (43 percent). Across both individual and group interviews, the fear of gossip or concern about confidentiality was assumed or known to be a key reason why employees do not come forward. Gossip was considered a common feature in all workplaces: ‘The gossip is very strong here ... It prevents staff from opening up’; ‘I have good female staff, but they have abusive husbands and they don’t turn up. They stay home for a few days with bruises and black eyes. People gossip about it’.

Some staff are also embarrassed or ashamed to seek help. They are worried about being blamed and that ‘they will be looked down upon’; because of ‘loss of face [and] fear of losing their job because of poor performance’; ‘because they are worried that people might use it against them’. Employers need to create a culture where their staff feel safe and supported:

One company has launched and implemented an anti-gossiping campaign, where staff are taught skills to recognize and avoid engaging in workplace gossip. The campaign also discourages gossip and encourages staff to formally pledge to not get involved. This company reports that there has been less gossip, particularly on social media, since the campaign started.

The issue of confidentiality is complex. Almost half of those who said they had spoken to someone at work about the domestic or sexual violence they experienced had spoken to more than one person. Some employees first turn to their friends or colleagues who then speak to human resources on their behalf. This means that even if management or human resources retain confidentiality — in line with grievance mechanisms — others may not. So the story can quickly spread. Having a clearly identified contact network and a wider emphasis on the damaging effects of gossip may reduce the likelihood that people will make multiple disclosures or if they do, that these disclosures will be gossiped about.

“As leaders, we need to build the confidence of staff so that they can trust us. It’s all about communication, inspiring confidence in team members that they can make a decision about their safety and welfare.”

*(Company 1 group discussion, male staff member).*

Whether employees want to disclose incidents of violence and seek help through more formal channels depend on a manager's management style and how approachable they are. Managers interviewed for the study demonstrated a range of responses. According to one, ‘The most important thing is the welfare of your staff.’ Another noted, ‘The culture here is to leave personal problems at home.’ A third said, ‘We had one female staff who had issues at home ... Her tone was high with others in the workplace. We advised her that we don’t tolerate that kind of behavior and suspended her. She resigned.’

Many employees in the companies participating in this study recognize that management practices and approaches where staff are told to ‘leave their problems at the door’ need to change, and are changing.

<sup>25</sup> Throughout the interviews it was apparent that most employees tend to equate one-on-one conversations with their supervisors with counselling, even when the focus is performance management. Only one company had a clear pathway to professional counselling services as well as management staff with an understanding of the difference between counselling and discussion. Another company had a manager who was seen to provide counselling and was ‘a good listener’, but apparently did not have a professional background in domestic and sexual violence counselling, nor was it part of their official position.

<sup>26</sup> Specific options for selection were time off (either paid or unpaid), counselling, medical care, transport between work and home, being moved to a safer place at work, having a security alarm installed at work, alerting security staff, changing/screening work numbers or emails, assistance to access emergency accommodation, long-term accommodation, emergency care for children or dependents, financial support, coordinating access to support services, and ‘other’.

“ Leaders of any organization play a big role in this. Gone are the days when managers told staff to leave their problems at the door. We need to have understanding and willingness to care, to put the workers first. Every leader, every manager in the modern day needs to be caring to identify what the staff are facing because if they don't, it will affect the performance.”

*(Company 1 group discussion, male staff member)*

“ We have had no training except for on-the-job-training. I had never dealt with these situations, but the HR department took us through some workshops about what to do in certain situations. We were just doing counselling how we thought it was right. Sometimes counselling turned into advising, but with counselling you should coach people into finding a solution.”

*(Company 1 group discussion, female staff member)*

Different management styles or uneven progress towards a more open and supportive organizational culture means that employees in some departments do not approach their supervisors, while others do, as these statements from various managers indicate:

- ‘I have not come across any DSV’ [in a 15 person team];
- ‘Both men and women call in and say they are late, not coming to work or take sick leave. We’ve had three guys already saying my wife is gone. She’s taken the kids ...’;
- ‘I haven’t seen any cases [of DSV] in my department’.

A centralized workplace policy response with clear contact points will make help-seeking more uniformly accessible and less personality driven.

In one of the three companies included in this study, staff members had received some training and guidance on how to best assist someone experiencing domestic or sexual violence. However, this was primarily on-the-job-training with a focus on performance management.

Consequently, ‘many managers don’t know how to handle personal problems and they don’t know if they should have a public or private conversation’. Across the three companies, managers recognized that they need additional skills to be able to support affected staff: ‘Most of the leaders focus on productivity. They need to have a bit of sense to ask if something is wrong. Leaders need training around awareness and how to pick up those reactions from the team. There is not much awareness raised [about domestic and sexual violence]’.

If key staff are not adequately prepared to respond to the effects of domestic and sexual violence on workplaces, fulfilling this function can be stressful. Taking on this role without training might compromise their ability to do their core work, risk burnout, vicarious trauma<sup>27</sup>, or compassion fatigue. Key informant interviews and group discussions demonstrated a cohort of very caring and compassionate managers in each company who are fulfilling the management values that the companies want to promote. These staff, in turn, need to be protected and supported in terms of being adequately prepared for the unavoidable demands of supporting staff affected by domestic or sexual violence.

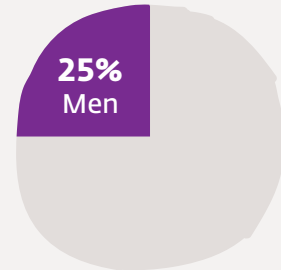
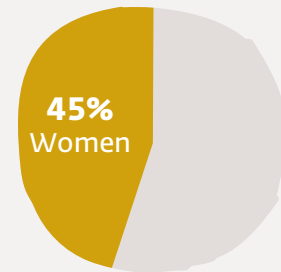
<sup>27</sup> Vicarious trauma describes the profound shift in world view that occurs in helping professionals when they work with individuals who have experienced trauma: helpers notice that their fundamental beliefs about the world are altered and possibly damaged by being repeatedly exposed to the traumatic experiences of those they are seeking to help (Pearlman & Saakvitne, 1995)

### Services outside the workplace

Forty-five percent of women and 25 percent of men (39 percent of all participants) who had experienced domestic or sexual violence had accessed at least one service outside of the workplace. Most commonly, for women this was reporting the domestic or sexual violence to the police (29 percent of women who had experienced violence) followed by medical services (20 percent). Eleven percent of men who had experienced domestic or sexual violence had also reported the violence to the police, and seven percent had accessed ‘other’ services — most commonly these were church related. Nine percent of women who had experienced domestic or sexual violence had obtained an interim domestic violence restraining order, and eight percent a final domestic violence restraining order (22 women in total). Two men affected by violence had also obtained a final domestic violence restraining order. For 13 women and one man, their workplace was included in the restraining order as a place not to be approached.

There was some indication that accessing services outside the workplace was problematic. This was, at times, because those services did not have sufficient capacity — *‘There is crisis accommodation through the Salvation Army, but they are always fully booked. Businesses could be involved in providing emergency housing’* or because staff did not know about them. Some had positive experiences speaking to someone in their church, but for others, the message to reconcile was not helpful. In some cases, managers trying to assist staff had experienced difficulties in contacting the right people in relevant services. Though Fiji has a long history of supporting women affected by domestic or sexual violence, it does not seem to have an established referral network that operates without first going through the FWCC.

### Participants who have experienced domestic or sexual violence and who had accessed at least one service outside of the workplace



## 4.8 Existing company responses – what companies are doing well

Some good practices were identified in each of the three participating companies, including:

- **Referral to professional services** – *‘If staff are affected by DSV, we ask them if they want to remain at work or speak with the FWCC’; ‘We provide counselling services to staff through Medical Services Pacific. We also provide transport, confidential runs during or after hours. Staff get paid time to travel to and from and attend counselling’;*
- **A sensitive approach to employees’ need to be absent from work** – *‘the manager [a situation was reported to him] had no tolerance for violence, and told her not to worry about the work and just take the time that she needs’;*
- **Attempting to address some of the underlying stressors** — *‘We also provide financial literacy training through [a bank]. Perpetrators try to make victims helpless by taking their money and resources. The financial literacy course covers talking with family about money, saving options, managing expenses’.* Financial literacy training is also being provided to employees by another participating company through its training department.

Management at all three companies believe that employees struggle to manage their finances. Many employees have difficulty negotiating finances with their immediate and extended families. The provision of a financial literacy training, with a focus on healthy financial relationships, provides employees with practical skills to recognize and address unhealthy relationships. It further encourages employees to seek help where unhealthy patterns continue. This training would also reach employees who may not want to engage directly in discussions about domestic and sexual violence, and thus complement and enhance the more direct company response.

Other examples of good company practices included alerting security guards and directing them to stop known perpetrators of violence from approaching the workplace; encouraging the affected person to report incidents to the police, and granting a one-off additional paid leave to give someone time to try to leave a violent home environment.

## 4.9 Addressing perpetrators in the workplace

There was no indication that the employers included in this study took any action on allegations of perpetration of domestic<sup>28</sup> violence by employees. Perpetration of domestic violence was either seen as a 'personal matter'<sup>29</sup> or there was denial regarding staff involvement. This is unlikely, given the high prevalence of domestic and sexual violence in Fiji.

In this context, a company's response is an important aspect of the company's overall stand against domestic and sexual violence, and a key strategy in reducing the acceptance of such violence and the culture of silence surrounding it. Additionally, if left unchecked, incidents present a risk to the reputation of the company and to the cohesion of the workforce.

## 4.10 Opportunities for improving company responses

Current responses to employees experiencing domestic and sexual violence in the three companies in this study appear to be ad hoc. They depend mostly on the management style of the person/s who receive the disclosure of violence. There is an opportunity to introduce a systematic response that provides consistent helpful response to employees experiencing violence.

There is also an opportunity for companies to develop a more proactive approach to responding to allegations of domestic or sexual violence being perpetrated by employees. Companies can establish reporting and investigation guidelines, noting that they will only be able to investigate allegations that have a nexus with work. Companies can suspend employees pending investigation. If employees are found to be perpetrating domestic or sexual violence, they can be referred to relevant services, including behavior-change related counselling; employers can take disciplinary action up to and including dismissal and/or can report the matter to police.

Moreover, companies have an obligation to provide a safe working environment and to ensure the health and safety of its employees. Fiji's Occupational Health and Safety Act (1996, Section 9) states that *'Every employer shall ensure the health and safety at work of all his or her workers'* and has the responsibility *'to provide and maintain a working environment for his or her workers that is safe and without risks to health and adequate as regards facilities for their welfare at work'*. Workplace response to domestic and sexual violence will assist companies to meet this obligation.

<sup>28</sup> It was acknowledged that sexual violence presented a different issue potentially requiring reporting to the police.

<sup>29</sup> There is inconsistency in what companies view to be a 'personal matter' as one company has a zero-tolerance policy on extra-marital affairs. Under this policy, employees are not allowed to have affairs in or outside the workplace, allegations of affairs are investigated by ethics officers and disciplinary action is taken. IFC has concerns about a zero-tolerance policy of this nature. It may be providing an avenue for one party to exert power and control over another by embarrassing and humiliating them and damaging their employment. Under the policy, employees are counselled to reconcile with the person raising the allegation. Where allegations are made within a relationship where there is domestic violence, this approach may pressure employees experiencing violence to return to dangerous and damaging situations. IFC recommends rescinding the zero-tolerance policy on extra-marital affairs.



## 5. Recommendations

We recommend that Fijian employers implement a set of actions to respond to domestic and sexual violence in the workplace. The starting point is developing a workplace policy that outlines the assistance that a company can provide and how this can be accessed. It is also important that companies develop a policy on employees perpetrating violence as this will signal that violence is unacceptable and guide company responses. This can be followed by training a contact team that centralizes reporting and requests for assistance and helps affected employees to obtain the support they need both within and outside the workplace.

Companies should address the issue of workplace gossip as fear of gossip can deter employees from disclosing violence. In addition, companies should provide employees access to regular financial literacy training — with an emphasis on healthy financial relationships — to increase employees' ability to negotiate family matters effectively.

Below is a set of key recommendations to help employers in Fiji respond to the needs of staff impacted by domestic and sexual violence:

1. Develop a policy and program to guide their workplace response to domestic and sexual violence and publicize it to all employees. The policy should also outline the company's approach to allegations of domestic and sexual violence perpetrated by employees — this should reinforce the non-acceptance of violence in any form.
2. Establish small cross-department teams of women and men who are adequately trained and supported to assist employees affected by domestic and sexual violence.
3. Develop a list of key contacts in referral agencies, particularly police, counselling, medical, emergency accommodation, social work, and case management services to facilitate efficient referral.
4. Address workplace gossip as a key part of preparing for and implementing a workplace response to domestic and sexual violence.
5. Provide employees access to financial literacy training that emphasizes healthy financial relationships.
6. Ensure that the policy and program are gender sensitive and encourages both women and men affected by violence to seek support.

A workplace program on domestic and sexual violence should follow a planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation cycle. Companies should plan and implement regular awareness raising activities and training; monitor the uptake of policy provisions; measure staff experience through annual surveys; and evaluate the program annually so that they can consolidate the strengths of the program and address challenges.

Workplace responses to domestic and sexual violence will only be successful if they are implemented in an environment where employees feel safe to disclose their issues. As such, companies should ensure that they have effective anti-bullying and harassment workplace policies and programs and grievance mechanisms in place prior to implementing workplace responses to domestic and sexual violence.

## 6. Conclusions

This study shows a wide range of workplace impacts arising from domestic and sexual violence — on individual employees, their colleagues, and employers. Positively, it also shows that there is very little acceptance of violence — much lower than the level of acceptance found in the FWCC study conducted in 2010/2011. Employers can reinforce this shift.

Showing compassion and humanity to those who are affected, avoiding blaming them, and responding to founded allegations of violence being perpetrated by employees will help Fijian companies position themselves in alignment with the global drive to eliminate domestic and sexual violence from people's lives.

Both women and men are affected by domestic and sexual violence, which impacts them at work. It is important to recognize the severity and prevalence of violence against women, and the additional dimension of unequal power, often fewer options to leave, and differences in physical strength, that make women more vulnerable. However, the fact that both men and women are affected is an important entry point for workplace responses, and a powerful motivation for change. It is clear that workplace responses to address violence are beneficial to both women and men.



# Annex 1: Methodology Details and Limitations

## A1.1 Survey methodology

This survey was designed to identify:

- Employees' views of domestic and sexual violence (regardless of whether it happens at home, workplace or elsewhere) and the impact it has on workplaces
- The prevalence and dynamics of domestic and sexual violence experienced by employees
- The effects of domestic and sexual violence on employees' ability to attend work, to be safe and productive at work, and the associated costs to businesses
- The availability and helpfulness of various kinds of support to employees affected by domestic and sexual violence, both provided by employers and in the community.

The survey questionnaire was developed by IFC based on a similar survey tested by IFC in Papua New Guinea in October 2015 (unpublished) and an earlier survey by the University of New South Wales implemented in Australia.<sup>30</sup> The full survey was also recently conducted by IFC in Solomon Islands in 2018.<sup>31</sup> It includes six main parts:

1. An introductory explanation including the purposes of the survey, confidentiality, and definitions of violence, after which consent to participate is sought
2. Some basic (non-identifying) demographic data on participants
3. Views and experiences of domestic and sexual violence
4. The impact that this has had on (a) the respondent when at work; (b) co-workers, supervisors and clients; (c) the physical workplace and its assets
5. Help-seeking and support provided by the company and service providers
6. General responses about the effects of violence on employers and whether the company should help.

No section or questions are compulsory, and if participants report not having any personal experience of domestic or sexual violence in part 3, they skip to the final section, part 6.

Surveys could be completed, online or with an enumerator, in either English, Fijian Hindi, or the indigenous Fijian i-Taukei language. Survey responses were consolidated into one dataset for analysis. No significant difference was observed in rates of disclosure of violence between surveys completed online or with an enumerator.

The methodology, including the way violence is first defined and the type of questions asked in this survey, was developed with reference to existing guidance for such research<sup>32</sup> intended to minimize under-reporting, and most importantly, not to do further harm or re-traumatize survey participants. Nevertheless, due to the sensitive topic, studies such as this are generally thought not to be able to illicit a completely accurate picture of domestic and sexual violence, and the experience of violence is often assumed to be under-reported.

## A1.2 Interview methodology

Individual interviews were semi-structured in nature. Group interviews used a structured focus-group method, with eight questions and encouragement of discussion between participants. At each company, four focus groups were conducted (female operational staff, female supervisors, male operational staff, and male supervisors). Questions focused on understanding of domestic and sexual violence, acceptance and justifications, impacts on work, workplace responses (current and potentially useful) and responses to allegations of employee perpetration of violence, barriers to help-seeking, and access to other services.

## A1.3 Study limitations

There are important differences to note between this survey design and other studies using the World Health Organization methodology (such as the FWCC study). These differences have implications for the interpretation of findings.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>30</sup> McFerran (2011) National Domestic Violence and the Workplace Survey. Sydney: Australian Domestic and Family Violence Clearinghouse/University of New South Wales.

<sup>31</sup> IFC (2019) The Impact of Domestic and Sexual Violence on the Workplace in Solomon Islands – Survey Report. Sydney: IFC.

<sup>32</sup> Ellsberg M, and Heise L (2005); Heise L (2013) Monitoring and measuring partner violence. STRIVE Learning Lab (presentation). London: London School of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene.

<sup>33</sup> WHO (2005) Multi-country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence against Women: summary report of initial results on prevalence, health outcomes and women's responses. Geneva: WHO.

Firstly, the prevalence screening question (What best describes your own experience of domestic or sexual violence?) acts as a filter. Those who answer that they have no personal experience, skip the questions about specific behaviors. The survey needed a consistently applied logic, suitable for online administration in a workplace, that did not make respondents feel that they were being asked irrelevant questions. Therefore, the survey did not include multiple opportunities to disclose violence and did not revisit the initial answer to whether respondents had experienced violence or not.<sup>34</sup> The World Health Organization methodology is much more complex and includes a large number of very specific questions aiming to maximize disclosure opportunities.

Secondly, the survey sample was not randomly identified. The survey was focused on workplaces and the participants are all employed. Participation in the survey, was encouraged by participating companies, but voluntary. The aim was to reach at least 30 percent of total employees for each company. The survey was only open to those aged 18 years and over. Unlike the World Health Organization (and FWCC) methodologies, the sample is neither intended to be representative of the entire workforce, nor of Fiji. Nonetheless, we are confident that the sample is sufficiently large and diverse that it presents a good enough picture for the companies to fulfil the study objectives.

Finally, the survey uses the neutral language of ‘experienced violence’ — in the past 12 months, more than 12 months before, or not at all. At this point, it does not differentiate between those who have perpetrated violence and those who have been victims. Subsequent questions do delve in more detail about personal experiences of certain kinds of violence. From analysis of subsequent questions and enumerators’ feedback, we know that people usually responded in terms of their experience as a victim — or said otherwise. While it is possible that some are reporting impacts as perpetrators of violence, in this case it is not of consequence because the purpose of this study is to demonstrate the effects of domestic and sexual violence on a workplace. This happens both when employees are perpetrators and victims.

34. Ellsberg and Heise (ibid.) note that studies that include only one or two questions on violence or use filter questions can result in substantial underreporting (p.97).

## Annex 2: Methodology Used to Estimate the Cost of Domestic and Sexual Violence to Businesses

As per the Fiji Islands Employment Relations Promulgation (2007), we have used a 50-week work year (=12.5 x 4 week periods), assuming two weeks of official leave per year. The leave period is not included in the calculation. All calculations are on the basis of a 45 hour per work week as the maximum standard work week (and therefore a nine-hour day).

### A2.1 Calculation of productivity loss from feeling distracted, tired or unwell

This was calculated using the multipliers in Table 4. For example, if someone reported feeling distracted, tired or unwell ‘sometimes’, we calculated that they lost 10 percent of their productivity at work. For someone working five days a week, this means that they may be losing the equivalent of half a day per week in productivity.

Table 4 shows that in the survey sample, feeling distracted, tired or unwell brings an average of 0.94 days of lost productivity per employee affected by violence over a four-week period. If we average this loss over all employees that participated in the survey (not just those affected by violence), we estimate that four days per employee are lost per year due to feeling distracted, tired or unwell at work.

### A2.2 Calculation of productivity loss as a result of employees affected by domestic or sexual violence, being late to work or missing work

For those who reported being late for work, we calculated this loss on the basis that they were late by just one hour, noting that in all likelihood, many missed more work than this<sup>35</sup>.

For those who missed work, we have calculated the actual number of days<sup>36</sup>.

Table 5 estimates that a total of 12.9 days were lost in the four weeks preceding the survey because employees were late due to domestic and sexual violence. If we average this loss over all employees that participated in the survey (not just those affected by violence), we estimate that 0.3 days per employee are lost per year due to employees being late due to domestic and sexual violence.

Table 5 shows that a total of 66 days were missed in the four weeks preceding the survey due to domestic and sexual violence. If we average this loss over all employees that participated in the survey (not just those affected by violence), we estimate that 1.5 days per employee are missed per year due to domestic and sexual violence.

<sup>35</sup> For the purposes of this calculation, reports of being late or absent for more than five days in the four-week period were summarized in a single category (5+).

<sup>36</sup> For those who reported missing more than five days in the four-week period, we reduced this to five days in recognition that these were unusual or outlier cases.

Table 4 - Estimated days lost due to employees feeling distracted, tired or unwell at work as a result of domestic and sexual violence 4

Frequency of effect reported	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	Total
Estimate of productivity loss (multiplier) (a)	-	0.05	0.1	0.15	0.2	
Number of survey participants reporting feeling distracted, tired or unwell in previous four weeks (b)	94	13	45	14	9	
Estimate of total person days lost in four-week (20 work day) period for survey sample [(c) = (a) x (b) x 20]	-	13	90	42	36	181
(d) Average number of days lost in a four-week period due to feeling distracted, tired or unwell (per employee experiencing violence)						0.94
(e) Average number of days lost in one year (per employee experiencing violence) = (d) x 12.5 (# 4-week periods in a work year)						11.8
(f) Average number of days lost in a four-week period (per employee) = (c)/563 (# survey participants)						0.32
(g) Average number of days lost in one year (per employee) = (f) x 12.5						4

Table 5 - Number of days lost as a result of employees being late to work or missing work due to domestic and sexual violence in the four weeks prior to the survey among the survey sample

(a.1) Number of times late for work in previous 4 weeks	1	2	3	4	5+	Total
(b.1) Number of survey participants reporting being late (a.1) times	18	12	4	3	10	
(c.1) Estimate of total person days lost in 4-week period for survey sample = (a.1) x (b.1) / 9 (hours / day)	2.0	2.7	1.3	1.3	5.6	12.9
(d.1) Average days lost per affected employee in 4 weeks = (c.1) / 192						0.07
(e.1) Average days lost per affected employee in 1 year = (d.1) x 12.5						0.8
(f.1) Average days lost per employee in 4 weeks = (c.1) / 563						0.02
(g.1) Average days lost per employee in 1 year = (f.1) x 12.5						0.3
(a.2) Number of times missed work in previous 4 weeks	1	2	3	4	5+	Total
(b.2) Number of survey participants reporting missing (a.2) times	8	8	7	4	1	
(c.2) Estimate of total person days lost in 4-week period for survey sample = (a.2) x (b.2)	8	16	21	16	5	66
(d.2) Average days lost per affected employee in 4 weeks = (c.2) / 192						0.34
(e.2) Average days lost per affected employee in 1 year = (d.2) x 12.5						4.3
(f.2) Average days lost per employee in 4 weeks = (c.2) / 563						0.12
(g.2) Average days lost per employee in 1 year = (f.2) x 12.5						1.5

### A2.3 Calculation of time spent supporting colleagues affected by domestic or sexual violence

We asked all survey participants how much time, on average, did they spend during work hours per week supporting other staff or co-workers who are experiencing domestic or sexual violence. Thirty-seven percent of all survey participants said that they spent at least one hour per week.

We used the following conservative calculations in our estimate of productivity loss:

**Table 6: Calculations used to estimate time spent supporting colleagues affected by domestic or sexual violence**

Answer category	Lost productivity per week
None	<b>0 hours</b>
Less than 1 hour per week	<b>0.5 hours</b>
1-5 hours per week	<b>3 hours</b>
6-10 hours per week	<b>8 hours</b>
More than 10 hours per week	<b>10 hours</b>

Table 7 shows that a total of 419 hours were spent supporting colleagues affected by domestic or sexual violence in the four weeks preceding the survey. If we average this time spent over a year, we estimate that 4.1 days are spent per employee supporting colleagues affected by domestic or sexual violence.

### A2.4 Employees feeling unsafe as a result of domestic or sexual violence

To assess the impacts of domestic and sexual violence on an employee's sense of safety, we asked employees how often did they feel unsafe at work in the four weeks preceding the survey due to the domestic or sexual violence. Table 8 shows the results.

### A2.5 Summary calculations

These productivity losses due to employees feeling distracted, tired or unwell, being late or missing work, or because of getting involved in an unstructured response, end up as more substantial across the whole workforce. Table 9 summarizes what the losses might look like over a year for both the survey participants who reported experiencing domestic or sexual violence and what the average losses might be per employee, assuming that comparable losses to those reported in this survey sample are found across the full cohort of employees.



Table 7 - Calculation of productivity loss due to time spent supporting colleagues affected by domestic or sexual violence

	Less than 1 hour per week	1-5 hours per week	6-10 hours per week	More than 10 hours per week	Total
(a) Multiplier (hours lost)	0.5	3	8	10	
(b) Number of survey participants reporting effect	117	76	9	6	
(c) Total hours lost per week = (a) x (b)	59	228	72	60	419
(d) Total hours lost in 1 year = (c) x 50					20,925
(e) Total person days lost in 1 year = (d) / 9					2,325
(f) Average days lost per employee per year = (e) / 563 (# survey participants)					4.1

Table 8 - Number of survey participants who have experienced domestic or sexual violence reporting that they have felt unsafe at work never, rarely, sometimes, often, or always as a result of the violence in the four weeks prior to the survey

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Total	119	11	32	9	3
% of survey participants who have experienced violence	62%	6%	17%	5%	2%

Table 9 - Estimated number of days lost per year as a result of domestic and sexual violence

	Feeling tired, distracted, unwell	Late for work	Missed work	Unstructured response <sup>*</sup>	Total days lost
Average losses — employees affected by domestic or sexual violence	11.8	0.8	4.3	11.2	28.1
Average losses — all employees	4.0	0.3	1.5	4.1	9.9

<sup>\*</sup> Calculated on the basis of number of people reporting any time spent responding to the impacts of domestic or sexual violence in the workplace (=208).

*Our thanks to the participating companies*



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