

Respectful Workplaces:

EXPLORING THE COSTS OF BULLYING AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT TO BUSINESSES IN MYANMAR



Respectful workplaces are workplaces free from bullying and harassment. Respectful workplaces are good for employees and good for business.

Creating respectful workplaces will:

- help increase productivity,
- support business growth, and
- attract and retain talented employees.

IFC and the DaNa Facility commissioned a study of businesses in Myanmar to identify common disrespectful behaviors and provide practical recommendations for how businesses can create respectful workplaces.

BULLYING

is repeated and unreasonable behavior directed towards a worker or a group of workers that creates a risk to health and safety.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, which makes a person feel offended, humiliated and/or intimidated.

956 employees from 26 companies across the agribusiness, finance, retail and tourism sectors participated
1558 research activities were completed

598
women



358
men



KEY FINDINGS

Sexual harassment affects all workplaces:

- **15%** of employees had been sexually harassed.
- **21%** witnessed someone being sexually harassed.

Bullying is more common than sexual harassment:

- **40%** employees had been bullied.
- **56%** employees had witnessed bullying.
- Employees are almost three times more likely to have witnessed or experienced bullying than sexual harassment.

Men and women both experience bullying and sexual harassment in Myanmar workplaces, but their experience is different:

- **40%** were bullied. More men than women have experienced bullying.
- **15%** employees had been sexually harassed. More women than men have experienced sexual harassment.

Bullying and sexual harassment are a cost to business:

- **14%** annual loss of labor productivity due to bullying and sexual harassment.
- Other business costs not measured in this study include turnover, recruitment and retraining costs.

MOST COMMON TYPES OF BULLYING

- Being gossiped about
- Being shouted or sworn at by a supervisor
- Being teased
- Being excluded from work-related social events

MOST COMMON TYPES OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

- Body shaming
- Hearing someone tell a joke containing sexual content
- Inappropriate hugging

Business are not adequately prepared to respond:

- **Only one business had evidence** of formal policies and procedures in place to help prevent and respond to workplace bullying and sexual harassment.

The way that some employees respond to incidents is not good for businesses:

- There are often **no formal reporting** mechanisms for employees in their workplaces.
- Whilst some employees confront offenders, many employees either **ignore** incidents, or may discuss or post about what has happened on **Facebook**.

Bullying and sexual harassment are workplace culture issues that can be addressed:

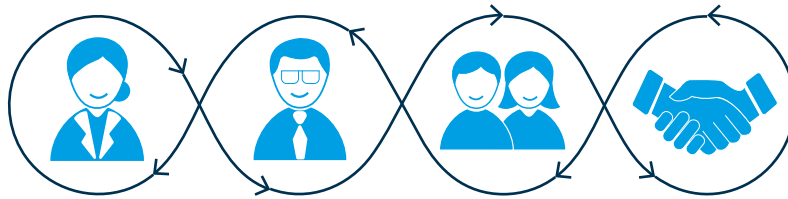
- Some businesses in Myanmar had high levels of bullying and sexual harassment and some businesses had relatively low levels.
- In some cases, **the same business had different experiences of bullying and sexual harassment** across two separate locations. This appears to contradict the commonly voiced excuse that these issues are due to "Myanmar culture".

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Businesses can contribute to creating respectful workplace cultures by:

- **Increasing awareness** about bullying and sexual harassment,
- **Developing skills and capacity** to create respectful workplaces; and
- **Collaborating with other organizations** to change social attitudes towards bullying and sexual harassment, and to increase positive behaviors in workplaces.

Some key recommendations include:



Senior Managers & Directors	HR Managers	Employees	Others
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt and implement a code of conduct • Mobilize resources • Introduce performance management tools • Public leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide training • Work with management on solutions • Implement policy and grievance mechanisms • Prevention actions • Measure key metrics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in training • Know and understand the policies • Discuss performance expectations with manager • Contribute to company satisfaction surveys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal advocacy • Provide support services • Awareness campaigns for gender equality and anti-bullying and harassment • Partner with the business sector

The full report can be downloaded from: <http://wrlid.bg/locV3o0oGPO>

For more information, contact: Ellen Maynes on emaynes@ifc.org or the DaNa Facility on info@danafacility.com.