

# Violence Against Women and Jobs: Economic Costs and Labor Market Implications

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# VAW undermines development priorities

## Job creation & economic transformation

- Lowers labor supply, productivity, earnings (IMF, 2021)
- Lack of access to stable housing or loss of housing (e.g., effects of IPV), increase in out-of-pocket household expenses
- Economic cost of up to 4% of GDP globally (WB, 2014)
- Natural resource endowments—especially mining—are associated with higher GBV risk and larger economic costs from domestic violence. (IMF, 2021)
- Reduced economic output in SSA, 1 pt increase in GBV linked with nearly 9 pt decrease in economic activity (IMF, 2021)

## Human capital development

- Barrier to educational attainment, especially for girls
- Increased fertility, low birth spacing, poor health from early marriage and pregnancy
- Increased anxiety, depression, suicide, substance abuse
- Intergenerational effects: girls 2x more likely to experience violence as adults and boys 2.5x

## Access to basic services and resilience

- Increased GBV risk linked with lack of adequate water, food security, and safe transport
- Increased GBV risk in FCV setting including displacement



# Impact on Employment Access

VAW reduces women's ability to obtain jobs:

- Safety concerns reduce mobility
- Higher crime perception reduces labor force participation
- Public transport violence limits job access
- Early marriage reduces education and skills
- Psychological trauma limits job search/aspirations



## Impact on Retention & Advancement



Once employed, VAW affects women's ability to stay and being promoted:

- Mental health impacts → lower retention
- Workplace sexual harassment undermines career progression
- Higher absenteeism and turnover
- Lower job stability and promotion rates



# Productivity & Economic Costs

## Effects at the firm and individual level:

- Lost workdays, presenteeism, burnout
- Mental health mediates productivity losses
- Higher health, legal, and social protection costs



# Policy Responses

- Expand access to secondary education
- Safe schools and prevention curricula
- Social protection + economic empowerment for survivors (e.g. cash transfer programs)
- Safe transport & infrastructure design
- ILO C190-aligned workplace protections
- Having women in managerial roles

**THANK YOU**

