

# Responding to the needs of survivors of SVWP; safety and collaboration II Webinar Series



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# IMMIGRANT WOMEN WORKERS



# GOAL

- To introduce participants to the dynamics of sexual violence in the workplace
  - Identify risks
  - Strategies for working with survivors
  - Self- care
  - Collaboration

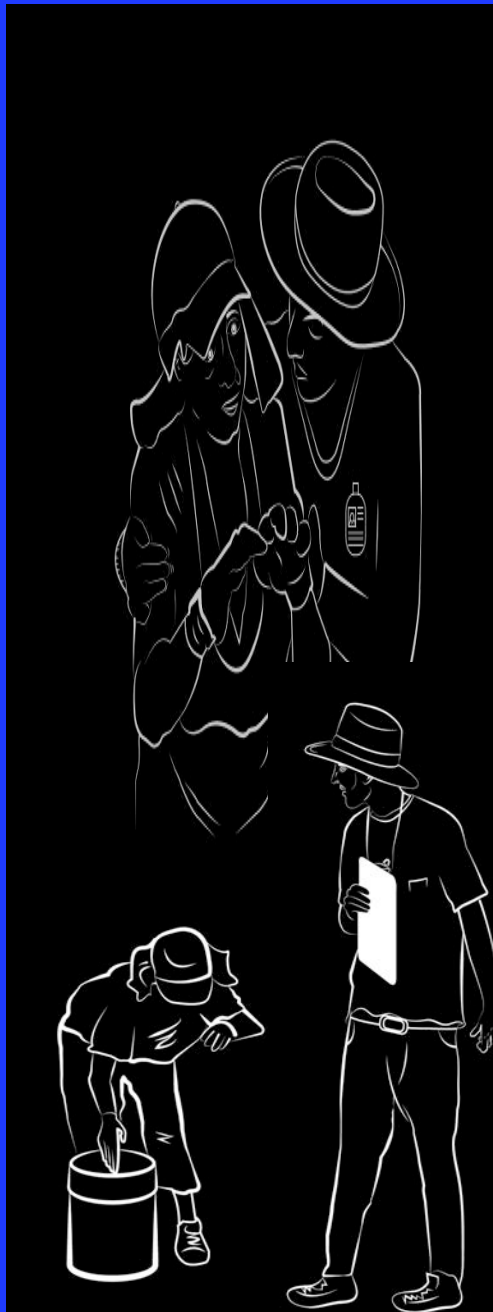


# Sexual Harassment preceding Sexual Assault

- In DeCoster, Swift and Postville all women endured sexual harassment in silence for weeks and months before they were sexually assaulted
- The few that complained suffered retaliation and punishment through harder jobs, less hours of paid work, public humiliation, etc.
- Sexual harassment is a red flag for further victimization

# What are we talking about?

- Sexual harassment is a form of sexual violence and gender violence
- Sexual harassment must be addressed immediately and seriously because it is often a precursor to sexual violence in the form of rape
  - Immigrant survivors report that supervisors or co-workers perpetrators had harassed and abused them multiple times before completing a rape during a period of time



- Why?

- Sexual violence in the workplace is fostered by an imbalance of power between employers, supervisors and their low wage immigrant workers- Human Rights watch- cultivating fear-
- Power: to hire or fire, retaliate and/or confer certain “benefits”
- Immigrant women are extremely vulnerable
- Immigrant women often face systemic barriers exacerbated by their status as blue collar workers, often unauthorized to work will NOT report these abuses nor bring perpetrators to justice

# Parties

- Perpetrator may be
  - man or woman
  - of same sex
  - supervisor, agent of
  - employer, co-worker, third party
- Victim can be affected by the hostile work environment

# Manifestations of SV in the Workplace

- *My friend told me that...*



<i>Direct sexual abuse</i>	<i>Indirect sexual abuse</i>	<i>Creating a sexualized environment (not directed to anyone in particular)</i>	<i>Sexual discrimination</i>
<p>Increasingly aggressive harassment</p> <p>Attempted or completed rape vaginally or anally by physical force, threat, or blackmail</p>	<p>Required to wear provocative clothes or cleavage</p> <p>Make the worker flirt with a client to attract business</p>	<p>Showing, displaying degrading sexual images or obscene materials</p> <p>Sexual jokes, innuendo and double entendres</p>	<p>Discrimination against pregnant or older women workers</p> <p>Preference for male workers over females</p>

Test your Knowledge...

<i>Direct sexual abuse</i>	<i>Indirect sexual abuse</i>	<i>Creating a sexualized environment (not directed to anyone in particular)</i>	<i>Sexual discrimination</i>
<p>1. Forcing a person to perform sexual favors other than intercourse by force, threat or blackmail</p> <p>2. Force nudity or forced to undress</p> <p>3. <b>Rubbing against or getting too close physically while working</b></p> <p>4. Touch or pinch directly or through clothing any sexual area</p> <p>5. Unwanted caresses, groping or fondling</p> <p>🕒👉 <b>Blackmail/threats to force victim to engage or accept unwanted sexual abuse</b></p>	<p>1. Unwanted indecent advances</p> <p>2. Indecent proposals</p> <p>3. Sexual innuendo</p> <p>4. Indiscrete glances</p> <p>5. Intimate references*</p> <p>6. Use of sexually denigrating terms to offend a worker</p> <p>7. Denying benefits to a worker who did not respond to sexual advances</p> <p>8. <b>Spreading rumors of the person's sexual preferences or sexual habits</b></p> <p>9. <b>Threaten to out an LGBTQ worker</b></p>	<p>c) Talk or make allusions to sexual activity or preferences</p> <p>ci) General use of obscene language or gestures</p> <p>cii) Requiring to wear a provocative uniform</p>	<p>e) Disparaging comments or bias treatment to a worker who has childcare demands</p> <p>f) Failure to discipline or enforce rules against sexual harassment or assault by supervisors, co-workers or clients</p>

# She “consented”...?

- **Control** is influencing someone to do something they would not otherwise do.
- **Coercion** is the act of getting someone to act or think in a particular way by using or threatening with negative consequences for noncompliance.
  - \* Better pay-raise
  - \* Improve working conditions
  - \* Scheduling
  - \* Getting/keeping a job for a family member
  - \* Not getting “punished”
  - \* Chisme
  - \* Avoid physical harm to self or others

# Type of abuse/exploitation:

## PHYSICAL

- Rape
- Sexual assault
- Sexual harassment
- Retaliation
- Sex trafficking
- Stalking
- Domestic violence
- Pregnancies/Ownership
- Pornography

## OTHER

- Threats with physical harm
- Voyeurism
- Hostility
- Intimidation, Verbal abuse
- Black listing
- Family members as targets
- Recruitment under false pretenses-Fraud Recruitment
- Heterosexual, Homosexual sex
- Secondary trauma by other workers who are not target
- Use of legal systems to control

# Identifying the Risks



# EXERCISE

## IDENTIFYING THE RISKS

### GOAL

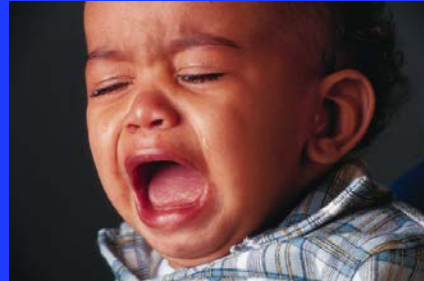
Help participants identify the diverse range of risks or threats survivors are experiencing depending on the industry and to see where commonalities may arise regardless of the industry.

1. Think about a particular industry and looking at the table above identify what kind of risks immigrant women may be more prompt to experience in that particular industry.
2. The following four industries may be suggested for this activity:
  - a. Housekeeping
  - b. Food processing
  - c. Farm work
  - d. Restaurant

# BEATRIZ

BEATRIZ- HOUSE KEEPING

# Risks of Reporting



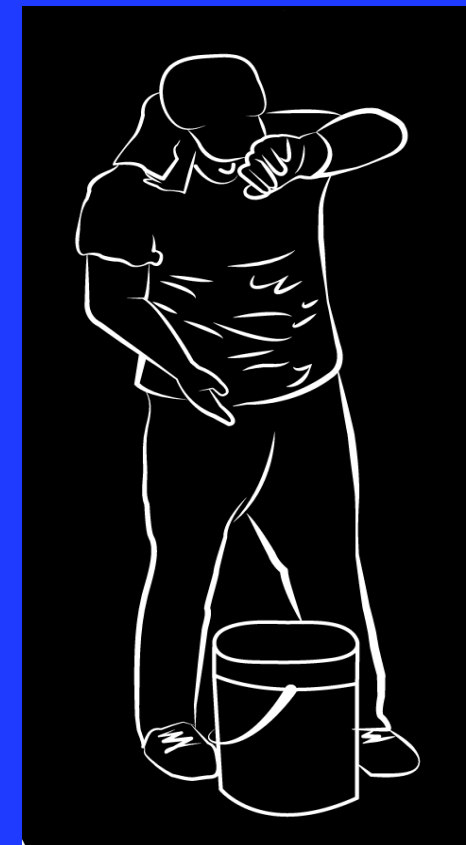


# Strategies for Working with Survivors



Threats from the violence	Threats from perpetrator
Need for medical attention	Fire her
Not being productive at work	Fire family members
Missing work	Blacklisting her or family members so she does not work on other farms
Injuring herself from lack of concentration	Change shifts
Trauma	Change positions to harder jobs
Gaps in memory- not appearing "credible" or appearing "disturbed"	Reduce hours
	Reduce pay
	Make up lies and gossip about her to managers
	Call immigration
Threats from co-workers	Threats from employers:
Ostracize her	Deter her from filing employment complaints
Tell her husband that she is having an affair	Retaliate against her for having exerted her labor and employment rights
Sexual violence from co-workers with actual or perceived power	Retaliate against family members employed at the same place
Gossip (chisme)	Stall or halt a proceeding after an investigation has begun
Treat her like a prostitute	Fire the worker
Blame her for changes in the workplace	Fire the family members
Victim blaming attitudes	Report the worker (or family members) to immigration
	Lack of clear policies prohibiting sexual harassment
Threats at home	Threats/barriers from the criminal system

# Safety first!





“INTERVIEWING TECHNIQUES”  
TALKING ABOUT IT



# Dealing With the Workplace

- Does the survivor want to disclose?
- What does the survivor need/want?
- What are the relevant laws/policies that can help?
- Who in the workplace will be an ally?  
Obstacle?
- What is possible within the context of the particular workplace?

# Interviewing immigrant women victims of workplace sexual violence Exercise

1. Turn to the person seating next to you
2. The oldest will be the survivor, the youngest the advocate
3. In the next 5 minutes, share with the advocate your last consensual sex experience in detail

# Strengthening your interviewing skills

## A step removed

- ▶ Money
  - Are they paying you all your hours, overtime?
  - How are they treating your co-workers? Any complaints?
  - What do you see?
- ▶ Supervisors or anyone with perceived power
  - How does your supervisor/co-workers treat you?
  - Has anyone mistreated or disrespected your peers? How?
  - Did any of it ever happen to you?
  - Has your supervisor/Co-worker ever made you feel uncomfortable? If so, how?
- ▶ Did you complain about it or talked about it to
  - a trusted person in the office/ company or a peer? Human resources representative? Union leader? Nurse? Anyone else?

## On sexual violence

- ▶ Did any of your supervisors/co-workers ever ask you out or offer you to go to lunch, call you outside of work, invite you to give you a ride home before or after work?
  - What happened if you said no? (potential punishment/retaliation)
  - Did your supervisor/co-worker ever touch you in an offensive way or in any manner?
    - How many times did it happen?
    - Did anyone see it?
  - Did this happen to you ever?
  - Did you tell anyone about it?
  - Did anyone see it?



# When speaking about the instant incident

- Ask in-depth questions
- Provide prompts to get episodic memories
- Provide choices
- Probe with behavioral markers for issues that the client may fail to mention for any reason
- Validate but do not collude with denial or minimization
- Do not be judgmental
- Normalize, educate, provide structure
- Guide her to move forward, support small steps, support the vision for the future
- Provide reality checks and clarity in judgment
- Expand her options and alternatives

# If abuse was ongoing

- Ask about first, worst and last incident
- Get information on the exact nature of the abuse
- Find out about grooming
- Find out about what she did, think, feel, and experience around the issue
- Open the door for ambivalence
- Ask about functioning before and after the instant incident or the first time
- Ask not only about psychological symptoms but also interpersonal, social and health-related



# Re-empower the victim

- Help her clarify what her bottom line is
- Help her make her own decisions
- Do not engage in a power struggle but be directive
- Focus on a violence-free life



# Self-Care for Advocates

*Adapted from “Understanding Vicarious Traumatization -  
Strategies for Social Workers” By Shantih E. Clemans, DSW Social Work Today,*

# The Importance of Self Care

## What is Vicarious Trauma?

- Cumulative effects of working with survivors of traumatic life events, such as rape, incest, child abuse, or domestic violence.
- **Three important things to know about VT are:**
  - VT manifests differently in each individual.
  - VT is cumulative. The effect on helpers intensifies over time and with multiple clients.
  - VT is pervasive. It affects all areas of helpers' lives, including emotions, relationships, and their views of the world.

# What are the signs of VT?

- **Feelings of vulnerability**
  - Hearing traumatic stories can cause a helper to question their own safety and feel that they and their loved ones are vulnerable.
- **Difficulty trusting**
  - After hearing accounts of abuse within intimate relationships—through battering, acquaintance rape, and child sexual abuse—trusting someone can be difficult.
- **A changed view of the world**
  - Interactions with traumatized people can change a helper's ability and willingness to see the world as a good and safe place for themselves and those they love
    - These feelings can lead to diminished empathy and resentment towards victims and isolation.

# What can be done to minimize VT?

- Know your A-B-C's
  - Awareness
  - Balance
  - Connection

# Integrating the labor movement and building new collaborations

## WHY?



# Whose Business is it Anyway?

## SA programs:

- Fewer resources
- Lack of access to workplaces
- “That is not part of my grant...”
  - No direct connection or partnership with EEOC, Fair Agencies, Workforce development, employment attorneys, unions, etc.

## • Survivors:

- Lack knowledge about the services
- Concerned about losing their jobs if reporting
- Concerned about being deported if brought to law enforcement’s attention

## • Labor Advocates

- We do not do that stuff
- We help if she wants to file complaints
- I do not find these cases

# Safety from the Labor Field

- Unions
  - Civil rights, women's, and safety & health committees
  - Union educators/trainers
  - Labor mediators
  - Engaging men as allies
  - Manual
- Businesses
  - HR and EAP professionals
  - Comprehensive programs, not just policies
  - Pilot site project



# Outreach/Training/TA Strategy

- Federal government
  - Policies and training/TA
  - EEOC fact sheet and trainings for advocates
- Advocates
  - Assisting survivors to maintain employment
  - Working with workplaces as a partner
  - Trainings

# Approach

- Encourage workplaces to recognize, respond and refer, and implement preventative measures for future
- Proactive framework that is survivor-centered and ensures accountability for perpetrators
- Multi-stakeholder

# In Nebraska

Who do you need to know?

# QUESTIONS?

Coming up!

# Responding to the Needs of Immigrant Workforces Victims of Sexual Harassment and/or Assault

Meaningful alliances