



Reos Partners

# Addressing gender-based violence and harassment in the workplace

COLLABORATING FOR MEANINGFUL AND ENDURING CHANGE





# The challenge

Addressing gender-based violence and harassment (GBVH) and its root causes in the workplace is not just a moral imperative but a strategic one too.

Doing so creates a **positive workplace culture**, resulting in increased productivity, an ability to attract and retain talent, and **mitigates the risks** associated with reputational damage, loss of investor confidence, human capital loss and legal and governance risks.

GBV refers to the abuse of power directed at women and gender diverse people, which causes physical, sexual, or psychological harm. In the workplace context, we talk about GBVH to include sexual harassment, bullying, threats and micro-aggressions.





## Growing awareness

There is growing recognition within organisations and companies that GBVH needs to be addressed. We are also observing a **growing commitment to take action**. At the same time, organisations most often appear to be addressing symptoms. Many do not know where to start or how to tackle the issue.

GBVH is rooted in unequal gender norms and unequal power. What this means in practical terms, is that if you want to effectively address GBVH in the workplace **you cannot only focus on response mechanisms when incidents occur**, but need to address the beliefs, harmful norms, mental models, organisational culture, as well as policies, structures, processes, systems and practices that enable gender inequality and unequal power dynamics to flourish.



## No “quick fix”

Addressing GBVH is not a technical problem with quick-fix solutions. It requires both dialogue that lead to shifts in awareness and behaviour, along with putting effective policies, structures and systems in place that protect victims and ensure they are getting the support they need.

It is important to create spaces for **psychological safety**, where people can talk about the issues, and shift culture. It also requires an understanding of how system change happens, and offering a practical and implementable roadmap for this change process.





## What will it take to effectively address the issue?

Systemic problems require systemic interventions.

Oftentimes workplaces seek to address issues by working at the symptomatic level, rather than at the root. This can result in a collection of disjointed initiatives which produces very little change, which can cause more harm than good.

As trusted guides in systems change, we invite you to partner with us to create meaningful and enduring change to shift the dial on GBVH in your place of work.

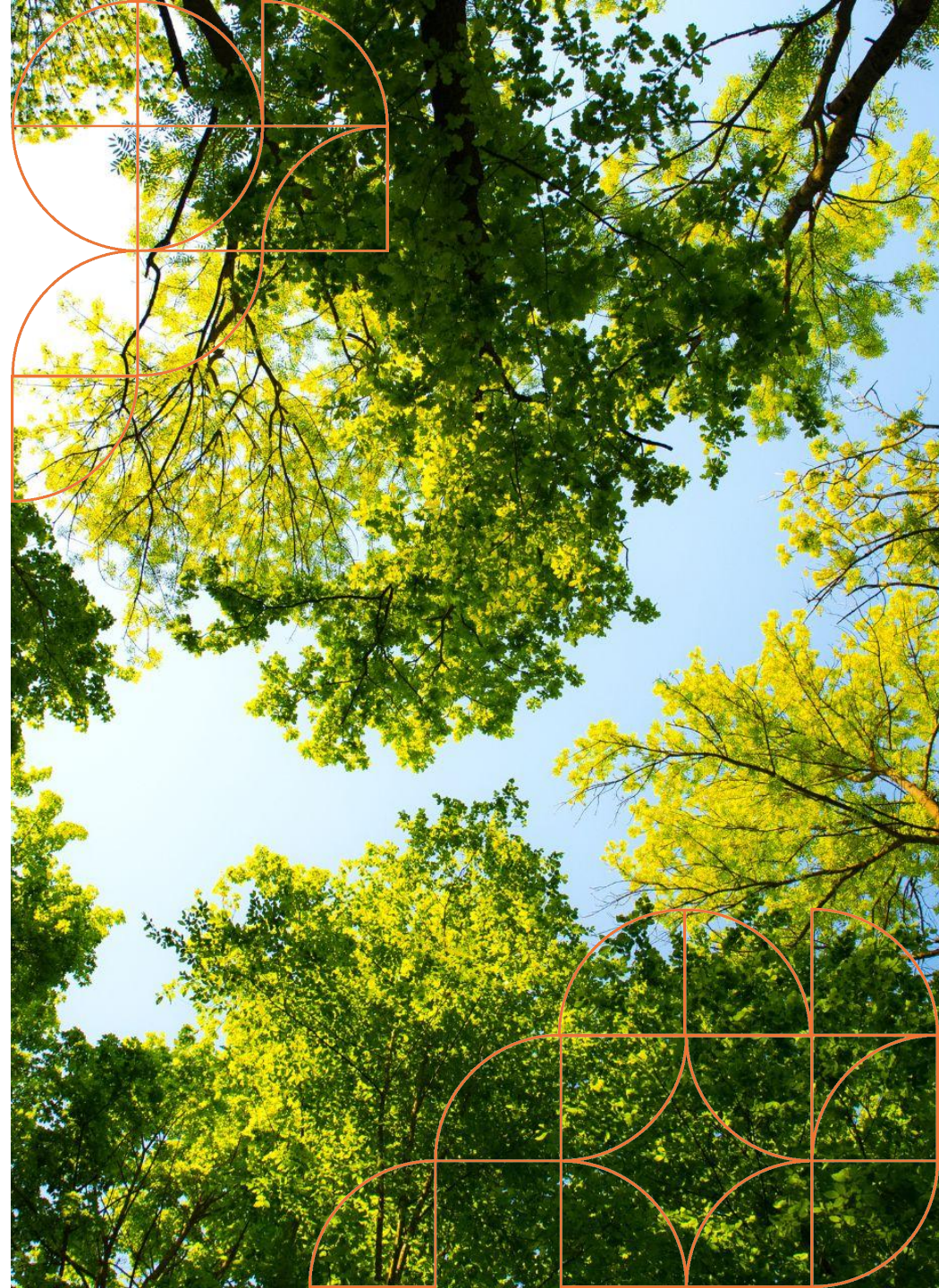


# Creating a positive workplace culture

Here's what we believe is required to effectively address GBVH in your organisation.

1. Leadership and institutional **commitment** to change
2. Building collective **understanding**
3. Acting **together** in new ways
4. Ensuring that the **structures** are fit for purpose
5. Creating a **positive workplace** culture
6. Developing adaptive **leadership** capacity

**We're here to partner with you at each step of this journey...**





## PREVIOUS WORK

# Addressing gender-based violence in Southern African mining communities

In the last two years, we have worked extensively across wider Anglo American business units on GBV initiatives to strengthen the businesses' GBV prevention and response work both internally and within mining communities. Our specific work with Anglo Plats spanned 6 months in 2022 and worked across the organisation's 11 operational sites.

A significant outcome of this work has been to activate the organisation's awareness of how GBV presents itself at Anglo Plats, and ways in which it can be addressed:

- through building awareness and communicating across the organisation,
- to integrate efforts through governance structures – inside and outside the gate, across operations and functions, working on both prevention and response strategies.

Reos presented a roadmap of 6 areas of intervention over the next 3 years, which the organisation has taken forward.



## PREVIOUS WORK

# Kumba Iron Ore GBVH prevention lab in South African mining communities

Kumba Iron Ore approached Reos Partners to coach, facilitate and co-create trauma-informed long-term GBVH solutions.

Using the **social lab** approach, Reos engaged over 2,500 stakeholders across Kumba's ecosystem to explore the root causes of GBVH, laying the foundation for teams to innovate prototypes to address the identified causes.

The interventions have been designed to go beyond the mining company to address the prevalence of GBVH in the mining communities they operate in.

Reos and Kumba achieved a collective definition of the problem and clarity on the boundaries and objectives of a future GBVH lab.







# We welcome a conversation with you.

## MAHMOOD SONDAY

Managing Director  
Johannesburg  
sonday@reospartners.com  
www.reospartners.com

## COLLEEN MAGNER

Director of Innovation & Practice  
Johannesburg  
magner@reospartners.com  
reospartners.com

[reospartners.com/gbvh](https://reospartners.com/gbvh)

