

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT PRINCIPLES

MARCH 2020

WEPS IN ACTION



PRINCIPLE 3

Ensure the health,
safety and well-being of
all women and men workers

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CASE STUDY: L'ORÉAL FIGHTING EVERYDAY SEXISM AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

LESSONS LEARNED

- Addressing everyday sexist behaviour that women often encounter in the workplace is essential to promoting an inclusive workplace culture. Everyday sexism includes actions, words or attitudes which may seem innocuous on the surface but create suffering at work.
- Understanding that the workplace has a crucial role to play in providing support to victims of domestic violence and in mitigating its effects is the starting point for ensuring the safety and well-being of all staff.
- Demonstrating the impact domestic violence has on companies, including reduced productivity and the potential harm to others in the workplace, can help challenge the notion that it is a private matter.
- Depicting real life scenarios through anonymized practical case studies can be an effective way to develop programmes which support employees and raise awareness on domestic violence.
- Building partnerships with other organizations in both the public and private sector promotes collective action that advances the agenda of women's safety and well-being.

CONTEXT

L'Oréal is an international producer of personal care products based in Paris. The company has a good gender balance both overall and at senior level, and women's representation has steadily grown over the past decade. The number of women global brand managers stood at 43 per cent in 2010 and 66 per cent in 2019, while the total workforce was 64 per cent women in 2010 and 70 per cent women in 2019.

L'Oréal has made a strong commitment to equal opportunity, human rights, and safety and well-being, demonstrated by two flagship initiatives:

1. **One in Three Women network:** A European network of companies committed to fighting gender-based violence and understanding the impact it has on employees and workplaces.
2. **#StOpE:** Stop Ordinary Sexism in Enterprises, or #StOpE, aims to raise awareness of and prevent everyday sexism, and to encourage whistleblowing where it occurs.

ACTIONS

One in Three Women network

Globally, one in three women will experience physical, psychological, or sexual violence in her lifetime and in most cases, this will be carried out by a partner or ex-partner.

In November 2018, L'Oréal was the first company to join the One in Three Women network. The network is the first European network of companies engaged to fighting gender-based violence. It is coled by the Fondation Agir Contre l'Exclusion (FACE) and the Kering Foundation. It is organized under the patronage of the French Minister of State for Gender Equality and the Fight against Discrimination.

Through the network, six companies including L'Oréal took part in groundbreaking research to understand employees' experiences of domestic violence, measure its impact on companies, and assess employees' awareness and use of resources available to help victims.

An online survey was sent to 40,000 employees in six countries (Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom), with all responses kept anonymous. A second survey was sent to human resources (HR) and diversity managers, who were also interviewed. Overall, 74 per cent of respondent were women with the majority being younger, more educated, and more likely to be a manager.

The findings demonstrate that domestic violence affects employees and companies in multiple ways, including through lateness, absenteeism and inability to be fully productive while at work. It may also hinder the safety of individuals and their colleagues, clients, customers and anyone who comes into the workplace.

The study was conducted among six European companies: L'Oréal, BNP Paribas, Carrefour, Kering, Korian and Oucicare. The survey was designed to provide an evidence-base for companies and is one of several activities taking place through the One In Three Women network.

To protect the privacy of participating companies and respondents, a global analysis of the employees' survey was conducted, combining responses from all companies.

Some of the findings of the study included the following:

- Overall, 16 per cent of women and four per cent of men reported experiences of current or past domestic violence (this is considerably lower than findings from other surveys).
- Of those who had ever experienced domestic violence, 55 per cent said it had affected their work in at least one of three ways – lateness, absenteeism or being less productive.
- Of those who had ever experienced domestic violence, 30 per cent feared it had affected their job performance so much that they might lose their job.
- Abusive phone calls, texts, emails, messages on social media, stalking at or near the workplace, and threats of contacting co-workers were the main ways that domestic violence occurred in the workplace.

#StOpE

In December 2018, L'Oréal launched the #StOpE campaign to fight everyday sexism in the workplace. The company partnered with Ernst & Young and Accor Hotels and received support from Brigitte Grésy, Secretary General of the Higher Council for Professional Equality between Women and Men, in France.

“L'Oréal has a long-standing commitment to gender equity. Combatting ordinary sexism in the workplace is a key step in achieving it,” said Margaret Johnston-Clarke, Global Head of Diversity & Inclusion. “Ordinary sexism can be gestures or behaviours which may seem innocuous on the surface but which exclude or destabilize women and create suffering at work.”

#StOpE has prompted almost 60 companies with a presence in Europe, including Air France, Christian Dior, IBM, Lenovo, Microsoft, Siemens, and Total to join the campaign.



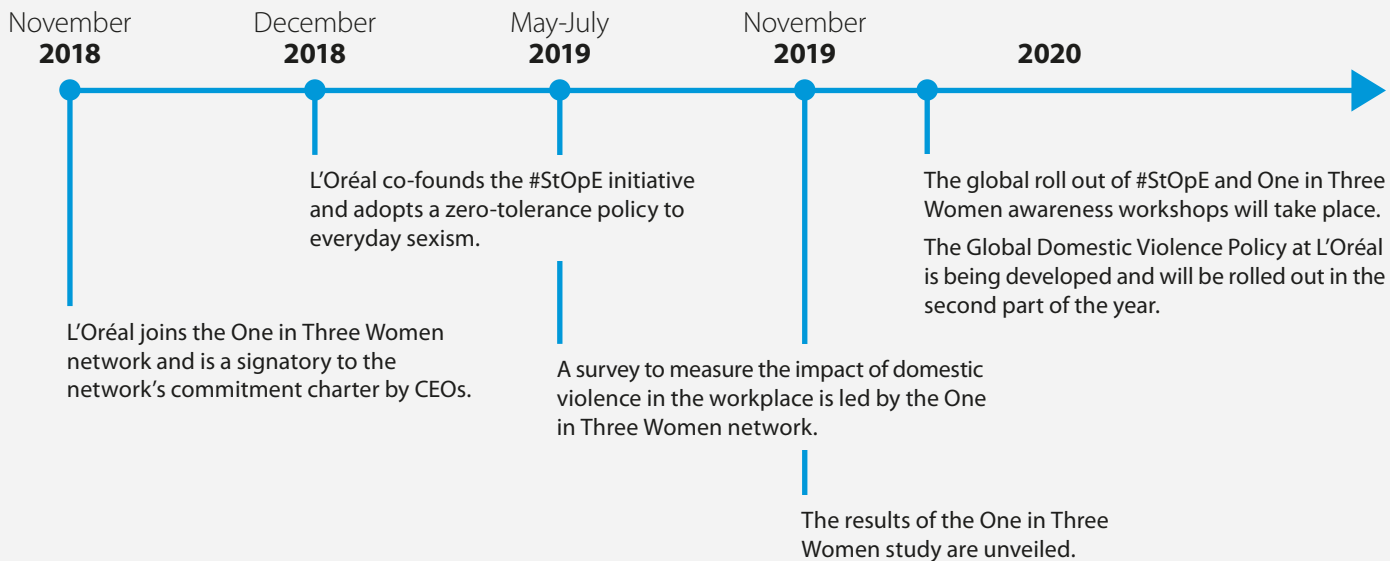
Companies signing up to #StOpE undertake to meet eight commitments:

1. Adopt a zero-tolerance policy to everyday sexism.
2. Raise awareness of sexist behaviour and its impact.
3. Provide targeted training that combats everyday sexism.
4. Share information with employees to address sexist behaviour.
5. Encourage employees to contribute, for example identifying and challenging sexist behaviour.
6. Prevent sexism and where it does happen, provide support for victims and witnesses to report it and for decision-makers to address the situation.
7. Punish sexist behaviour and publicize action taken against perpetrators.
8. Develop indicators to monitor progress, learn lessons and keep improving.

Through #StOpE, a range of examples of good practice in stopping everyday sexism have been identified. These include encouraging managers and other key stakeholders to demonstrate their buy-in by actively “signing up” for the campaign, running awareness cam-

paings to demonstrate what everyday sexism looks like and the impact it has, having voluntary as well as mandatory trainings for employees, among others. Educational tools including guides on everyday sexism and mandatory e-learning, have also been developed.

TIMELINE



CHALLENGES

One of the challenges with the One in Three Women study was getting people to participate. Visible support from L'Oréal Chief Executive, Jean Paul Agon, and HR Director, Jean-Claude Le Grand, proved to be crucial in making sure it was prioritized.



RESULTS

Companies in the One in Three Women network recognize the role of the workplace in providing support to victims of domestic violence and in mitigating its effects. At L'Oréal, over 100 employees attended a gender-based violence awareness workshop in 2019. Customized communications have been created for all participating countries and online learning is being developed for all companies in the network.

The #StOpE initiative led to a zero-tolerance policy against sexism, with an email signed by senior leaders sent to all employees in France reinforcing the policy. Awareness was raised of sexist behaviour and its impact and examples of sexist behaviours were shared alongside a quiz to test employee's understanding.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Margaret Johnston-Clarke, Head of Global Diversity and Inclusion, said, "When we think about inclusion, we have to consider the different factors that make office spaces inclusive for women. It is not just about maternity leave, but also thinking about other ways in which women will feel more comfortable."

"Are they safe from being ostracized or judged? Can they have time off to seek support for domestic violence? Are there opportunities for childcare? The workplace has to evolve to consider all the factors that make it inclusive," she added.

The sensitivity of the topic and belief that it was a private matter contributed to the challenge in getting employees to participate. There was also simply a lack of awareness of the issues. A series of workshops helped employees understand the link between domestic violence and the workplace, and the results of the survey clearly demonstrated the impact it has on the workplace.

Committed support of CEO and Group HR Director helped to gain buy-in.

Launched a series of half-day awareness workshops helping employees better understand the issue and the role the company has in supporting victims.

Publicized the survey results to demonstrate the business case and the importance of an inclusive workplace where employees can seek help.

There were public displays of the eight commitments and employees were given the opportunity to sign the charter. Awareness days were organized to highlight ordinary sexism, aiming to challenge prejudices around the subject and encourage internal discussion. HR managers were equipped to advise employees about how to recognize and challenge sexism and a memo sent to all employees on what is considered misconduct and the consequences.








Combating gender-based violence calls for a range of sustained programmes that help prevent it happening and tackle it where it does. Training material, awareness raising tools, and employee assistance programmes and services need to continually evolve.


Managers and co-workers could also be given guidance about having non-judgmental and confidential conversations with victims. Women and men in leadership positions should challenge gender stereotypes for all employees, and can work with men to promote positive social norms.

THE ROLE OF WEPs


The company's CEO, Jean Paul Agon, signed the Women's Empowerment Principles in 2014. The WEPs have provided a useful framework for L'Oréal's gender equality ambitions in the workplace. The WEPs have enabled L'Oréal to promote


more women to strategic positions, close the gender pay gap and offer generous parental leave. They also help demonstrate L'Oréal's strong commitment to gender equality to its stakeholders.

- Principle 1  Establish high-level corporate leadership for gender equality.
- Principle 2  Treat all women and men fairly at work– respect and support human rights and nondiscrimination.
- Principle 3  Ensure the health, safety and well-being of all women and men workers.
- Principle 4  Promote education, training and professional development for women.
- Principle 5  Implement enterprise development, supply chain and marketing practices that empower women.
- Principle 6  Promote equality through community initiatives and advocacy.
- Principle 7  Measure and publicly report on progress to achieve gender equality.

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