**This tool presents four scenarios that an organisation’s leadership team can use as exercises to guide a discussion to ask, ‘what if?’ and ‘what would you do?’ in relation to sexual violence incidents that affect staff.**

Having policies and processes in place may not be enough if an organisation’s leadership is not in full agreement on what actions should be taken in response to serious incidents, especially if these actions are in conflict with the goals of senior leadership. Organisation-wide awareness that management fully supports established policies can help to drive the response process and enhance confidence that the leadership will take the appropriate moral stance in difficult situations. It is also beneficial if managers understand that incidents are not always straightforward.

Scenario 1

You have been informed that a new, inexperienced, junior member of staff working on a flagship project with significant institutional funding has been raped by one of the town elders during a collaboration meeting that the two attended alone. The town elders show no remorse and accuse the staff member of being a prostitute.

Key points to remember in this scenario:

* The country of operation is a core part of the organisation’s strategic geographical vision for the region.
* The work with the town elders is a core part of the project, and without their buy-in, the whole project will fall apart.
* Project failure or shutdown would mean that funds would have to be returned to donors, but money has already been spent on the start-up (such that repayment would represent a substantial cost to the organisation).
* Repayment would potentially set the organisation back by years in terms of its long-term strategy.
* The location and the elders have had interest from donors and other organisations to do similar work.
* The survivor expects the leadership of the organisation to do something.
* The country director has stated that the junior staff member acted foolishly and put herself in a situation that put her at risk.
* It has also come to light that this kind of incident has happened in the past with the same elders, but no action was taken by the previously affected organisation, and it has not deterred donors from working with the elders.
* The state of the judicial and law enforcement system in the country means that nothing can be done to bring the elders to justice.
* The country director has also stated that speaking to donors or organisations to try to deter the elders would put local staff at risk of reprisals.

Core questions:

* What actions should the leadership team take?
* Is the leadership team prepared to exit the programme and location?
* What will the leadership team do to support the survivor of the incident?
* What actions should be taken in terms of communications.

Scenario 2

Your organisation has multiple projects totalling £15 million in funding across five different locations in the country. You have been informed that a senior government minister raped one of your international volunteers during a networking event. The volunteer is severely traumatised by what has happened.

Key points to remember in the scenario:

* The minister has a strong level of government and public support and protects his reputation fiercely.
* Due to his position, he could shut down much of the organisation’s access and raise its operating costs.
* The minister’s level of power makes it nearly impossible to take criminal or legal action against him.
* The country director is concerned that confronting or trying to take action against the minister will lead staff to be expelled from the country or arrested and detained under dubious charges.
* A partner has said that many people will not believe the story as the minister has power and is seen as ‘desirable’, so there would be no need for him to force himself on someone.
* Donors have good relationships with the minister and have undertaken publicity activities with him. These accusations could be embarrassing for them.
* The funding from the project in this country is a substantial part of the organisation’s income; losing this funding would require downsizing international and headquarters teams.
* The volunteer has lost all confidence in the country director and is expecting action from the organisation’s leadership team. The volunteer’s family are considering taking the incident and the organisation’s response public.

Core questions:

* What actions should the leadership team take?
* Is the leadership team prepared to exit the programme and location?
* What will the leadership team do to support the survivor of the incident?
* What actions should be taken in terms of communications?

Scenario 3

You are informed that a member of staff has seriously sexually assaulted another member of staff. The survivor wishes to go to the police and press charges. The country director has informed you that there is a high risk that the alleged perpetrator will be attacked, become a survivor of sexual violence, or be killed while in custody, as suspected sex offenders are known to be assaulted by police and other inmates.

Key points to remember in the scenario:

* The organisation has the same duty of care for the alleged perpetrator as for the survivor.
* The alleged perpetrator is an international member of staff and wants to leave the country before an arrest can take place.
* The country director is concerned that if the individual leaves the country, other staff members may be arrested for aiding an alleged sex offender to flee the country.
* The survivor knows what the potential outcomes are if the alleged perpetrator is arrested but insists on involving the local police.

Core questions:

* What actions should the leadership team take?
* Is the leadership team prepared to follow the survivor’s wishes even if the other staff member will be placed at an extremely high risk of harm?
* What will the leadership team do to support the survivor and the alleged perpetrator of the incident?
* What actions should be taken in terms of internal and external communications?

Scenario 4

A staff member in a country programme has reported that they have experienced inappropriate sexual advances from a high-profile senior staff member who is often seen as the public face of the organisation. An informal investigation into the situation has raised concerns about this same staff member’s relationship with a number of beneficiaries. The primary beneficiaries of the organisation’s projects in the country are teenage girls. The senior member of staff in question has regular contact with these beneficiaries. The parents of several teenage girls involved in the organisation’s projects have reported that their daughters have displayed symptoms of psychological trauma after spending time with the senior staff member in question.

Key points to remember in the scenario:

* While there are safeguards in place within the organisation to prevent staff members from being alone with children and vulnerable adults, it appears that the senior staff member was giving private support to the girls in his own time.
* One of the teenagers has told her parents that the staff member forced himself on her and told her to comply if she wanted help.
* The family want compensation and action taken against the alleged perpetrator.
* The family have very little influence and do not know what channels to use to report the incident.
* The organisation’s image could suffer greatly if such a high-profile staff member were accused of sexual violence.
* The staff member who made the initial harassment complaint no longer wishes to be involved in the response.
* It has also come to light that similar harassment complaints were raised over the past three years during the staff member’s other placements.

Core questions:

* What actions should the leadership team take?
* Is the leadership team prepared to publicly condemn the actions of the high-profile staff member?
* What will the leadership team do to support the survivors in the current location and those who have reported similar complaints over the past three years?
* What actions should be taken in terms of internal and external communications?