

# Addressing Violence Against Women and Girls Through DFID's Economic Development and Women's Economic Empowerment Programmes

DFID Guidance Note

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VIOLENCE  
AGAINST  
WOMEN  
AND GIRLS  
HELPDESK

# Why this guidance note

- Tackling violence improves the effectiveness of economic development programmes
- Economic development programmes can make an important contribution to preventing and responding to VAWG.
- Tackling VAWG is imperative in terms of a human rights based approach to development and in light of the UK's commitment to human rights

# Women, work and violence

- 35% of women - 818 million women globally - over the age of 15 have experienced sexual or physical violence
- Women earning an income can be protected from violence
- In some situations an economic power re-balance can lead to violence in the home
- VAWG in the workplace – sexual harassment, physical violence and abuse (between 18% and 90% of women)
- Vulnerability in the informal sector, for migrants, in special economic zones, cross border trade, on the way to work

# The cost of violence

- The economic cost of VAWG - 1.2% to 3.7% of GDP
- Business impact - VAWG impacts on business productivity and profitability
- Cost to women - Violence can act as a barrier to women's employment, VAWG results in loss of income and increased costs to women
- Violence against girls at school can reduce the likelihood of school attendance and result in a reduction in girls' long-term potential and a longer-term depletion of the stock of human capital

# DFID Guidance note areas of work

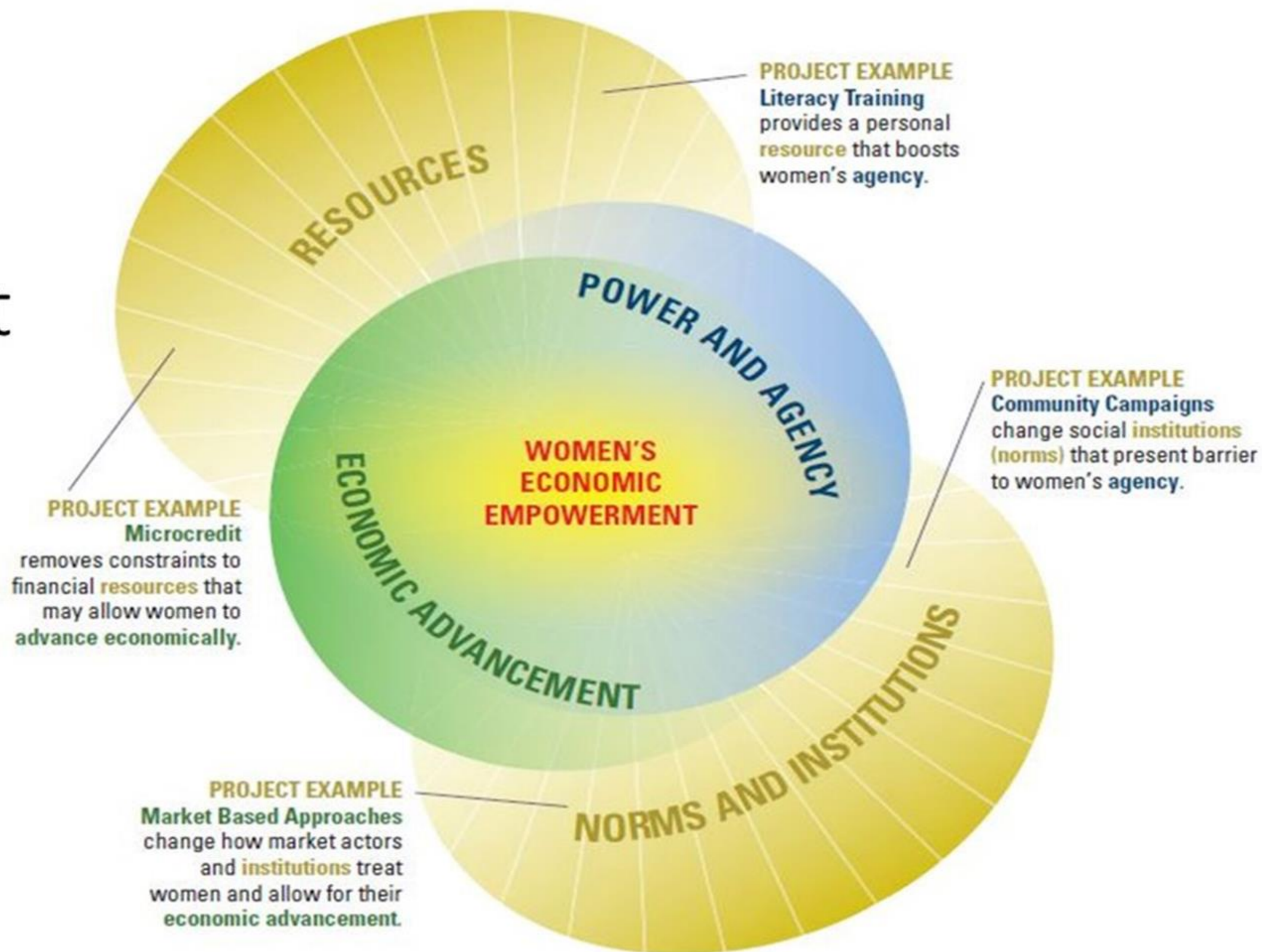
- Women and girls in trade, employment, microenterprise and market places are free from violence and the threat of violence
- Women and girls increased economic activity and economic empowerment helps to reduce VAWG and protect women and girls from violence

Women's  
skills, power  
and income

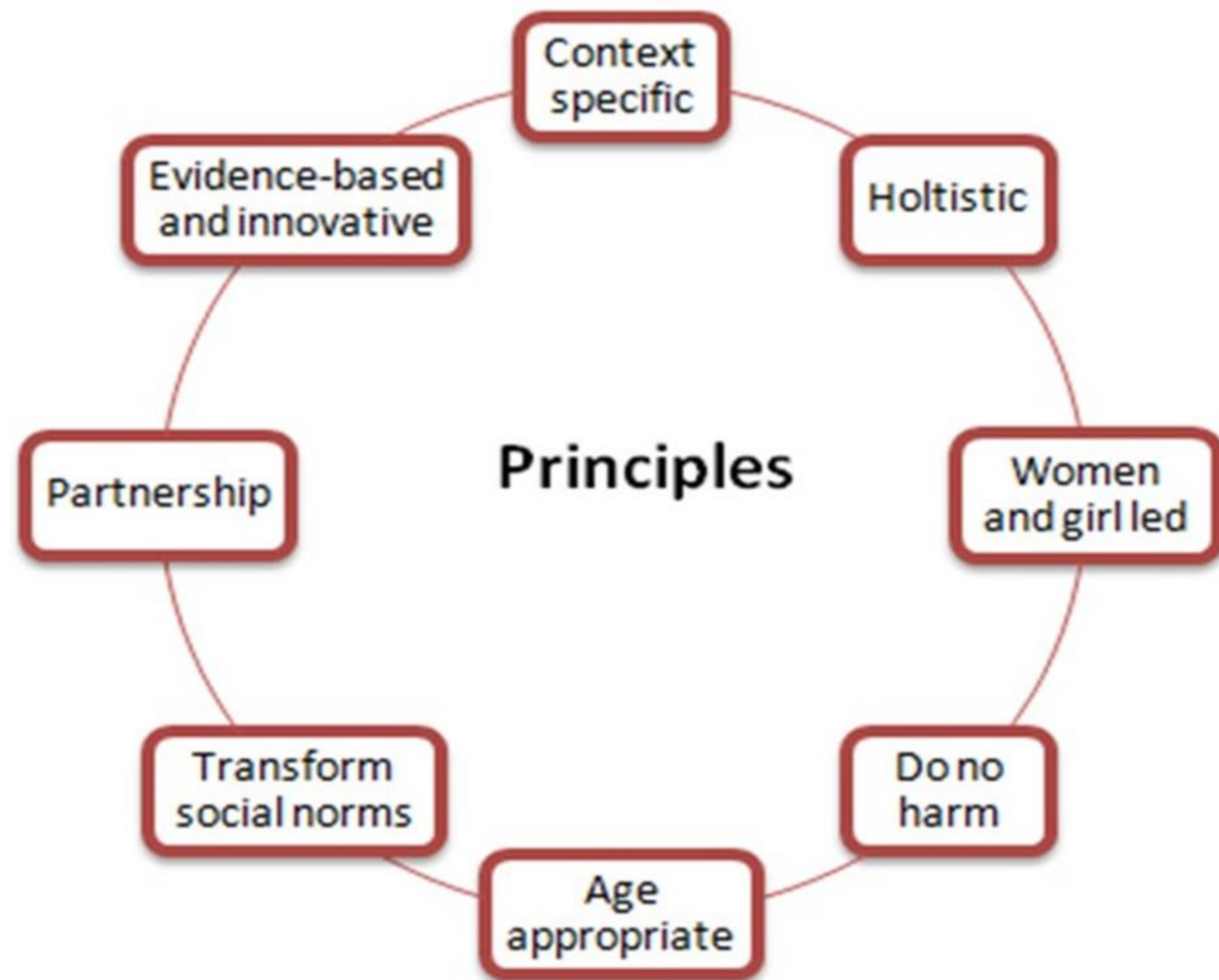
Businesses and  
employers  
policies and skills

Enabling  
environment

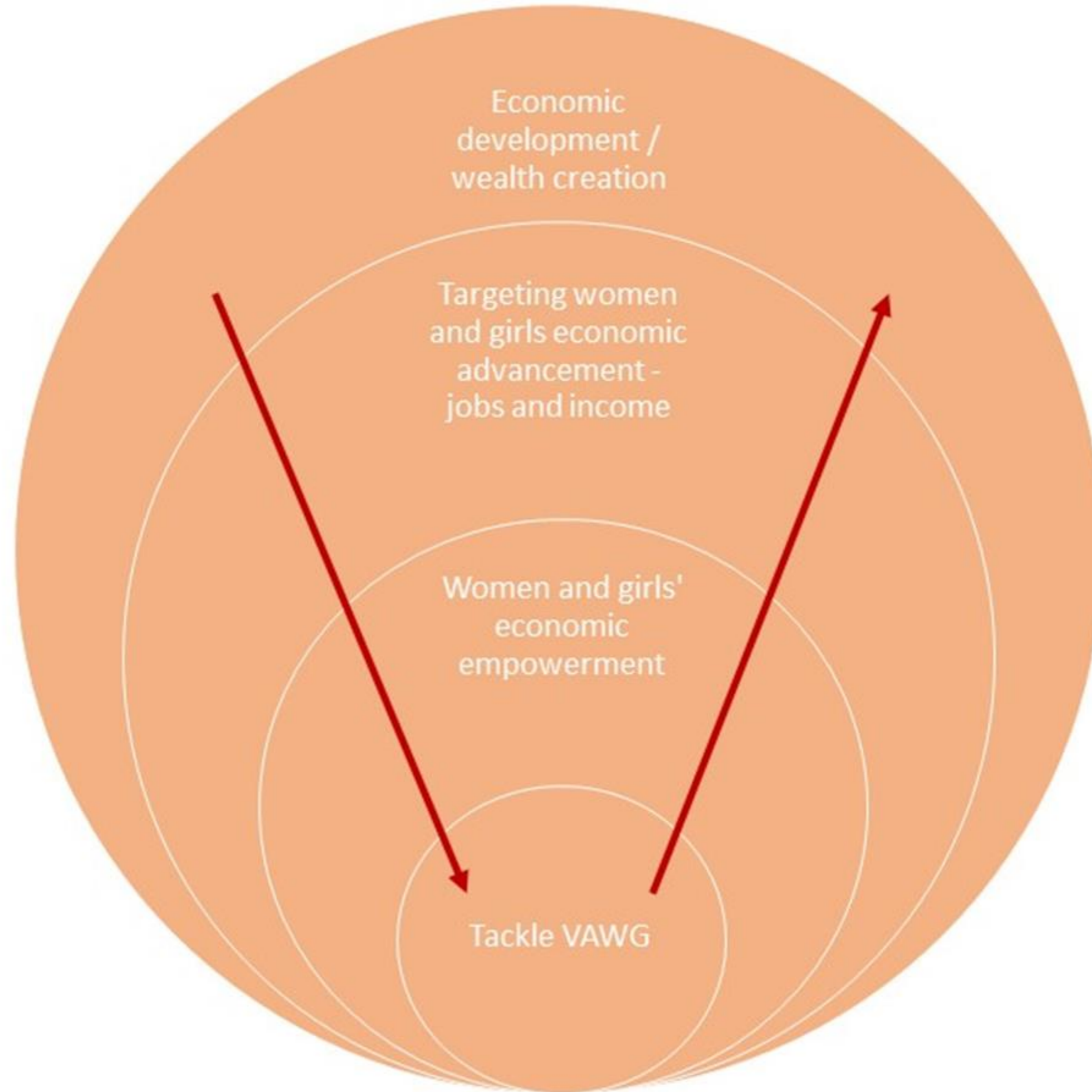
# Women's Economic Empowerment



# Designing a programme

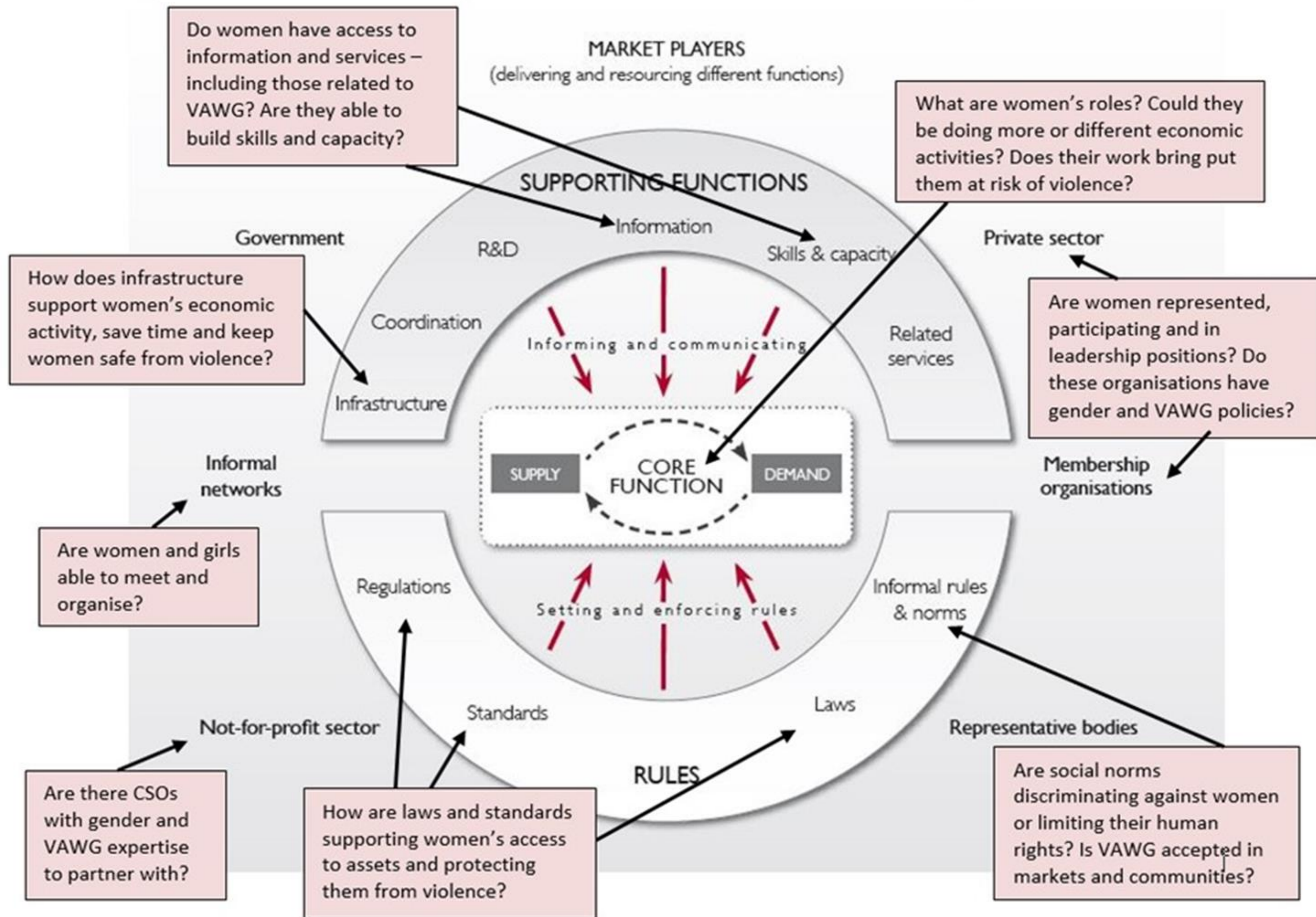


# Where to start





**Figure 3: M4P lens on market system – with indication of WGEE and VAWG questions**



# 1. Women and girls skills, income and empowerment - Challenges

- Women and girls often have limited experience and knowledge of employment in the formal sector, or of business, finance and marketing, in comparison to men
- Lack of support in the household, poor health, and unpaid work burden
- Discrimination and lack of access to services such as financial services, or business development services
- Relevant support and service delivery organisations lack knowledge of and expertise on VAWG and how to respond to it

# 1. Women and girls skills, income and empowerment - Interventions

- Address women's and girls' **financial exclusion**, while at the same time building up their abilities and networks to protect them from violence
- Expand and improve **business development services**, enterprise support and skills and resources for market development and value chain inclusion for women and girls
- Introduce and build **women's collective action, business associations** and unions to support women and girls in enterprise, markets and employment
- Develop **skills training and safe employment** opportunities (including for vulnerable workers such as migrants) that include approaches to enhance women's and girls' knowledge of their rights and access to resources
- Provide **social protection** (including cash transfers) and subsistence asset support for women and girls who have no options for earning an income and who need to develop resilience for future potential
- Services and support systems to prevent, protect and respond to violence

## 2. Business and employers policies and skills - Challenges

- Social norms and beliefs of leadership and management
- Some businesses, markets or associations may not have basic systems and organisations in place to tackle VAWG
- Weak employee or market actor voices, and lack of inclusion of women, can mean there is limited demand for change
- Lack of knowledge of the impact that workplace violence is having on women and girls in the workplace

## 2. Business and employers policies and skills - Interventions

- Support unions, collective action and social dialogue to address VAWG and gender inequality in the workplace
- Develop company policies and leadership that promote gender equality, women's rights, access to services and non-tolerance of VAWG
- Strengthen human resource systems and integrate action to address VAWG
- Develop a benefits, social support and referral system for employees to support those who have experienced violence
- Company social norm change

### 3. Enabling Environment - Challenges

- Public sector and legislative bodies may have social norms that inhibit their commitment to tackling violence
- Lack of national research and information about VAWG in the workplace
- Employers do not understand the benefits that their organisations and employees can achieve with legal and policy frameworks that protect women and girls from VAWG in public spaces, in the home and in the workplace
- Lack of expertise and political will in CSOs and public sector
- Contradictions and difference in practice between national law and customary or traditional laws and practice

### 3. Enabling Environment - Interventions

- Work to change discriminatory legislation, including customary law
- Ensure there are public policies and legislation to promote equality and safety of women and girls in the workplace, in markets and in public spaces
- Simplify and adapt laws for industries and business in which women dominate and ensure they are gender sensitive
- Introduce public policy and programmes to ensure safety on the way to work and in market places
- Time-saving legislation and action to ensure legal maternity leave and childcare, addressing unpaid care and household work
- Promote legislation that ensures VAWG issues are included in health and safety legislation and basic labour standards, including equal pay

# Programme needs

- Direction
- Leadership
- Team
- Partners
- Policies, processes and tools



# Useful Contacts & Links

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## **VAWG Helpdesk -**

[www.sddirect.org.uk/our-work/vawg-helpdesk/](http://www.sddirect.org.uk/our-work/vawg-helpdesk/)