



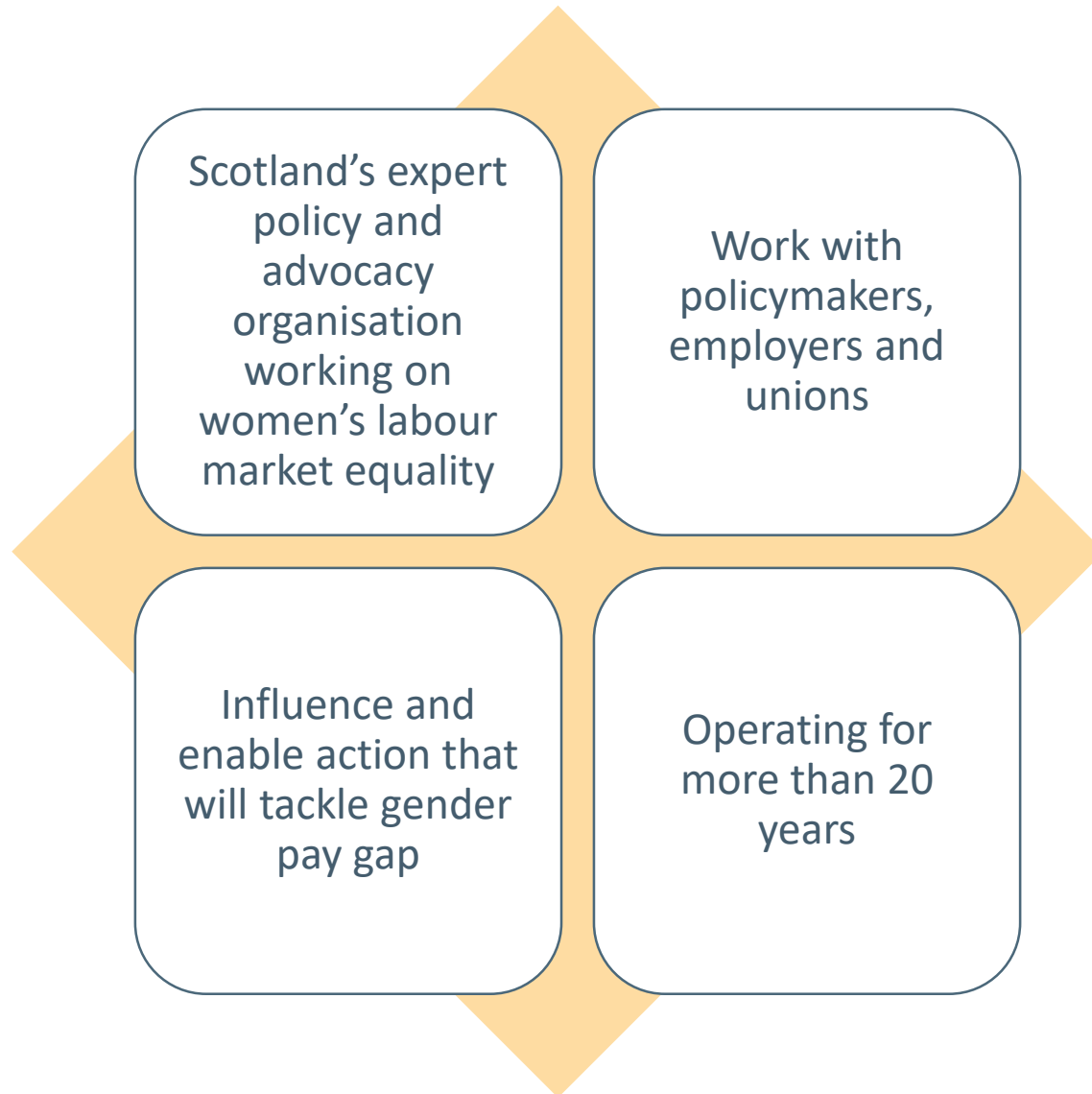
# Tackling Gender Equality

Why VAW is a workplace issue

Collett O' Connor, Programme Officer



# About Close the Gap





# Equally Safe at Work



- World-leading employer accreditation programme
- Aligned with *Equally Safe* Scotland's national strategy to prevent and eradicate violence against women and girls
- 18 accredited organisations
- 18 currently in the programme

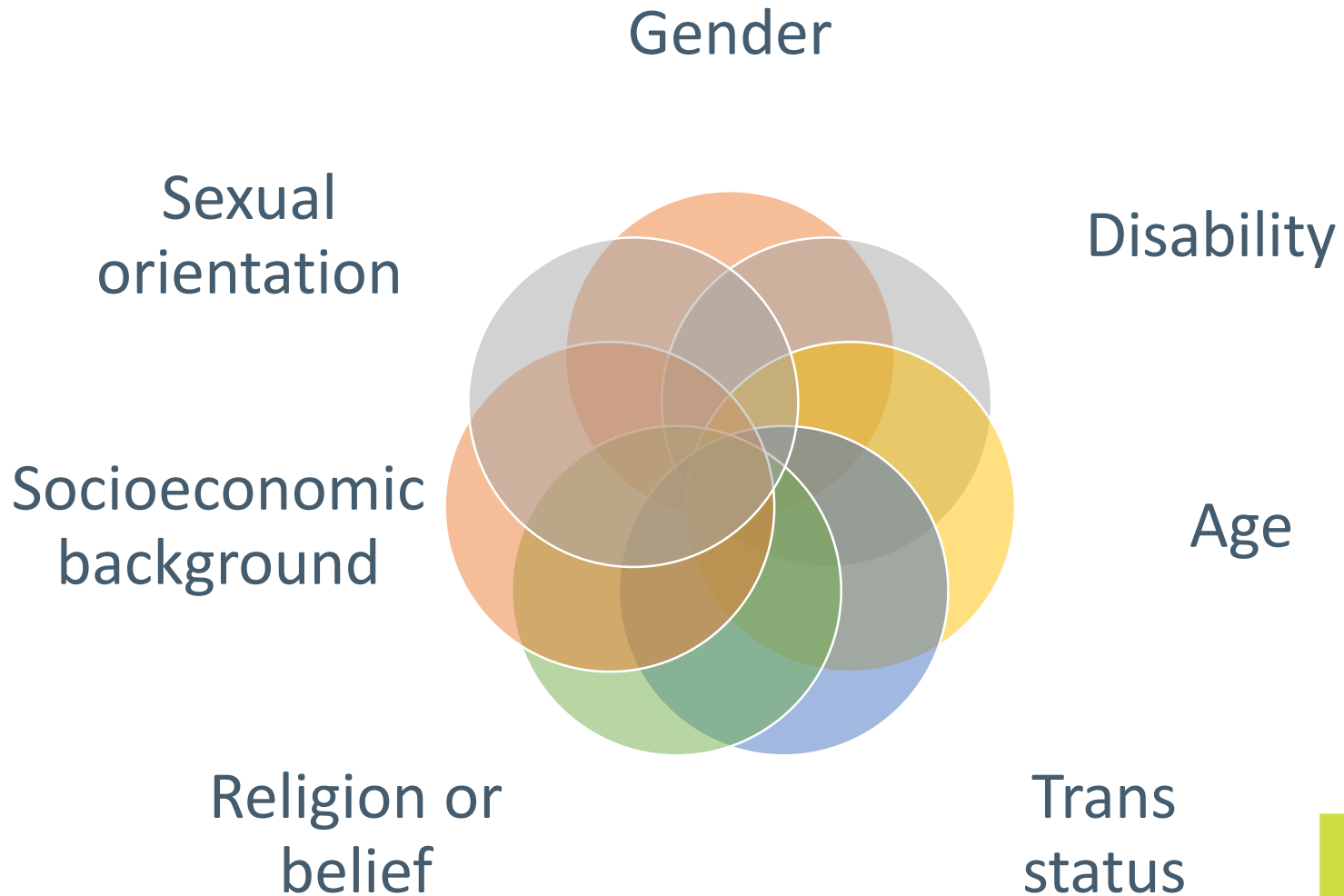


# Why VAW happens: The causal story





# Intersectionality





# Prevalence of VAW in Scotland

1 in 3 women  
experience some  
form of VAW

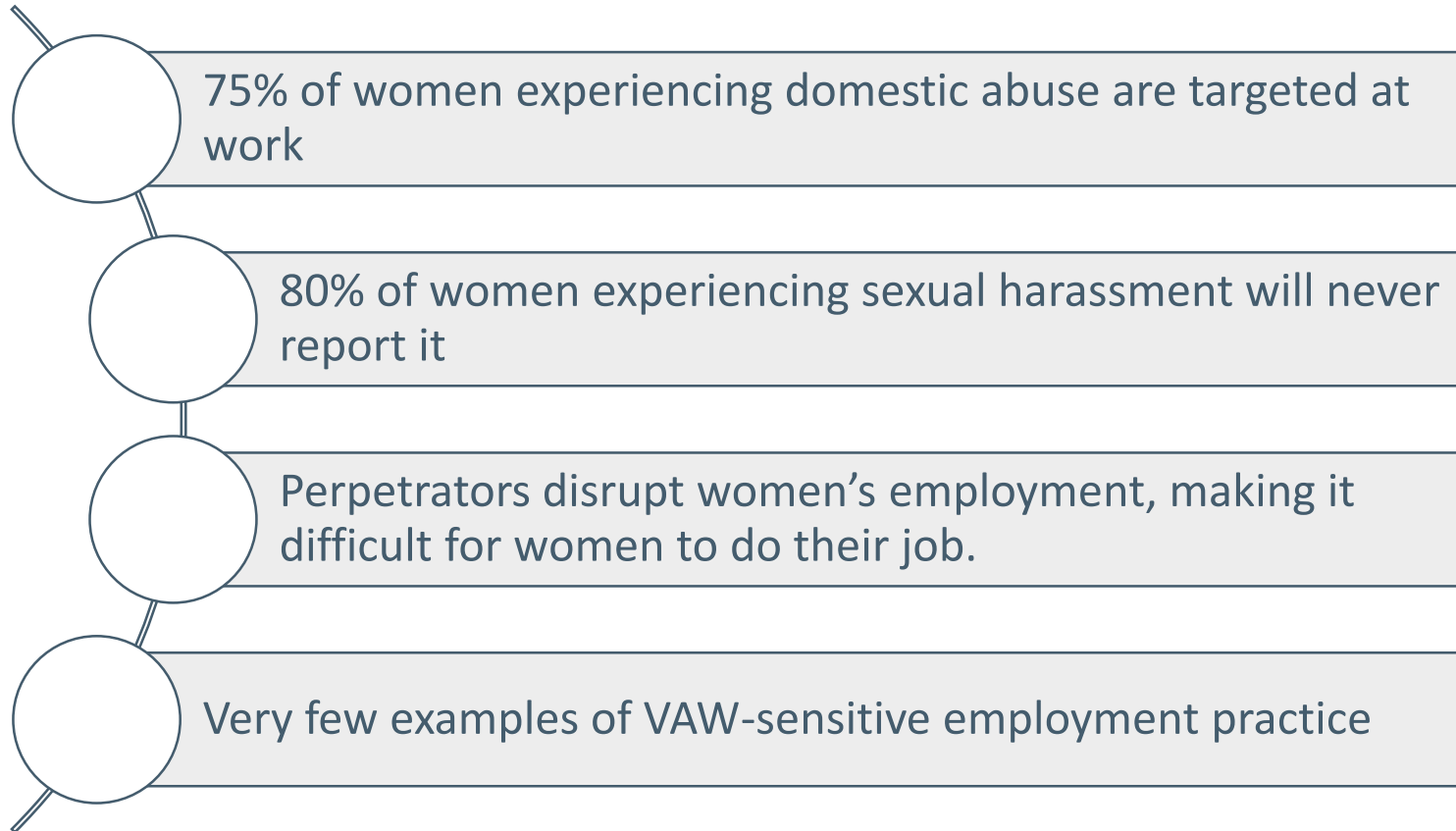
1 in 4 women  
experience  
domestic abuse  
in their lifetime

Over 70% of  
women have  
experienced or  
witnessed sexual  
harassment

In 2023-24  
14,484 sexual  
crimes were  
recorded



# VAW is a Workplace Issue





*“Being raped is like being involved in a horrific car crash with brain damage: you have traumas and injuries that don’t allow you to function properly. Your body and your brain need rest; your trauma is deep and important. But when a woman is raped, she’ll never be allowed to have as much time as someone involved in a car accident to recover, even though the trauma doesn’t allow us to function normally.”*

-Participant in the Rape Crisis Scotland’s  
Survivor Reference Group





# When an employer got it wrong





## Discussion

If something like this happened in your team or organisation, how confident would you feel in knowing how to respond—and what might help strengthen that confidence?



# What is the problem?

Lack of visible leadership on inclusion

Assumptions that inappropriate behaviour is just banter

VAW is not seen as a workplace issue

Inconsistent responses from managers

Fear of speaking up due to lack of psychological safety

Lack of clear reporting routes



# Best practice





# Next steps

Take a zero-tolerance approach to VAW.

Embed inclusive leadership at all levels

Provide safe, trusted reporting routes

Regularly review workplace culture and team dynamics

Ensure intersectionality informs all actions