

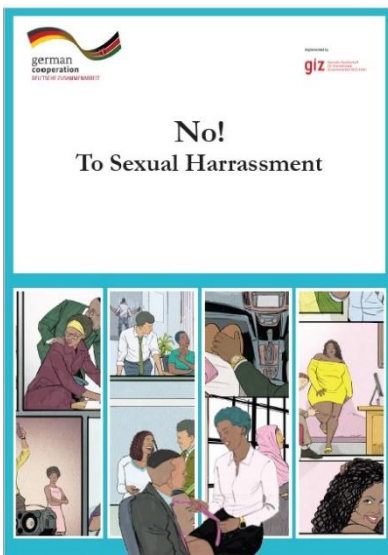
ZERO TOLERANCE TO SEXUAL HARASSMENT: Enhancing staff awareness through the Art of Comic Book

According to a survey by Kenya Demographic and Health Survey (KDHS¹) 14% of women have experienced sexual violence. Unfortunately, sexual harassment at workplaces remains officially undocumented and underreported due to factors such as lack of awareness and fear of retaliation.

GIZ Kenya operates in a challenging context characterized by a patriarchal society where reporting and discussing sexual violence are deemed shameful. This cultural norm is particularly entrenched in the rural settings where most projects within our portfolio are implemented. Recognizing the impact of these attitudes on gender equality, our national staff has been shaped by the same cultural norms surrounding this sensitive topic.

Our contribution to enhancing gender competence within our organizational unit involves the strategic allocation of resources, the establishment of a robust network of gender focal points, and the creation of impactful awareness tools such as the sexual harassment comic book. These approaches have successfully fostered a culture of openness and understanding, facilitating ongoing dialogue and education on gender issues among our colleagues.

Corporate culture



Sexual harassment comic book

Our portfolio has allocated a full-time staff member dedicated to *Gender and Do-no-Harm*, supporting all the projects in the country during the establishment of and implementation of projects, including and not limited to projects' Safeguards and Gender Analyses and Country Gender Feasibilities. The Gender advisor is part of the management meetings and is involved during the country planning meetings where the gender activities are planned, budgeted and funds allocated to implement respective activities.

The portfolio has established a network of GFPs technical group comprising of the *Gender and Do-no-Harm Advisor* at country level; five cluster gender focal points and projects GFPs, a representation from human resource (HR) and Security Risk Management Office Kenya (SRMO). Regular meetings are held every bimonthly, where the colleagues exchange insights on gender issues, including developing projects' materials on sexual harassment at workplace in their respective context e.g. [marginalised groups in agriculture sector](#) videos and translated flyers, online gender based violence translated [flyers](#) and [trainings](#); information sharing on topics from external gender experts such as UN Women; onboarding and training sessions (including AIZ), among others.

All recruited staff members are onboarded. The *Gender and Do-no-Harm Advisor* conducts a two hour session allocated on projects' gender mainstreaming, and creates awareness on sexual harassment policy. The five clusters hold deep drive sessions especially they have converged like during their annual cluster meeting allocate time to have colleagues get the opportunity to have discussions around gender topics including sexual harassment policy.

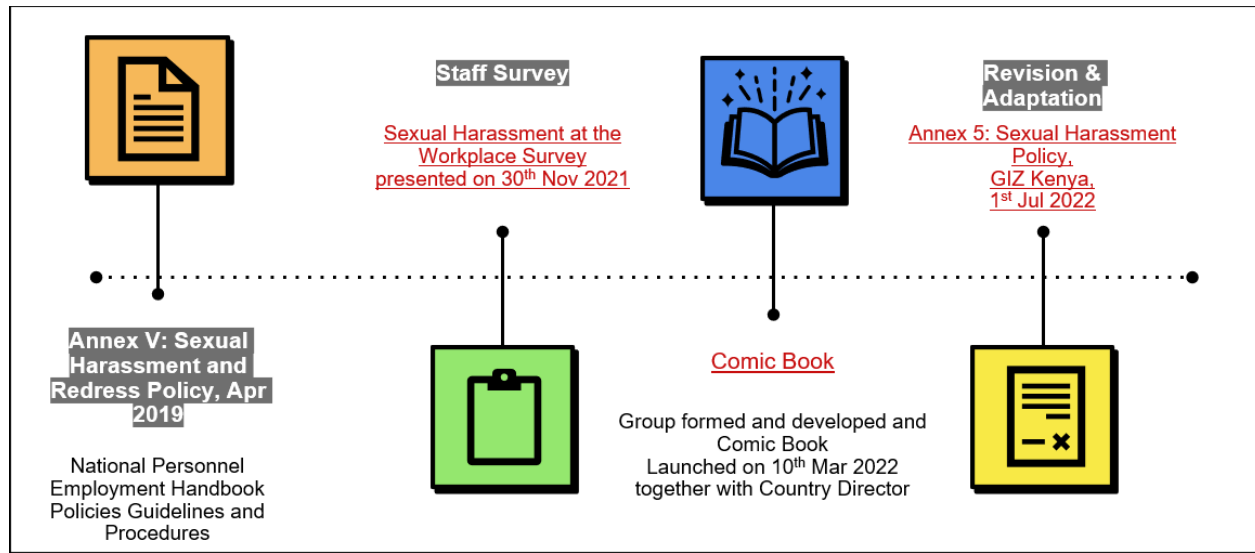


Gender session during onboarding new staff

¹ [Kenya Demographic and Health Survey 2022 - Key Indicators Report \[PR143\] \(dhsprogram.com\)](#)

Gender competence

We operate in a challenging context characterized by a patriarchal society where reporting and discussing sexual violence are deemed shameful. This cultural norm is particularly entrenched in the rural settings where most projects within our portfolio are implemented. We recognize the impact of this attitudes on gender equality since a majority of our national staff have been shaped by the same cultural norms surrounding this sensitive topic. A sexual harassment survey was conducted in 2020, staff sensitisation on sexual harassment was identified as a key area for improvement.



The comic book provides a soft start for discussing the complex topics and make it easy for colleagues to open to the discussion. From the comic book scenarios one of the projects came up with a 10 series videos on sexual harassment for use in the communities where they are implementing the project. The comic book has been shared with across other GIZ countries - Uganda; and has been used to facilitate sexual harassment sessions including *Gender Insider GIZ series* on Harnessing the Power of Storytelling for Workplace Ethics and Empowerment – 29th June 2023



Cooperation

This would not have been successful without the involvement of the management, the clusters, the different projects and SRMO Kenya operating within the portfolio. The process was commissioned from the country office and implemented within the GFP technical group where the different projects were presented. The colleagues came up with different scenarios for each of the forms of sexual harassment, the scenarios were brainstormed on and enhanced to form the final product.

In March 2022 the comic book was launched by the country director during a virtual event which was attended by staff across the portfolio



Our main challenge

Time constrains from the team developing the comic book; the GFP project level double in as technical officer in the various project. The competing duties caused by their other duties meant that the gender advisor at the country level had to constantly follow up on the committed deadlines.

Key Success factors

1. **Collaboration:** The comic book was developed in partnership with the different colleagues in GIZ Kenya. Scenarios came from people's personal experiences reported in the survey and ombudsmen or through observations which very vivid and relatable.
2. **Dedicated resources:** The process included dedicating resources both time, human resource and funds towards the implementation and production of the comic book. Gender equality goes beyond providing funds, it is important to have staff members who have dedicated time to work on the gender agenda.
3. **Management good will and support:** this process would not be successful without the support of the management which included having gender as part of the country strategy, fund allocation, human resources for gender topics. This includes the support at cluster level where sensitisation sessions on the gender topics have been conducted including policies against sexual harassment being top of the list.

Key outcomes

1. Sexual harassment comic book that makes it easy for the discussion of sexual harassment session. The different scenarios bring out the complex topic in an easy way eliciting serious discussion around the topic.
2. Setting the pace for innovative way of handling sexual harassment; Building on the success of the comic book the Agri-jobs for youth project took a proactive step and produced 10 episodes of videos inspired by the comic book's content. This innovative approach has proven effective in conveying crucial messages about sexual harassment in a format that resonates with our diverse team.

Submitted by; Esther Muthee and Elizabeth Kago