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Strong collaboration of development partners, ministries and civil society for sustainable impacts:

Fostering Gender Equality through Ikiganiro GBV Material Communication & Information material on sexualised and gender-based violence

Categorie:

GE2

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Promoting gender equality

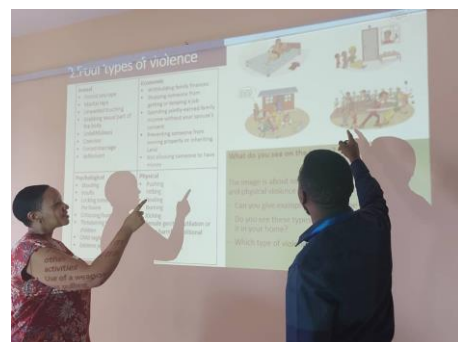
Over the past years, efforts to promote gender equality in our partner countries have become even more prominent within our company and in our work with partners worldwide. BMZ's feminist development policy as launched in March 2023 provides the framework to focus on gender-transformative approaches to remove structural barriers to equality. In the work with our partners, we are also tasked with localizing feminist development policy and find common ideas and terminology to address questions of representation, resources, rights, and diversity.

The project Prevention of sexualized and gender-based violence (PSGBV) of GIZ Rwanda works with a wide spectrum of partners to support national coordination efforts, improve the quality of services for survivors of any form of sexualized and gender-based violence (SGBV) and disseminate knowledge about SGBV and underlying social norms. The project collaborates also with the Health Project Barambe of Belgian Cooperation.

In September 2023, PSGBV and Barambe responded to their partners request to develop easy language communication tools that would a) support community outreach activities on SGBV and b) improve the counseling services at the state-run Isange One Stop Centers (IOSC), which are multi-service centers for survivors of SGBV where they should receive medical, legal and psychosocial support. The idea of the Ikiganiro Flipbooks (ikiganiro means conversation in the local language Kinyarwanda) was born out of a joint workshop with representatives of the Rwandan Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion (MIGEPROF), the Rwandan Ministry of Health (MoH), the Rwanda Biomedical Center (RBC), Rwandan Isange One Stop Centers UNICEF, Humanity & Inclusion, and partners from Rwandan Civil Society, such as Health Development Initiative, Haguruka, Doctors for Choice and Rwanda Union of the Blind.

Process of development of Ikiganiro GBV Material

About 25 people from the above described ministries and institutions as well as from civil society organisations have actively and jointly developed the material through the process of workshops.



What made this process and the product of the flipbooks so impactful regarding gender equality in Rwanda?

The creation process of the flipbooks in itself with all the partners mentioned above facilitated an ongoing discussion about the meaning and dimensions of SGBV in Rwandan society. State and non-state actors brought their knowledge together in a rare opportunity to come up with a jointly shared understanding of SGBV that goes beyond the legal definitions given by Rwandan law.

The Ikiganiro books are image-based, depicting scenes from daily life and situations in which violence occurs to initiate community dialogues without a pre-defined script. This means that the images needed to transport as much content as possible. Discussing (and subsequently) revising the images so that they could be used for their purpose has been a valuable peer learning process about gender and SGBV for those involved. Representatives of ministries, public institutions, civil society organisations (CSO), activists and practitioners debated how to understand and depict violence in its dimensions and implications and eventually found a common ground.

The discussion around the Ikiganiro Flipbooks led to a reflection on how community outreach on GBV and gender is often conducted in Rwanda (as an information and education session) and highlighted that a true reflection of harmful gender norms and practices requires patience, times and above all open discussion that take the views of citizens into account.

This partner-driven approach has created two Ikiganiro Flipbooks. One is especially helpful for women as the majority of survivors of GBV. It contains human rights-based, trauma-sensitive and survivor centered information that will help to understand and structure the counselling processes for a client who seeks help at IOSC. The second flipbook addresses the various dimensions of GBV and its underlying social norms and invites communities to reflect on GBV and discuss what violence is and what could be done about it.

Products: Ikiganiro GBV Material (Flipbooks)

1. Gender-based violence
2. Services at the Isange One Stop Centre (Centre for persons affected by sexualised and gender-based violence)

Both are available in English (for the Development Partners and English-speaking persons interested in the content) and Kinyarwanda. Kinyarwanda is the only local language in Rwanda. The Ikiganiro GBV Material for use by ministries, public institutions (e.g. health care providers) and Civil Society Organisations is in Kinyarwanda.



Gender as a quality feature of our work

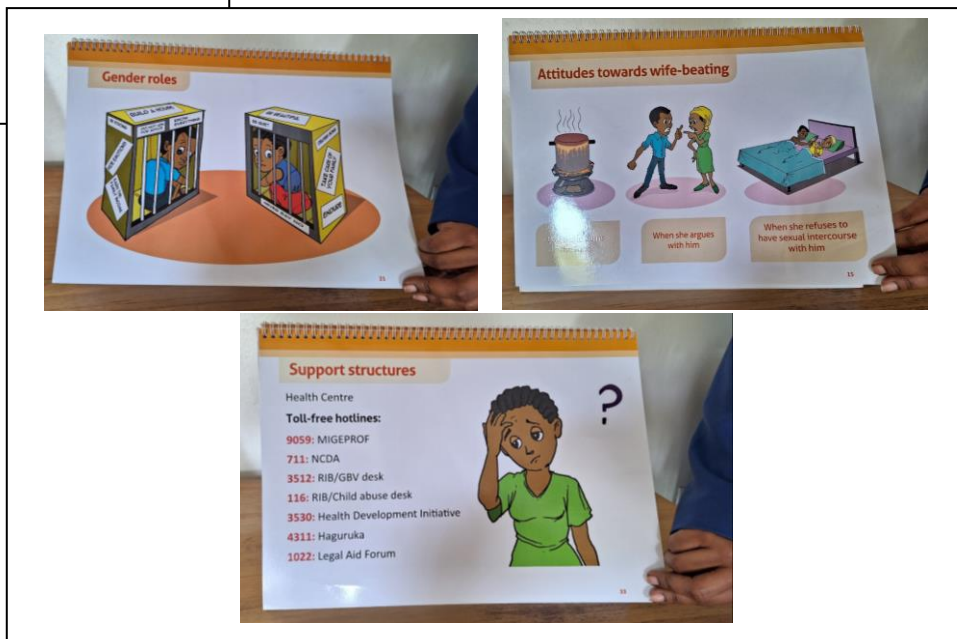
GIZ is well known for its implementation of gender-differentiated approaches. The process of creating the Ikiganiro flipbooks started because partners like MIGEPROF and other stakeholders like Enabel approached the SGBV project of GIZ Rwanda and requested technical exchange and support to the design of low-barrier communication materials that would facilitate counselling and outreach on GBV. Partners emphasized GIZ Rwanda's wide-ranging expertise in the field of gender and acknowledged the partner-driven design of projects and content of materials. In Rwanda, German Cooperation as implemented through GIZ is a trusted actor regarding analytical and technical work on gender. The existing experiences with the One Mainstreaming Approach and the adaptation of concepts to a given local context have helped the process of designing the Ikiganiro flipbooks to a great extent.

One factor that enabled the translation of concepts into images that are powerful and culturally sensitive was the constant exchange with local stakeholders through the creation of safe spaces

for discussion. GIZ's way of working closely with and upon request of our partners, using carefully established collaborations, facilitated the overall process.

Gender-transformative approach

Not only the methodology, but also the illustrations and the content themselves are created to foster gender-transformative aspects. The Ikiganiro GBV Material (Flipbooks) discussed traditional gender roles, which are still prevailing in Rwandan society and which are one of the main root causes of the high prevalence of sexualised and gender-based violence. Furthermore, it offers concrete information about support structures available in Rwanda.



Implementing feminist core principles

The process of the development of the Ikiganiro GBV Material was based on the human rights-based approach with a strong focus on empowering people, especially women and girls to know and claim their rights.

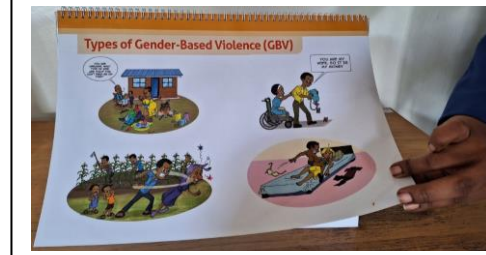
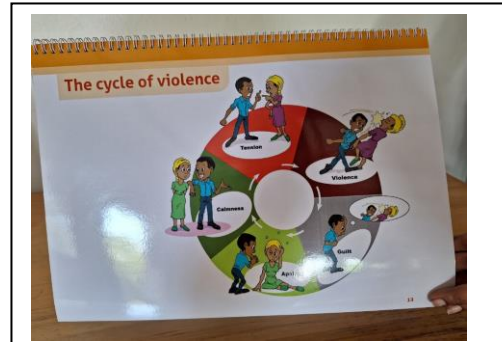
The content aims at discussing traditional and progressive social norms around gender aiming at dismantling of structural caused for inequality as one of the root causes of sexualised and gender-based violence.

The aspect of intersectionality has been important throughout the process of the development of the Ikiganiro GBV Material. Civil Society Organisations that focus on the inclusion of persons with disabilities as well as persons with disabilities themselves have been part of the development process.

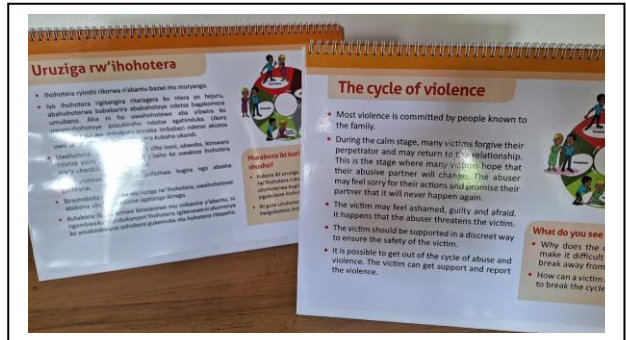
Ikiganiro GBV Material (Flipbook) on Gender-based violence
Methodology: Illustrations

The audience (e.g. communities, families, couples, safe groups for women only) only sees the image(s). This methodology is meant to enhance discussion and reflection, exchange of opinions and joint learning. In the Rwandan community it is not common to actively involve citizens and foster reflection and social norm change through exchange and discussions instead of “teaching”.

The first question to the audience for each illustration is: “What do you see in the picture?” This question should foster reflection and open a more interactive discussion instead of teaching the audience as it is often the case in Rwanda.



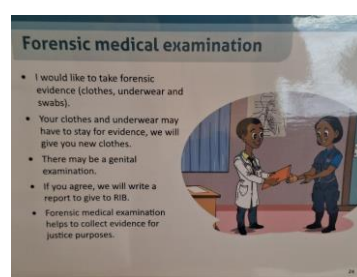
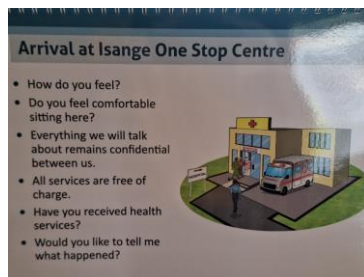
While the audience is looking at and discussing the respective topic of the illustration the facilitator finds some guiding questions as well as some key information that the facilitator should mention in case it is not mentioned by someone of the audience (on the other side that is only visible to the person facilitating).



Ikiganiro GBV Material (Flipbooks)

Services at the Isange One Stop Centre (Centre for persons affected by sexualised and gender-based violence)

This flipbook focuses on the services at the so-called Isange One Stop Centres. These centres located at health facilities are meant to provide medical, legal and psychosocial support to survivors of mainly sexualised violence. Since a client-centered approach is a challenge in Rwanda this information and communication material is developed to support service providers to be more client-oriented. The methodology is very similar to the one of the other flipbook. The audience or the survivor sees an illustration and the service provider has some questions and information on the other side to provide a client-oriented support.



Intersectionality

The Ikiganiro GBV Material (Flipbooks) has been developed jointly with civil society organisations that focus on the inclusion of persons with disabilities.

Persons with disabilities are visible in the illustrations to illustrate that everyone, regardless of their gender, age, disability is part of society. This is especially important because persons with disabilities are often discriminated against and deprived of their human rights. Women and girls with disabilities face a much higher risk to be affected by sexualised and gender-based violence.

The methodology is more inclusive; especially for persons with learning disabilities and with visual impairments as the first question to the audience “What do you see in the picture?” functions like an audio description that enables them to understand the illustrations and follow the discussions. The development of a full audio version for people with visual impairments is currently under discussion.



Cooperation

The Ikiganiro Flipbooks and the trainings and exchanges that came with them are the result of a cooperation process that spanned more than one year. Two Development Partners of the Government of Rwanda joined forces for every step along the way: GIZ Rwanda’s project on Prevention of sexualized and gender-based violence and Enabel’s Barame Health Project shared costs and human resources. As a result, the cooperation between the two projects has become a flagship of cooperation under Team Europe in Rwanda.

The two projects supported a group of interested stakeholders from government partners as well as CSO, UN agencies and medical practitioners. Two lead ministries from the health sector and the gender sector could be brought on board which strengthened the multi-sectoral approach and ownership of the Rwandan partners. CSO representing people with disabilities were also part of the group and provided inputs regarding inclusive materials and counselling.

The group had a shared interest in useful communication tools that could also be used by community volunteers or local leaders at cell and village level to engage their fellow citizens in discussions about GBV and underlying social norms.

Major challenges we encountered were:

- Reducing texts and overly detailed guidelines and pitching for participatory and engaging materials
- Getting people on board to trust open community discussions about the roots of GBV and move away from the sole focus on reporting and legal action

The three key success factors were:

- Efficiency through sharing of costs and resources across implementing agencies and sectors between GIZ Rwanda and Enabel
- Ownership of the lead ministries created through constant exchanges and strong partnerships
- Creating safe spaces and frequent exchange for the co-creation of images and texts