



STOP Sexual Harassment Lesson

Guidance on how to Prevent and Respond to Sexual Harassment

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	3
OBJECTIVES	3
DEFINITION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT	4
KEY TERMS	4
DETECTION	6
DETECTION: SEXUAL HARASSMENT TYPES.....	6
DETECTION: RISK FACTORS LEADING TO SEXUAL HARASSMENT	6
DETECTION: CHECK OUR UNDERSTANDING	8
LAWS, RIGHTS, AND RESPONSIBILITIES ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT.....	9
RWANDAN LAW	9
PUNISHMENT FOR COMMITTING SEXUAL HARASSMENT	9
KNOW YOUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES	10
PREVENTION.....	11
WHAT IS PREVENTION?	11
WHY DO WE PREVENT SEXUAL HARASSMENT FROM HAPPENING?	11
HOW DO WE PREVENT SEXUAL HARASSMENT FROM HAPPENING?	11
PREVENTION: CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING	12
EVIDENCE	13
UNDERSTANDING EVIDENCE	13
WHAT IS EVIDENCE?	13
TYPES OF EVIDENCE.....	13
HOW TO DOCUMENT AND PRESERVE EVIDENCE.....	13
RESPONSE.....	14
UNDERSTAND RESPONSE, REPORTING STEPS AND METHODS.....	14
REPORTING MECHANISMS.....	14
LIST OF TOLL-FREE NUMBERS FOR REPORTING SEXUAL HARASSMENT	15
FOLLOW-UP	15
RESPONSE: CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING.....	16
CONCLUSION	17
SUMMARY	17
GLOSSARY.....	18
LIST OF DEFINITIONS	18
ANNEXES	19
ANNEX 1: GUIDANCE NOTE FOR SCHOOL STAFF	19
ANNEX 2: CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING ANSWERS	21
REFERENCES	22
SOURCES	22

Introduction

Many students and trainees at school or at the workplace face sexual harassment. Sexual harassment can have a negative impact on mental health, leading to poor performance, depression, trauma, or even suicide.



This is a serious challenge that can be prevented by raising awareness about sexual harassment and how it can be detected, prevented, and reported when it happens.

Objectives

The main objectives of this lesson are to help you to:

- Understand what sexual harassment is.
- Detect the signs of sexual harassment.
- Know your rights to receive support and follow-up.
- Identify ways to prevent sexual harassment.
- Understand how to report a case of sexual harassment.

Please refer to the Glossary for a list of words and their definitions, which may help you better understand the material.

While this lesson is designed for students, we strongly encourage school staff, including trainers and teachers, to complete it too, preferably with students as part of their orientation week at the beginning of the school year. As a complementary resource, please also familiarize yourself with Annex 1: [Guidance Note for School Staff on Sexual Harassment Response and Follow-Up](#), which outlines some useful tips on how to provide appropriate support to students should they report a case of sexual harassment.

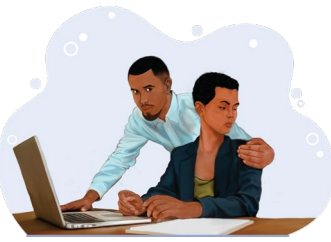
Definition of Sexual Harassment



Sexual harassment consists of any unwanted and repeated sexual remarks (written or verbal), looks, touches, or gestures that leave the victim feeling uncomfortable, affecting his/her life. It may occur in a variety of places, including school and the workplace. Most often, the perpetrator has some form of power or authority over the victim.

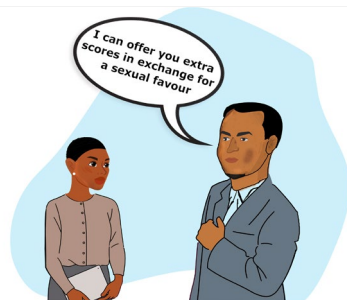
Key Terms

	<p>Harassment is any unwanted physical, verbal, or non-verbal behavior that makes someone feel physically or mentally uncomfortable or embarrassed.</p>
	<p>A victim is someone harmed or injured as a result of a crime, accident, or another negative event or action.</p>
	<p>A perpetrator is someone who committed an illegal, harmful crime.</p>



Sexual harassment consists of any unwanted and repeated sexual remarks (written or verbal), looks, touches, or gestures that leave the victim feeling uncomfortable, affecting his/her life. It may occur in a variety of places, including school and the workplace, and most often, the perpetrator has some form of power or authority over the victim.

Note: Sexual harassment can also occur only once, and a victim can still speak out, but to collect evidence to build a court case, it must be repeated. However, you do not have to wait for enough evidence to seek support from a trusted individual.



Sexual exploitation is when someone in a position of power profits or attempts to profit from the use of another person's body in a sexual manner, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially, or politically.



Sexual abuse is the use or threat of physical force of a sexual nature and includes sexual slavery, pornography, child abuse, and sexual assault/rape.



The reporting mechanism is a system that enables victims or witnesses to report crimes, including sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, or sexual abuse.

Detection

Detection: Sexual Harassment Types

To be able to identify whether sexual harassment is happening, as a student or trainee you must be aware of the types, signs and the risk factors leading to sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment types and their related signs fall into three categories:

1. Physical harassment includes unwanted touching, such as kissing and hugging, attacking a person's body, and standing closer than appropriate or necessary for the work or activity being done.
2. Verbal harassment includes asking for sexual favors, unwelcome whistling, sexual comments or jokes, calling someone a name or term with sexual meaning, or making phone calls of a sexual nature.
3. Non-verbal harassment includes offensive body language, such as looks and hand movements, indecent exposure, and sharing sexually suggestive objects, videos, or pictures.

Detection: Risk Factors Leading to Sexual Harassment

Signs you are at high risk:

- Being asked to keep a relationship secret (or even a friendship) with a peer or an adult such as a teacher, trainer, or supervisor
- Being asked to meet during unusual times of the day or night or in unusual places, such as staying behind after class or work or unsupervised tutoring
- Receiving special attention or treatment, especially from an adult such as a teacher, trainer, or supervisor
- Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs or being around someone else or a group of people who are under the influence of alcohol or drugs

Factors putting you at risk:

- Studying or working in an environment where there are no rules and regulations on sexual harassment prevention and response
- Lack of awareness on sexual harassment prevention and response, including your rights and responsibilities
- Working or studying in a team/company or course/trade with a gender imbalance, especially at the leadership level

Note: Some of these risk factors you can avoid. Other risk factors may be outside of your control and in such situations, you should be mindful of the increased risk and be extra cautious.

Sexual Harassment may have serious impacts such as:

- Poor performance at school or at the workplace
- School dropout or loss of employment (being fired or choosing to leave the job)
- Negative impacts on mental health, including low self-esteem, depression, trauma, feeling trapped and even suicide
- Unfairly losing out on opportunities

The impacts of sexual abuse may include:

- Sexually transmitted infections
- Rejection and stigma from the community lead to feelings of isolation, shame, and loss of trust
- Destructive behaviors, including excessive use of drugs or alcohol
- Depression, trauma, and even suicide
- Unwanted pregnancy

Detection: Check our Understanding

Read each statement and determine if it is true or false. You can find the correct answers in Annex 2.

Question 1: **True/False**

ANNIE walks into the carpentry shop to start working, and a co-worker makes some gestures of a sexual nature that make her uncomfortable. The co-worker did not physically touch ANNIE, so this is not considered sexual harassment.

Question 2: **True/False**

Sexual harassment can include:

Sharing drawings or pictures that are reproductive health-related during science class.

Question 3: **True/False**

Sexual harassment can include:

Telephone calls or text messages of a sexual nature.

Question 4: **Which of the following is/are not a type of physical sexual harassment? Select all the answers that apply.**

- a) Standing closer than appropriate or necessary for the work or activity being done
- b) Pictures or videos of trade demonstrations
- c) Unwanted kissing
- d) Jokes about the weather
- e) Unwanted body touching

Question 5: **Which of the following is a negative impact of sexual harassment? Select the correct answer.**

- a) Depression
- b) Being unjustly fired
- c) School drop-out
- d) All of the listed items are negative impacts of sexual harassment
- e) Unfairly losing out on opportunities

Laws, Rights, and Responsibilities on Sexual Harassment

Rwandan Law

Sexual harassment is prohibited and punishable by Rwandan law.

Some laws include:

1. The Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda of 2003, revised in 2015, contains several provisions that protect against discrimination and violation of human beings.
2. Law N° 66/2018 of 30/08/2018 regulating labor in Rwanda states that sexual harassment in any form against the supervisee is prohibited, as well as the dismissal of an employee for having reported or testified on sexual harassment committed by his/her supervisor.
3. Law N°59/2008 of 10/09/2008 on Prevention and Punishment of Gender Based Violence (GBV) provides details on the punishment for sexual harassment, including fines and imprisonment.
4. The National Anti GBV Policy 2011 specifies that different mechanisms have been established to eradicate gender-based violence (GBV). For example, the Anti-GBV Clubs in schools also help to empower youth to fight GBV in schools, especially sexual harassment and abuse by teachers and fellow students.

Punishment for Committing Sexual Harassment

According to N°68/2018 of 30/08/2018 Law determining offences and penalties in general¹, if a person is convicted of committing sexual harassment (peer, family member, neighbor, or someone else in the community, etc.), they can be jailed for six months to one year and fined between 100,000 and 200,000 Rwandan francs.

If sexual harassment is committed by an employer or someone who sexually harasses another person who is lower in rank or position, they can be jailed for one to two years and fined between 200,000 and 300,000 Rwandan francs.

Note: While not all reported cases will go to court, those who commit sexual harassment may also be fired from their job. This is why it is important for schools, workplaces, and other institutions to have a policy or guidelines on sexual harassment prevention and response to ensure perpetrators can be held accountable and that students and other staff are kept safe.

¹ Official Gazette no. Special of 27/09/2018 - <http://extwprlegs1.fao.org/docs/pdf/Rwa187909.pdf>

Know Your Rights and Responsibilities

You have the right to:

- Say “No” to sexual harassment.
- Refuse gifts, promotions, passing marks, etc. in exchange for sexual favors.
- Work and learn in a safe and supportive environment.
- Request a copy of sexual harassment rules and regulations at your school or workplace, and if they don't exist, advocate for them to be developed.
- Confidently report and receive appropriate support and follow-up.

You have the responsibility to:

- Take sexual harassment seriously and consult trusted individuals when you are unsure of what to do.
- Know and respect the rules and regulations at your school or workplace.
- Avoid unsafe environments or situations that could lead to sexual harassment.
- Collect and save evidence to support your case, when possible.
- Report the incident in a timely way to relevant authorities.

Here are some things you can say and do if you are in a situation where you feel uncomfortable:

- Say “No”. Make it clear that you are not happy with what the person is saying or doing. You can also say, “Never say or do that again” and “Keep your distance”.
- Make it clear to the harasser that what they are doing or saying is inappropriate and that action will be taken if they do not stop.
- Use specific examples to make your point clear.
- Ask, “Do you know that you are committing a punishable offense?”

Sexual harassment often stops if the perpetrator knows that what he or she is doing is not acceptable. However, if the harassment continues, it is important to act. You will learn more about the steps you should follow later in the lesson.

Prevention

What is Prevention?

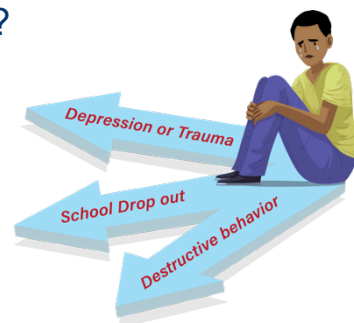
Prevention is informing yourself and taking action to stop something from happening, or someone from doing something, that might have a negative impact on you or another person (for example, preventing sexual harassment.)



Why do We Prevent Sexual Harassment from Happening?

Sexual harassment worsens and becomes more difficult to resolve when it is not addressed from the moment it was detected. Prevention is everyone's responsibility. We all play a role in preventing it from happening in our homes, schools, workplaces, and communities.

Unless you know how to prevent it, it will not disappear on its own.



How do We Prevent Sexual Harassment from Happening?

- Recognize the signs of sexual harassment and be able to identify it when it's happening.
- Be aware of risk factors leading to sexual harassment and avoid them.
- Know your rights and the rules and regulations established by your school or workplace on sexual harassment and abuse.
- Avoid unsafe environments that can lead to sexual harassment.
- Avoid any secret/hidden relationship with your colleagues and superiors.
- Identify trustworthy authority figures and peers at school, in your community and in the workplace who you can turn to for advice or support.

Prevention: Check Your Understanding

After reading the following scenario, answer the question by selecting the correct answer. You can find the correct answers in Annex 2.

Scenario:

KEZA, a student in hospitality management, recently started her industrial attachment in one of the hotels located in Rubavu District. During her orientation, the manager asked her to visit his office every morning.

The day after her orientation, when KEZA went to the manager's office as directed, he made a sex-related joke, which made her uncomfortable. She hoped it wouldn't happen again. KEZA continued going to his office each morning as he asked, but as the days went on, he continued to make inappropriate remarks about her appearance and attire. This morning when KEZA reluctantly went into his office to ask about her assignment for the day, the manager closed the door and tried to kiss her.

KEZA pushed him away and ran outside, wondering what she should do next.

Question: **After reading the scenario, what do you think KEZA should do?**

- a) Ask the hotel HR Manager whether the hotel has internal rules and regulations on sexual harassment
- b) Keep quiet and hope things improve
- c) Report what happened to the appropriate authority at her school and to the nearest local authority (e.g. District Isange One Stop Center) or HR/workers' representative
- d) Quit the industrial attachment

Evidence

Understanding Evidence

As a student or trainer, what do you do once you have detected that sexual harassment is happening?

Once you have detected that sexual harassment is happening, based on the signs and types elaborated in this material, it is important to understand what evidence is, and how it can be used to report a case of sexual harassment. Make sure you collect and store all evidence securely to enable you to support your case.

Note: You may not have a way to collect and store evidence. You also do not have to wait for enough evidence to seek support and follow up from a trusted individual. You can seek support and follow up at any time.

What is Evidence?

Evidence is information that helps prove something happened and is important for follow up and legal purposes.

Types of evidence

Type	Examples
Digital evidence	Text messages, emails, recorded voice notes, camera footage (pictures or videos)
Physical evidence	Bruises or other marks on the body, including scratches, wounds, etc.
Documental evidence	Written notes, cards, letters, and witness statements, or any report related to the case
Testimonial evidence	Eyewitnesses or testimonies of other victims

How to Document and Preserve Evidence

- Record the details of what happened i.e.: place, date, time, identification of the perpetrator (name and position/title, if known, or a physical description).
- Gather proof, including screenshots of messages sent on social media or via text messages or email, as well as audios and videos.
- Keep all evidence in a safe place/or with a trusted individual.
- Once the evidence has been collected, you will need to share this with the appropriate authorities who are handling your case. This may include the police or Rwanda Investigation Bureau. However, do not share your evidence publicly until the case has been resolved.

Response

Understand Response, Reporting Steps and Methods

What is response and why is it important?

Responding to sexual harassment requires clear reporting mechanisms and follow-up support, as well as knowing your rights and responsibilities.

Reporting mechanisms enable victims to report crimes, including sexual harassment and sexual abuse.

When you suspect you are a victim of sexual harassment at school or the workplace, these are some of the steps you should follow:

- Identify which type/s and sign/s of sexual harassment you are experiencing.
- Keep a distance from the perpetrator to the extent possible. If you must interact with them, ask a friend or colleague to be in the room with you.
- If possible, collect and preserve evidence.
- Seek advice from a trusted individual on next steps, including how to report evidence to relevant authorities and receive the follow up support you need.
- Report the incident to relevant authorities at your school, workplace, and/or the nearest district authority (e.g. District Isange One Stop Center). More details are included on the next slide.
- Do not hesitate to follow up on your case until it is resolved.

Note: If you know someone is experiencing sexual harassment, you can advise them on what to do based on the steps above.

Reporting Mechanisms

If the incident happens at your school, submit a report verbally or in writing (e-mail, text message, etc.) to one of the following individuals: School Manager, Director of Studies, Director of Discipline, Matron/Patron or Gender Focal Point.

If it happens at the workplace, submit a report verbally or in writing to the HR worker's representative or nearest relevant district authority, such as an Isange One Stop Center. You should also file a report with your school.

Call a relevant toll-free number. You will find a list of useful numbers on the next page.

Note: If you do not receive the appropriate support and follow up from your school and/or workplace, don't hesitate to call one of the numbers listed or to go in person to the nearest Isange One Stop Center.

List of Toll-Free Numbers for Reporting Sexual Harassment

Number	Organization/Service
3512/116	Rwanda Investigation Bureau (RIB)
5798	Gender Monitoring Office (GMO)
711	National Child Development Agency (NCDA)

Follow-up

- Reporting sexual harassment is an important step in the response process. Make sure you find someone who you can confide in, as sharing your experience and feelings with someone who takes the problem seriously is very important.
- Once you have reported the case to a trusted individual and/or formal authority (through one of the toll-free numbers) you will need to follow up on your case. This may include compiling the evidence to support your case in an investigation or being reassigned to a different workplace.

If you need to talk about how you are feeling with a trusted peer or other individual throughout the process, don't hesitate to find the support you need. And while reporting should lead to a resolution, including punishment for the perpetrator, there may be times when the perpetrator is not fired, jailed, or fined. However, at a minimum, your safety and wellbeing should be prioritized by school staff.

Response: Check Your Understanding

Read the following question and select the correct answer(s). You can find the correct answers in Annex 2.

Question: **As a student or employee, what should you do if you have been sexually harassed?**

- a) Wait to see if things get better to avoid any issues at school/work
- b) Gather and keep evidence
- c) Keep a distance from the abuser, if possible
- d) Report the incident to a trusted individual
- e) Report the incident after facing a negative impact

After reading the following scenario, answer the following questions by selecting the correct answer:

Scenario: GAKIRE is a student at Come and Learn TVET School. During break time, his teacher called him into her office to ask why he always performs poorly in her course. When he arrives, instead of discussing what type of support GAKIRE might need, she offers to change his scores in exchange for a sexual favour.

When GAKIRE refuses, the teacher starts insulting his intelligence and telling him he will never succeed in life unless he agrees to have a secret relationship with her in exchange for better grades.

Question 1: **Where should GAKIRE report his case?**

- a) To the School Manager, Director of Studies, Director of Discipline, Gender Focal Point, or Matron/Patron
- b) To his friend
- c) To a nearby hospital

Question 2: **If GAKIRE's report is not properly handled at the school level, what would you advise him to do?**

- a) Cancel his complaint
- b) Accept his teacher's proposal
- c) Call one of the toll-free hotlines (RIB, NCDA, or GMO)

Conclusion

Summary

In this lesson, you have learned how to detect, prevent, and respond to sexual harassment.

Most importantly, you have learned that sexual harassment is a crime punishable by Rwandan law and that you have the right to say “no.”

Sexual harassment can only thrive in secrecy, and it is up to each of us to bring it to light and for the appropriate authorities to hold perpetrators accountable.

Don't forget that the trusted adults in your life (family members, teachers, supervisors, mentors) have the responsibility to help keep you safe. And when needed, there are formal authorities who can support you in getting help.

You are not alone, and you do not need to tolerate sexual harassment. Let's work together to create a future free from violence and harassment.

Glossary

List of Definitions

Depression: Feeling sad, lonely and discouraged for an extended period of time.

Detect/Detection: Identify that something is happening.

Discrimination: Being treated differently and in a negative way.

Imprisonment: Putting someone in prison during the investigation period for something wrong he/she is suspected to have done or punishing him/her if found guilty.

Knowledge: Facts, information, and skills that you get through experience or learning at school.

Orientation: Receiving an explanation or guidance on how to do something or what something is about.

Prohibited: Something that is not allowed.

Provision: Giving something to another person to be used.

Rejection: Not being accepted or supported by an individual or a group of people; being left out of activities or made to feel alone and not important.

Self-esteem: Having a sense of your own ability to do or achieve something.

Stigma: When someone has a negative view and treats you differently based on something you have done or something that has happened to you.

Suicide: To end your own life.

Testify: To verbally share details about something that happened.

Tutoring: To help someone, like a student, better understand a subject by providing extra time to explain it, usually outside of class.

Annexes

Annex 1: Guidance Note for School Staff

Guidance Note for School Staff on Sexual Harassment Response and Follow Up

All school managers, principals, trainers, teachers, industrial liaison specialists, and school support staff are strongly encouraged to complete the STOP Sexual Harassment Moodle lesson at the start of the school year, accessing it when needed as a refresher.

This Guidance Notes is brief and a complementary resource, but it should be accompanied by an in-depth workshop with trained professionals from outside your school. These could be invited from a government entity, such as the Gender Monitoring Office or Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion, or a development partner. Also, if your school does not have a policy or guidelines in place on sexual harassment prevention and response, it is important that you develop these and make them widely available to staff and students.

As a trusted adult, it's your responsibility to take reports of sexual harassment seriously. Failure to act in a timely manner may negatively impact a student and even have legal consequences. Prioritizing the wellbeing of the student should come first.

Some things to consider...

1. When the case is first reported to you as the trainer or other school staff member, you should:

- ❖ Ask sensitively for the details of what happened or is happening to the student (who, what, when, where and how often). Questions may include:
 - Do you want to tell me more about what happened?
 - How are you feeling now?
 - **What are the next steps you'd like to pursue? What do you need to feel safe and supported?**
 - Do you want me to tell anyone else (e.g. family member)?
 - Agree on the next steps with the student, offering them some options based on the details they have shared above (report, etc.)
 - *Note: Depending on the severity and type of case (verbal harassment in the workplace, sexual assault/rape, etc.) and the age of the student, you will need to follow different steps and provide tailored support and follow up.*
 - Advise on prevention, if necessary – Refer to the prevention section in the STOP Sexual Harassment Moodle lesson.

2. When supporting a student who has reported a case, it is important that you:

- ❖ Listen to them
- ❖ Do not blame or judge them
- ❖ Show empathy
- ❖ Let the student know that you will maintain their **confidentiality**

3. When reporting a case, it is important that you:

- ❖ Do not take any action unless the person reporting agrees to it (for students over age 18); however, for minors, school staff have a legal responsibility to report the case to the appropriate authority. Also, the school has the responsibility to report a case to the police when an incident has been perpetrated by one of its staff, but it must be handled anonymously/confidentially.
- ❖ Follow up on the case to ensure it is resolved to the satisfaction of the student and in accordance with the law.

Annex 2: Check Your Understanding Answers

Detection – Check Your Understanding:

Question	Answer	Feedback
Q1.	False	Sexual harassment is not limited to physical touch or verbal expressions. Sexual harassment can include unwelcome gestures or facial expressions of a sexual nature.
Q2.	False	Sharing drawings or pictures related to reproductive health during science class is not sexual harassment. However, sharing sexually suggestive objects, videos, or pictures in a different setting is sexual harassment.
Q3.	True	Sexual harassment can include telephone calls or text messages of a sexual nature.
Q4.	b & d	Pictures or videos of trade demonstrations and jokes about the weather are not types of physical sexual harassment.
Q5.	d	All items listed are negative impacts of sexual harassment.

Prevention - Check Your Understanding:

Question	Answer
Question. After reading the scenario, what do you think KEZA should do?	c

Response - Check Your Understanding

Question	Answer
Question. As a student or employee, what should you do if you have been sexually harassed?	b, c & d
Q1.	a
Q2.	c

References

Sources

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ILLUSTRATIONS:

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