

Learning Activity 7.2

Setting up a sexual harassment committee

Overview

This activity uses simple project planning techniques to help participants think about the individual components in the process of developing a workplace sexual harassment committee. It is especially suitable as a basis for planning more complex social dialogue initiatives.

Suggested time

60-90 minutes

Target groups

This activity is especially useful for

- Project planners.
- Representatives from groups where there is an understanding about the world of work (e.g. employers' organizations, trade unions, governments or NGOs or organizations supporting workplace sexual harassment committees).

Aims

- Identify the components which are necessary to set up an effective and sustainable workplace sexual harassment committee (e.g. such as those required by Indian legislation).
- Appreciate the relationships between different elements of a project planning process and timeframe.

Preparation

- Prepare for the activity by collecting sources of information for the group work session and provide contextual information and tips about the issues that can be discussed.
- Copies of the "List of activities needed to set up an effective anti-sexual harassment committee" (one per group). Sets of individual cards with one activity per card may be prepared in advance (see Step 1 below).

Setting

A room large enough to accommodate several groups.

Materials

- Flip charts or post-it cards
- Markers
- Tape (if needed)

Time/Steps

Task: small group activity

Step 1: Small group work to plan a project (suggested time: 30 minutes)

- In small groups participants read the list of different activities that might be necessary for the successful setting-up and running of a workplace sexual harassment committee. (These can be printed onto individual cards, prepared in advance and given to each group, or participants can write them using individual cards).
- The groups discuss the activities needed for setting up a sexual harassment committee (e.g. for their workplace). They can add their own ideas to the list of activities.
- The groups then consider each stage to be included up process (e.g. winning support or training) and what will need to be carried out before moving onto the next stage.
- The cards are then arranged in the form of a semi-linear process in a logical timeframe.
- The process should take into account the different situations in each workplace, for example, whether there is a trade union or not. Not all the issues listed need to be included in every process.
- Some stages will run alongside each other, so expect branches and side shoots in the plan/diagram. There is no correct order and the order will not be always be linear. For example, there may be concurrent activities that are shown as feeding into a central activity.
- The level of detail required for each project will depend on the size, complexity and level of effective social dialogue in the workplace.

Step 2: Developing an outline plan (suggested time: 30 minutes)

Develop an outline project plan drawing on the following relevant stages and putting them into an order that will result in a successful workplace sexual harassment committee.

Step 3: Plenary presentations and discussion (suggested time: 30 minutes)

Each group should present their project plan to the whole group and explain the reasons for how it has been arranged, pointing out any activities where there was uncertainty where it should be placed in the timeframe. Following the group presentations there is a whole group discussion.

How to adapt it

- Trainers can simplify the activity to suit different groups of participants by identifying the steps in setting up and maintaining a workplace sexual harassment committee
- Trade union workshops could adapt this model to focus on trade union priorities on gender-based violence at work for the collective bargaining process.

Tips

- Trainers who are familiar with the Jigsaw methodology, Gant charts or Mind Maps can draw on these to assist participants conceptualize the task.
- If post-it cards are provided participants can put each card into place to form the action plan.

Resources

- Paper copy of the list of possible actions or actions printed on separate cards
- Post-it cards

List of activities needed to set up an effective anti-sexual harassment committee

- Preparing an argument about the benefits of reducing sexual harassment
- Winning the support of the local community
- Engaging men in a campaign against gender based violence
- Publicizing sexual harassment and gender based violence through media and community education
- Winning support of factory/farm manager
- Training for managers
- Training for supervisors
- Training for workers
- Training for trainers

- Gaining external support and possible funding
- Develop a strategic action plan
- Knowing the law
- Find out what other organizations or workplaces are doing about sexual harassment
- Setting up a confidential hotline, helpline or advice centre
- Connecting with other initiatives on e.g. HIV/AIDS or sexual and reproductive health programmes

- Contacting the trade union/ employer to ask for support
- Organizing trade union women's workshop or a union meeting
- Researching on the website of the global/national union - or ITUC - for advice on dealing with sexual harassment
- Contacting a local women's NGO to help develop a strategy

- Identifying buyer and agreeing role of brand/supermarket
- Setting up a workers' confidential hotline
- Conducting a workplace survey on sexual harassment
- Interviewing workers on their experience of sexual harassment
- Running a focus group discussion for workers, using art
- Increasing awareness of the problem through community and participative theatre
- Identify workers' safety after late shifts and transport issues
- Identify issues in employer provided accommodation.

- Defining sexual harassment
- Informing workers what behaviour is not acceptable at work
- Agreeing what disciplinary action will be taken in cases of sexual harassment
- Agreeing a sexual harassment complaints' procedure
- Agreeing a process for independent investigation of a complaint of sexual harassment
- Agreeing a company policy on sexual harassment
- Electing a workers' committee
- Agreeing how to ensure confidentiality
- Setting up formal complaints process