

# Recommendations to Kenya Ferry Service on Reduction of Incidences of Sexual Harassment in the Ferry



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Creating a Safe and Professional Transport  
Industry for You and Your Loved Ones

## Background

Flone Initiative conducted a Baseline Assessment on Gender Mainstreaming and Safety in Public Transport Services in Mombasa in April 2019. The assessment explored the status of public transportation systems in Mombasa with a focus on the Kenya ferry services, the matatu, Tuk-tuk and Boda boda industries. The main purpose of this survey was to understand the situation on gender equity, safety and inclusivity in the organization, management and operation of public transport services in Mombasa City, Kenya. It is evident in these report findings that traffic, transport policies and infrastructure have not responded equally to women's and men's mobility needs.

Flone Initiative in September disseminated the report findings in a workshop with 14 Kenya Ferry Officials at the Chamiachi Resort, Nyali. The report showed the highest prevalence of sexual harassment incidences were at the Ferry, followed by matatus, then boda boda and lastly on Tuk-tuk. . Flone sought to hear from KFS about the issue of harassment from their point of view and work together to come up with solutions.

The team proposed the following recommendations to the Ferry Services Management to address the issues of harassment at the ferry.

The full report is available [here](#).

### 1. Develop Internal Policies

Kenya Ferry Service (KFS) needs to develop a policy framework that can clearly define sexual harassment and the parameters of their duty to respond to and support survivors of sexual harassment. The policy framework should clearly indicate how individuals can report and what action will be taken to gather evidence and hold perpetrators accountable once a report of sexual harassment has been made. From the policy framework, such things as awareness/sensitization campaign materials can be developed and deployed. Specifically, we recommend:

- KFS to review current Human Resources Manual and any current sexual harassment policies, as well as national and local laws pertaining to sexual harassment in the work place or otherwise;
- KFS to create a stand-alone sexual harassment policy that clearly defines sexual harassment, reporting mechanisms and follow-up procedures;
- The sexual harassment policy should also advise on sensitization messages for passengers and training requirements for staff.

### 2. Sensitization

One of the major gaps that arose from our meeting with KFS workers was a lack of understanding of exactly what sexual harassment is and what the response should be when it is reported. Additionally, it was felt that the scope of sexual harassment as a problem is unknown because so few people report about it. How do we know it's a problem if no one reports it as a problem? Some meeting participants countered this argument by giving the example that women, who are often Muslim and married, do not feel comfortable reporting such incidences to authorities. They also do not feel



encouraged to report nor do they believe that reporting will result in any action being taken.

All of this can be traced to a lack of sensitization about sexual harassment. As such, we recommend:

- Regular and mandatory sexual harassment sensitization training for all staff and management;
- Development of sensitization materials with messages that condemn behavior defined to be sexual harassment and encourages people to report incidences when they are experienced or witnessed (along with clear instructions on how to report);
- Meaningful and sustained sensitization efforts (in the form of announcements, stickers, posters, videos, etc.) on all ferries and in the waiting areas, which communicate KFS's concern, provides definition of sexual harassment, encourages people to speak out and provides clear reporting mechanisms.

### **3. Training**

As indicated above, there is a need for regular and mandatory sexual harassment training at all levels, including management, staff, security/police, and all other ferry stakeholders. Training should explore issues of gender and gender roles, power dynamics, the definition of sexual harassment, and how to identify it. Once the stand along sexual harassment policy has been developed, trainings should ensure that all staff are well-versed of the policy and understand the reporting mechanisms.

*Flone Initiative remains committed to the creation of safe, sustainable and accessible public transportation spaces and invites like-minded NGOs and government agencies to collaborate. This collective approach will elevate the inclusion of the needs of vulnerable group in public transport and urban planning to a new level, with even better prospects for enforcing policies and implementing evidence-based interventions.*

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