

# GALA principles: Case studies of good practice

## **Principle 8: All workers trust they can report GBVH confidentially or anonymously, without fear of retaliation.**

*Grievance mechanisms are central to addressing GBVH. All reports must be taken seriously and treated as if they have occurred. While grievance mechanisms alone cannot prevent GBVH, without a safe way to report issues, workers' rights are violated, and businesses cannot identify, remediate or prevent risks.*

### **SIKIKA**

In East Africa, workers and local community members claimed severe human rights abuses, including GBVH, had been committed by employees and security guards (third-party) at an agricultural production business. Although the business had grievance mechanisms in place at the time, these were not effective and accessible. As a part of their action plan towards remediation and future prevention, the business developed and implemented an operational-level grievance mechanism (OGM).

The business' revised OGM is a systematic, transparent, non-judicial process for receiving, investigating, and addressing company-related grievances from affected communities, workers, farmers who supply avocados through Kakuzi's economic empowerment program, and other relevant stakeholders. Kakuzi's OGM, known as SIKIKA, which means "to be heard" in Kiswahili has been developed in line with the United Nations Guiding Principles for Business and Human Rights(UNGPS).

#### **How was the OGM developed?**

Kakuzi developed the OGM through extensive stakeholder engagement, facilitated by external experts. The business has held multiple direct engagements with local communities to explain the two distinct grievance procedures of Kakuzi's Operational Grievance Mechanism (OGM) 'SIKIKA' Tier I and II. The business has also produced posters for workers and community members in English and Kiswahili that set out the process for raising a report and resolving the issue.

#### **What is the OGM?**

The OGM involves two separate tiers, each with its own procedure. Tier I is a business-managed process for grievances that concern impacts that may occur during the normal course of

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business operations that can best be handled and resolved by Kakuzi staff. Tier I consists of a Grievance Officer, (departmental) Investigation Officers and a Grievance Committee. Tier II is an independent process for grievances that concern allegations of severe human rights impacts that have been caused by, contributed to, or are directly linked with Kakuzi and/or its business partners. Tier II has its own procedures and safe-guarding to review grievances regarding serious impacts and provide remedy to victims/survivors. It is headed by a legal and investigative team that is supported but *not controlled* by Kakuzi.



## Monitoring, reporting, accountability and learning

Tier I prepares and submits monthly reports to Tier II for review, monitoring, and feedback on the management and resolution of cases. Tier II, in turn, compiles and submits quarterly and annual reports to the Independent Human Rights Advisory Committee (IHRAC), which exercises an oversight and advisory role to the Kakuzi Board on human rights matters. Additionally, an Independent Monitor periodically audits the performance of both Tier I and Tier II, engaging with human rights defenders, complainants, and community members to assess whether the Operational Grievance Mechanism (OGM) continues to effectively address stakeholder concerns.

The changes Kakuzi implemented reflect a considerable investment which has been borne directly by the business. The lessons learnt have led to changes across the business, and consequently, Eastern Produce Regional Services (EPRS) to join ETI as a foundation member to continue its journey of improvement.

[Read more about the OGM.](#)