Dear member of the CRC, dear guest,

welcome to the Collaborative Research Centre TRR 228 Future Rural Africa (CRC).

The CRC is committed to creating and maintaining a work, learning, and research environment where all members and guests feel safe, respected, and heard. Welcoming researchers and students from all over the world, we believe that our internationality and diversity in language, gender, sexuality, religion, beliefs, race, age, physical abilities, and socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds is one of our greatest assets and a promoter of excellent science.

This Code of Conduct serves as a guide for all the staff and visitors coming together at the CRC. It outlines the behavior that we expect everybody to commit to during all activities (online and offline) to maintain a respectful, trusting, and non-discriminatory cooperative environment at the cluster. Therefore, it also addresses the special responsibilities of members in leadership positions as well as the topic of existing power relations that must be constantly reflected upon and dismantled.

The CRC aims to be an equality-oriented, family-friendly, and discrimination-sensitive research cluster. Thus, it aims to prevent or eliminate disadvantages, discrimination, harassment, and violence based on[1]:

- Age
- Ethnic background and nationality
- Gender and gender identity (including pregnancy, maternity, family responsibilities)
- Religion and worldview
- Physical and mental ability
- Sexual orientation
- Social background
- Race

We expect all CRC members and guests to commit to the following guidelines and principles:

Reflect your terminology and communicate thoughtfully. We are conscious of the role that language plays in promoting diversity, equity and inclusion in the context of produced research publications, teaching, and in everyday communications amongst CRC members. We emphasize the importance of kindness, fairness and respect when communicating with one another. Any kind of disparaging, inappropriate, or intimidating communication will not be tolerated. Therefore, consider your word choice and be sensitive to language or expressions that might hurt others or make them feel uncomfortable. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Refrain from making discriminatory jokes or personal attacks and insults.
- Refrain from using racist, antisemitic, homophobic or heterosexist, transphobic, ageist, ableist, or sexist terms (including implicit gender bias and normative oppressive expectations of gender performance).
- Refer to your classmates and colleagues by their stated names and pronouns.
- Respect other members' and guests' religious beliefs and practices during academic discussions that engage critically with religious constructs. Respect religious

[1] The Diversity Charta (Charta der Vielfalt) [1] distinguishes seven ‚diversity dimensions', which can be linked to specific, but also intersecting forms of discrimination. Inspired by the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies [2], we added the category of race.

differences and attempt to avoid making others uncomfortable or offended when discussing their religious beliefs or worldviews.
- When you disagree with someone, try to understand their viewpoint and accept that they have the right to hold views that contradict your own perceptions.
- If someone raises concerns about your language or communication, respond with openness rather than defensiveness, and reflect on the feedback.

Refrain from verbal and physical harassment. We do not tolerate any form of harassment, including intimidation, hostility, humiliation, degradation, or insults. Therefore, we expect you to:

- Refrain from any violent threats or language directed against another person
- Respect other peoples‘ boundaries. If someone asks you to stop, then stop. Always respect a „No“ as a „No“.
- Do not engage in (cyber-)bullying, verbal assault, or the defamation of others.

A particular form of harassment is sexual harassment, which is defined as verbal or non-verbal behavior of a sexualized nature or intent, aiming at or resulting in the violation of the dignity of the affected person [3]. We do not tolerate any form of sexualized discrimination and violence, such as[2]:

- Sexualized comments (remarks about looks and appearance, jokes etc.)
- Inappropriate questions concerning the private or intimate lives of individuals
- Staring or whistling
- Inappropriate physical closeness or unwanted touching, even if seemingly accidental
- Stalking, including cyber-stalking
- Making images or videos without consent, including ‘upskirting’ (images/video taken under someone’s clothing) or ‘downblousing’ (images/video taken down someone’s clothing) without consent, as well as the distribution of such content
- Sexual assault, molestation, and rape

As a leader, be aware of your particular responsibilities. We are aware of hierarchies and power structures existing in academia and therefore in the CRC, based on age, gender or knowledge, for example. In order to reduce power imbalance, to prevent abuse of power and to establish a respectful and appreciative work environment, it is important to reflect on these relations and one‘s own positionality.
In particular, members with leadership, teaching, or supervisory responsibilities are expected to lead by example, not only in reflecting on their own role, but also in addressing any misconduct brought to their attention. Also, they must implement suitable measures within their area of responsibility to prevent any form of discrimination, harassment, or violence. They are, therefore, particularly committed to this code, and have special responsibilities, such as:

- Through exemplary behaviour, awareness raising and appropriate preventive measures, they contribute to promoting respectful and non-discriminatory interaction with one another and protecting the integrity of all CRC members.

[2] The University of Bonn‘s ‚Policies for Protection against Sexualized Discrimination and Violence“ [4] and the ‚Antidiscrimination directive of the University of Cologne‘ [5] list various behaviors that are classified as sexual harassment and violence.

- PIs shall ensure that relationships of dependency between members with a leadership position and other employees and students are organised in a responsible manner and not exploited.
- Leaders must avoid unequal treatment on the basis of work contracts (e.g. part-time and/or temporary) as well as solely on the basis of one's hierarchical status.
- The assignment of tasks must be based on the staff member's professional and personal capabilities and may not demand too much or too little from them.
- Leaders ensure that a careful and systematic introduction for each new staff member takes place and in this way supports professional and social integration.
- Leaders are expected to communicate openly, patiently and to listen to everybody involved. This ensures that any criticism they offer is not impulsive but rather constructive and well reflected upon.

Anti-discrimination and diversity-sensitive recruitment policy. We are committed to creating and enforcing unbiased recruitment and application processes for staff and students alike. Our overall objective is to create a diverse and inclusive learning and working environment at the CRC that eliminates all forms of discrimination. At various points in the recruitment process, mechanisms can come into play that increase the likelihood of discrimination against scientists on the basis of their gender, skin colour or disability, for example. These mechanisms include unconscious biases, which in principle all people have, but which can also be anchored in organisational cultures. In order to counter unconscious bias more effectively, the following aspects in particular should be considered:

- Transparent and binding selection criteria must be defined from the beginning for each selection procedure, and these must apply equally to all applicants.
- All calls/job descriptions should be advertised, making sure adverts are posted on accessible platforms.
- Having a diverse recruitment/selection board.
- Inviting a balanced number of male and female applicants to the job interviews.
- During the interview, avoid questions about family circumstances or how family life is organised[3]. Instead, refer to the family-friendly offers of the University of Bonn/Cologne.

Field research and work-related travels. Many anti-discrimination policies lack a clearly formulated geographical scope. As part of an international research cluster, members may be exposed to discrimination not only in the workplace at their respective universities, but also on business trips, and especially during field research, which is where most of the researchers spend a large portion of their working hours. Therefore, we are committed to ensuring safe conditions for all researchers during their fieldwork and to providing support and a safety network in the event of risks, uncertainties or incidents. Safety in fieldwork is related to the researcher‘s intersecting positionalities as well as the context and the topic of the research project; it is important to reflect on the physical and emotional risks during fieldwork and raise awareness for the importance and complexity of fieldwork safety. We underline the supervisor's role and responsibilities about (PhD-) students' safety. In accordance with the

[3] Many questions in this context are indirectly gender-specific and/or discriminate against women on account of pregnancy or motherhood within the meaning of Section 3 (1) AGG. In particular, questions about pregnancy are inadmissible in all cases. [6]

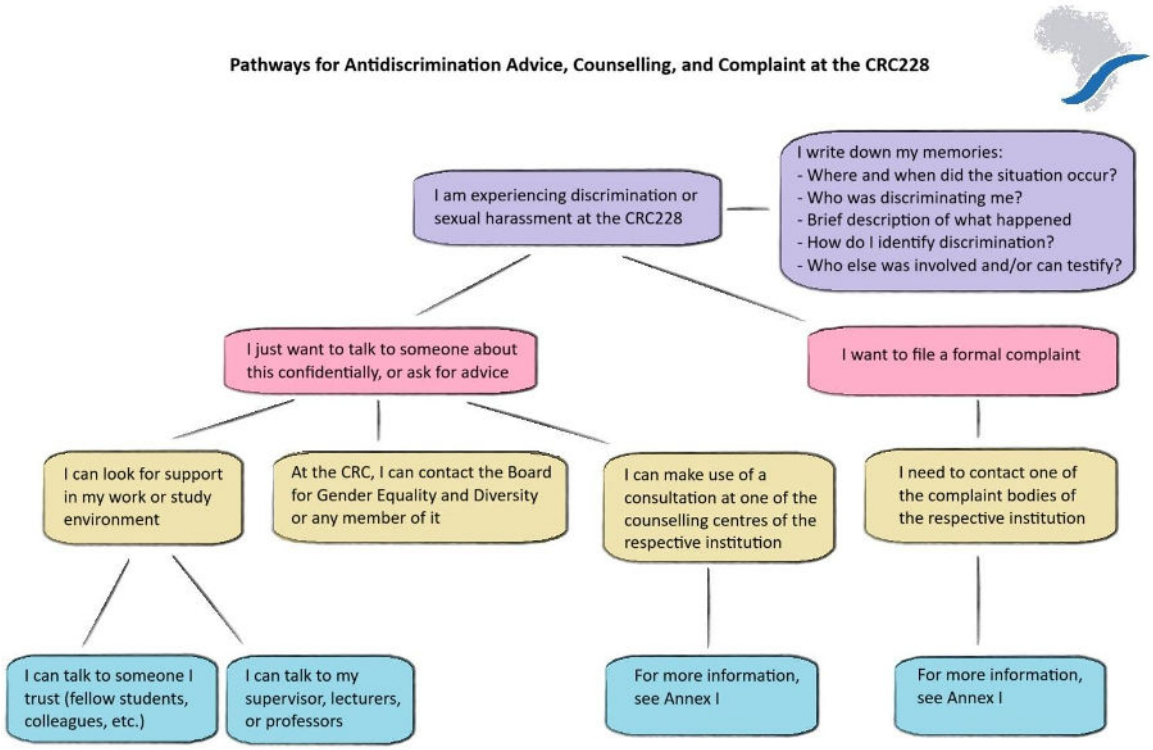
manifesto of the safer-fieldwork project [7], we would like to emphasize that it is the responsibility of the members, and in particular the PIs, to comply with the following points:

- Recognizing fieldwork safety as an explicit goal of projects rather than a personal issue of individual researchers.
- Establishing researcher safety as a central topic of methodological training and therefore providing workshops on risks, challenges and safety in fieldwork prior and in preparation for the field research (including workshops for PIs on supervisors' responsibility to ensure students' fieldwork safety).
- Developing guidelines for handling and responding to possible incidents, including establishing an emergency contact.
- Accommodating projects to each researcher's individual skills, resources, and intersecting positionalities.
- Respecting the researchers' choices to adapt or restrict their projects according to their own boundaries and vulnerabilities.
- Raising awareness of the possible long-term consequences of unsafe fieldwork conditions for the researchers and their (non-)academic social environments.
- Creating a platform for researchers before, during, and after fieldwork to share and exchange about challenging fieldwork experiences, risks and forms of discrimination.

You have the right to speak up and seek support. All CRC members are encouraged to speak up against incidents of discrimination or harassment and to report them. Please note that:

- It is important to trust your senses and perceptions and not to ignore your own or someone else's discomfort in situations of potential or actual harassment.
- Please reach out to those who might be suffering from harassment and offer your support.
- If you or another CRC member is experiencing discrimination or harassment, you can contact any member of the CRC Board for Gender Equality and Diversity or the counselling centres and complaint bodies of your institution.
- If you experience harassment, discrimination, or violence during your field research, you can reach out to any member of the CRC Board for Gender Equality and Diversity, your PI, or the emergency contact for your project.

The following diagram shows how you can proceed to get formal or informal support when experiencing discrimination or sexual harassment at the CRC:



Board for Gender Equality & Diversity, e-mail: crc228-genderboard@uni-koeln.de

[1] https://www.charta-der-vielfalt.de/en/
[2] https://www.dependency.uni-bonn.de/images/pdf-files/21-08-23_bcdss_ad-policy-docx.pdf
[3] German General Act on Equal Treatment (Allgemeines Gleichbehandlungsgesetz, AGG)
[4] https://www.chancengerechtigkeit.uni-bonn.de/de/medien/diskriminierungsschutz-und-inklusion/richtlinie_zum_schutz_vor_sexualisierter_diskriminierung_final_en.pdf
[5] https://vielfalt.uni-koeln.de/fileadmin/home/bdahmen/PDFs/Englisch/Anti-Discrimination_Directive_2022_bf.pdf
[6]https://www.antidiskriminierungsstelle.de/SharedDocs/downloads/DE/publikationen/Expertisen/was_arbeitgeber_fragen_duerfen.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=5
[7] https://saferfieldworkproject.de/project/