

Global Review of Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by UN, NGO, IOM and IFRC Personnel



July 2010



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from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This document was produced by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), on behalf of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee. It is a synopsis of the Global Synthesis Report of the IASC's Review on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse. It is composed primarily of excerpts from the Global Synthesis, which was written by Moira Reddick, an independent consultant who served as the Review's Facilitator.

Special appreciation is extended to all agencies who contributed to the Review, as well as to Carolyn McAskie, the Review's Special Adviser.

**For the full Global Synthesis Report
and the Country Case Studies please visit the website
www.un.org/pseataskforce**

LETTER FROM THE SPECIAL ADVISOR CAROLYN MCASKIE

Dear Colleagues,

The problem of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse has been in the forefront of our thoughts since 2002. Eight years later, we now have before us a concise and readable review of what the humanitarian enterprise is doing about protection. Unfortunately, the review shows us that Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse has not been in the forefront of our actions. The review offers recommendations on the way forward and as you go through them, I would like to suggest a number of questions to keep in mind.

Firstly, do we believe that we have a problem and can we agree on what that problem is? Is the problem the persistent existence of sexual exploitation, or is the problem the fact that despite all our work we continue to fail in addressing it?

Secondly, can the humanitarian and development communities now use this review to make a joint commitment to improve support to beneficiaries? Can we recognize how the humanitarian delivery system itself provides the leverage for abuse? Can we focus on effective solutions which a) enable beneficiaries to lodge complaints safely; b) provide robust responses to known or reported abuse; and c) is driven by heightened staff awareness all through the chain of command?

Thirdly, are senior leaders allocating resources to those on the front line who must provide the protection which vulnerable victims of conflict and disasters need? Do our managers know that this is an integral part of their management responsibility? As the review makes clear, we are better at designing policy than in implementing it.

Fourthly, can we inspire friends and partners to support us in this long overdue endeavour? The peacekeeping enterprise has learned many lessons which they can share with humanitarians. Donors must be engaged to back the efforts. How humanitarian support is delivered is as important as the support itself. It must be done in a way that understands the increased vulnerability in conflict and disaster situations, especially for women and children, and respects the dignity of the affected populations.

Finally, can we pool our resources and work together? Every humanitarian entity cannot put in place its own mechanisms. Each crisis situation must benefit from joint programmes and peer pressure. This is where humanitarian coordination and inter-agency burden sharing will be critical to the success of effective protection mechanisms. It is only together that all of us can deliver the goods in every sense of the word.

This review provides us with an excellent starting point. I have been privileged to act in a modest way as an advisor to the process and commend its recommendations to all.

Yours sincerely,
Carolyn McAskie
Former Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator and SRSG Burundi

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ACRONYMS

CAP	Consolidated Appeals Process
CDT	Conduct and Discipline Team
CDU	Conduct and Discipline Unit
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
DFS	Department of Field Support
DOCO	UN Development Operations Coordination Office
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
ECHA	Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs
ECPS	Executive Committee on Peace and Security
FP	Focal point
HAP	Humanitarian Accountability Partnership
HC	Humanitarian Coordinator
HCT	Humanitarian Country Team
HCLM	High-Level Committee on Management
HCLP	High-Level Committee on Programmes
HQ	Headquarters
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IGO	Inter-governmental organisation
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IRC	International Rescue Committee
MINUSTAH	United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti
MONUC	Mission of the United Nations Organisation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
MOS	Minimum Operating Standards
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
PSEA	Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse
RC	Resident Coordinator
SC	Steering Committee
SEA	Sexual exploitation and abuse
SGB	Secretary-General's Bulletin
SGBV	Sexual and gender-based violence
SRSG	Special Representative of the Secretary-General
TOR	Terms of reference
UN	United Nations
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VA	Victim assistance
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

INTRODUCTION

The Inter-Agency Standing Committee Working Group commissioned a review on protection from sexual exploitation and abuse in July 2009, following seven years of collective work by humanitarian agencies to ensure protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) of vulnerable people by those associated with humanitarian agencies.

This PSEA effort was initiated subsequent to the 2002 report by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and Save the Children UK on the prevalence of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) in West Africa, which documented allegations against 40 agencies. Subsequent studies by the Humanitarian Accountability Partnership and Save the Children UK further document sexual exploitation and abuse and its chronic under-reporting.

Underpinning this inter-agency PSEA effort has been the 2003 Secretary-General's Bulletin Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (ST/SGB/2003/13) (SGB), which was issued to ensure that all UN staff and others under UN contract were aware of the core principles of PSEA and the consequent obligations upon them.

This review was overseen by a Steering Committee of nine agencies, one umbrella organisation and one Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator (RC/HC) who provided guidance to the review. A Special Advisor provided expert advice and support throughout the review.

Purpose

The review was tasked with identifying the extent to which PSEA policies have been implemented – together with the constraints that exist – and with making recommendations for any future action to ensure the effective implementation of PSEA obligations. The review was not tasked with identifying the scale of any misconduct, as this has already been well documented.

Studies by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Save the Children and the Humanitarian Accountability Partnership over the past decade have revealed the existence of sexual exploitation and abuse by humanitarian personnel. The scale of the problem is not yet known, but these studies highlight the humanitarian community's responsibility to find out. For complaints to come forward, local communities need to be informed that humanitarian assistance is free and is never to be conditioned on sexual favours. They need to be told how to complain if sexual exploitation or abuse occurs.

Methodology

An External Review Facilitator worked together with 14 agencies (13 of which are either part of the IASC or members of consortia which are part of the IASC), which conducted a self-assessment of their own policies and guidance and the extent of their directives and support to the field. Field implementation levels were examined through field research in 2 countries, as well as through desk research in 5 additional countries.

14 agencies participated in the headquarters self-assessment portion of the Review:
DFS, IFRC, IOM, IRC, OCHA, Oxfam GB, Save the Children UK, UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, WHO, World Vision International

Outputs

The results are presented in: (1) a Global Synthesis Report, (2) a compendium of country-specific reports (DRC, Nepal and Liberia) and case studies (Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, Thailand and Yemen), and (3) confidential reports for each of the 14 agencies that participated in the headquarters self-assessment.

KEY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The review found that:

- While progress has been made on the establishment of PSEA policy, this has not translated into managerial and staff understanding and acceptance of these policies.
- The policies and technical guidance have not been communicated to the field with sufficient authority or clear direction and the guidance, in itself, has not been accessible.
- With the exception of 3 of 14 agencies considered (by means of a self-assessment exercise), implementation is either patchy, poor or non-existent.
- The most critical gap in organisational support to PSEA is that of visible senior management leadership to actively promote PSEA policies and to proactively support PSEA activity, while holding field managers accountable for implementation.

It was also found that, with a few exceptions: HQs are not giving clear directives on PSEA to the field or supporting directives given with adequate guidance and training; managers are not being held accountable; PSEA focal points are not being effectively supported; effective personnel awareness-raising and complaints mechanisms are not in place; and monitoring of activity or sharing of good practice is not happening.

Furthermore, with a few exceptions, community-level awareness-raising and complaints mechanisms are not in place. Without these, vulnerable individuals will not make complaints.

In fact, very low levels of complaint are currently being received. If appropriate awareness-raising and complaints mechanisms are put in place, then complaint levels may rise sharply. Based on current capacity ascribed to PSEA, agencies are unlikely to have the resources to respond appropriately in this scenario.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Lack of clear HQ directives to the field

One country manager said that he often spoke to his staff about the importance of financial probity and the penalties for not adhering to the agency's directives on this issue, but not SEA. He said that his HQ had made it clear that he was expected to take a strong public line on corruption, but that he had received no comparable directives on SEA. Repeatedly during interviews, managers said that they had not received any directives on PSEA (apart from it being included in email circulations of policies) and that the issue had not been discussed during their inductions or supervisions.

While the review asserts that the fundamental responsibility for ensuring that PSEA obligations are met must remain at the individual agency level, the review has concluded that the advancement of PSEA in the humanitarian community would be best served if the IASC were to resume its leadership on the issue. This is due to: the need to address the high risk of SEA in humanitarian contexts; the lack of progress within the humanitarian sector compared with the peacekeeping sector; the need to focus the humanitarian community on improving implementation of the SGB; and the need to engage humanitarian leaders at the highest level – which is argued throughout the report as the most critical factor in securing progress in PSEA. Also critical are the accountability of UN agencies, inter-governmental organisations (IGOs), non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the Red Cross/Red Crescent movement to the IASC and the direction of current work to ensure the enhanced utilisation of IASC outputs from which PSEA experts could benefit.

While institutionalisation of PSEA must remain the responsibility of agencies, the need for agencies to scale up their PSEA activity is so acute that six-monthly progress reports from agencies on scale-up and outcomes will be needed until the IASC is satisfied that PSEA has been institutionalised within agencies.

In addition to the necessary scale-up at individual agency level, this review proposes a pilot in five selected locations. The pilot would ensure intensified PSEA activity over a period of 18 months of both individual and collective agency work to put PSEA mechanisms in place and to monitor the outcomes. This is necessary both to test the mechanisms themselves and to understand the implications of having effective PSEA mechanisms in place in locations where there is a substantial humanitarian community. This inter-agency approach will allow individual agencies to contribute their own good practice and experience where this exists. Resources will be required to ensure additional capacity to support PSEA networks and initiatives.

There is a need to relaunch the Secretary-General's Bulletin, which is not sufficiently well known and understood at field level. This should be done in tandem with the Interpretation Guide that is currently being prepared by the United Nations and NGO Task Force on PSEA of the Executive Committees on Humanitarian Affairs and Peace and Security. This relaunch must be undertaken using

multiple methods to ensure the highest possible visibility. The campaign should be reinforced by the prominent participation of senior humanitarians and leaders of agencies. A Special Representative should be appointed during the period of the relaunch. In addition, the current SGB should be reviewed to remove the current (perceived) ambiguity of language, require field-based inter-agency cooperation and compliance with minimum standards and ensure enhanced reporting, including on victim assistance.

Putting in place awareness-raising and complaints mechanisms will require additional capacity-building within agencies and consideration of inter-agency mechanisms wherever possible to maximise resources. Resourcing for the implementation of these fundamental PSEA instruments should be considered from now on by adding PSEA components to every CAP and to Flash Appeals and through pooled funding to support inter-agency PSEA work. Advocacy to institutional donors should be considered.

Agencies at headquarters should:

1. Move from a passive approach to SEA, such as the signing of codes of conduct, the SGB and other contracts, to a more active approach that involves discussion, explanation, training and higher visibility for the issue, which will offer greater protection for vulnerable people.
2. Ensure that agency heads play a visible leadership role, including making communications to ensure that the necessary cultural change takes place in order to support enhanced PSEA activity.
3. Appoint high-level focal points to monitor and receive reports on enhanced activity and outcomes, and ensure that these reports are shared at senior management team/board level.
4. Make public declarations on PSEA activity and outcomes as part of their accountability mechanisms, eg. in annual reports or on agency website.
5. Require senior field managers to ensure that PSEA obligations are met, and support them to achieve this.
6. Hold managers accountable as to whether or not they ensure that PSEA obligations are met by including PSEA accountability within performance reviews.
7. Communicate (mandatory) policy and guidance to those who have obligations to implement these at field level. Technical personnel must ensure that field staff are supported through applied tools that can be absorbed at field level, the establishment of a rapid support mechanism to answer questions and deployments of technical staff to either lead or support on PSEA at field level.
8. Evaluate personnel time made available to PSEA currently, assess if it is adequate for present needs and determine what additional personnel time might be needed if the IASC were to require scaled-up PSEA activity. Take advice from the CDU on appropriate staffing levels.
9. During recruitment processes, ensure that background checks are undertaken for any history of SEA.
10. Once scaled-up activity has been established, embed SEA within other conduct issues and regular policies and procedures to ensure that it becomes part of the wider organisational accountability framework. This should include incorporation within corporate risk management procedures and should include appropriate costing and resourcing of PSEA activity.
11. Empower PSEA technical staff and responsible managers to share information on SEA prevalence, learning and good practice. The current insistence on confidentiality is inhibiting peer-to-peer learning. If the self-assessment process is to be repeated, then the facilitator should be empowered to support such peer-to-peer learning.

The IASC should:

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| 1. Accept leadership on PSEA and ensure that IASC member agencies are working both as individual agencies and collectively to see PSEA institutionalised within the humanitarian sector. |
| 2. Require agencies to report six-monthly on global progress in fulfilling PSEA obligations, until the IASC is satisfied that PSEA has been institutionalised within agencies and that sufficient change has occurred at field level across all humanitarian contexts. It should also require the current PSEA Task Force to develop a reporting format for endorsement by the IASC Working Group prior to the Task Force disbanding. |
| 3. Implement five inter-agency pilots in selected locations over an 18-month period in order to test PSEA mechanisms and standards and to determine to what extent levels of SEA misconduct exist and the capacity needed by agencies to respond to the misconduct. These pilots should be supported by inter-agency PSEA networks and the placing of PSEA Coordinators in HC/RC offices. Donors and individual agencies should be asked to support these pilots. |
| 4. Advocate for additional funding for regular in-country PSEA activity. Consider inclusion in CAPs and Flash Appeals, lobby for pooled funding and ensure that inter-agency PSEA mechanisms are used wherever possible to better use resources. Dialogue with donors regarding PSEA conditionality and funding is critical. |
| 5. Convene a new taskforce to a) offer support to the general scale-up in all humanitarian locations and to support the PSEA Coordinators in the pilot projects, and b) coordinate reporting to the IASC. Formalised links between the new taskforce and PSEA networks at field level should be established to ensure direct support and response from the taskforce to the field e.g. help desks or the issuing of new field-friendly guidance and tools. The new taskforce should ensure that tools and guidance supplied to the field are in line with the findings of the recent 'Review of IASC Products' report. |
| 6. Clarify the role of the Cluster system in institutionalising PSEA and ensure that PSEA is incorporated into emergency planning. |
| 7. Ensure that learning can be taken from achievements on PSEA in the peacekeeping sector and can be incorporated into the humanitarian sector. DFS should be invited to participate when the IASC receives reports on PSEA progress and to participate in any inter-agency group or taskforce that is convened. |
| 8. Replicate the self-assessment process in 18 months' time (at the end of the pilot period) in order to monitor progress and identify areas where agencies collectively are finding difficulty in making the necessary progress. Lessons should be learned from the process just completed, and the HAP Standard Benchmarks should be used to inform a revised questionnaire. |

The UN, in partnership with NGOs, IOM and the Red Cross/Red Crescent movement should:

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| <p>1. Design and run a communications campaign to relaunch the current SGB in tandem with the Interpretation Guide that is currently being prepared by the Task Force. This relaunch must be undertaken using multiple methods to ensure the highest possible visibility. The campaign should be reinforced by the prominent participation of senior humanitarians and leaders of agencies. A Special Representative should be appointed during the period of the relaunch to act as a focal point.</p> |
| <p>2. Ensure that the Interpretation Guide to the SGB currently being drafted is concise and clear and that it uses examples to demonstrate the intent of the SGB.</p> |
| <p>3. Review the SGB to remove the current (perceived) ambiguity of language, require field-based inter-agency cooperation and compliance with minimum standards and ensure enhanced reporting, including on victim assistance.</p> |
| <p>4. Require the current Task Force to make a report on its activities and achievements during the past five years to both ECHA and ECPS as well as the HLCM. The objective of this report and presentation should be to determine the added value of an internal UN inter-agency taskforce and the most appropriate parent organisation to ensure enhanced institutionalisation and accountability for future PSEA activity within the UN. The critical need for cross-agency leadership should be clearly outlined within the presentation. Clarity should also be sought on what is required to ensure that guidance currently in draft form can be formalised. The report should be presented to ECHA and ECPS by the Co-Chairs of the current PSEA Task Force and the Special Adviser to this review.</p> |
| <p>5. Further clarify the responsibilities of RCs/HCs to highlight PSEA policy. RCs should continue to hold overall responsibility including ensuring that PSEA is on the agenda of the UN Country Team, while HCs should be responsible for promoting the engagement of the humanitarian community and for coordination and leadership in humanitarian forums (such as the Humanitarian Country Team). These latter points should be considered when the next revision of the HC's job description takes place.</p> |
| <p>6. Ensure that there is dedicated coordination support during the set-up and establishment phase of PSEA Networks.</p> |
| <p>7. Where there is a UN mission, ensure that PSEA networks are at the very least jointly chaired by the CDT and a humanitarian agency.</p> |
| <p>8. Within PSEA networks, establish inter-agency victim assistance programmes in order to maximise resources.</p> |

Agencies at the field level should:

1. Expect managers at field level to speak publicly about PSEA and ensure that the agency's intent with regard to PSEA policy is understood by personnel, while actively supporting PSEA work.
2. Table the issue of PSEA at country-level management meetings and include reporting on PSEA activity and outcomes in such meetings.
3. Ensure clear guidance is provided to focal points (FPs) in a form that they can absorb. Allocate adequate time and resources to FPs to enable them to undertake their roles with respect to their own institutional responsibilities and also with regard to their active participation in PSEA networks. FPs must be known by other staff members. They must have their FP role included within their job descriptions and their performance on PSEA must be appraised.
4. Appoint an FP from programming in addition to a FP from HR to ensure that there is a stronger understanding of SEA amongst programme staff, that strengthened community engagement takes place and that programmes are designed in order to mitigate the risks of SEA.
5. As a priority activity, establish complaints systems, together with effective awareness-raising at the community level. Wherever possible, inter-agency mechanisms should be established as a) one joint mechanism will be easier for communities to understand, and b) will also maximise resources and be easier to maintain.
6. Ensure that feedback on follow-up action is given to complainants.
7. Implement increased SEA awareness activity for personnel that is regularly repeated, such as code of conduct workshops.

NEXT STEPS

IASC

In follow-up to the Review, the IASC Working Group, at its 7 to 9 July 2010 meeting, agreed to the following actions:

1. Welcomed the Global Synthesis Report of the IASC Review of Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.
2. Agreed that IASC has an important role to play in Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), and stressed that every IASC organization has a responsibility to ensure enhanced commitment and engagement from senior management. Action by: IASC organizations.
3. Expressed support for the Special Advisor's proposal to send letters to IASC Principals calling for their enhanced commitments for PSEA. Action by: Special Advisor to the PSEA Review.
4. Endorsed the establishment of a Task Force on protection from sexual exploitation and abuse which would support and monitor implementation of the recommendations of the Review, and invited agencies to volunteer to form a smaller group to develop the ToR of the Task Force. Action by: Interested IASC organizations to inform [tbc] by end August.
5. Requested the newly established Task Force to develop specific recommendations for the Principals to be tabled at the December Principals meeting. Action by: IASC Task Force on PSEA.
6. Agreed to pilot scaled-up PSEA action in up to five selected locations, and proposed Haiti as the first pilot. Action by: IASC Task Force on PSEA.

The United Nations – Next Steps

How to address Review recommendations that fall outside the IASC's purview will be considered at the next principal-level meeting of the ECHA/ECPS UN and NGO Task Force on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse. The architecture that is needed to support implementation of such recommendations will also be determined. This was agreed by the working level of the ECHA/ECPS Task Force on 21 July 2010.

COUNTRY REPORTS AND CASE STUDIES

Two field missions were undertaken for this PSEA review, to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Nepal. The purpose of the field missions was to track the receipt of HQ directives and guidance on PSEA, understand how this guidance was being understood and applied, and observe the extent of implementation at field level.

In addition, a desk study on Liberia and 6 country case studies (Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Thailand (2) and Yemen) were undertaken by the review in order to capture, from practitioners, the widest possible examples both of good practice and of challenges. All were conducted through document review and telephone interviews.

The DRC and Nepal Country Mission Reports, the Liberia Desk Study and all six Country Case Studies informed the Global Synthesis Report and all can be downloaded from the PSEA website (www.un.org/pseataaskforce). A short description of each follows below.

DRC Country Mission Report

The report found that, while FPs and a PSEA network were in place at capital city level, general levels of awareness amongst agency staff were low. There was a sense amongst managers (including some senior managers) that the SGB was unrealistic in its scope and in its language allowed for some flexibility. Agencies' dissemination of PSEA policies was not robust enough and implementation levels were low. Institutional memory of past PSEA activity was poor, and it is likely that additional capacity will be required to support the PSEA network to implement its workplan.

Nepal Country Mission Report

The report found that, while FPs and a PSEA network were in place at capital city level, general levels of awareness amongst agency staff were low and agencies' dissemination of PSEA policies was not robust enough. Despite trainings of both FPs and managers having taken place only a year before the mission, staff turnover meant that only 50 per cent of the FPs in the PSEA network had benefited from that training, and there had been no enhanced implementation either by individual agencies or collectively since that time. PSEA was not on the workplan of the Clusters or considered as part of inter-agency emergency preparedness planning.

'Liberia: A case study of progress on the prevention of, and response to, sexual exploitation and abuse'

The desk study on Liberia describes how progress has been made under all four pillars and the impact of committed leadership and vision by senior-level stakeholders. It acknowledges, however, that gaps remain and that community engagement remains the most challenging aspect of PSEA.

Kenya: ‘Appealing to people’s professionalism in Kenya – a case study on awareness-raising of aid workers’

The study on Kenya explores an approach taken that sought to provide workers with a framework to understand the process of SEA and the nature of the power relationship between aid workers and beneficiaries.

Somalia: ‘Reaching communities through local NGOs in Somalia – a case study on building field-based networks’

Explores the challenges of working in settings where security limits field access and details the experience of establishing a field-based PSEA network of local and national NGOs.

Sudan: ‘Plain speaking in Southern Sudan – a case study on awareness-raising’

Discusses the challenges of awareness-raising over large geographical areas where there are logistical challenges and also where it is difficult to raise issues with communities when there is not sustained contact. Pilots were undertaken to identify messages that were then used in scaled-up programmes and through mass communication methods.

Thailand: ‘Creating community dialogue on the Thai–Myanmar border – a case study on working with beneficiary populations’

This study on Thailand details the collective steps taken by a group of NGOs working with refugee communities to prevent and respond to cases of SEA through developing a common code of conduct and inter-agency protocols for response.

Thailand: ‘Pooling resources in Thailand’

Discusses how smaller agencies and those based in urban locations where there is limited contact with beneficiaries can still work collectively to profile the issue of SEA and ensure that all aspects of a zero tolerance policy are understood.

Yemen: ‘Finding the Entry Points in Yemen – a case study on challenging assumptions’

Explores how dialogue on SEA was initiated in a context which has strong cultural taboos against discussing such issues, but also where there have been limited humanitarian resources and the relevance of PSEA has not been immediately obvious.

ANNEX I: INDICATORS AND STANDARDS

The Review used a series of indicators and standards to analyze the extent to which PSEA policy has been implemented, one set for headquarters and one for the field. These could serve as a basis for future monitoring.

Headquarters

PILLAR 1 – MANAGEMENT AND COORDINATION

Indicator 1.1: Effective policy implementation

Benchmark	Characteristics
Low	A policy to protect from SEA exists and has been signed off by senior management.
Low–Medium	A policy has been signed off by senior management and provided to current staff on a minimum of one occasion.
Medium–High	A policy has been signed off and has been provided to current staff on repeated occasions, and the implementation of the policy has been promoted.
High	A policy has been signed off and has been provided to current staff on repeated occasions, the implementation of the policy has been promoted, and the entity monitors implementation of the policy and is able to state its current level of implementation.

Indicator 1.2: Adequate personnel time is explicitly committed to PSEA

Benchmark	Characteristics
Low	Personnel/departments have responsibility for the development and implementation of PSEA policy and activities.
Low–Medium	Individual personnel have explicit (formalised) responsibility for PSEA in their job description, performance appraisal or similar.
Medium–High	Individual personnel have explicit (formalised) responsibility for PSEA in their job description, performance appraisal or similar. Personnel working on PSEA have received systematised training in PSEA.
High	Individual personnel have explicit (formalised) responsibility for PSEA in their job description, performance appraisal or similar. Personnel working on PSEA have received systematised training in PSEA. The personnel time committed to PSEA is commensurate with the scale of implementation required at the current time.

Indicator 1.3: Commitment and engagement of senior managers

Benchmark	Characteristics
Low	There is a lack of clarity about how, and even whether, senior management should be informed about PSEA activities and issues.
Low–Medium	Reports on PSEA activities and issues are provided to senior management on an ad hoc and incident-related basis.
Medium–High	Scheduled reports on PSEA activities and issues are provided to senior management, and senior management responds with feedback and guidance.
High	In addition to scheduled reports on PSEA activities and issues being provided to senior management, and senior management responding with feedback and guidance, PSEA features as a regular reporting item on the agenda of the senior management team or at governance meetings.

PILLAR 2 – ENGAGEMENT WITH AND SUPPORT OF LOCAL POPULATION**Indicator 2.1: Effective and comprehensive communication from HQ to the field on what to do regarding raising beneficiary awareness of SEA**

Benchmark	Characteristics
Low	The HQ has not communicated explicitly on this issue.
Low–Medium	The HQ has communicated but without guidelines, detail or illustration.
Medium–High	The HQ has communicated in detail or with illustration such as trainings or guidelines.
High	The HQ has communicated in detail or with illustration such as trainings or guidelines. The HQ has been explicit that the field should raise beneficiary awareness through a variety of mechanisms and by involving various groups in the community in the design of these mechanisms.

Indicator 2.2: Effective community complaints mechanisms

Benchmark	Characteristics
Low	The HQ has not made the establishment of complaints mechanisms mandatory for every field office.
Low–Medium	The HQ has made the establishment of complaints mechanisms mandatory for every field office and this has been communicated to field offices, but without guidelines, detail or illustration.
Medium–High	The HQ has made establishment of complaints mechanisms mandatory for every field office and this has been communicated in detail or with illustration such as training or guidelines. There is provision for the complaints mechanism to be adapted to the cultural context and this is done with community participation.
High	The HQ has made establishment of complaints mechanisms mandatory for every field office and this has been communicated in detail or with illustration such as training or guidelines. There is provision for the complaints mechanism to be adapted to the cultural context and this is done with community participation. There is provision to ensure the confidentiality of the complaints mechanism. There is a mechanism for monitoring and review of the complaints mechanism.

PILLAR 3 – PREVENTION

Indicator 3.1: Effective recruitment and performance management

Benchmark	Characteristics
Low	Introduction to the PSEA policy/code of conduct forms part of the recruitment process.
Low–Medium	Introduction to the PSEA policy/code of conduct forms part of the recruitment process. Training on SEA awareness forms part of the induction process.
Medium–High	Introduction to the PSEA policy/code of conduct forms part of the recruitment process. Training on SEA forms part of the induction process. The entity has a policy regarding reference-checking procedures for job candidates, including checking for any history of perpetrating SEA.
High	Introduction to the PSEA policy/code of conduct forms part of the recruitment process. Training on SEA forms part of the induction process. The entity has a policy regarding reference-checking procedures for job candidates, including checking for any history of perpetrating SEA. Supervision and performance appraisals include adherence to the PSEA policy/code of conduct.

Indicator 3.2: Effective and comprehensive mechanisms are established to ensure awareness-raising on SEA amongst HQ-based personnel

Benchmark	Characteristics
Low	No standardised awareness-raising mechanism at HQ level.
Low–Medium	Standardised awareness-raising mechanisms exist.
Medium–High	Standardised awareness-raising mechanisms exist and cover the broad spectrum of relevant issues.
High	Standardised awareness-raising mechanisms exist and cover the broad spectrum of areas listed in the questionnaire (specifically those in question 4.b.3). A minimum of 51 per cent of HQ personnel have received this awareness-raising, and repeat awareness-raising takes place.

PILLAR 4 – RESPONSE

Indicator 4.1: Effective personnel complaints mechanisms are in place

Benchmark	Characteristics
Low	No written procedures on how complaints can be made are in place.
Low–Medium	Written procedures on how complaints can be made are in place.
Medium–High	Written procedures on how complaints can be made are in place and are monitored and reviewed for effectiveness.
High	Written procedures on how complaints can be made are in place and are monitored and reviewed for effectiveness. HQ has communicated to field offices how they should identify local cultural and contextual barriers to reporting SEA. HQ has procedures in place to advise field offices on how complaints received that refer to the personnel of another entity should be referred.

Indicator 4.2: Effective field-based complaints handling and follow-up

Benchmark	Characteristics
Low	There is no standard operating procedure on what to do with complaints once received.
Low–Medium	There is a standard operating procedure on what do with complaints once received.
Medium–High	There is a standard operating procedure on what to do with complaints once received and it is explicit about confidentiality, who should receive complaints, timelines, communication of results and required HQ response. Training in the standard operating procedures has been carried out at an adequate level to ensure that trained investigators are available to field offices when required.
High	There is a standard operating procedure on what to do with complaints once received and it is explicit about confidentiality, who should receive complaints, timelines, communication of results and required HQ response. Training in the standard operating procedures has been carried out at an adequate level to ensure that trained investigators are available to field offices when required. Substantiated complaints have resulted in either disciplinary action or contractual consequences and, if not, the entity is able to justify why not.

ANNEX 2: MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR PSEA AT THE FIELD LEVEL

PILLAR 1 – MANAGEMENT AND COORDINATION

1.1 Focal points

Minimum Standard: PSEA focal point designated has appropriate qualifications and is adequately managed and supported.

Key Indicators: Agency nominates a Focal Point at the P4 level and an alternate focal point. (One of the two must be female). Focal Point provides monthly reports to management and is provided with monthly feedback and guidance. Performance as the Agency PSEA Focal Point is included in TOR and Personnel Appraisal.

1.2 Senior management/leadership

Note: Senior leadership and management is a critical issue for the institutionalisation and embedding of PSEA culture and mechanisms.

1.3 PSEA networks

Minimum Standard: Agency Focal Points regularly contribute to In-country Networks for PSEA.

Key Indicator: Each Agency Focal Point participates regularly in the PSEA Network meetings and contributes to the implementation of the PSEA Network annual action plan.

PILLAR 2 – ENGAGEMENT WITH AND SUPPORT OF LOCAL POPULATION

2.1 Complaints mechanisms

Minimum Standard: All sections of the affected population have been engaged in the development of an effective complaints mechanism, understand how to access the mechanism, and know how to report any problems through the mechanism.

Key Indicators: The community is fully involved in designing and carrying out PSEA complaints mechanism and training of community is undertaken quarterly. Number and record of complaints are lodged by the community and follow up recorded. Feedback mechanisms to community established and number of reports monitored.

2.2 Community awareness of SEA

Minimum Standard: All sections of the affected population have received adequate awareness-raising to ensure they are fully aware of SEA issues, and know what they are entitled to.

Key Indicators: Affected community involved in designing community awareness messages (e.g. local media, teachers, community leaders, midwives, clergy etc.). Number and type of communication mechanism used (bulletin boards, camp meetings, flyers etc.) and materials translated in local languages

PILLAR 3 – PREVENTION

3.1 Staff awareness

Minimum Standard: Personnel have received a copy of the Secretary General’s Bulletin (SGB), know how to contact PSEA Focal Points and are made aware of the obligations required of them in the SGB.

Key Indicators: Staff are informed of PSEA Focal Points annually (e.g. done via memos to staff, informed verbally through various management mechanisms (e.g. staff meetings) and/or posted on bulletin boards etc.). MOS-PSEA report of each agency shared internally with staff. Staff receive awareness training on PSEA annually and re-sign the Code of Conduct. All newly recruited staff sign the Code of Conduct and participate in an orientation session on SEA. Whistle-blower protection measures are in place, and all staff are aware of the importance in reporting.

3.2 Cooperative arrangements

Minimum Standard: Procedures are in place to receive written agreement from non-UN entities or individuals entering into cooperative arrangements with the UN that they are aware of and will abide by the standards of the SGB.

Key Indicators: Agency record system collects written agreements that the individuals or organisations will abide by the SGB. SGB and respective codes of conduct are disseminated to those in contract to UN/NGO. Staff of contractual organisations undergo SEA training annually.

PILLAR 4 – RESPONSE

4.1 Investigations

Minimum Standard: Procedures for investigations into cases of SEA are in place by the agency including prompt reporting of cases to appropriate HQ authority.

Key Indicator: SOP [Standard Operating Procedure] or equivalent issued and used to guide practice. Investigations undertaken by experienced and qualified professionals in the field of SEA.

4.2 Victim assistance

Minimum Standard: Agency has written guidance on the provision of victim assistance.

Key Indicators: Agency implements fully the Victim Assistance programme in country. All agency staff trained on Victim Assistance.

IASC

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