

Management Letter on preventing, addressing and reporting on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment

Further to Decision 2018/3 para.10, as indicated in the management letter of the UN Women Executive Director/Under-Secretary-General on sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) dated 30 January 2020 and in accordance with Section 4.6 of the Secretary-General’s Bulletin on “Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse” (ST/SGB/2003/13), UN Women hereby certifies that, as of the date of this letter, UN Women has reported to the Secretary-General all allegations of SEA that have been brought to its attention and has taken all appropriate measures to address such allegations, in accordance with established rules and procedures for dealing with cases of staff misconduct.

Recognizing the request of the Executive Board to also report on sexual harassment (SH), UN Women wishes to also confirm that it has taken all appropriate measures to address allegations of SH against UN Women personnel, in accordance with established rules and procedures.

Preventing and addressing SEA and SH

UN Women continues to use a proactive and victim-centered approach to preventing and addressing SEA and SH. Since its last certification provided to the Executive Board on 16 May, 2019, this entailed:

1. The ongoing implementation of the recommendations from the external, independent victim-centered review of UN Women policies and procedures on tackling SEA and SH.
2. The review of the UN Women Policy on Prevention of Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Discrimination and Abuse of Authority. The revised policy was issued on 6 May 2020 and, *inter alia*, has strengthened UN Women’s position on a zero-tolerance approach to SH and to a victim-centered approach; has imposed new and more detailed roles and responsibilities; imposed the requirement that Regional Directors, Heads of Office and Directors of Division are to provide annual certification on the implementation of the policy in their offices to the Executive Director; provides informal protection from retaliation; includes more expansive managerial and interim measures; expands on the informal and formal processes of reporting prohibited conduct; includes provisions on prevention and support for personnel; and reinforces confidentiality and the monitoring of implementation. The policy is augmented by specific role-based guidance in relation to SH for supervisors, affected individuals and alleged perpetrators.
3. The promulgation of the revised Procedure for Selecting Programme Partners. The updated procedure includes an assessment of partners in accordance with the *UN Protocol on Allegations of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse involving Implementing Partners*, which ensures its compliance with the provisions of ST/SGB/2003/13, “Special Measures for

Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse”. As part of the implementation of the revised procedure, a new Partner Agreement template for contracting programme partners has been developed. The Partner Agreement includes, *inter alia*, an outline of the standard of care expected of programme partners relating to SEA; an undertaking by the programme partner that they accept the standards of conduct set out in ST/SGB/2003/13; an acknowledgement that SEA are strictly prohibited and that UN Women will apply a policy of zero tolerance with regard to SEA; and the requirement that the programme partner investigate and report any allegations of SEA to UN Women and that personnel whom they engaged have undertaken training on prevention and response to SEA (including access via a link to the United Nations SEA online training for all implementing partners).

4. The continued reinforcement of the zero-tolerance policy and the above-mentioned UN-Women specific framework through mandatory trainings for personnel on the prohibition of SEA and workplace harassment, including SH, and ways of reporting such acts, as well as on ethics and integrity.
5. As part of its Enterprise Risk Management, two new risks labels were included in the standardized online risk register that relate to SEA and SH respectively.
6. The ceaseless maintenance of a robust, comprehensive and confidential reporting mechanism for formal allegations of SEA and SH, to our independent oversight and investigative services, the UN Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), who are mandated to conduct investigations into wrongdoing. Without prejudice to the operationally independent status of that office, such reports remain highest priority.
7. The operationalization of the Clear Check database, aligned with the UN system, through the Clear Check procedure which establishes the process by which UN Women populates the Clear Check database to ensure that UN Women personnel with a Record of SEA or SH are not hired, re-hired, engaged by or permitted to serve in the UN system. In addition, the procedure sets out how UN Women vets candidates against the Clear Check database.
8. The development of an Inclusive Workplace Strategy promoting diversity, inclusion and standards of conduct. This includes notably an internal campaign on UN Women’s Values and Competencies; and the conduction of a team culture survey, gathering from all UN Women personnel their workplace relations needs, and assessing the effectiveness of SEA and SH prevention.
9. The roll out of the Respectful Workplace Facilitators pilot program, a confidential and informal peer support system under the umbrella of the Ombudsman for Funds and Programs. It provides informal avenues of early assistance and information on all services available to UN Women personnel.
10. Adoption of the UN Chief Executives Board Code of Conduct to Prevent Harassment, Including Sexual Harassment, at UN System Events.

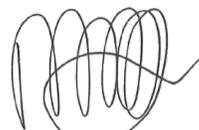
Reporting SEA and SH

UN Women continues to be fully committed to reporting on these issues while maintaining confidentiality in order to ensure, *inter alia*, the probity and confidentiality of any investigation, to ensure the safety and security of persons including the alleged victim, and to respect the due process rights of all involved. Accordingly, the established reporting mechanisms are as follows:

1. Each year, we report to the Executive Board, as mandated by the Secretary-General, that we have reported all allegations of SEA and taken appropriate measures to address such allegations.
2. UN Women has joined the UN system-wide effort to centralize the reporting of SEA allegations through the *iReport SEA Tracker*, an electronic tool which allows SEA allegations to be reported in “near real time” and be readily available on the public Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) website Data on Allegations.
3. The Annual Report on internal investigation activities to the Executive Board relays the cases of SEA and SH and information on the actions taken including management's response to substantiated allegations of misconduct.
4. Pursuant to the UN-Women Legal Policy for Addressing Non-Compliance with United Nations Standards of Conduct, each year the Executive Director issues a report that communicates information on disciplinary decisions taken and cases of misconduct, including SEA and SH, that have resulted in the imposition of disciplinary measures in the course of the preceding year. The report is provided to the Executive Board, published on the UN Women Accountability Portal, and also shared with all UN Women personnel.

Finally, in accordance with ST/SGB/2003/13 and the provisions of General Assembly resolution 62/63, the Secretary-General, on behalf of UN Women, brings credible allegations that reveal that a crime may have been committed, including SEA and SH, to the attention of the States against whose nationals such allegations are made.

Recognizing the importance of transparency and accountability in the United Nations system with respect to fighting SEA and SH, this has been done in good faith.



Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka
Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director
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