



# **Executive Board of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women**

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**Policy and programme matters**

## **Management response to the independent review of UN-Women's policies and procedures to tackle sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment**

### *Summary*

The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) is deeply committed to the elimination of all forms of sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment. UN-Women's work in these areas is anchored in key intergovernmental norms and standards and in full alignment with the Entity's core mandate.

In response to Executive Board decision 2018/13, UN-Women contracted the consultancy firm Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited (Deloitte) to undertake an independent and victim-centred evaluation of the organization's policies and procedures for tackling sexual exploitation and abuse as well as sexual harassment. The objective of this exercise was to review the Entity's current approaches, identify areas of good practice and provide recommendations to strengthen UN-Women's response in both areas of work.

This document provides UN-Women's management response to the independent report. UN-Women takes note of and accepts all recommendations in the independent review report. The Entity is pleased to report that work in the recommended areas is already proceeding or planned in most cases. In areas in which further engagement is required, the Entity is committed to developing its corporate responses, as outlined in the management response matrix.

The Executive Board may wish to: (i) take note of the management response to the independent review of UN-Women's policies and procedures to tackle sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment; (ii) support the ongoing strong commitment to address and eliminate sexual harassment and sexual exploitation and

abuse; and (iii) welcome the progress made by UN-Women so far on SEA and SH response.

## **I. Introduction**

1. The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) is deeply committed to the elimination of all forms of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) and sexual harassment (SH). UN-Women's work in these areas is anchored in key intergovernmental norms and standards, including: the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and its review outcomes, and, critically, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – notably SDG 5.2 (the elimination of all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation). Moreover, this commitment is in full alignment with the Entity's core mandate as reflected in Outcome 4 of its Strategic Plan, 2018 – 2021 (all women and girls live a life free from all forms of violence).

2. SEA and SH are fundamental violations of human rights and as such, undermine the integrity, work and core values of the UN. As an organization with a clear mandate, UN-Women is committed to promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women worldwide. The organization is thus dedicated to having the highest standards of policies, processes and systems in place to ensure effective prevention and management of SEA and SH cases.

3. In response to Executive Board decision 2018/13, adopted at the annual session 2018, UN-Women (similarly to UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS) contracted the consultancy firm Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited (Deloitte) to undertake an independent and victim-centred evaluation of the organization's policies and procedures for tackling sexual exploitation and abuse as well as sexual harassment. The objective of this exercise was to review the Entity's current approaches, identify areas of good practice and provide recommendations to strengthen UN-Women's response in both areas of work. As UN-Women is currently in the process of updating many of its existing policies and procedures, the assessment conducted by Deloitte is a formative evaluation of the Entity's SEA and SH prevention and response mechanisms, rather than a comprehensive review. Consultations have been held with personnel to improve a shared understand what is working and what needs strengthening in our policies. As such, this report will be used by UN-Women as a key resource in the further refinement of its SEA and SH prevention and response and identification of key next steps in this process. As requested, Deloitte's final report and UN-Women's management response are to be presented to the Executive Board during its annual session 2019.

4. The independent review consisted of an initial desk review of UN-Women's existing documents relating to the prevention and response to SEA and SH, including relevant policies and procedures, as well as communications, outreach, and training material. In addition, interviews and focus group meetings were conducted with 59 internal stakeholders to assess how policies and procedures are implemented as well as to examine potential barriers to successful SEA and SH prevention. Moreover, in response to its Executive Board's request for a victim-survivor centred evaluation, UN-Women recommended that Deloitte also engage with external stakeholders, including organizations that represent victim-survivors, as well as the UN-Women Youth Council and the UN Feminist Network as part of this process. The outputs from these interviews and focus group meetings were validated with participants to

clarify and sharpen the data collected. This also ensured that observations and inputs were properly understood and correctly captured.

5. Deloitte's evaluation relies upon the Inter-agency Standing Committee (IASC) defined UN Standards for the effective prevention of SEA as well as Deloitte's industry experience in this field (including its proprietary assessment methodology). Given the timing of UN-Women's review, the Entity's evaluation also benefitted from and built upon findings from the performance reviews of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS's SEA and SH set ups. The resulting recommendations fell into the following categories: accountability and governance; prevention; reporting and investigations; and assistance.

6. UN-Women takes note of and accepts all recommendations in the independent review report. The Entity is pleased to report that work in the recommended areas is already proceeding or planned in most cases. In areas in which further engagement is required, the Entity is committed to developing its corporate responses, as outlined in the management response matrix.

7. The Executive Board may wish to: (i) take note of the management response to the independent review of UN-Women's policies and procedures to tackle sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment; (ii) support the ongoing strong commitment to address and eliminate sexual harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse; and (iii) welcome the progress made by UN-Women so far on SEA and SH response.

## **II. Key Findings**

### **A. Overview**

8. UN-Women welcomes this opportunity to assess its current policies and procedures to tackle sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment and appreciates the support from Deloitte in conducting this review.

9. UN-Women understands sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment as existing as part of a continuum of violence, as violations of human rights, and as rooted in structural inequalities and power dynamics as well as drawing on the global evidence base on prevention and victim-centred work to address violence against women. The UN Secretary-General and its Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) highlighted that: "sexual harassment, like sexual abuse and sexual violence, is rooted in historic power imbalances and the male dominated culture that permeates governments, the private sector, international organizations and even areas of civil society."<sup>1</sup> As such, UN-Women is committed to leveraging its normative support, UN coordination functions and operational activities to support transformational and structural change towards elimination of SEA and SH.

10. Whereas SEA and SH constitute two separate issues with two different set of responses and policy frameworks, UN-Women understands them as connected forms of sexual violence or misconduct based in structural gender inequality. As such, UN-

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<sup>1</sup> From the Secretary-General's Chief Executives Board statement May 2018. Last accessed 27 May 2019  
[https://www.unsystem.org/CEBPublicFiles/Note%20and%20CEB%20statement\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.unsystem.org/CEBPublicFiles/Note%20and%20CEB%20statement_FINAL.pdf)

Women is committed to aligning its efforts on the two areas and ensure that they are complementary and coherent. This approach builds on system-wide efforts on these issues, as evidenced by the clear-check database which will cover both SEA and SH cases.

11. On the normative front, UN-Women acknowledges the importance and need for an established UN System wide set of principles and guidance in the areas of SEA and SH. This common framework is critical to ensure harmonized definitions and provisions, principles and approaches in response to SEA and SH. This, in turn, creates a platform to which UN-Women can anchor its regional and country level efforts to directly respond to instances of SH and SEA when they occur.

12. Furthermore, in light of its UN coordination mandate, UN-Women is strongly invested in tracking and influencing UN System-wide developments on addressing SEA and SH. As such, the Entity remains engaged through a variety of mechanisms and inter-agency bodies to ensure ongoing collaboration and alignment with other UN agencies on approach, policy and implementation. UN-Women's expertise on addressing violence against women (VAW) has enabled the Entity to take a substantive lead in these discussions and promote the application of best practices, including the elaboration and implementation of a victim/survivor-centred approach on SEA and SH. These efforts are intended to seek consistent UN System-wide understanding, framing and practice on SEA and SH.

13. Moreover, in the context of the UN System, UN-Women recognizes that expectations (internally and externally) for the Entity are particularly high, given its mandate and the depth as well as breadth of technical expertise in the organization which informs UN-Women's global understanding of these issues. These expectations are also present at regional and country levels, as UN-Women colleagues are regularly approached by staff from other UN organizations who seek guidance on best practices and resources to respond to SEA and SH allegations as they arise. UN-Women acknowledges this responsibility and will strive to respond by strengthening its internal capacities and equipping its staff consistently to deliver high-quality, victim/survivor-centred responses to SEA and SH.

14. In light of these expectations and of its mandate, UN-Women has dedicated significant resources in its work on SEA and SH, including through the appointment of a dedicated Executive Coordinator and Spokesperson on addressing SH at D2 level; and participation in system-wide processes, such as co-chairing of the policy sub-group of the CEB Task Force on SH. It has mobilized its expertise in ending violence against women to support these efforts, although this has sometimes created an additional burden.

15. It is clear that additional resourcing and support are needed to support an adequate response on SEA and SH. UN-Women still operates with a gap of approximately 25 percent in its regular resources, which would typically support such efforts. The Entity is committed to identifying efficiencies and exploring how to best allocate additional resources to this area of work. Nevertheless, this flexibility remains hampered and impacted by the overall under-resourced funding base.

## **B. Specific findings**

16. On UN-Women's regulatory landscape, the review notes that the organization has a number of policies and procedures in place of relevance to addressing and eliminating SEA and SH. Some are 'owned' by UN-Women, others are subject to UN-system-wide decision making. UN-Women's Sexual Harassment policy has recently been updated (August 2018) and is currently being reviewed in light of the CEB adoption of "*UN System Model Policy on Sexual Harassment*" as well as the Entity's own expert technical input. On sexual exploitation and abuse, UN-Women is governed by the Secretary-General's Bulletin "Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse" (ST/SGB/2003/13). These overarching frameworks are complemented by a series of additional internal policy documents. The review encourages UN-Women to continue to harmonize its regulatory framework with UN-System wide policies and approaches, while simplifying their content and improving their dissemination among managers and personnel at UN-Women.

17. UN-Women takes note of this recommendation and is committed to ensuring that good practices and the voices of victim/survivors inform the Entity's ongoing efforts to improve its SEA and SH policy documents. The Entity will continue to leverage a combination of communications platforms and outreach strategies to increase the accessibility of its corporate policy and procedures on SEA and SH response.

18. On internal coordination, the review notes the range of bodies, teams, task forces in the Entity that focus on SEA and SH. Notably, the report highlights UN-Women's creation of the role of Executive Coordinator and Spokesperson on Addressing Sexual Harassment and other Forms of Discrimination as well as the use of an internal coordination group and PSEA focal points throughout the organization. These mechanisms highlight UN-Women's increased emphasis to ensure dedicated capacity and resources at HQ and field levels to respond to SEA and SH, despite a lack of adequate resourcing. While recognizing the added value of these coordination bodies, the report notes the need for greater clarity and increased communication on ownership, authority, roles and responsibilities across the organization.

19. UN-Women acknowledges the need for increased internal coherence on SEA and SH response. As part of an ongoing review process, UN-Women will assess the various mechanisms and roles that are relevant to work on SEA and SH with a view to consolidating efforts, streamlining work and updating approaches in line with contemporary knowledge on best or promising practices. UN-Women will ensure that the clarity resulting from this exercise is shared with all personnel, through awareness-raising and guidance materials as well as webinars. The Entity will also publish an organizational chart outlining capacity allocated to SEA and SH efforts.

20. The review notes UN-Women's demonstrated commitment to employing a victim/survivor-centred approach in its SEA and SH response, including through the establishment of mandatory trainings and ongoing communications on SEA and SH, the provision of multiple reporting mechanisms for victims/survivors, the removal of the statute of limitations on reporting and establishment of anonymous and third-party

reporting. UN-Women takes this opportunity to reiterate the centrality of this principle to its mandate and work on SEA and SH. The Entity intends to continue to strengthen its capacity in this area and will, through the office of the Executive Coordinator on Addressing Sexual Harassment, compile a set of good practice standards on victim-centred approaches on SH.

21. Regarding accountability, the review acknowledges clear messaging from UN-Women's leadership on the Entity's zero tolerance policy in relation to sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment. The report notably cites consistent engagement by the Executive Director to reiterate her commitment to addressing these issues. The report encourages UN-Women to build on this demonstrated political will and ensure greater transparency in an effort to increase trust among personnel.

22. UN-Women takes note of this recommendation and will continue its efforts to ensure that policy is translated into practice on the issues of accountability and zero tolerance, including by ensuring that zero tolerance is reflected in all of its programming, partnership and human resource work in ways that encourage and simplify reporting, hold perpetrators accountable no matter their seniority and drive progress towards the elimination of sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment. UN-Women will further flesh out what is meant by "zero tolerance" in practice around the core principle of "never doing nothing". The Entity will continue to use the Annual Report on the Internal Audit and Investigation functions, as well as the Disciplinary Procedures report to reinforce, assert and manifest its commitment to accountability for both internal and external stakeholders.

23. While UN-Women has had very few reports of SEA and SH in recent years, UN-Women is committed to improving reporting and responses to ensure that there is no impunity and that all personnel feel safe to report. UN-Women notes that this does not only require strong policies and clear mechanisms to be in place, but also changes in organizational culture at UN-Women and throughout the UN system. UN-Women is committed to leading efforts in this area.

24. On confidentiality, the review notes UN-Women's commitment to this principle as a cornerstone of a victim/survivor-centred approach. Nevertheless, the report also highlights practical challenges to maintaining confidentiality due to policy provisions as well as considerations that may ultimately inhibit the willingness of victim/survivors to make reports and trust that their wishes will be honoured.

25. UN-Women notes that regulations governing the obligation to divulge information (i.e. mandatory reporting) in all reported cases of sexual harassment and the lack of guaranteed protection from retaliation for those who report informally are policy barriers to increased reporting. While UN-Women can act to mitigate the issue to some extent, collective efforts to review and improve these system-wide provisions are needed and has implications for the identification and management of risk. The Entity will seek to influence interagency discussions and explore communications with those who report, so that they are mindful of and seek to avoid actual or potential harm.

26. Regarding field capacity, the review encourages UN-Women to increase resources and strengthen the capacity of offices and personnel to operationalize the Entity's policies and procedures on sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment response. While recognizing UN-Women's commitment to establishing a corporate policy framework on these issues, the report recommends that the Entity

invest in the development of operational plans and tools to systematically follow up on commitments and actions taken (including through local anchoring and coordination, the development of local action plans and improved face to face and scenario-based training learning from good practice innovations).

27. UN-Women acknowledges that efforts to support field offices should be increased. Much of the organization's focus in the past year has been on developing and strengthening policies, tools and procedures in coordination with UN system-wide thinking and initiatives. It can now turn to the operationalization of these policies, the building of capacity and coordination on interactive trainings, and the provision of guidance targeted to specific groups (vulnerable groups, bystanders, managers, etc.) and adjusted to local contexts. To date, and in alignment with its regional architecture and decentralization efforts, UN-Women has established regional PSEA focal points as well as regional HR Business partners, who serve as the Entity's first contact point and first line of defence on the ground in relation to possible SEA or SH cases. UN-Women will assess how it can further utilise and capacity build PSEA focal points and HR Business partners in this respect. Moreover, UN-Women has established the role of Workplace Relations Adviser, who among other things, focuses on providing training and producing awareness-raising materials on UN-Women standards of conduct, including SH and SEA.

28. Building on this, UN-Women will aim to provide strengthened guidance to its Country Representatives and will develop appropriate measures to prevent and respond to SEA and SH in partnership other agencies and in coordination with their reporting regional office. Moreover, the Entity will conduct a mapping of existing resources to support their more efficient and effective distribution at global, regional and country-levels.

29. On prevention, the review highlights the need for UN-Women to better manage risk related to sexual harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse by its implementing partners. The report encouraged UN-Women to explore inter-agency cooperation and leverage the learnings of sister agencies (i.e. UNDP or UNOPS) that have successfully implemented assessments and screenings on implementing partner SEA profiles.

30. UN-Women acknowledges the recommendation and is in the process of finalizing the revision of its Due Diligence procedure for selecting Implementing Partners and Responsible Parties to ensure appropriate screening of partners before engagement. UN-Women has reached out to other UN entities to learn of their experience in developing and implementing screening tools and is collaborating with other UN entities in the development of the training for Implementing Partners and Responsible parties.

31. On response, the review noted the importance of regular communication with victims / bystanders / witnesses as a key strategy to reinforce trust in the investigative process and internal systems. UN-Women fully agrees that any rights-based, victim-survivor centered approach should include clear, timely and relevant communications on case progress. Although UN-Women cannot directly impact the frequency and quality of communications for active complaints cases, (as this is under the purview of OIOS), the Entity remains committed to supporting this principle and the highest standards on transparency in any and all of its internal processes related to SEA and SH prevention. Furthermore, a system-wide discussion on this issue is currently being undertaken by the High-Level Task Force on Sexual Harassment Investigations




Working Group. UN-Women is engaged in this process, with a particular focus on victim/survivor-centred approaches.

### III. Management Response Matrix

#	Recommendations	Priority	Status of Management response	Expected timeframe	Management Comments and Plan of Action
1	<p><b><i>Clarify roles and responsibilities</i></b></p> <p>Several interviewees expressed a need for greater coordination and monitoring of the distribution of roles and responsibilities, and the ownership of policy and procedures in order to ensure that all concerns and risks related to SEA and SH are adequately mitigated, while bureaucracy and duplication of work do not occur in a setting where resources are already stretched. This in turn entails a need for clarity as to where the actual ownership, related accountability, authority, and capacity lie in relation to policy and specific supporting activities to implement it in order to ensure clear and formalized governance of the SH and SEA effort. It is recommended that UN-Women follow up on this in the short term to reach consensus on formalized roles and responsibilities for the SH and SEA initiatives. This should result in the issuance of a formalized organizational chart for the responsibilities and resources allocated to both SH and SEA efforts, to be shared with all personnel.</p>	●	Agreed	Q3 2019	<p>UN-Women accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>The organization commits to reviewing the work done by all internal stakeholders in this area (accountabilities, authority and capacity) and clarify roles, responsibilities at the organizational level and ensure that the clarity resulting from this exercise is shared with personnel through, among other things, an organizational chart.</p>
2	<p><b><i>Reinforce accountability</i></b></p> <p>The need to assert and manifest accountability to all relevant internal and external stakeholders has been one of the main challenges flagged by UN-Women personnel during the interviews conducted. Ensuring personnel's trust in the internal setup to manage reported SEA and SH cases is critical. As previously mentioned in the Observations section, a number of interviewees stated that policies are in place and quite clear on the zero tolerance of SH and SEA, and that UN-</p>	●	Agreed	Ongoing	<p>UN-Women accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>A number of mechanisms already exist within UN-Women to support transparency and provide information and updates on allegations of SEA and SH reported to OIOS, outcomes of any investigations into the allegations and subsequent action taken in cases where the allegations were substantiated by an investigation. These include the quarterly report by the Secretary-General on all allegations of</p>

	<p>Women should continue to make an effort to show that this is indeed the case. To ensure this, UN-Women may consider increasing transparency (beyond the annual audit, investigation, and disciplinary reports to the Executive Board) as to the number of cases reported/investigated and their potential outcomes, while of course still maintaining the required level of confidentiality. This could include more targeted and regular (e.g. quarterly) communication to the personnel to update them on progress and reiterate the message of zero tolerance as suggested by interviewees. Overall, it is recommended that a focused effort be initiated to provide a clear direction and demonstration of practice to reinforce accountability and sustain trust in the internal system.</p>				<p>SEA, the management letter by the ED on SH and SEA, the Annual Report on the Internal Audit and Investigation functions, as well as the report on disciplinary decisions and other action taken in response to finding of misconduct and wrongdoing.</p> <p>UN-Women will ensure that information is disseminated widely to all personnel with the aim to strengthen trust in corporate systems for SEA and SH response, while ensuring the probity and confidentiality of any investigation, ensure the safety and security of all persons and respect the due process rights of all involved.</p>
3	<p><b>Ensure sufficient resources in the field</b> For most members of the personnel working with SH and SEA initiatives at regional and local levels, these tasks are part of their day-to-day responsibilities. However, they must balance them with other focus areas of their respective job descriptions. In this regard, it might be relevant to (re)consider the time allocated to operational tasks against the time spent on actual development and implementation of SH and SEA efforts in the field in order to ensure adequate allocation and prioritization of resources at regional and country-office levels.</p>	●	Agreed	Q2 2020	<p>UN-Women takes note of this recommendation.</p> <p>The time and resources required to perform SEA and SH related tasks depend greatly on the size and complexity of the office and mechanisms in place in each location, including through interagency partnerships.</p> <p>In order to better support personnel engaged in SEA and SH prevention and response, UN-Women will conduct a full mapping of existing resources in these two areas. The findings from this exercise will then inform a more efficient and effective distribution of capacity at global, regional and country levels.</p>
4	<p><b>Ensure local anchoring and coordination</b> To align procedures and practices across UN-Women, it is recommended that the organization increase its focus on coordinating efforts across geographical locations. This does not imply setting up e.g. a whole new taskforce structure, but greater cross-border coordination should help ensure that regional and country offices are empowered to adapt content</p>	●	Agreed	Ongoing	<p>UN-Women takes note of this recommendation.</p> <p>In support of increased internal coordination and coherence on SEA and SH response, UN-Women will continue to leverage its existing internal coordination group on addressing Sexual Harassment. Convened by the Executive Coordinator on Addressing Sexual Harassment on a weekly basis, the group is composed of</p>

	<p>and activities developed at the headquarters to their local contexts and languages, while also ensuring that the overall strategic and operational directions are aligned across the organization, and that knowledge is shared on an ongoing basis. It is recommended that UN-Women arrange regular meetings to provide a platform to personnel working with SEA and SH initiatives to give them the opportunity to exchange ideas across borders and jointly develop material and activities, which is likely to foster a greater sense of collaboration as well as a sense of interconnectedness across the organization. It may also be more cost-effective. It is also recommended that a decision be made on the frequency of meetings held by the headquarters, regional, and country offices to ensure timely communication of relevant dialogues and decisions.</p>				<p>representatives from Headquarters and field offices, and includes members of the UN Women Youth Council and the UN Feminist Network. This mechanism will continue its outreach to internal stakeholders, broaden its membership and promote exchange and collaboration between UN-Women units/offices.</p> <p>UN-Women will make efforts to better support field offices so that adequate resources are available on SEA and SH response in all UN Women locations. It will engage with country-level coordination mechanisms (via the UN Country Teams) in order to share good practices, resources (i.e. trainings, awareness raising campaigns).</p> <p>To date, and in alignment with its regional architecture and decentralization efforts, UN-Women has established regional PSEA focal points as well as regional HR Business partners, who serve as the Entity's first contact point and first line of defense on the ground in relation to SEA or SH. UN-Women will assess how it can further utilize and build the capacity of PSEA focal points and HR Business partners in this respect.</p>
5	<p><b><i>Focus on face-to-face and scenario-based training</i></b>  Even though UN-Women has a set of mandatory e-learning sessions in place, it might be useful to consider implementing more face-to-face, repetitive, and scenario-based training sessions which are geared towards ensuring behavioural change as an outcome of the mandatory training. The current training setup with online training may not make a sufficient impact, as it might merely become a check-the-box exercise to ensure compliance and thus an opportunity for the organization to discharge its liability. Furthermore,</p>	●	Agreed	Q3 2019 / Ongoing	<p>UN-Women accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that much of UN-Women's focus in the past year has been on developing and strengthening policies, tools and procedures in coordination with UN system wide thinking and initiatives. UN-Women has invested in creating the laying the necessary foundations (i.e. policies and people) to increasingly deliver on SEA and SH prevention at country level and at scale.</p>

	<p>some interviewees said that the training developed at a corporate level might be too generic and theoretical to ensure that they have an actual operational value in the field. UN-Women should consider doing this together with other UN agencies, especially at regional and country-office levels, in order to reduce costs.</p> <p>It is understood that guidelines on effective SH training are in the pipeline at UN-Women.</p>				<p>The Entity’s focus can now turn to the operationalization of these policies, clarifying concepts, building capacity and coordination of interactive trainings, guidance targeted to specific groups (vulnerable groups, bystanders, managers etc.) and adjusted to the local context in partnership with other agencies, UN Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams. UN-Women’s Security Awareness Training is a good example of this approach and has been delivered to personnel across the UN System.</p> <p>Consultations and webinars on SH with country and regional offices have already provided tailored support to country-specific contexts, including on promising practices. In addition, UN-Women is developing best practice guidance on effective training on sexual harassment. Intended primarily as guidance for UN System and external partners, this document will be published in August 2019, by the office of the Executive Coordinator on Addressing Sexual Harassment.</p> <p>In 2017, UN-Women established the role of Workplace Relations Adviser which among other things, focuses on providing training and producing awareness-raising materials on UN-Women standards of conduct; guiding personnel on reporting misconduct, including sexual misconduct (SH and SEA); and managing the informal process for reporting sexual harassment. These trainings include scenario-based exercises on both SEA and SH. Moving forward, UN-Women will continue to deliver this curriculum to personnel on an as needed basis.</p>
<p><b>6</b></p>	<p><b><i>Maintain confidentiality</i></b> Many interviewees have pointed to the two dimensions of confidentiality in relation to</p>		<p>Agreed</p>	<p>Ongoing / Q4 2019</p>	<p>UN-Women accepts this recommendation.</p>


	<p>investigations. There appears to be a strong consensus that the involved parties' confidentiality – victims, witnesses, and alleged perpetrators alike - must be protected, not least in order to reinforce a victim-centred approach. However, this might pose a challenge in practice, especially in situations where the allegations come from a small office/team, which in turn might raise concerns in terms of upholding confidentiality and preventing rumours from catching on internally. On the other hand, confidentiality can also indirectly impede a preventive effort, while the investigation is ongoing. UN-Women might consider reaffirming its clear position on this important aspect to promote the personnel's perception that confidentiality is being enforced in practice.</p>				<p>UN-Women recognises the delicate balance between maintaining confidentiality (including when requested by victim/survivors) while investigations are ongoing, in order to preserve the integrity of the process, and preventative efforts. UN-Women will ensure that this balance is adequately addressed in its revised policy framework.</p>
7	<p><b><i>Develop local action plans</i></b> While recommendation no. 4 concerns coordination across UN-Women, we also recommend that local action plans be developed for SH and SEA work at a regional/country-office level (in coordination with the headquarters) to ensure greater local anchoring of efforts. The formulation and implementation of these action plans could provide the organization with an operational tool to systematically follow up on commitments and actions taken, while enabling local ownership and establishing accountability at an appropriate level.</p>	●	Agreed	Q4 2020 / Ongoing	<p>UN-Women accepts this recommendation. The Entity is committed to continuing its work to capacitate country offices in order to better respond to SH and SEA.</p> <p>On the basis of guidance received from HQ and regional offices, Country Representatives will develop appropriate measures, including action plans, to prevent and respond to SEA and SH in partnership with other agencies and in coordination with their regional office.</p> <p>Depending on the local context, UN-Women specific measures and / or plans could be part of a larger UNCT action plan, under the aegis of the Resident Coordinator.</p> <p>UN-Women will also assess risks around SEA and SH as part of its enterprise risk management process.</p>
8	<p><b><i>Maintain a victim-centred approach</i></b> UN-Women's aspiration to push the SH and SEA agenda on a conceptual and societal level may pose</p>	●	Agreed	Ongoing	<p>UN-Women accepts this recommendation.</p>

<p>a challenge in terms of what is possible on a practical, short-term basis internally in relation to available resources and UN general practices, which might impede a systemic change. UN-Women has already launched many activities to support a victim-centred approach, such as providing mandatory training and ongoing communication related to SEA and SH, providing multiple reporting mechanisms to victims, removing the statute of limitations to reporting, and enabling anonymous and third-party reporting of allegations. While UN-Women already has a significant focus on upholding a victim-centred approach, it is recommended that the organization work towards ensuring a shared and comprehensive understanding of what the term victim-centred approach implies, especially with regard to making the concept more tangible and operational in terms of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Adapting training to local offices' context;</li> <li>- Offering a broader variety of resolution opportunities, for instance, through implementation of so-called "peer support groups", which are currently being piloted in the Asia-Pacific region;</li> <li>- Ensuring that the right competencies, resources, and capabilities are in place within the investigations team to meet and deal with the victims;</li> <li>- Ensuring fairness and due process in investigations for both the victim and the alleged perpetrator; and</li> <li>- Ensuring a local assistance setup to provide support tailored to the victims' individual needs.</li> </ul>			<p>UN-Women will continue to leverage internal and external resources in order to further strengthen corporate capacity to maintain a victim-centered approach in all SEA and SH prevention and response efforts.</p> <p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Aide Memoires developed by UNDSS for each UN Country Office containing local information for support to personnel affected by gender-based violence, including psychosocial support.</li> <li>- Mapping of victim assistance mechanisms, as completed by the IASC and the Victim's Rights Advocate</li> </ul> <p>UN-Women is exploring the possibility of establishing voluntary peer support groups.</p> <p>The office of the Executive Coordinator on Sexual Harassment is developing a set of standards on victim-centred approaches. This document will capture global good practices which will also inform UN-Women's own work.</p> <p>UN-Women will also review its policies to ensure that they support reporting in a way that is in line with the wishes of the victim/survivor. UN-Women will also seek to more actively leverage the role of the Ombudsman and Ethics Office, which can play a supportive role.</p> <p>OIOS as UN Women's independent investigations provider has indicated to UN Women that it has in place specific competencies, procedures, resources and capabilities to handle SEA and SH to meet and deal with victims/survivors, as well as to ensure fairness and due process for both the victim/survivor and the alleged perpetrator. OIOS has informed UN Women that these are</p>
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					currently being reviewed and enhanced as part of system-wide efforts on SH.
9	<p><b><i>Increase focus on implementing partners</i></b></p> <p>Other organizations in the UN are in the process of designing and implementing a screening tool to assess implementing partners prior to engagement start for, among other things, their SEA risk profiles. If the implementing partner does not meet the requirements of SEA prevention and response, this is flagged as a risk which needs to be further assessed and managed. Within the UN system, UN-Women may consider reaching out to e.g. UNDP or UNOPS to learn about their experience of developing and implementing their screening tools. Once the implementing partners are engaged, we recommend that UN-Women consider establishing training tailored to implementing partners to raise awareness about UN-Women's expectations as to how their personnel conduct themselves in relation to the risk of SEA.</p>	●	Agreed	Ongoing	UN-Women accepts the recommendation and is in the process of finalizing the revision of its Due Diligence procedure for selecting Implementing Partners and Responsible Parties to ensure appropriate screening of partners before engagement. UN-Women has reached out to other UN entities to learn of their experience in developing and implementing screening tools and is collaborating with other UN entities in the development of the training for Implementing Partners and Responsible parties.
10	<p><b><i>Ensure ongoing communication on case progress to victims</i></b></p> <p>Following the victim-centred approach (and recommendation no. 8), it is recommended that, during investigation, victims be provided with a clear timeline at the beginning of the formal case process to help them manage expectations in terms of when a case will be finalized and to prevent the perception that a case might take years to resolve. Furthermore, it is recommended that victims/bystanders be provided with brief status updates on a regular basis and upon conclusion of the investigation, without this impeding the investigative process, in order to reinforce confidence in the process and the internal system.</p>	●	Agreed	Ongoing	<p>UN-Women takes note of this recommendation and fully agrees that any rights-based, victim-survivor centered approach should include clear, timely and relevant communications on case progress.</p> <p>Although UN-Women cannot directly impact the frequency and quality of communications for active complaints cases, (as this is under the purview of OIOS), the Entity remains committed to supporting this principle and the highest standards on transparency in any and all of its internal processed related to SEA and SH prevention.</p> <p>Furthermore, a system-wide discussion on this issue is currently being undertaken by the High-Level Task Force on Sexual Harassment Investigations Working Group. UN-Women is</p>



					engaged in this process, in particular on victim-centred approaches
11	<p><b><i>Know your rights</i></b></p> <p>Creating awareness about the personnel’s rights might be a valuable first step in promoting a culture change with emphasis on openness, security and equality and breaking down perceptions of the working environment within UN-Women. It is recommended that all personnel and particularly the members of personnel deemed to be more exposed to the risk of SH and SEA, i.e. non-staff, contractors, volunteers, interns, and junior members of staff, be informed of their rights and how to claim them when first onboarded into the organization and then on a regular basis to ensure greater awareness. Furthermore, it is relevant to extend the effort to raise awareness and knowledge of the individual’s rights as well as the reporting mechanisms available among the potentially affected local populations.</p>	●	Agreed	Ongoing	<p>UN-Women accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>UN-Women remains committed to creating and strengthening an enabling environment in which every member of personnel is aware of their respective rights, responsibilities, obligations and protections in relation to SEA and SH.</p> <p>UN-Women will continue to ensure that all new personnel, regardless of contract type, receives a UN-Women orientation package (including standards of conduct and information on policies related to misconduct) and requirements for the first 6 months of service, including completion of mandatory courses (which provides the basic information on rights and channels) and responses on “where to go for what”. Moreover, the Entity is committed to ensuring regular updates of its intranet page to enhance the accessibility of this information.</p> <p>UN-Women will also invest in the production of new and improved rights-based and victim-survivor centered content on SEA and SH prevention. It will continue to partner with the PSEA task team of the Interagency Standing Committee in order to deliver high-quality and context specific outreach and awareness materials.</p> <p>The Executive Coordinator on addressing SH is also developing innovative tools/initiatives to support awareness-raising about rights and responsibilities and support UN-Women’s rights-based approach to addressing SH.</p>

<p><b>12</b></p>	<p><b><i>Review policies and procedures</i></b>  UN-Women has a few main policies governing SEA and SH as well as a substantial number of supporting documents in the form of procedural documents and guidelines to ensure that they cover the key risks related to SEA and SH. For these policy and procedural documents, it is recommended that the communication be revisited to simplify it where possible and ensure that the documents are clear and understandable to personnel across UN-Women.  It might also be relevant to consider how to provide greater conceptual clarity and alignment of the definitions and wording of the concepts, e.g. the distinction between SH and SEA.  It is furthermore recommended that UN-Women verify that the personnel are fully aware of and able to understand the procedures relevant to them, and that communication to the broader organizational audience be targeted and simplified, so that e.g. short versions of policies/procedures with graphics as well as supporting visual communication are made available in the office space. It may also be relevant to consider how to ensure that procedures contain clear and auditable criteria to enable reporting of progress and ensure traceability of actions.</p>		<p>Agreed</p>	<p>Q4 2019</p>	<p>UN-Women accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>UN-Women is in the process of revising its policy framework with the goals of consolidation, simplification and conceptual clarity.</p> <p>UN-Women will aim to keep the policy short, clear and understandable, and where necessary will supplement the policy framework with brief, concise “how to” tools, illustrated with graphics or other easily understood formats. The policy framework will also set out clearly the applicable roles, responsibilities and accountability lines.</p> <p>In addition, the SEA Policy is currently being reviewed at the inter-agency level and the new/amended policy will be applied System-wide.</p>
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