

## **Background Note: Briefing to the Executive Board, Annual Session 2021**

### **“Update on the implementation of recommendations contained in the independent victim-centred review of UN-Women's policies and procedures on tackling sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment and as noted in the related management response”**

#### **I. Introduction**

1. Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) and Sexual Harassment (SH) are deeply rooted in power imbalance and gender inequalities and as such, constitute forms of sexual violence and fundamental violations of human rights. As the UN entity for gender equality and the empowerment of women, UN-Women condemns SEA and SH as profound betrayals of our values. UN-Women is thus not only deeply committed to the elimination of all forms of SEA and SH but also resolutely pursues the highest standards of policies, processes, and systems to ensure effective prevention of and response to SEA and SH across the organization.
2. In April 2019, as per Executive Board decision (2018/3), UN-Women engaged in an independent and victim-centred review of its policies and procedures to tackle both forms of sexual misconduct. During the Executive Board 2019 Annual Session, UN-Women welcomed and accepted all the presented recommendations and committed to take the actions required to implement them.
3. In June 2020, during the Executive Board's 2020 Annual Session, UN-Women presented its update on the implementation of the recommendations, making known that the entity was able to complete 60% of the recommendations. Since then, UN-Women has continued to work diligently to honor the remaining commitments.
4. This background paper outlines the actions taken to complete the implementation of the outstanding 40% of the recommendations contained in the independent victim-centred review of UN-Women's policies and processes on tackling SEA and SH over the past year, a summary of which is provided in the updated management response matrix.
5. While the fulfillment of all commitments to realize the recommendations represents a milestone achievement for the strengthening of UN-Women's response to SEA and SH, we will continue to push to further improve our mechanisms to effectively address all forms of sexual misconduct, building on the lessons learned from the implementation of the recommendations.
6. The Executive Board may wish to: (i) take note of the final update of the implementation of recommendations contained in the independent review of UN-Women's policies and procedures to tackle SEA and SH; (ii) welcome the completion of the implementation of all recommendations by UN-Women; and (iii) continue to support the Entity's ongoing strong commitment to address and eliminate SEA and SH.

#### **II. Key Updates**

7. During the 2020 Executive Board Annual Session, UN-Women reported significant progress, ranging from strengthening its governance and policy structure to streamlining its accountability mechanism, in the implementation of the recommendations of the independent victim-centred review of its policies and procedures to tackle SEA and SH. Building on these achievements, UN-Women was able to

focus its efforts for the past year on the operationalization of its SEA and SH framework across all levels of the organization, allowing it to meet the remaining commitments and complete the implementation of all recommendations.

8. To maximize effectiveness and relevance for the different operational contexts, UN-Women prioritized leveraging existing resources and capacities in its regional and country offices from previously undertaken work on SEA and SH.

9. It is further important to note that UN-Women seeks to ensure a coordinated application of processes, cohesive to its regional and country offices, while also guaranteeing alignment with the UN system-wide approach and the collective PSEA strategy and in-country action plan overseen by the respective UN Country team (UNCT).

10. For these reasons, UN-Women designed a series of operationalization efforts, targeting its PSEA and SH country and regional focal points. Among these efforts, the organization established a network of SEA and SH focal points to put in place an informal, internal coordination mechanism for UN-Women's work on addressing sexual misconduct. To provide a space for exchange and peer-learning for all members of this network, UN-Women additionally created a Community of Practice, where it also made available all key tools and resources for their easy access. The information received from the focal points for the internal SEA and SH resource mapping exercise was used to perform a gap analysis, based on which a SEA and SH resource management plan, aiding a more efficient and effective distribution of capacities, was developed. Additionally, as the focal points expressed a need for practical guidance on how to successfully tackle SH, UN-Women HR developed a template for a UN-Women SH action plan. This template is in line with the updated policy on Prevention of Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Discrimination, and Abuse of Authority which foresees the development of local actions plans to prevent and respond to prohibited conduct.

11. Furthermore, the previously mentioned mapping and gap analysis exercise had revealed a need for capacity reinforcement for two-thirds of UN-Women SEA and SH focal points. Therefore, UN-Women designed a workshop to address this gap. To ensure an engaging learning experience, this workshop included a variety of case scenarios designed specifically for the UN-Women contexts, interactive learning activities, guest speakers from key PSEA stakeholders within UN-Women and within the wider UN system, as well as presentations of best practices from UN-Women colleagues.

12. By empowering its SEA and SH focal points with the necessary resources and capacities, they are not only able to significantly facilitate the operationalization of UN-Women's SEA and SH framework in their regional and country offices, but also able to represent and position UN-Women in inter-agency initiatives in their respective locations, thus contributing to and reinforcing the UN-wide efforts.

13. To strengthen and assist UN-wide efforts from the headquarters level, UN-Women has also further expanded its active role in the UN working group on SEA and the Chief Executive Board (CEB) Task Force on Addressing Sexual Harassment within the Organizations of the UN System. This participation allowed UN-Women to additionally ensure robust alignment of its efforts with the UN system wide PSEA and SH strategies and their operationalization.

14. UN-Women remains fully committed to addressing SH both internally within UN-Women and the UN system and externally through its advocacy, policy work and global initiatives. Recognizing the importance of continuing its work on SH, UN-Women also allocated dedicated special resources to prevent and respond to SH from Human Resources and policy perspectives.

15. Furthermore, as a member of the CEB Task Force on Addressing SH, UN-Women contributes to several activities that raise awareness of UN personnel at large on their rights in relation to SH. More specifically, UN-Women's Deputy Executive Director, Anita Bhatia, co-leads "Work Stream Four: Outreach and Knowledge Sharing". Through this engagement, the CEB Task Force is working to take concrete actions to achieve results through hosting peer-to-peer learning dialogues with Member States and external partners, setting up a

knowledge sharing hub and crafting video messages, showcasing leadership commitment, and fostering transparency and accountability on this issue across the UN system. Additionally, UN-Women provides regular technical advice to “Work Stream Two: Advancing a Victim-Centred Approach to Tackling Sexual Harassment”, “Work Stream Three: Learning and Communication”, and “Work Stream Five: Leadership and Culture”. The work of these workstreams includes: the provision of awareness raising material on prevention of and response to sexual harassment, which will also encompass materials suitable for the current work environment and communications to build a common understanding of the main principles of a victim-centred approach to sexual harassment; the fostering of learning and communication; as well as the promotion of culture change to address and ultimately eliminate sexual harassment in the UN and beyond



16. In addition, as UN-Women personnel are expected to abide by the organization’s standards of conduct that prohibit all forms of sexual misconduct, UN-Women focused its efforts on raising awareness around their rights, responsibilities, available support services and providing training that promotes behavioral change.


17. After having undertaken a benchmarking exercise against other UN entities as well as leading INGOs, UN-Women developed scenario-based trainings for addressing SEA and SH to complement and contextualize the mandatory online training for both topics. The case scenarios used were specifically created for the UN-Women contexts to maximize relevance and relatability of the training. UN-Women piloted the two trainings in 4 country offices and the feedback received was used to improve upon the content and methodology. UN-Women HR, with the help of SEA and SH focal points and Human Resources Business Partners, is coordinating the rollout of these workshops across the organization, using a training-of-trainers approach so that farthest reach can be achieved. Throughout the development of scenario-based training and capacity building workshops for our focal points, UN-Women has been actively engaging with other UN agencies on personnel training.


18. To complement the awareness raising achieved by the scenario-based trainings, UN-Women undertook a variety of initiatives promoting greater knowledge of rights among its personnel. These measures include a multi-phased communications campaign on the updated policy on Prevention of Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Discrimination, and Abuse of Authority, with personnel rights and obligations at its centre, to be conducted over the whole year of 2021. UN-Women also hosted the 2020 UN Leadership Dialogue Programme “Acknowledging Dignity through Civility” to drive a robust culture of ethics within the organization that contributes to an environment in which dignity and respect are the norms, free from sexual misconduct. Moreover, UN-Women used a variety of communication channels, including email, Yammer, and the internal update newsletter to inform its personnel on guidance and support services such as counseling services and resources for personnel well-being.


19. In light of all these actions, UN-Women believes that it has fully implemented all the recommendations from the independent victim-centred review.


### III. Updates Management Response Matrix

	Recommendations	Priority	Management Comments and Plan of Action	Status	Update May 2021
1	<p><b>Clarify roles and responsibilities</b> 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.</p> <p>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>		<p>UN-Women accepts this recommendation. 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>	Completed in 2020. For details on actions taken, see Background Note, Annual Session 2020.	N/A.
2	<p><b>Reinforce accountability</b> 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.</p> <p>Ensuring personnel’s trust in the internal setup to manage reported SEA and SH</p>		<p>UN-Women accepts this recommendation. 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</p>	Completed in 2020. For details on actions taken, see Background Note, Annual Session 2020.	N/A.


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	<p>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-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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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>substantiated by an investigation. These include the quarterly report by the Secretary-General on all allegations of 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><i>Ensure sufficient resources in the field</i></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</p>		<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. 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</p>	Completed.	<p>UN-Women conducted a mapping of its internal resources to address SEA and SH in its regional and country offices, based on the results of which a gap analysis was additionally performed.</p> <p>Building on the findings from this exercise, UN-Women developed a SEA and SH resource management plan, aiming at a more efficient and effective distribution of capacities across all organizational levels.</p>


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	allocation and prioritization of resources at regional and country- office levels.		more efficient and effective distribution of capacity at global, regional, and country levels.		With the above, UN-Women believes that the recommendation can be closed.
4	<p><b><i>Ensure local anchoring and coordination</i></b> To align procedures and practices across UN- Women, it is recommended that the organization increase its focus on coordinating efforts across geographical locations.</p> <p>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 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.</p> <p>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>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 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-</p>	Completed.	<p>UN-Women's internal taskforce on addressing SH has continued to meet on a regular basis, under the shared leadership of the Executive Director's Office and the Executive Board Secretariat. The exchange among the different key stakeholders ensures coordination of all SH efforts.</p> <p>Furthermore, in addition to the above explained actions targeting SEA and SH resources (for details, see recommendation 3), UN-Women undertook a series of efforts to provide regional and country offices the support they require to effectively respond to SEA and SH:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- UN-Women established a network of PSEA and SH focal points to serve as a closer and more informal coordination mechanisms among personnel working on SEA and SH.</li> <li>- UN-Women created a Community of Practice for the PSEA and SH focal point network, providing a space to exchange, collect and leverage knowledge and information on SEA and SH, share resources, collaborate, and engage in peer-learning.</li> <li>- UN-Women designed and facilitated a 3 half-day, scenario-based capacity building workshop for PSEA focal points to provide them with an in-depth understanding of SEA, clarify their roles and responsibilities, and exchange experiences and best practices.</li> <li>- UN-Women put together a kit with key SEA and SH tools and made it accessible for personnel working on those issues in one</li> </ul>



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			Women will assess how it can further utilize and build the capacity of PSEA focal points and HR Business partners in this respect.		centralized location, within the community of practice space.  With the above, UN-Women believes that the recommendation can be closed.
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.</p> <p>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, 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>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>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</p>	Completed.	<p>After conducting a literature review of existing SEA and SH trainings from other UN entities as well as leading INGOs, UN-Women developed interactive, face-to-face trainings for SEA and SH, using scenarios specifically created for UN-Women contexts, accompanied by facilitator guidelines and participant handouts.</p> <p>UN-Women has successfully conducted pilot trainings on SEA and SH in 4 country offices each and UN-Women HR, with the help of focal points and HRBPs, is coordinating the rollout of the trainings across the organization. Feedback collected after each session will be used to continuously improve the trainings to ensure maximum relevance and operational value.</p> <p>Moreover, as mentioned in recommendation 4, UN-Women designed and facilitated a 3 half-day, scenario-based capacity building workshop specifically for PSEA focal points. To additionally ensure alignment with the UN system wide PSEA strategy and its UNCT operationalization, UN-Women invited speakers from the Victims' Rights Advocate, the UN Development Coordination Office, and the Office of the Special Coordinator for improving the UN response to SEA. Focal points from all regions participated, and a similar workshop will be planned for the second half of 2021.</p>


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			<p>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>Furthermore, UN-Women has been actively engaging with other UN agencies in training efforts for UN personnel, as a member of the UN system-wide SEA Working Group and the CEB Taskforce on Addressing SH – inter-alia Workstream 3: Learning and Communication-, to complement the mandatory online trainings. In the specific context of the work of CEB Taskforce Workstream 3, UN-Women’s publications “What will it take? Promoting Cultural Change to End Sexual Harassment” and “Stepping up to the challenge: towards international standards on training to end sexual harassment”, respectively published in 2019 and 2020, are being considered as reference documents.</p> <p>In addition, UN-Women co-lead, together with UNFPA, IOM, and UNICEF, the inter-agency PSEA focal point training, held in March 2021 for the Senegal inter-agency PSEA network.</p> <p>With the above, UN-Women believes that the recommendation can be closed.</p>
6	<p><b><i>Maintain confidentiality</i></b></p> <p>Many interviewees have pointed to the two dimensions of confidentiality in relation to 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</p>		<p>UN-Women accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>UN-Women recognizes 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>	<p>Completed in 2020. For details on actions taken, see Background Note, Annual Session 2020.</p>	<p>N/A.</p>




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	<p>other hand, confidentiality can also indirectly impede a preventive effort, while the investigation is ongoing.</p> <p>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>				
7	<p><b><i>Develop local action plans</i></b></p> <p>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>		<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. 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. 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. UN-Women will also assess risks around SEA and SH as part of its enterprise risk management process.</p>	Completed.	<p>The updated policy on Prevention of Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Discrimination and Abuse of Authority states that regional directors and country representatives “<i>may develop local action plans to prevent and respond to prohibited conduct in partnership with other UN entities and in coordination with their regional office.</i>” In response thereof, UN-Women HR developed a template for a UN-Women action plan to tackle sexual harassment, building on best practices from other UN entities and INGOs to guide the creation and implementation of such action plans at regional and country office levels.</p> <p>In parallel, local PSEA action plans have been developed since 2020, under the auspices of the Resident Coordinators, within the respective UNCT and in-country network efforts. UN-Women HR also continues to support PSEA focal points for the development thereof, where needed.</p> <p>SEA and SH risks are being assessed within UN-Women's Enterprise Risk Framework since the inclusion of two respective risk labels in the entity's standardized risk register in Q3 2019.</p> <p>With the above, UN-Women believes that the recommendation can be closed.</p>

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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 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.</p> <p>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> </ul>		<p>UN-Women accepts this recommendation.</p> <p>UN-Women will continue to leverage internal and external resources in order to further strengthen corporate capacity to maintain a victim-centred approach in all SEA and SH prevention and response efforts. 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.- 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 SH 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</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., which can play a supportive role.</p>	<p>Completed in 2020.  For details on actions taken, see Background Note, Annual Session 2020.</p>	<p>N/A.</p>

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	- Ensuring a local assistance setup to provide support tailored to the victims' individual needs.		OIOS has informed UN-Women that these are currently being reviewed and enhanced as part of system-wide efforts on SH.		
9	<p><b><i>Increase focus on implementing partners</i></b>  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>		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.	Completed in 2020. For details on actions taken, see Background Note, Annual Session 2020.	N/A.
10	<p><b><i>Ensure ongoing communication on case progress to victims</i></b>  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</p>		<p>UN-Women takes note of this recommendation and fully agrees that any rights-based, victim- survivor centred 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</p>	Completed in 2020. For details on actions taken, see Background Note, Annual Session 2020.	N/A.

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	upon conclusion of the investigation, without this impeding the investigative process, in order to reinforce confidence in the process and the internal system.		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, in particular on victim- centred approaches.		
11	<b><i>Know your rights</i></b> 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.		UN-Women accepts this recommendation.  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.  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.  UN-Women will also invest in the production of new and improved rights-based and victim- survivor centred 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	Completed.	UN-Women continues to provide all new hires with a welcome email and link to the new hire intranet page. New hires can find various documents that provides more information on their rights including the policy on the Prevention of Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Discrimination, and Abuse of Authority and the accompanying role-based guidelines on sexual harassment for supervisors, alleged perpetrators and affected persons, and the Secretary-General's Bulletin on Special Measures for protection from SEA (ST/SGB/2003/13). Additionally, new hires are informed of the mandatory courses and responses on "where to go for what".  For 2021, UN-Women designed a multi-phased awareness raising campaign for the updated policy on Prevention of Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Discrimination, and Abuse of Authority, with personnel rights and obligations at its centre. The first phase is being implemented. UN-Women further rolled out the 2020 UN Leadership Dialogue Programme "Acknowledging Dignity through Civility", designed to drive a robust culture of ethics within the organization that contributes to an environment where dignity and respect are the norms, free from sexual misconduct. Moreover, UN-Women used a variety of

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			<p>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>communication channels, including email, Yammer, and the internal update newsletter to advise its personnel on guidance and support services, such as counseling and well-being.</p> <p>Furthermore, as a member of the CEB Task Force on Addressing SH, UN-Women contributes to several activities that will help increase awareness of UN personnel at large on their rights in relation to SH. UN-Women’s Deputy Executive Director Anita Bhatia co-leads the Work Stream Four: Outreach and Knowledge Sharing and is working to achieve concrete action and results through hosting peer to peer learning dialogues with Member States and external partners, setting up a knowledge sharing hub and crafting video messages, showcasing leadership commitment, and fostering transparency and accountability on this issue across the UN system. Furthermore, UN-Women provides regular technical advice as a member to Work Stream Two: Advancing a Victim-Centred Approach to Tackling Sexual Harassment, Work Stream Three: Learning and Communication, and Work Stream Five: Leadership and Culture. The work of these workstreams includes: the provision of awareness raising material on prevention and response to sexual harassment, which will also encompass material suitable for the current work environment, and communications aimed at advancing a common understanding of main principles of a victim centred approach in in cases of sexual harassment; the fostering of learning and communication; as well as the promotion of culture change to address and ultimately eliminate sexual harassment in the UN and beyond.</p>

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					With the above, UN-Women believes that the recommendation can be closed.
12	<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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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</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.</p> <p>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>	Completed in 2020. For details on actions taken, see Background Note, Annual Session 2020.	N/A.