

Report of the Ethics Office of UNICEF for 2023

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UNICEF Executive Board – Informal briefing – 23 May 2024

Item 11: Report of the Ethics Office of UNICEF for 2023

Reference document: E/ICEF/2024/18



01. Ethics Office's Mandate



**POLICY INPUT TO
SENIOR
MANAGEMENT**



**TRAINING AND
OUTREACH**



**CONFIDENTIAL
GUIDANCE AND
ADVICE**



**CONFLICT OF
INTEREST
FINANCIAL
DISCLOSURE
PROGRAMME**



**PROTECTION
AGAINST
RETALIATION**

02. Resource and Operating Constraints

- Executive Board decision 2022/14 reiterated decision of 2020/19 requesting UNICEF to provide sufficient financial and human resources to the Ethics Office. Also requested the Ethics Office to continue to report on adequacy of resources.
- Recent MTR provided additional funding from savings for remaining 2 years of budget cycle in relation to regularising a senior post established in 2023 and two existing posts which were upgraded.



03. Key Milestones for 2023

In 2023, the Ethics Office met and, in many areas, exceeded its objectives for the year

1. Reaching a level of organizational maturity and strategically shifting work from transactional/demand driven to outcomes and impact

Work shifted through: aligning with desired impact, scanning and detecting coverage gaps; deepening engagement for desired outcomes and taking preventive measures for early detection of ethical risks. Specific teams/offices targeted for deeper diagnostics and root cause analysis before engaging.

2. Continuing to serve as Trusted Advisor to staff and management at all levels

Demand for confidential ethics advice continued to increase by 24.8% with more complex subject matters. Noting encouraging trend that almost two thirds (65.1 per cent) of matters were from field offices, compared with 52.3 per cent in 2022 and 38 per cent in 2021, helping bridge perceived gap between “ethics at the centre” and “ethics in the periphery”.

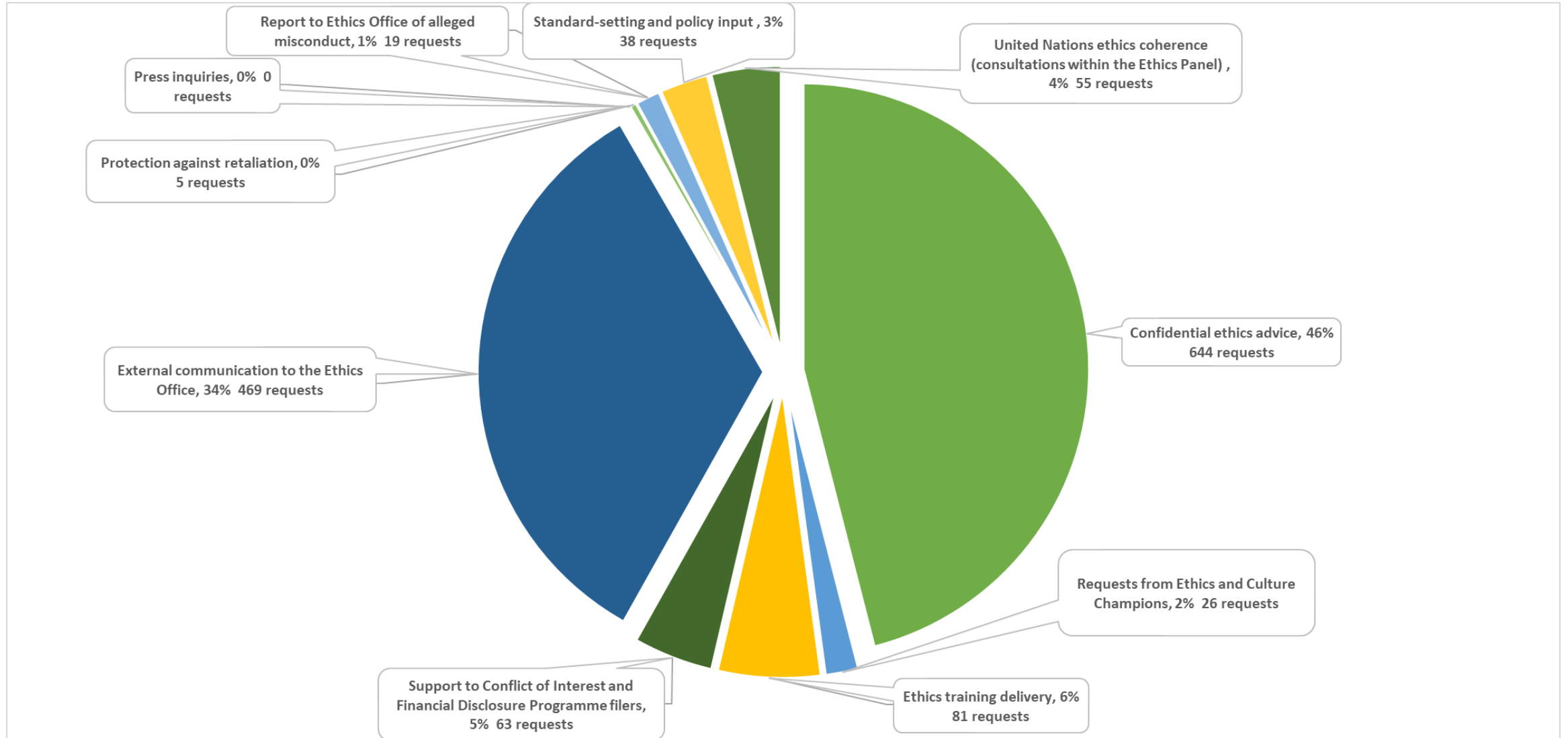
3. Strengthening and sustaining an ethical and values-based culture with a positive trajectory in impact of activities

Broadened and deepened training, outreach and awareness raising through targeted and customized engagements with focus on higher risk groups. Piloted new engagements: coordinated regional approach, targeted facilitated conversations on core values and deep dives into ethical leadership and political activity. Strengthened capacity of Ethics and Culture Champions who have gained credibility including with global management.

4. Mitigating risks for the organization

The Conflict of Interest Financial Disclosure Programme saw 100% compliance among 1,738 personnel, which the Office administers to identify, manage and mitigate risks. The Office co-designed a new electronic platform to strengthen the programme.

04. Relevant Data



05. Cultivating Ethics and Culture Champions Globally

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| <i>Amplifiers for Effective Reach and Impact</i> | Strengthened the ECC Network, the signature UNICEF Ethics Ambassadors Program, of 490 Ethics champions across 130 UNICEF offices globally, mainstreaming and embedding ethical culture dialogues in team settings. |
| <i>For Ethics Outreach</i> | Serve as ethics liaison for staff at all levels and locations; reinforce values-based habits and behaviour; communicate and amplify organizational values and ethics initiatives; facilitate authentic and organic dialogues on local issues. |
| <i>For Ethics Insights</i> | Assist in identifying ethics and integrity issues at local level; share “lessons learned” and experience in the field; proactively identify organizational and reputational risks. |
| <i>For Feedback</i> | Act as sounding board for messages, training and tools; identify and create safe spaces to speak up; facilitate a feedback loop between employees in their location and Ethics Office. |
| <i>For Detection and Prevention</i> | Help detect and flag ethical risks early for proactive resolution. |

06. Shifts in Training, Outreach and Awareness-Raising: Outcome

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| <i>Face-to face Training, Outreach and Awareness-raising</i> | Sustained high level of engagement with 81 trainings to over 4,600 personnel, exceeding the 3,900 in 2022, including delivery to 19 offices with priority in emergency contexts and other complex and fragile settings. Delivery of 62 engagements including specific requests for deep dives. |
| <i>Mandatory Online courses</i> | 3,570 personnel completed Ethics and Integrity at UNICEF course and 3,658 personnel completed Protection from Sexual Harassment and Abuse of Authority course – both represent significant increases from 2022 with completion rates for staff of 95% and 96% (under 90% for all personnel). |
| <i>Global Campaign for Ethics Month</i> | Led the 7 th annual Ethics Month in October 2023 focused on the core value of Trust and engaging over 6,000 personnel, with 40 trainings, including targeted conversations on trust and diversity, equity and inclusion. |

07. Strategic Priorities: 2024/25

Expanding and extending training, outreach and awareness-raising

Increase focus on priority groups including personnel in L2 and L3 emergency contexts, General Services staff, employee resource groups and offices that score on the low end of staff surveys.

Create and deliver new training content

Develop and roll out tools on *ethical leadership* for leaders and expanding this to all 4,000 UNICEF managers in subsequent years, and a module on preventing and addressing sexual harassment in the workplace, in partnership with other key stakeholders.

Nurture and strengthen the ECC Network

Continue cultivating ECCs with more frequent engagement, increased training and virtual spaces where they can bring issues and questions and share ideas.

Review and revise key policies

Undertake a comprehensive review and update as needed of the Executive Directive on Financial Disclosure and Declaration of Interest Statements and the whistle-blower protection policy to align with developments and current best practices.

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Thank you

The Ethics Office

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