

Report of the Ethics Office of UNICEF for 2021

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Item 8: Report of the Ethics Office of UNICEF for 2021

Reference document: [E/ICEF/2022/15](#)



01. Resource and Operating Constraints

- The year 2021 was the first year that the Ethics Office operated as independent organizational unit. However, no additional staffing was allocated to support the transformation. The Office is one of the **least resourced among comparable UN Ethics Offices**.
- Executive Board decision 2020/19 requested UNICEF to “**provide sufficient resources** to the Ethics Office based on the assessment of the level of resources” and to “continue to **report on the adequacy of the resources** made available to the Ethics Office”.
- Audit Advisory Committee in its 2021 Annual Report to the Executive Board urged UNICEF to “review the Ethics Office structure (i.e., the **absence of middle management**) and resources for 2022–2025 (staff and non-post) to preserve its independence, strategic use of leadership time, and to mitigate succession risks.”



02. Key Milestones for 2021

1. Record Engagement and Trust

- Exponential rise in the level of engagement, with requests for services increasing from 555 in 2020 to 1,020 in 2021.

2. Unprecedented Outreach and Training

- 11,000 personnel reached in 2021, compared with 6,300 in 2020; 6,300 personnel participated in Ethics Month; 41 customized training sessions, almost double from previous year.

3. Deepened Proactive and Preventive Approaches

- Shifted to a more preventive and proactive approach to address and resolve emerging ethical failures.

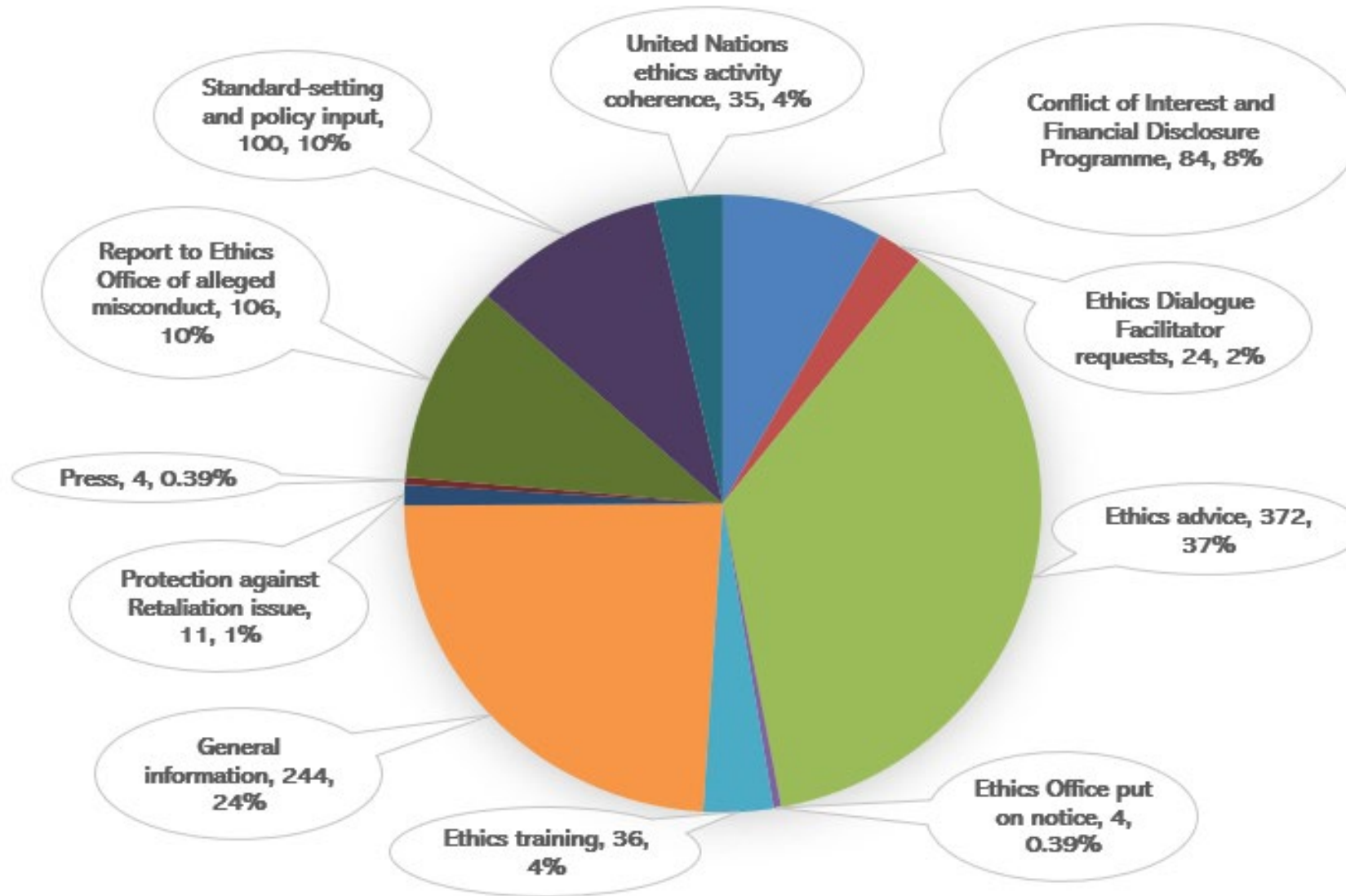
4. Enhanced Collaboration

- Strengthened cross-divisional collaboration with relevant internal stakeholders and external counterparts (UN Ethics Panel (EPUN), Ethics Network of Multilateral Organizations (ENMO), UN Secretariat, UNFPA, World Bank, etc.)

5. Financial Disclosure Programme Upgrade

- 100% compliance rate; full cycle completion reduced from 12 to 8 months, resulting in streamlined processes and significant efficiency gains.

03. Relevant Data



04. Shift from Reactive to Proactive and Preventive Approach

ETHICS OFFICE WILL

-  **ADDRESS INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS** before they rise to the level of misconduct or full conflict
-  **FOCUS ON NEEDS** of the affected UNICEF staff
-  **PURSUE INFORMAL RESOLUTION** by referring and/or providing guidance to stop/correct the inappropriate behavior or emerging risks
-  **PROVIDE SUPPORT** throughout the entire process, including protection from retaliation

ETHICS OFFICE WILL NOT

- CONDUCT FACT FINDING INVESTIGATIONS**, nor make any factual determinations 
- ACT AS AN ADVOCATE FOR ANY PARTY**, to preserve its independent and impartial status 
- REFER MATTERS** for investigation or other resolution mechanism without the consent of the affected personnel 
- REVIEW MANAGERIAL DECISIONS** or performance evaluations 

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05. Shift in Training, Outreach and Awareness-Raising

Pre-planned trainings, outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proactively reaching out to units/offices identified for outreach• Resources and mission dates are planned at the beginning of the year
Strategic, data-driven criteria for trainings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ethics employs clear and consistent criteria for identifying high-priority/high-risk candidates in making training decisions• Data-driven clarity on which offices, units and personnel groups have greatest risks or needs for Ethics Office outreach and interventions• Ethics Office identifies and responds to “red flags” and systemic or recurring issues• Ethics Office outreach data systematically captured
High ethics awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Personnel staff are familiar with ethics roles under Integrity Framework and regularly reach out to Ethics Office for advice or outreach/training support• Personnel report ethical failures or ethics risks
Training materials and content meet personnel needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Training suite is robust and catered• Tailored training materials or thematic sessions are available for audiences with specific needs
Strong ethics and values-based mindset	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Personnel familiar with values and how these relate to their work• Use of values-first and principles-based approach in ethically ambiguous situations

