

End-of-Year Management Letter on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) and Reporting of SEA Allegations

In accordance with Section 4.6 of the Secretary-General's Bulletin on "Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse" (ST/SGB/2003/13) and with and in accordance with CF/EXD/2004-002, I, Catherine Russell, hereby certify that UNICEF has reported to the Secretary-General all allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse that have been brought to its attention and has taken all appropriate measures to address such allegations, in accordance with established rules and procedures for dealing with cases of staff misconduct.

Furthermore, the great majority of UNICEF staff members and related personnel¹ have completed the training on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, and have been informed of their individual obligation to report incidents. UNICEF has been proactive in raising awareness of its staff members and related personnel, regarding the prohibition of sexual exploitation and abuse and ways of reporting such acts, and UNICEF has engaged in outreach efforts to raise the awareness of the affected population and beneficiaries of assistance, regarding the prohibition of sexual exploitation and abuse and the ways of reporting such acts. UNICEF has also submitted the annual Action Plan on measures undertaken to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse and conducted and acted upon the results of risk assessments covering its field operations and programmes and continue to review these on an ongoing basis, and have properly addressed the victims' rights to assistance and support.

UNICEF requires all of its staff members and related personnel to undertake training on prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (including its prohibitions and reporting obligations); completion rates exceed 95 per cent. Approximately 97 per cent of surveyed personnel believe UNICEF takes action to raise awareness among personnel; over 76 per cent were familiar with its efforts to raise awareness in communities.

UNICEF requires risk management of sexual exploitation and abuse annually at an enterprise level, risk (re-)assessments at the onset of emergencies, and assessment of capacity of implementing partners to manage these risks at the commencement of partnership (which capacity is reviewed following incidents).

¹ United Nations staff and related personnel include United Nations staff members, individual consultants/contractors, interns, National Officers, United Nations Volunteers, affiliated personnel and contingent members.

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UNICEF requires risks pertaining to sexual exploitation and abuse to be assessed and registered annually in its Enterprise Risk Management platform, and managed in accordance with its Enterprise Risk Management Policy. Risk assessments for sexual exploitation and abuse must be reviewed at the onset of emergencies. UNICEF monitors the performance of offices in registering and mitigating such risks, and in establishing action plans, establishing systems to address sexual exploitation and abuse, and in the access of their communities to reporting mechanisms.

UNICEF has taken significant steps towards operationalization of the UN Protocol on Allegations of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse involving Implementing Partners. Since 2020, UNICEF rolled out its organization procedure for risk/capacity assessment of all its CSO Implementing Partners and strengthening their capacity, while contributing to the development of a wider/harmonized UN approach. The procedure came with a toolkit to assist UNICEF's implementing partners in improving their PSEA efforts. Based on significant experience and lessons, and proactive consultation with field practitioners, UNICEF has updated its procedure in 2022 to reflect both UN common approaches as well as to deepen its action in transforming the capacities and practices of its staff and implementing partners. All existing active UNICEF CSO partners (over 3,950 partners) have their PSEA capacities assessed and categorized, among which about 50 per cent requiring capacity strengthening through the development and implementation of tailored action plans.

In 2023, UNICEF will be sharing partner risk assessments across the system, using the UN common assessment methodology and the UN Partner Portal, and will prioritize additional efforts for capacity strengthening of both UNICEF staff and implementing partners.

UNICEF monitors whether offices have procedures for referrals for victim/survivor assistance in accordance with the United Nations Protocol on the Provision of Assistance to Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, and assesses the capacity of its implementing partners to effect such referrals. In individual cases, it seeks information about the services provided.

Recognizing the requirement for leadership, transparency and accountability if we are to eradicate sexual exploitation and abuse within the United Nations system, I hereby certify that I have exercised my duties in this regard in good faith and to the very best of my abilities.



Catherine Russell
Executive Director
10 February 2023