

UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS Executive Board Annual Session 2022

Background Note on Response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) and Sexual Harassment (SH)

I. Update by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

1. At the first regular session of the Executive Board in January 2022, UNDP provided a comprehensive [update on progress](#) in the implementation of its second Strategy and Action Plan on the Response to Sexual Harassment (SH) and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA), 2021-2022. This Strategy focuses on four areas– prevention; reporting and response; support to victims/survivors and accountability – and aims to achieve the following objectives (1) to significantly reduce the incidence of SH and SEA committed by UNDP personnel; (2) to ensure that each case is identified and addressed quickly and effectively with a focus on the well-being and protection of the victims/survivors and strict accountability for perpetrators; (3) to ensure that proper safeguards are embedded into all UNDP operations, including programme activities implemented both by UNDP and through our Implementing Partners; and (4) to minimize SH and SEA risks and ensure appropriate response action. In line with these objectives, action continues both corporately and in the field, with teams across UNDP Country Offices making a significant effort to prevent and address SH and SEA.

2. To take stock of the progress already achieved and to guide future action, UNDP instituted a survey of its Country Offices which covers all the key elements of our SH and SEA response. The first survey was conducted in June 2020 and UNDP updated the Executive Board of its key results at the 2nd regular session 2020. The second survey was conducted in January March 2022. The response from Country Offices was very positive, with 118 Country Offices having participated in the 2022 survey – an additional 19 compared to 2020. Once again, the survey has generated a rich source of data which will be utilized to guide UNDP’s approach to preventing and tackling SH and SEA. The results will also be used to inform the new indicators on SH and SEA included in the Integrated Results and Resources Framework (IRRF) for the new Strategic Plan as well as inform further updates to the corporate SH and SEA Action Plan.

3. While the Taskforce on the Prevention of SH and SEA is still in the process of analyzing the survey data, following are some of the initial findings from the 117 Country Offices that responded:

- In 2020, 53 COs (54% of 98 respondents) believed SEA was a risk in their respective country; in 2022 this number increased slightly, to 58 COs (50% of 117 respondents). 42 COs (36% of 117 respondents) reflected SEA risks in the risk logs of UNDP programmes/projects.
- UNDP PSEA Focal Points are now in place in 116 Country Offices (99% of 117 respondents) in 2022.
- The percentage of COs with a joint UN PSEA mechanism/task force increased from 59 COs in 2020 (60% of 98 respondents) to 102 COs in 2022 (87% of 117 respondents). Roughly 3 out of 4 UN PSEA mechanisms have clear TORs, which has not changed from 2020.
- In 2022, 105 COs (90% of 117 respondents) reported that UNDP personnel in their offices are informed of the SEA standards - up from 91 COs (93% of 98 respondents) reported in 2020.
- In 2020, 37 COs (38% of 98 respondents) reported having organized discussions with Implementing Partners on meeting UNDP SH and SEA standards. In 2022, this number increased to 50 COs (43% of 117 respondents). While the trend is positive, this number is still too low and work with Implementing Partners will continue to be a key area of focus. *To note: this issue is one of the key objectives mandated to be included in all offices’ Integrated Workplans (IWPs) for 2022 (see para 5 below).*
- In 2020, 40 COs (41% out of 98 respondents) reported having a community-based complaint mechanism (CBCM) already in place for local populations to report SEA allegations. This number dropped to 37 COs (32% out of 117 respondents) in 2022. *To note: the issue of CBCMs was highlighted*

in the IASC report (see para 8 below). It is also one of the key objectives mandated to be included in all UNDP Offices' Integrated Workplans (IWPs) for 2022 (see para 5 below).

- In 2020, 70 COs (71% out of 98 respondents) reported that local victim/survivor support providers (e.g., national or local gender-based violence centers) to assist victims/survivors of SEA (e.g., medical, psychosocial, legal, etc.) were identified. This number increased to 77 COs in 2022. While we welcome this increase, there is still much to be done and this issue remains a very high priority area in UNDP's Action Plan. *To note: this issue is one of the key objectives mandated to be included in all UNDP Offices' Integrated Workplans (IWPs) for 2022 (see para 5 below).*

4. The 2022 survey also included a number of questions on sexual harassment and our Respectful Workplace Facilitators to create a new baseline going forward. Some initial findings include:

- 92 COs reported that senior management have initiated activities to prevent sexual harassment in their offices within the last year, including training, communication materials and advocacy.
- 106 COs reported that policies on sexual harassment have been shared by senior management within the last year.
- 111 Country Offices reported that there is a sexual harassment focal point in their Country Office.

5. Based on the results of the survey, UNDP has updated the baselines for the IRRF indicators which aim to enhance accountability for results and transparency about actions taken, and increase the evidence base for future decision making. UNDP expects to run these surveys annually to ensure progress is on track. In addition, to further accelerate action against SH and SEA and ensure that action is taken, the Administrator mandated all UNDP offices to include SH and SEA objectives in their 2022 Integrated Workplans (IWP). As such, all offices have to: inform all personnel in the Office of the SH and SEA standards; assess and reflect SEA risks in the risk logs of UNDP programmes/projects; organize discussions with implementing partners (IPs) on UNDP's standards on SEA and their capacity to meet these standards; work to put in place complaints mechanisms for local populations to report SEA allegations and further expand efforts to identify local victim/survivor support providers to assist victims/survivors of SEA.

6. While the analysis of the narrative comments provided by country offices - which are particularly rich and informative – still continues, some key issues have emerged. For example, while there is a high level of awareness, there is still high demand for training and re-training, including in different languages, for many Country Offices, especially for the new Focal Points. UNDP will continue to make use of the comprehensive joint interagency training which will assist Focal Points in building the right knowledge and fulfilling their responsibilities.

7. Similarly, while the survey comments provide good examples of actions taken to provide support to beneficiary communities (hotlines, posters, GBV mechanisms, etc.), more advice and guidance is requested in this area.

8. Some Country Offices have already put in place innovative mechanisms to support Implementing Partners, e.g., providing virtual platforms and ICT facilities for IP training; setting up hotlines/call centers for questions and concerns, and distributing information materials and posters. However, demand remains high for advice and support related to raising awareness among Implementing Partners and providing them with support in meeting UNDP's high standards. To address this need, UNDP established a new Task Team to support Country Offices in their work with Implementing Partners on SH and SEA in accordance with the UN Implementing Partners Protocol which UNDP has adopted as a guiding document for our work with Implementing Partners. For example, UNDP has already included specific clauses related to the SH and SEA obligations in UNDP agreements with its Implementing Partners. All UNDP COs have been requested to engage with their respective IPs on the ground, informing them of the UNDP standards related to SH and SEA and engaging in discussions to address any capacity gaps in these areas. This work is on-going. The capacity of Implementing Partners to respond to SH and SEA is assessed through the UNDP Partner

Capacity Assessment Tool that includes specific questions regarding SH and SEA. This is in line with the UN Implementing Partner Capacity Assessment tool. UNDP is now completing an internal guidance note on how to work with implementing partners, which will also address issues related to dealing with SH and SEA cases involving Implementing Partner personnel.

9. Comments in the survey also confirmed challenges with establishing CBCMs. In the last update to the Board we noted the [IASC's report's recommendation](#) that CBCMs were seen as too complex for country level application without significant and sustained resourcing. Application of the model requires support and collaboration across all sectors, monitoring capacity in the field, and the ability to listen to and feedback to communities. In most contexts, such extensive support has been lacking and lessons have not been applied. The IASC report highlights that more work needs to be done to recommit to the inter-agency approach to avoid multiple community engagement mechanisms. UNDP looks forward to the outcome of those UN wide discussions. In the meantime, the Taskforce is exploring other options, including leveraging UNDP's already existing Grievance Response Mechanisms (GRMs) and Stakeholder Response Mechanisms at the project and Country Office levels.

10. Going forward, UNDP will continue to advance action across the four focus areas identified in the Strategy and will specifically focus on further strengthening UNDP's overall culture, as SH and SEA issues are deeply connected to civility in the workplace, including issues of transparency, respect, and freedom from fear. As part of this effort, a new initiative to be launched in 2022 aims to cultivate a 'speak up' culture across UNDP, where people are empowered and have the tools to shape their employee experiences and create an environment where they can thrive. It focuses on measures that help prevent and dismantle any discrimination in the workplace and discourage staff from believing that discrimination must be silently endured. It also recognizes that bias manifests in nuanced ways and often does not rise to the threshold of wrongdoing but is rooted in organizational ways of working and interpersonal relations in the workplace. As part of this initiative, UNDP will be implementing actions that increase trust, belonging and psychological safety, enhance the quality of the psychological environment UNDP personnel operate in, nurture 'up-stander' actions and discourage 'by-stander' culture. UNDP will also continue to implement solid leadership development programmes and resources which provide people managers with tools to promote an inclusive and respectful workplace environment free from any form of harassment and discrimination. All of this will be in addition to the on-going work to enhance the general employee experience as well as to promote diversity, equity and inclusion, as part of UNDP's comprehensive People for 2030 Strategy.

11. Additionally, and in line with the already on-going good practice, UNDP will continue implementing other inter-agency initiatives. For example, UNDP will use the Clear Check database to include perpetrators of SH and SEA. To-date, UNDP has included 13 of its former personnel. UNDP will continue vetting all its new International Professional hires against Clear Check and will complete the extension of such vetting to cover national staff, Service Contract and Personnel Service Agreement (PSA) holders, and consultants.

12. UNDP will continue its efforts to identify, effectively investigate and respond to, and report on allegations of SH and SEA. In Q1 2022, 11 cases of Sexual Misconduct have been opened (5 SH, 5 SEA, 1 sexual assault). SH and SEA cases continue to be prioritized with an average of 6 months for investigations, which is within the industry standard.

13. UNDP's ambition remains to intensify the on-going efforts, effectively implement the policies and processes in place and, with the support and commitment of all UNDP personnel, further strengthen the organization where everyone including partners and beneficiaries can be confident that they will be safe and free from all forms of harassment, including SH and SEA.

II. Update by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

Since its last comprehensive update to the Executive Board in February 2022, UNFPA has continued implementing its survivor/victim-centered Strategy on Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (PSEAH) under the action plan for 2022. This annual action plan, annexed hereto, sets out a number of concrete objectives, measurable activities and results across the four strategic pillars of UNFPA: (1) effective prevention of SEAH by personnel and partners; (2) timely, structured and survivor/victim-centered response to every incident; (3) high-quality support and assistance to victims of SEAH; and (4) all measures embedded in a robust institutional safeguarding framework.

The main focus remains on effective implementation of the Strategy and strengthening the capacities on the ground to ensure effective prevention and to provide a coherent, structured and prompt response to every individual case.

All programmed activities are progressing as planned.

Institutional Safeguarding Framework

Effective in-country PSEA structures: In February, UNFPA launched its 2022 PSEA focal point training cycle. The training consists of six modules, including the tasks of focal points participating in interagency coordination mechanisms; it is being offered in English, French and Spanish and will be provided to 200 focal points globally over the next three months. An additional in-person workshop is planned with the regional PSEA focal points to provide broad support in the management of PSEA risk registers and facilitate experience sharing.

Country-focused interagency collaboration: UNFPA currently leads inter-agency PSEA networks, with full- and part-time coordinators in 11 IASC priority countries, including, most recently, a P5-level coordinator in Ukraine. To meet the continued need for qualified human resources, UNFPA is carrying forward one of its Championship initiatives; in May 2022, the Fund is launching a second call to roster for P4- and P5-level interagency PSEA coordinators to expand the existing pool. A dedicated UNFPA PSEA consultant has been seconded to the IASC Secretariat to ensure the coordinated deployment of PSEA coordinators to humanitarian settings, in line with IASC PSEA priorities. The establishment of a sustainable mechanism to resource PSEA work on the ground remains a key priority for the Fund and UNFPA is working closely with IASC partners to take this collective agenda forward.

Implementing partner assessments: The assessments of implementing partners are progressing as planned. UNFPA has completed 680 assessments of its 1015 partners, and is continuing its active engagement in the inter-agency working group to ensure a coordinated operationalization of the UN Protocol on Allegations of SEA involving Implementing Partners.

Risk management: UNFPA has developed, and disseminated to all country offices, new guidance note on PSEA risk management, to strengthen the identification, assessment and treatment of contextual and programmatic PSEA risks. The guidance is accompanied by practical tools and templates to support business units in the development of their PSEA risk registers under the new UNFPA enterprise risk management policy.

Monitoring progress and results: In line with the PSEA indicator of the 2020 quadrennial comprehensive policy review and those of other United Nations development system agencies, a dedicated PSEAH indicator is included in the Strategic Plan 2022-2025, Integrated Results and Resources Framework (IRRF). The indicator complements existing monitoring mechanisms, such as the managerial compliance programme, and is mandatory for inclusion in the results planning of all business units. It will facilitate the monitoring of compliance with PSEAH requirements, and the progress made against four milestones: (a) designation of a PSEA focal point; (b) mandatory regular SEA and SH training; (c) risk assessments conducted, including those involving implementing partners; and (d) mapping of support services available to victims of SEA and SH.

Prevention

Screening - Clear Check: In 2022, UNFPA continues to screen all new recruits in Clear Check for past involvement in sexual misconduct; and it has entered two new subjects into the database. UNFPA also participates in, and supports, inter-agency discussions to further expand the use of the Clear Check platform to include other forms of misconduct.

Organizational culture - communication and awareness raising: Several in-house initiatives have been launched to improve the organizational and speak-up culture of UNFPA. Activities include a three-module training for all UNFPA managers to strengthen prevention, a survivor/victim-centered approach and psychological safety in teams. Joint sessions of the “UNFPA Integrity family” for all personnel are being prepared to increase trust in the existing accountability mechanisms.

The online training on PSEA remains mandatory for new personnel; and an updated mandatory online training on sexual harassment will be available by the third quarter of 2022.

Response

Data on allegations: As of 31 December 2021, the UNFPA Office of Audit and Investigation Services (OAIS) had received six allegations of sexual harassment in 2021, a significant decrease, compared to 11 allegations received during the same period in 2020.¹

The number of SEA cases reported remained stable, with 14 allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse received since January 2021, one more than the number of SEA allegations received in 2020. Six of the allegations received pertain to implementing partners, two less than the number received in 2020. This includes allegations labeled as ‘SEA’ that were self-disclosed by implementing partners. These allegations were reviewed for adequacy of the corrective action taken; and appropriate risk mitigation was taken, as warranted.

During the first quarter of 2022, OAIS opened four cases of sexual misconduct, two cases of sexual harassment and two cases of sexual exploitation and abuse.

Strengthening information-sharing: In January 2022, UNFPA implemented the United Nations system-wide guidance on sharing of information on SEA allegations at the in-country inter-agency level. The objective of the guidance is to provide the most senior UN officials in countries with the necessary information on allegations without jeopardizing the confidentiality of investigations or the safety of victims.

An UNFPA internal information-sharing protocol has been adapted to enable a prompt and consistent management response, as required, during and beyond any investigative process.

Assistance

To further improve assistance in sexual harassment cases, UNFPA will, in line with recent CEB guidance, designate a focal point to provide procedural information and support to survivors/victims during and beyond the investigation.

UNFPA remains firmly committed to preventing and responding to sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment, and will take all necessary actions to ensure a survivor/victim-centered approach in response to sexual wrongdoing.

¹ Please refer to OAIS annual report 2021 for further detail of allegations received. Please note that allegations could be reclassified in the course of, or at the conclusion of, an investigation.

III. Update by the United Nations Office of Project Services (UNOPS)

1. Despite the challenges faced by the organization due to the COVID-19 pandemic, during 2020 and 2021 UNOPS has been able to implement a record number of projects having direct positive impact on the lives of the beneficiaries we serve; helping people build better lives and countries to achieve peace and sustainable development. The challenges we have faced have offered us valuable learning opportunities which are giving rise to new ways of working. Together, they form the basis upon which UNOPS is cementing its efforts to progress in our digital maturity journey. We expect that the new ways of working and our digital maturity journey will help us to communicate better with our stakeholders regarding PSEAH. Moreover, we will be able to get better data about where our actions on prevention and response are more effective. Finally, we should be able to identify areas of possible improvement and design adequate action to achieve that.

Continuous improvement:

2. Since the time when UNOPS was established, we have made continuous improvement part of our DNA. During this time, we have achieved different milestones. Each of them became the platform for our future aspirations. In terms of Protection against Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (PSEAH), the independent review commissioned under the request of the Executive Board started the current iteration in our maturity process. Since then, we have implemented a number of measures to improve our protection efforts, and continued undergoing different internal and external reviews. In 2021, three main review exercises were 1) the Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) assessment report; 2) the Gender and Inclusion Participatory Audit; and, an independent review commissioned by UNOPS on the functioning of UNOPS' Speak Up channel and management of allegations. Currently, we are using the most recent Executive Board decision to guide our work towards improving our protection efforts during 2022 and 2023.

3. At the end of 2021, UNOPS decided to make increase the human resources dedicated to Protection against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment (PSEAH). While this has already been a priority for UNOPS in previous years, our work so far has identified concrete areas where fully dedicated human resources have the potential of making a significant difference.

Reinforced coordination with increased investment in dedicated human resources:

4. Since 2018 an Interdivisional PSEAH Task Force has dedicated tremendous efforts to PSEAH. However, recognizing that a dedicated position will be invaluable to ensure PSEAH efforts receive the necessary attention, recruitment of a dedicated corporate PSEAH Coordinator is currently underway. The PSEAH Coordinator will build on the work of the Task Force and play a central role in ensuring that UNOPS PSEAH efforts are identified, prioritized and coordinated across the Organization.

5. Additionally, we are considering adding dedicated human resources at the field level to 1) support the corporate PSEAH Coordinator with effective coordination at the field level; and, 2) provide functional guidance to the PSEA and PSH country Focal Points in their respective regions.

6. This reinforced organizational structure at corporate and field, together with the cadre of UNOPS personnel who, both at headquarters, but primarily in the field, dedicate significant efforts to protect beneficiaries and colleagues from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment, will facilitate a close and efficient cooperation across the Organization by ensuring that PSEAH efforts are aligned with global standards and best practices while also being inclusive towards adequate representation of field perspectives and realities.

Ensuring a Robust Framework: Strategy & Action Plan Review:

7. In acknowledging the great advances in PSEAH at the UN System level, UNOPS PSEAH Strategy will undergo an in-depth internal review focused on three key objectives:

- The Strategy is fit for purpose and aligned with UNOPS Strategic Plan 2022-25 and UN system approach,
- The Strategy has a comprehensive, long-term vision that can be translated into an effective Corporate and Regional Action Plans that deliver concrete and measurable actions, and
- The Strategy implements a reinforced victim-centric approach aligned with interagency best practices.

8. At the same time, UNOPS is undergoing a review of its policy on protection to victims in order to ensure that the UNOPS policy is fully aligned with the United Nations Protocol on the Provision of Assistance to Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (2019), so that the rights of victims are fully protected, and that the organization has equipped itself with the right tools achieve this when needed so

9. These actions will be implemented under the PSEAH Corporate 2022/23 Action Plan, which is added here as an annex.

10. In a next step, the UNOPS Corporate 2022/23 will inform Regional and Country Office Action Plans on PSEAH which will be developed in a joint effort by the soon-to-be appointed Corporate PSEAH Coordinator and Field PSEAH Coordinators under the strategic guidance of the PSEAH Task Force. The Action Plans will focus on tangible and concrete measures outlined in this submission.

11. In response to the most recent decision of the Executive Board, UNOPS had developed specific Integrated Results and Resource Framework (IRRF) indicators for PSEAH. The IRRF indicators have been designed to allow the organization to further advance through the maturity process by focusing on current needs as a mean to achieve mid-term goals.

Leadership, strategic focus and culture:

12. Senior leaders within UNOPS continue to reinforce their focus and attention on PSEAH matters. In 2022, there will be at least two meetings of the Senior Leadership Group where PSEAH matters will be discussed. Moreover, PSEAH is now part of the Quarterly Business Review sessions.

13. Moreover, the action planning and action plan implementation that follows the UNOPS Personnel Survey represents another opportunity to reinforce UNOPS Speak Up, protection, and duty of care culture. In 2021 UNOPS retained a new service provider of engagement surveys and related management consulting services. This provider offers a broad range of products and services that will allow the organization to have even more meaningful activities impacting UNOPS culture in those areas.

14. Finally, the UNOPS Management Letter Exercise which is conducted on an annual basis. This exercise consists of a series of communications to senior leaders across the organization to remind them of their personal accountability on PSEAH, equip them with communications tools to allow them to have meaningful interventions on this topic with the aim to impact the culture of the organization within their respective areas of responsibility. The exercise, which is a leadership tool, culminates with all senior leadership across the organization issuing a certification equivalent to that of the Executive Director. Moreover, through this exercise, leaders are reminded of their obligations regarding PSEAH and are offered specific tools that they can use to reinforce UNOPS zero-tolerance culture across the organization. As we move forward into more mature stages of our protection journey, we are designing key performance indicators that will allow us to monitor the effectiveness of this tool in different aspects, including its ability to reinforce UNOPS Speak Up and protection culture.

15. Through these leadership activities, we expect to achieve a positive effect on shaping the culture of the organization and achieve long-lasting positive effects in terms of reinforcing protection against SEAH.

Implementation of the UN Protocol on SEA Allegations Involving Implementing Partners and Clear Check:

16. During 2021, UNOPS commissioned a study to map how and what adequate safeguards and appropriate actions need to be taken to address obligations in UN Protocol on Allegations of SEA involving Implementing Partners in a substantive manner. Furthermore, dedicated UNOPS personnel regularly participate in the informal UN interagency working group on implementation of the Protocol to ensure close collaboration on this interagency effort. In addition, several interviews had taken place with relevant counterparts from UN sister agencies to capture the lessons learned and best practices. As a result of these efforts a Plan of Action on implementation of the Protocol has been developed and is currently under consideration by the Infrastructure and Project Management Group.

17. UNOPS was one of the first organizations of the UN system to implement Clear Check, on 1 April 2019. Since then, 388 queries have been run for clearance, prior to the issuance of staff contracts and 12,972 prior to the issuance of ICA (Individual Contractor Agreement) awards. We continue to be diligent in recording relevant information in the system and are committed to joining inter-agency efforts to strengthen the system and limit human error, as its reliability is dependent on the effective and timely reporting of cases by participating organizations. UNOPS takes note of the Executive Board's interest in receiving an analysis of UNOPS implementation of the Implementing Partners Protocol as well as the Implementing Partner Capacity Assessment and ClearCheck and will continue to provide regular updates on ongoing implementation.

Prevention:

18. Virtually all UNOPS personnel have completed the UN mandatory online PSEA Training and the Ethics Training which includes an SH component. A dedicated Intranet web page that serves as a repository of key PSEAH resources and includes key contacts as well as clear information on reporting, is known and available to all personnel.

19. Since the end of 2021, UNOPS has continued its PSEAH training efforts at the corporate, regional and local levels. A notable example from the Middle East region, where all personnel received a PSEAH refresher training and new hires received additional PSEAH induction sessions. Additionally, PSEAH sessions targeting implementing partners and contractors took place. Finally, an in depth 2-day training was facilitated for a team of a high risk project.

20. In 2022, prevention remains a key priority with a focus on bolstered communication and learning via a holistic Communications and Learning strategy which is being developed. The strategy has an internal and external component.

21. Internally, we will continue strengthening communication and learning via:

- Relevant and regular communications promulgating key messages on PSEAH
- Capacity building of personnel with PSEAH responsibilities. This includes a newly developed welcome package and dedicated training for all PSEA Focal Points.
- Additional PSEAH training to personnel. This includes adaptation of the interagency resources, namely the training "Saying no to Sexual Misconduct".

22. Additionally, in recognition that sexual misconduct cannot be treated in isolation, UNOPS is also determined to look inwards at its collective workplace culture to address the root causes tantamount to unacceptable behaviours that lead to sexual misconduct. Inspired by the promising interagency initiatives on Culture Change and PSEAH, UNOPS is exploring how to further improve and capacitate, empower and encourage:

- Leadership to lead by example by reinforcing positive culture and zero tolerance for all unacceptable behaviours

- Managers to play a key role in creating a safe space for deeper reflection and action within their offices/teams and PSEA and SH Focal Points to raise awareness on PSEAH within their offices;
- All personnel across the Organization towards self-reflection and active engagement in fostering a workplace environment that is inclusive, empowering, and safe from sexual and other forms of misconduct.

23. The second, external component of the Communications and Learning Strategy focuses on implementing partners, contractors (suppliers and vendors). Here, our focus is to improve understanding and awareness of PSEAH among our contractors, which is often too low. To that end, in early 2022 we have created a guidance document that explains to current and prospective contractors: 1) UNOPS PSEAH expectations in terms of prevention of PSEAH and 2) the measures contractors will have to implement in compliance with our contract clause on PSEAH. We are looking at piloting the use of this guidance shortly.

Response

24. Following the victim-centric approach, the UNOPS Internal Audit and Investigations Group (IAIG) prioritizes sexual misconduct cases, with both specially trained investigators and shortened case duration. Additionally, services have been offered and provided to the victims of these cases. This is consistent with UNOPS' victim-centered approach to SEAH cases as well as its commitment that victims receive the support they deserve in all instances. As the investigative body, IAIG is responsible for reporting to the Secretary-General's Office all allegations where there is sufficient information to identify an act of sexual exploitation and abuse against an identifiable perpetrator or identifiable victim. These include allegations related to both UNOPS personnel as well as personnel working for its implementing partners. These statistics are then publicly available on a real time basis.

25. Moreover, we have a large number of MOUs with Member States allowing us to share otherwise confidential information related to misconduct investigations. These MOUs also help us to conduct joint investigations and make referrals to national law enforcement authorities for the cases that are substantiated

Inter-agency coordination and collaboration:

26. UNOPS is part of the UN PSEA working group led by the Office of the Special Coordinator (OSC), engaging regularly in their bi-weekly meetings. UNOPS' IAIG is a member of the UN Representatives of Investigative Services who collaborate on PSEAH issues and UNOPS works with the other agencies by participating in Clear Check to prevent SEAH offenders from being rehired. UNOPS is also collaborating with several UN agencies on training for PSEA focal points. Inter-agency coordination is also taking place at the regional and local levels. UNOPS reports all credible SEA allegations to the Secretary-General's iTracking system on a real time basis. This information, which includes case status and outcome, is publicly available. Likewise, UNOPS is part of the CEB Task Force on SH.