



IASC Championship on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment

UNFPA Executive Director 2021 Priorities and Initiatives



*“Let’s all be champions
of protection and
place the rights and dignity
of victims and survivors
at the heart of our efforts.”*

Dr. Natalia Kanem
UNFPA Executive Director

In December 2018, the IASC Championship Strategy on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) and Sexual Harassment (SH) outlined the vision of *“a humanitarian environment in which people caught up in crises feel safe and respected and can access the protection and assistance they need without fear of exploitation or abuse, and in which aid workers themselves feel supported, respected and empowered to deliver such assistance in working environments free from sexual harassment.”*

PRIORITY AREAS

In January 2021, UNFPA Executive Director Dr. Natalia Kanem assumed the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Championship on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment (PSEAH).

The [IASC](#) is the longest-standing and highest-level humanitarian coordination forum of the United Nations system. It gathers together 18 Principals of United Nations and non-United Nations entities to ensure cohesive and timely international response to humanitarian crises.

In May 2018, the IASC outlined its vision of a humanitarian environment where people in crises can access protection and assistance without fear of exploitation or abuse by any aid worker. (Read the Chair's [statement](#).) In their PSEAH [Strategy](#) and related [Acceleration Plan](#), IASC Champions set key objectives and priorities to address sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment.

To further these objectives and build on the work of previous Champions, UNFPA will focus on strengthening a victim-centered approach to preventing and addressing sexual wrongdoing.

Dr. Kanem has identified three core priorities at the heart of her championship:

The Executive Director's three priorities

1. Bolster PSEA country mechanisms

Leadership, accountability and coordination are fundamental in order to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse on the ground. Inter-agency PSEA networks, led by dedicated inter-agency coordinators, have proven to be effective mechanisms to champion efforts to address SEA in-country.

2. Access to quality information and assistance

Humanitarian actors have a fundamental responsibility to ensure victims of SEA have access to timely, quality and survivor-centred assistance offered through specialized gender-based violence (GBV) support services. GBV case management services constitute a critical and life-saving primary entry point for survivors of GBV, including SEA, to receive immediate and longer-term support. This requires sustained investment in assistance to ensure that services meet the unique needs of survivors of GBV, including SEA, on the ground.

3. Strengthen coordination and coherence

Inter-agency cooperation forms the backbone of all PSEAH work. An effective and structured response must bring together a range of actors from within and outside the United Nations system, including civil society, affected communities and governments. It is critical that these groups are at the table in order to promote a truly victim-centred approach to PSEAH.

To drive these priorities forward, five key initiatives underpin the championship:

- 1. Establishment of an inter-agency PSEAH expert roster to ensure rapid deployment of qualified human resources.**
- 2. Review of the IASC PSEAH approach to assess the impact and effectiveness of measures implemented over the past years.**
- 3. Development of a PSEAH training package for GBV practitioners to address the particular needs of victims of SEA.**
- 4. Dedicated consultations with United Nations and non-United Nations actors to strengthen cohesion and coordination in the response to PSEAH.**
- 5. Advocacy campaign to improve access to quality information and assistance.**