**Country-Level Action Plan to Prevent and Respond to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse**

**(Model Template)**

***The PSEA Country-Level model template outlines the priorities agreed by UNCT/HCT members to achieve jointly across countries with humanitarian[[1]](#footnote-2), development and peace operations. This template provides the minimum requirements to review and analyse the effectiveness, impact and progress on measures to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation abuse country-wide. It serves as a model framework intended to be adapted and contextualized at the country level. The objective is to promote and document harmonized activities that contribute to implementing a robust action plan and provide the basis for tracking progress and provision/mobilization of required resources in related to PSEA in countries with United Nations presence.***

| **Desired outcomes** | **Indicators** | **Targets/ Benchmarks[[2]](#footnote-3)** | **Key actions** | **Timeframe** | **Budget/ Funding Source** | **Lead agency/ies**  **per activity** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Part A: Priority prevention outcomes for PSEA** | | | | | | |
| **Outcome 1. Prevention.** All United Nations staff and related personnel[[3]](#footnote-4) know the UN standards of conduct for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse and understand their personal and managerial/ command responsibilities to address sexual exploitation and abuse and other misconduct. | | | | | | |
| **Output 1.1** Personnel understand the United Nations standards of conduct on the protection from sexual exploitation and abuse. | 1. All UNCT/HCT personnel, including those visiting the country, are provided with an induction briefing on conduct and discipline issues, including sexual exploitation and abuse. | Reminders are communicated to all staff to ensure on-going visibility/awareness of the entity’s policies.  SOPs address out-of-bound areas.  All visitors are informed on country policies and SOP. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Prevention measures such as curfew/off-limits policies operate in peace operations and consideration should be given to implementing such measures to other duty stations |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. The UNCT/HCT personnel know the standards on sexual exploitation and abuse (training, leadership dialogues, town-halls). | Regular meetings and awareness discussions take place.  PSEA awareness-raising materials (broadcast, pamphlet, posters, etc.), including “no excuse cards” are locally contextualized, produced and distributed. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. All personnel are aware of the policy for protection against retaliation for reporting misconduct – to empower, encourage and protect staff who report cases of sexual exploitation and abuse ([ST/SGB/2017/2/Rev.1](https://undocs.org/ST/SGB/2017/2/Rev.1)). | UNCT/HCT staff members are aware of their obligation to report sexual exploitation and abuse/ misconduct and the policy for protection against retaliation. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. All personnel are provided with clear guidance on where and how to report allegations of misconduct. |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Output 1.2** Leadership, managers and commanders know their personal and managerial/command responsibilities to address misconduct and are aware of the procedures, rules and actions required to respond to incidents of misconduct. | 1. Managers monitor completion by all personnel in country of mandatory online and classroom training. | Monitoring mechanisms are in place and working. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Leadership communicates regularly and in varied formats in order to increase awareness and instill trust in the policies, including broadcasts on the duty to report misconduct. | Meetings with staff are convened to review implementation of country level sexual exploitation and abuse (townhall, leadership dialogue, etc.). |  |  |  |  |
| **Output 1.3** Quality training of personnel/awareness-raising on sexual exploitation and abuse policies is conducted regularly. | 1. All UN staff and related personnel complete the mandatory in-year refresher training and/or awareness briefings to personnel are conducted. Substantiation is done for those not completing the training. | Induction training for all personnel is conducted at regular intervals. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. UNCT/HCT leaders certify that all allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse relating to areas within their responsibility have been accurately and fully reported. | 100% response to the resident/humanitarian coordinator. |  |  |  |  |
| **Part B: Priority response outcomes for PSEA** | | | | | | |
| **Outcome 2. Safe and accessible reporting.** Every child and adult recipient of United Nations assistance has access to a safe, gender and child-sensitive pathways to report sexual exploitation and abuse (including through community-based complaints mechanisms)[[4]](#footnote-5) that lead to assistance, are appropriate to the context and accessible to those in the most vulnerable situations). | | | | | | |
| **Output 2.1.** Safe, accessible, child-sensitive mechanisms are in place for reporting sexual exploitation and abuse[[5]](#footnote-6), particularly in high-risk areas. | 1. UNCT/HCT Inter-agency SOPs on community-based complaint mechanisms and/or networks (CBCM/CBCN[[6]](#footnote-7)) on PSEA are established following inclusive consultations with all relevant stakeholders, including communities, disseminated and rolled out, and appropriate staff trained.[[7]](#footnote-8) | Interagency CBCM/CBCN Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are endorsed by all UNCT/HCT members. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. A variety of reporting channels appropriate to the local context is in place to fill reporting gaps as identified by mapping. | Regularly updated mapping of existing complaint and feedback mechanisms in the response.  Multiple confidential reporting channels are available which cater to the diversity of the population and differing levels of access (PLWD, Older Persons, children). |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Percentage of children and adults which have access to a safe channel to report sexual exploitation and abuse.[[8]](#footnote-9) | E.g., 100% of the affected population have access to at least one (1) safe and accessible channel to report sexual exploitation and abuse. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Percentage of allegations reported to the PSEA Network per month and responded to within seven days (Disaggregated by age, sex, and type of complaint (less than 18; 18 and above).[[9]](#footnote-10) |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Output 2.2.** Community mobilisation, consultation and awareness-raising on PSEA in each community receiving and/or affected by United Nations assistance. Where there is an HC/HCT this would apply to all humanitarian partners. | 1. Number of adults and children (disaggregated by gender and age) reached through consultation in the establishment of community-based complaint mechanisms, awareness activities and community mobilisation interventions on PSEA, including how to report SEA-related complaints.[[10]](#footnote-11) | E.g., Consultations with affected population inform the establishment of CBCMs.  Evaluation of existing CBCMs for effectiveness and compliance with human rights principles. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Percentage of sites reached by PSEA communications materials, how to report sexual exploitation and abuse and how to access victim/survivor-centred assistance.   (disaggregated by type of PSEA communication materials developed for each population group identified). | 100% of sites provide information on the prohibition of sexual exploitation and abuse, how to report and receive assistance.  Age and gender-sensitive materials on how to report sexual exploitation and abuse and how to access victim/survivor-centred assistance developed and disseminated. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Number of individuals within the affected population (disaggregated by age and gender) reached with key messages and awareness-raising material on PSEA. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Community perceptions and communication preferences are captured on a regular basis (informally and formally through needs SEA risk assessments, surveys, focus group discussions, etc.), and used to improve services. |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Outcome 3. Victims’ right to assistance.** Every child and adult victim/survivor/complainant is offered immediate, quality assistance (medical care, psychosocial support, legal assistance, reintegration support).[[11]](#footnote-12) | | | | | | |
| **Output 3.1** Sexual exploitation and sexual abuse victim/ survivor assistance is provided through Gender-Based Violence (GBV) or Child Protection (CP) programming which is familiar with sexual exploitation and abuse and the specific needs of victims/survivors. In humanitarian context, this may be resourced through the Humanitarian Response Plan (or other funding mechanisms).[[12]](#footnote-13) In other settings, UN entities should consider the creation of a contingency fund to facilitate victims’ rights support and assistance, including through exploring opportunities for joint fundraising by United Nations Country Team members and project proposal submitted to the [Trust Fund in Support of Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse](https://www.un.org/preventing-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse/content/submit-project-proposals). | 1. Mapping of the existing service providers (e.g., GBV and CP programming) and current gaps in SEA assistance coverage are identified and addressed. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Number and percentage of SEA victims/survivors/complainants who have been promptly referred to quality assistance, as part of ongoing GBV and CP programming. | E.g., 100% of victims/survivors are referred for assistance and received support within 48 hours.  Data is disaggregated according to the affiliation of the offender (UN staff and related personnel and implementing partners). |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Number and percentage of SEA victims/survivors who have accessed to assistance (disaggregated by age and gender and type of assistance received). | E.g., 100% of victims/survivors are referred for assistance and received support within 48 hours.  Data is disaggregated according to the affiliation of the offender (UN staff and related personnel and implementing partners). |  |  |  |  |
| d. Percentage of the affected population, particularly women and children, that can access GBV assistance.[[13]](#footnote-14) | E.g., 100% of the affected population (esp. women and children) can access GBV services.  e.g., Number of people satisfied with assistance received following a complaint of sexual exploitation and abuse. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Funding/resources for assistance to victims/survivors of sexual exploitation and abuse is available. (Please indicate if there are any funds of this nature) | There is a joint/contingency/ dedicated fund or pooled resources at country level. |  |  |  |  |
| **Output 3.2** PSEA Networks have referral pathways for victim/survivor assistance in place, as part of an integrated approach with GBV services. | 1. Status of implementation by PSEA Network of protocol for referral and provision of services for sexual exploitation and abuse victims/survivors (in line with GBV referral pathways).[[14]](#footnote-15) | E.g., GBV referral pathway integrated within PSEA Network SOPs. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Tracking and data collection on victims and victim assistance (please indicate the system in place, what information is collected and frequency of maintenance). | Please indicate if Gender-Based Violence Information Management System (GBVIMS) is being used to maintain data on sexual exploitation and abuse, or indicate if there is a dedicated tracking system in place/under development. |  |  |  |  |
| **Outcome 4. Accountability and investigations.** Every child and adult victim/survivor of sexual exploitation and abuse who is willing has their case investigated in a prompt, and safe way in accordance with a victims’/survivors’ rights approach. | | | | | | |
| **Output 4.1** PSEA Networks adopt, implement and track progress against uniformed protocols/guidelines for prompt, safe and victim/survivor-centred assistance during investigations at country-level. | 1. Percentage of UNCT/HCT members understand the standards under investigations are conducted. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. PSEA Network members and local partners have personnel trained on SEA guidelines and protocols for victim/survivor-centred investigations. |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Output 4.2** Sexual exploitation and sexual abuse victims/survivors informed of and/or supported in relation to investigations and accountability processes.[[15]](#footnote-16) | 1. Percentage of victims/survivors who are informed of the outcome of the investigations. |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Output 4.3** When working with implementing partners, adequate safeguards are in place and action is taken related to sexual exploitation and abuse – e.g., screening, cooperative arrangements, monitoring, and termination of arrangements ([United Nations Protocol on Allegations of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Involving Implementing Partners](https://www.un.org/en/pdfs/UN%20Protocol%20on%20SEA%20Allegations%20involving%20Implementing%20Partners%20-%20English_Final.pdf); [ST/SGB/2003/13](https://undocs.org/en/ST/SGB/2003/13)). | 1. The UNCT/HCT has policies on reference checking and vetting for former misconduct or supervision and performance appraisals related to [UN Implementing Partner PSEA Capacity Assessment](https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/un-implementing-partner-psea-capacity-assessment-0) and they are shared with UNCT/HCT. | E.g., Job applicants and contractor personnel are screened for history of misconduct/SEA issues before recruitment  (The Clear Check and/or [the Inter-Agency Misconduct Disclosure Scheme](https://www.schr.info/the-misconduct-disclosure-scheme) are consulted, self-certified declarations of previous offences, allegations and disciplinary history are required. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. [UN Implementing Partner PSEA Capacity Assessment](https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/un-implementing-partner-psea-capacity-assessment-0) guidelines are implemented. | Implementing partners assessment are centralized at country level and shared with other members of the UNCT/HCT. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Follow-up is established for the implementing partners that do not meet the minimum threshold. | Actions in line with the implementing partners protocol are taken against those implementing partners that do not meet the required standards. |  |  |  |  |
| **Part C: PSEA Country-Level Structure** | | | | | | |
| **Outcome 5. PSEA inter-agency country-level structure.** The Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator and UNCT/HCT are supported at senior management and technical-levels to lead, oversee, and deliver on the above four PSEA Outcomes. | | | | | | |
| **Output 5.1** The role of the RC/HC as PSEA lead is clear to all PSEA stakeholders. | 1. The RC/HC takes an active lead on PSEA and, where relevant, coordinates with the (D)SRSG. | RC/HC circulates code of conduct or the IASC Six Core Principles statement of purpose on PSEA.  RC/HC supports implementation and monitoring on in-country PSEA Strategy, making explicit the leadership role of the RC/HC and UNCT/HCT. |  |  |  |  |
| **Output 5.2** Members take on the PSEA role to support the Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator to deliver on PSEA at the UNCT/HCT level and the PSEA Network at the technical level. | 1. Status of the designation of agency chairs for the PSEA Steering Committee (principal level, UNCT/HCT) and the PSEA Network (technical level). |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Output 5.3** A full-time PSEA Coordinator (with medium to long-term secured funding) is in place, with a direct reporting line to the HC/RC, to provide day-to-day technical support and expertise to the inter-agency PSEA Network. In the absence of a Senior Victims Rights Officer (SVRO) or Field Victims’ Rights Advocate (FVRA), consider the designation of a focal point for victims’ rights[[16]](#footnote-17) at the country level by the PSEA Network in consultation with the most senior United Nations official in the country. | 1. Status of deployment of a full-time PSEA Network Coordinator (with clear ToRs). | P4 level full-time PSEA Coordinator is in place  PSEA Coordinator reports directly to the RC/HC. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. The PSEA Coordinator takes an active lead in supporting senior leadership in developing and implementing PSEA Network TORs and a PSEA Work Plan, based upon the inter-agency PSEA Network risk assessment**.** | A SVRO/FVRA or a focal point for victims’ rights has been appointed at the country level in the Office of the HC/RC. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. On request, the PSEA Coordinator provides expert guidance and technical support to Network members and other relevant entities operating in the context to strengthen their internal PSEA programs in line with good practice and standards. |  |  |  |  |  |
| d. Creation of a SVRO position or designation of the FVRA or consider the designation of a focal point for victims’ rights in the office of the HC/RC with a system-wide mandate has been appointed to advise at the country level (please indicate date of appointment or a timeline if the appointment of a SVRO/FVRA/focal point with a system-wide mandate is in the process, grade level and source of funding if full-time SVRO). |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Output 5.4** An inter-agency PSEA Network is in place with the resources and expertise necessary to deliver on PSEA outcomes (above). | 1. PSEA Network being established or in place. | E.g., PSEA Network is established and reports regularly to RC/HC via the PSEA Coordinator.  PSEA Network includes all UNCT/HCT members, including representation from international and national NGOs. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. All the PSEA Network members have received training from their entities on PSEA. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Integration of PSEA in the Humanitarian Response Plan (or similar), where relevant. | E.g., PSEA Action Plan is costed and resourced through HRP. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. All organisations (UNCT/HCT and PSEA networks) meet required minimum standards such as the Minimum Operation Standards (MoS) and Core Humanitarian Standards (CHS) PSEA Index to enable appropriate complaints receipt and handling. | All UN partners meet the requirements in the UN common assessment.  Joint capacity development and training provided through the network to support entities to meet the PSEA requirements. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Status of development and implementation of the UNCT/HCT PSEA Action Plan, including clearly defined roles and responsibilities of each actor. | E.g., PSEA Action Plan is endorsed by all UNCT/HCT members. |  |  |  |  |
| **Output 5.5** PSEA technical focal points from all UNCT/HCT members are in place and actively contribute to the PSEA Network’s delivery of PSEA outcomes (as per the above). | 1. Percentage of UNCT/HCT members that have appointed a dedicated PSEA technical focal point to the PSEA Network (with clear ToRs). |  |  |  |  |  |
| b. The PSEA technical focal points are active in designing or disseminating awareness-raising tools and facilitate events for community members with emphasis on their rights |  |  |  |  |  |
| c. The PSEA technical focal points are actively working with the inter-agency PSEA Network to establish a CBCM/CBCN |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Output 5.6** Country-level risk assessment in respect of sexual exploitation and abuse conducted on the basis of risk management tools | 1. The inter-agency PSEA network carries out regular SEA risk assessments and shares the findings and recommendations with the UNCT/HCT. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. The inter-agency PSEA network provides technical support needed to mitigate risks of SEA, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. The risk is regularly assessed and updated. |  |  |  |  |  |

*For additional information and resources:*

* [Management and accountability of the UN Development and Resident Coordinator System](https://unsdg.un.org/resources/management-and-accountability-framework-un-development-and-resident-coordinator-system)

[PSEA Knowledge Gateway](https://unitednations.sharepoint.com/sites/APP-Gateway/SitePages/PSEA.aspx)

[Inter-Agency Standing Committee resources](https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/psea)

[IASC Six Core Principles Relating to SEA](https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/inter-agency-standing-committee/iasc-six-core-principles-relating-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse) (Revised 2019)

[IASC Minimum Operating Standards PSEA](https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/iasc-task-team-accountability-affected-populations-and-protection-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse/minimum-operating-standards-mos-psea)

[Guideline – Inter-Agency Community-Based Complaint Mechanisms – Protection against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse](https://psea.interagencystandingcommittee.org/resources/best-practice-guide-inter-agency-cbcms)

* [Guideline – Inter-Agency Community-Based Complaint Mechanisms – Protection against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse](https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/best_practice_guide_inter_agency_community_based_complaint_mechanisms_1.pdf)
* [UN System Policies and Protocols on PSEA](https://www.un.org/preventing-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse/content/policies-and-protocols)
* [Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate](3.%20Comments%20Received/PDV_OVRA_JC_Valeria_May%2028/%09https:/www.un.org/preventing-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse/content/office-victims-rights-advocate)

1. This applies to refugee and humanitarian context which could be sub-national or regional in nature. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. The targets provided in the model template are intended as illustrative examples. Actual targets would need to be determined at country-level. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. United Nations staff and related personnel include United Nations staff members, consultants, individual consultants/contractors, interns, national officers, United Nations volunteers, experts on mission and contingent members. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. A Community-based complaints mechanism (CBCM) is a complaints mechanism system blending both formal and informal community structures, built on engagement with the community where individuals are able and encouraged to safely report grievances – including sexual exploitation and abuse incidents – and those reports are referred to the appropriate entities for follow-up. See further information <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/best_practice_guide_inter_agency_community_based_complaint_mechanisms_1.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. Type of mechanism and targeted locations to be determined by each UNCT/HCT based on context and existing channels/mechanisms for reporting already functioning. These could include, for example, phone hotlines, SMS, PSEA focal points, service points, etc. This could involve broader complaint channels that are strengthened with the necessary safeguards for reporting sexual exploitation and abuse, or training of PSEA focal points within protection-related services to support reporting and referrals, and/or other systems, and/or a combination of the above, as appropriate per the country context. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. Community-Based Complaint Networks (CBCNs) support communications with complainants and victims while allegations are being investigated, facilitate the provision of assistance and support to victims and their reintegration into their communities. The UN has engaged with local and international organizations and representatives of communities to develop formal and informal structures and channels that are safe, confidential, and easily accessible to women, men, girls and boys to report misconduct, specifically sexual exploitation and abuse, and follow up on the status of reported incidents and receive support. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. UNCT/HCT SOPs can be adapted from the [global IASC SOPs](https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/iasc_psea-global_standard_operating_procedures_june_2016_1.pdf). The SOPs provide the basis for inter-agency referral, sharing of information on and handling of sexual exploitation and abuse allegations, as an integral component of UNCT/HCT prevention and response to sexual exploitation and abuse. The SOPs require all signatories to have an established internal sexual exploitation and abuse complaint handling procedure in place. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. Access would be defined within the country context taking account of the type of complaint channels in place. This could include, for example, report to individual directly, phone access, taking account of age, gender, literacy, disability, etc., and/or a combination of factors. Please also note that this indicator refers to the estimated coverage of the population by the CBCM. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. This indicator is intended to allow HCs/HCTs to track and measure the use of SEA-related complaint channels by affected populations, including by those who are most vulnerable, as a core component of their overall effectiveness. This indicator is to be read together with related indicators to understand the overall accessibility, trust in, and effectiveness of SEA-sensitive complaint channels by and for affected communities. It is not intended to replace or duplicate the external reporting obligations that agencies hold, for example the UN reporting of sexual exploitation and abuse allegations to the UN Secretary-General on a quarterly basis. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. This should include the consultation of communities, particularly women and children, in the design of SEA-sensitive community-based complaint mechanisms. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. Support to victims/survivors/complainants is unconnected with the investigation and should be pursued from the time of an allegation as indicated in the [UN Comprehensive Strategy on Assistance and Support to Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse](https://undocs.org/A/RES/62/214) [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. This can and should include f existing protection system which provides the basis for support to sexual exploitation and abuse victims/survivors. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
13. The tracking of access to services is a core function of the PSEA Network’s role in strengthening response to sexual exploitation and abuse. Current gaps in SEA assistance coverage (as provided through GBV/ CP programmes) should be systematically addressed by UNCT/HCT members, as well as through CERF/CBPFs. There should be a tracking system maintained by the UNCT [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
14. See the [UN Protocol on the provision of assistance to victims of sexual exploitation and abuse](https://www.un.org/en/pdfs/UN%20Victim%20Assistance%20Protocol_English_Final.pdf) (“UN Victims’ Assistance Protocol”), 12 Dec 2019. This could include, for example, the inclusion of reference and procedures for referrals and accessing services. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
15. This may include civil and criminal proceeding, as well as other redress measures. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
16. Generic ToRs for a focal point for victims’ rights is available from the Office of the Victims’ Rights Advocate ([ovra@un.org](mailto:ovra@un.org)). [↑](#footnote-ref-17)