

# IASC Senior Focal Points on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) and Sexual Harassment (SH)

## Meeting Minutes

Friday, 2 November 2018

8:00am-9:30am NY/1:00 pm-2:30 pm GVA

### SUMMARY OF THE DISCUSSION

#### 1. IASC Championship strategy

- The IASC Chair presented the Championship strategy, jointly developed by UNHCR, UNICEF and OCHA.
- IASC members expressed overall support to the strategy, and reiterated the need for:
  - SEA and SH to be addressed jointly;
  - A rights-based approach to be anchored into the strategy;
  - An enabling environment for reporting to be in place, with context specific mechanisms made accessible to the most vulnerable;
  - The protection and safety of survivors, witnesses and staff to be prioritized during reporting and investigation phases (survivor-centered approach);
  - Support to be adequately provided to all survivors (including men and boys);
  - Stigmatization to be avoided at all stages.

#### 2. Proposal for discussion on accelerating implementation of PSEA at field level

- IASC Champion ED Fore presented a proposal to strengthen the implementation of IASC commitments on PSEA at country-level, building upon good practices and advancements that the IASC has made in this area.
- IASC members put forward some suggestions, such as highlighting the connections with the AAP work and related mechanisms at country level in the proposal.
- IASC Task Team on AAP and PSEA members or technical counterparts will review the proposal for finalization in advance of the 3 December IASC Principals Meeting.

#### 3. Revision of the IASC Six Principles

- Discussion focused primarily on a proposal to change the language in principle 4 from “strongly discourage” to “prohibit” sexual relationships between humanitarian workers and beneficiaries.
- It was agreed that a group will look at a revised formulation, to advance a common proposal that could be reviewed for endorsement at the next IASC PSEA/SH Senior Focal Points meeting, noting that this exercise will feed into the work undertaken by the UN SEA Working Group on the UN SG Bulletin/2003/13.

- IASC member organizations that currently prohibit sexual relationships between staff members and the people we serve are invited to share their experience for collective consideration and learning.

#### 4. AOB

- The IASC / CEB Meeting of Investigatory Bodies on PSEA and Sexual Harassment will be held in Geneva on 26 November. Senior IASC PSEA/SH Focal Points (or delegated representative) and/or IASC Heads of Investigatory bodies are invited to attend. The objective is for to seek collective ways to more victim-centered, effective, efficient and timely humanitarian investigations.

#### 5. Next Steps

Action	Deadline	Focal Point
OCHA and UNICEF conduct mapping of PSEA systems currently in place	Mapping completed and results compiled by 21 November 2018	Wendy Cue, OCHA Senior Coordinator for PSEA/SHA; Tasha Gill, UNICEF Senior Advisor Child Protection in Emergencies
Technical level focal points work on proposal of acceleration of implementation in the field;  Final Proposal to be presented for endorsement at December 3 <sup>rd</sup> IASC Principals Meeting.	12 November 2019  3 December 2018	Tasha Gill, UNICEF Senior Advisor Child Protection in Emergencies, with IASC AAP/PSEA TT
Senior Focal Points to brief their Principals on the PSEA Proposal, prepare commitments for implementing a country-level PSEA package to table at the 3 December IASC Principals Meeting, starting with humanitarian countries.	3 December 2018	Tasha Gill, UNICEF Senior Advisor Child Protection in Emergencies
Set up a small working group to look specifically at the revision of the IASC 6 Principles, including review of terminology (e.g. “beneficiaries,” “victims”, “survivors”, etc.)	15 November 2018	Fatoumata Ndiaye, UNICEF DED Management
Use the Senior Focal Points Meeting as a forum to share good practices, lessons learned, and knowledge-sharing ideas to inform the update of the summary of IASC good practices.	Ongoing	Wendy Cue, IASC PSEA Focal Point
Next IASC Senior Focal Points Meeting	March 2019 (TBD)	Tasha Gill, UNICEF Senior Advisor Child Protection in Emergencies

## DETAILED MINUTES

### Agenda Item 1: Welcome and introductions

- **UNICEF ED Henrietta Fore** noted that the meeting's aim is to generate active discussion and exchange of ideas around how we can work together under the IASC to strengthen our collective work on PSEA and SH, with a particular focus on our joint efforts at country level.

### Agenda Item 2: Presentation of IASC Championship strategy and priorities on PSEA/SH

- **ERC Mark Lowcock** highlighted that PSEA and SH are garnering more attention, thanks to the leadership of the IASC Championship role. He noted many initiatives are now being implemented by IASC partners, and the need to coordinate among them. The ERC highlighted the High Level Committee on Management communication about sexual harassment as an important step towards increasing accountability, and initiatives underway so that potential perpetrators will not find employment within the aid system.
- He presented the IASC Championship strategy, jointly developed by UNHCR, UNICEF and OCHA, noting the strategy will be presented to the IASC Principals for endorsement. It addresses 3 priorities: 1) Encouraging victims to come forward and a speak up culture; 2) Improving quality, survivor centered support and protection; and 3) Strengthened vetting, reference-checking, investigation processes and disciplinary measures.
- **UNICEF ED** noted support for the ERC in addressing SEA/SH as top priority, requiring dedicated resources, field engagement, and strong collaboration among IASC members. She emphasized taking a survivor-centred approach and to see this approach operationalized in the field, not only making sure that systems are set up, but that they are set up in a manner that is accessible and works for those who are most vulnerable.
- **Kelly Clements, UNHCR** confirmed UNHCR's support to the strategy. She noted how important UNHCR sees bringing together both SEA and SH into one workstream as part of a continuum of issues. She called for good practices re: culture change. She also noted that half of the allegations contained in the last quarterly report of the SG on SEA come from UNHCR. This is the fruit of initiatives undertaken by UNHCR to ensure that people speak up. It also demonstrates that there is still a significant underreporting trend within the system that needs to be addressed. She suggested that examples of ways in which organisations address sexual harassment allegations should be shared more widely so that we can learn from each other.
- **Jennifer Edmond representing the Oxfam Confederation** confirmed support to the strategy. She noted lack of support for men and of specialized services for children, and highlighted the dangers to staff, witnesses and survivors during reporting and investigations.
- **Jane Connors, UN Victims' Rights Advocate** also endorsed the strategy and its three priority areas. She shared concerns related to the protection of victims and witnesses during investigation. She agreed

that we need to increase the space for men and boys to report. She highlighted that community-based complaint mechanisms are really important for awareness raising, and for reaching out to communities but that there is a need for safeguards given the risks posed to survivors. She also noted that it is important to ensure that SEA is not perceived to be something that affects peacekeeping contexts only when in fact it also affects humanitarian and development settings. She also raised a point about terminology around “victims” and “survivors”.

- **Carolyn Aeby, INTERACTION** shared that INTERACTION recently held a CEOs retreat to discuss PSEA and SH. That discussion was attended by more than 40 CEOs. Overall, they expressed willingness in putting a victim centered approach at the core of their intervention but they are grappling with the complexities surrounding the different nations and cultures in which they work. To help them with policies, common definitions, trainings and evaluations methods, a multimillion USD grant will be provided to CEOs/organizations that are willing to work on this. She announced that 123 InterAction members and partners have now signed on to InterAction's pledge to prevent sexual abuse, exploitation, and harassment by and of NGO staff.
- **Manoj Juneja, WFP** supports the strategy. In line with the intervention of UNHCR, WFP noted the importance to address underreporting, and encouraging survivors to come forward. It is important to consider holistically the protection of survivors and to take courageous steps particularly regarding SH cases. In that regard, WFP suggested to advocate for the harmonization of different standards of proof (UN tribunal dispute vs ILO administrative tribunal).
- **Laura Londén, UNFPA** confirmed UNFPA's endorsement of the strategy. She emphasized UNFPA's ED leadership in supporting a culture of change. On the first priority area, she noted the importance of outreach and communications to be tailored to different audiences. On the second priority area, she recalled that victims' assistance has historically been challenged by a lack of sustainable resources. She also raised the importance of engaging with the media on SH and SEA. [In that regard, she shared an example where a staff member was allegedly involved in a case of SH but when the case was later on unsubstantiated it was already on the media and he was not able to work anymore. She suggested that support to the staff member in these circumstances needed to be taken into consideration]. On the third priority area, she raised the need for funding investigators and strengthening capacities through a pool of resources and standards which would help increase the credibility of the investigations. She noted that UNFPA leads the GBV AoR and raised a question related to what this may imply in terms of coordination and leadership on PSEA.
- **Sharon Kinsley, UNDP** confirmed UNDP endorsement of the strategy. She underlined the importance of a holistic approach in addressing both SEA and SH. In that regard, the inter agency collaboration is critical. She noted the willingness of UNDP to engage in that context, also knowing that SEA is not just about peacekeeping contexts but that it also occurs in development contexts. She would appreciate receiving more information about the mapping exercise proposed by UNICEF. She also suggested that

efforts should be undertaken to ensure that there is no duplication of efforts in terms of existing networks in the field.

- **Lynne Goldberg, Office of the Special Coordinator (OSC)** expressed appreciation for the invitation extended to the OSC to take part in the IASC discussions. She noted a stronger collaboration between the SEA Working Group and the IASC since the 1<sup>st</sup> of May IASC Principals Meeting which in turns allowed for better coordination in terms of resources but also in the way we now speak with one voice. She noted that the IASC Championship strategy is in alignment with the SG strategy. She raised concerns, however, regarding the expectations that may be raised in terms of victims' protection. She also raised concerns regarding the fact that often investigations are not conducted with a victim-centered approach. This risks to increase the lack of trust towards the system.
- **Kate Gilmore, OHCHR** suggested that a narrative could be added to the strategy to put the emphasis on a rights-based approach. It would be important as well to refer to the need for culture change in humanitarian settings (re: power imbalances). By providing such chapeau/contextual introduction, this would allow to protect the space for SEA/SH to be addressed with their specificities. In addition, it would be important to have a more proactive agenda to promote the rights of those we serve and reach a virtuous circle where we can collectively learn from each other on good practices and lessons learned from where we failed.
- **Andreas Mlitzke, WHO** also agreed on the proposed strategy. In line with UNHCR comment about the need to join forces on SEA and SH, he noted that this work is closely related and draws on many synergies. It is particularly true when it comes to prevention. He shared the example of WHO facing an increase in reporting of SH particularly in the last two years now that the organization has tools in motion. This has been less the case for SEA probably due to the nature of the agency but with the growing involvement of WHO in emergency settings there may also be an increasing risk for SEA to occur. He underlined the need to strengthen our investigation capacity. For example, on SH, WHO has built sufficient outreach and visibility but it still has little capacity. It still takes 6 months to respond to SH allegations. This is an issue in terms of our credibility. It is therefore important to ensure that we organize ourselves in a way that we have joint investigations capacities in the UN.
- **Cecile Aptel, IFRC** indicated agreement with the strategy. She shared concerns related to the fact that there are different complaint mechanisms for SEA and SH and suggested that we should avoid having multiple systems in place. She is supportive of an interagency approach. On the first priority area of the strategy, she noted that it would be important to have the reporting made context specific and accessible to the most vulnerable. This should not be based on technology that may be difficult to access. On the second priority area, she noted that the safety and protection should be at the core of any related intervention, and that it is key to avoid stigmatization at all stages.

**ACTION POINTS/ ERC Mark Lowcock** noted how important it is to pursue the exchange of information within this group. He recalled that at the last IASC Principals meeting (1 May 2018) a summary of IASC good practices had been circulated and that it would be important to continue updating it. He also noted that those organisations that handle SEA and SH best are the ones that have the largest number of allegations reported, and that it would be important to make sure that we incentivize good reporting systems.

### **Agenda Item 3: Proposal for discussion on accelerating implementation of PSEA at field level**

- **UNICEF ED** provided an overview of the proposal that aims to strengthen the implementation of our commitments on PSEA at the country-level, building upon the good practices and advancements that the IASC has made in this area. The proposal focuses on three outcomes for crisis-affected populations: 1) Safe and accessible reporting; 2) Quality survivor assistance; 3) Accountability and investigations. To support the delivery of results, structural changes are also proposed to clarify and further strengthen roles and responsibilities for PSEA in the field. This includes:
  - 1) Establishment of an SEA Steering Committee comprising all members of the Humanitarian Country Team, chaired by the Humanitarian Coordinator/Resident Coordinator and supported by a technical-level PSEA Network inclusive of all relevant partners. Under this structure, the HC/RC would periodically report to the Emergency Relief Coordinator – and through the ERC to the IASC - on the effectiveness of the PSEA work in the field.
  - 2) Putting in place the staffing structure needed to make these systems work, in particular PSEA Coordinators;
  - 3) Strengthening our technical-level work through enhanced participation and engagement inter-agency PSEA Networks.

UNICEF ED recalled that this structure is proposed as a model for strengthened principal-level leadership and accountability on PSEA, but it is not prescriptive – it would be adapted as appropriate to each country context. The proposed structure aims to systematize good practices in this area and address current gaps.

- **ERC Mark Lowcock** reinforced the fact that the proposal is for consultation. It contains two boxes specifying asks for IASC members. It calls for concrete commitments to advance on the SEA agenda.
- **Jennifer Edmond, OXFAM** recalled from her former experience as the Iraq PSEA network coordinator that there needs to be at a minimum one dedicated staff. She suggests that this staff or team needs to sit under OCHA or the HC in support of inter-agency efforts. She also put forward other concrete suggestions: set up a generic email address in any setting given the usual turnover of staff; make sure that the PSEA coordinator sits in the different clusters; ensure that indicators on SEA are mandatory to

report on; ensure that the Humanitarian Response Plans systematically cover SEA; make sure that resources are in place; ensure that SEA is integrated into the existing coordination structures, etc.

- **UNICEF ED** recalled her commitment to scale up resources with 11 million USD of UNICEF institutional resources dedicated to tackle SEA in 16 countries. She asked other organisations to commit resources in every way they can. She also noted with appreciation the fact that OCHA has put together a US\$1 million fund, to provide rapid grants to IASC organizations to support investigations into SEA and SH allegations, especially for those entities that do not have an investigative standing capacity.
- **Maria Thestrup, ICRC** noted the importance to link clearly the strategic vision and the concrete proposal and ensure that we promote, build and foster in that context a culture of integrity. This would require along the way strengthening the alignment of resources, the education of senior leadership, etc.
- **Kate Halff, SCHR** highlighted the need to ensure that we make clear connections with the AAP work and related mechanisms at country level. This needs to be made clear in the proposal. There is an effective task team working on AAP and PSEA under the IASC and this team needs to be part of the technical group that will support the proposal.
- **UNICEF ED** noted that a mapping is going to be conducted at country level so that the HCs have a baseline of information on the current systems in place and the gaps.

**ACTION POINTS/ UNICEF ED** called for a technical group to be established to review the different proposals and suggestions made during this meeting in advance of the Principals Meeting that will take place on December 3rd. In particular, the proposal for acceleration of the implementation of PSEA work at field level will need to be endorsed at the Principals Meeting. Commitments will also be expected from IASC member entities during the Principals Meeting.

#### **Agenda Item 4: Revision of the IASC Six Principles**

- **Fatoumata Ndiaye**, Deputy Executive Director of UNICEF, recalled that a proposal to revise the IASC Six Principles was tabled for discussion by the then IASC Champion on PSEA, IOM’s Director-General Swing, at the last meeting of the IASC PSEA Senior Focal Points in April 2018. Discussion focused primarily on a proposal to change the language in principle 4 from “strongly discourage” to “prohibit” sexual relationships between humanitarian workers and beneficiaries. She highlighted three key areas that we would need to see in the context of this proposed revision of the Six Principles:
  - The feasibility of a categorical prohibition, noting that the definitions of “humanitarian worker” and “beneficiary” are very broad. For example, a “humanitarian worker” comprises a broad range of staff, including a daily wage worker who may be a member of the beneficiary community.
  - The efficacy of a language change in achieving stronger outcomes on PSEA, and how such a change can achieve more effective compliance with the zero tolerance policy.

- Related actions needed by the IASC, and IASC members, to support and operationalize the adoption of a “prohibition” in principle 4 and/or any related changes.

Fatoumata Ndiaye added that UNICEF’s position on the revision is that we want to see a clear prohibition, based on an approach that is simple and straightforward. UNICEF thus proposes to 1) keep the formulation as is, with a change in language from “strongly discouraged” to “prohibited”; 2) clarify the definitions of humanitarian worker, and review the definition of beneficiary of aid so that it is clear; 3) re-consider the use of the term beneficiary to be more rights-based. Finally, the principle needs to acknowledge the power dynamics that are inherent in SEA.

- **Laura Londén, UNFPA** expressed concerns that in practical terms prohibition will be difficult to implement in contexts where most of the staff/workers/volunteers are themselves from the communities that we are serving.
- **Sharon Kinsley, UNDP** noted that a similar discussion is taking place in the SEA Working Group (under the leadership of Jane Holl Lute, Special Coordinator on SEA).
- **Diane Goodman, UNHCR** noted that UNHCR is facing a similar issue to the one raised by UNFPA with refugees working directly with the agency. However, she thinks that it is important to send a clear and strong message about this type of conduct.
- **Lynne Goldberg, Office of the Special Coordinator** confirmed that the SEA Working Group is indeed working on the revision of the Secretary General Bulletin 2003/13 which addresses language around exploitative relationships. She noted that the prohibition has been clearly set in the context of South Sudan and that there are now practical backlashes that are being faced.
- **Andreas Mlitzke, WHO** noted that language such as “strongly discouraged” is not very clear and that it should be made stronger. He also agreed that using terms like “beneficiaries” could be perceived as patronizing and would require further discussion.
- **Cecile Aptel, IFRC** confirmed IFRC’s willingness to support the revision and take part in these discussions given the number of volunteers working with the national societies of the red cross/ crescent.
- **ERC Mark Lowcock** suggested that the organisations that are part of the IASC and that are already prohibiting sexual relationships between staff members and the people we serve could share their experience.

**ACTION POINTS/UNICEF ED** proposed that a group looks at a revised formulation, to advance a common proposal that can be reviewed for endorsement at the next IASC PSEA/SH Senior Focal Points meeting, noting that whatever recommendation that we arrive at, we will propose it to the UN SEA Working Group to feed into the revision of the SG Bulletin 2003/13.

## Agenda Item 5: Next steps and AOB

Action	Deadline	Focal Point
OCHA and UNICEF conduct mapping of PSEA systems currently in place	Mapping completed and results compiled by 21 November 2018	Wendy Cue, OCHA Senior Coordinator for PSEA/SHA; Tasha Gill, UNICEF Senior Advisor Child Protection in Emergencies
Set up a technical level focal points group to work on proposal of acceleration of implementation in the field;  Final Proposal to be presented for endorsement at December 3 <sup>rd</sup> IASC Principals Meeting.	9 November 2019  3 December 2018	Tasha Gill, UNICEF Senior Advisor Child Protection in Emergencies
Senior Focal Points to brief their Principals on the PSEA Proposal and agree upon commitments towards implementing a country-level PSEA package that each IASC agency/ entity is prepared to make at the 3 December IASC Principals Meeting, starting with humanitarian countries.	3 December 2018	Tasha Gill, UNICEF Senior Advisor Child Protection in Emergencies
Set up a small working group to look specifically at the revision of the IASC 6 Principles, including review of terminology (e.g. “beneficiaries,” “victims”, “survivors”, etc.)	15 November 2018	Fatoumata Ndiaye, UNICEF DED Management
Use the Senior Focal Points Meeting as a forum to share good practices, lessons learned, and knowledge-sharing ideas to inform the update of the summary of IASC good practices.	Ongoing	Wendy Cue, IASC PSEA Focal Point
Next IASC Senior Focal Points Meeting	March 2019 (TBD)	Tasha Gill, UNICEF Senior Advisor Child Protection in Emergencies

## ANNEX - List of participants (38)

### UNICEF NYHQ/Maurice Pate – (10)

- **Henrietta Fore**, UNICEF Executive Director and IASC Champion on PSEA/ SH
- **Mark Lowcock**, Chair of the IASC, Emergency Relief Coordinator, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, OCHA
- **Fatoumata Ndiaye**, UNICEF Deputy Executive Director
- **Laura Londén**, ASG and Deputy Executive Director (Management), UNFPA
- **Eva Bolkart**, Coordinator, Protection from SEA and SH, UNFPA
- **Diane Goodman**, Senior Coordinator, SEA and SH, UNHCR
- **Jennifer Edmond**, Senior Advisor, Safeguarding, OXFAM America representing the Oxfam confederation
- **Sharon Kinsley**, Deputy Chief of Staff of the UNDP Administrator and Executive Office Deputy Director Chair of UNDP's Sexual Harassment in the Workplace Task Force, UNDP
- **Lynne Goldberg**, Office of the Special Coordinator on improving the UN's response to SEA
- **Jane Connors**, UN Victims' Rights Advocate

### Geneva in-person participants (7)

- **Andreas Mlitzke**, Director, Office of Compliance, Risk Management and Ethics, World Health Organization/GVA
- **Wendy Cue**, OCHA Senior Coordinator for PSEA/SHA, Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Secretariat
- **Kate Gilmore**, Deputy High Commissioner, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)
- **Veronica Birga**, SH Focal Point, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)
- **Cecile Aptel**, Director for Policy, Strategy and Knowledge, (IFRC)
- **Victoria Stodart**, Senior Officer, Inter-Agency Coordination Policy, Strategy & Knowledge (IFRC)
- **Alexandra Hileman**, IOM/IASC PSEA-CBCM Project Coordinator

### VTC/Geneva (10)

- **Kelly Clements**, Deputy High Commissioner, UNHCR
- **Mervat Shelbaya**, Chief of IASC Secretariat
- **Kate Half**, Executive Secretary, Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response (SCHR)
- **Maria Thestrup**, Head of Compliance Office, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)
- **Clarissa Azkoul**, IASC PSEA Sr Focal Point, IOM
- **Theodora Suter**, Head of the Gender Unit, IOM

- **Jeremy Rempel**, Coordinator, Less Paper More Aid, International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA)
- **Tanya Axisa**, IASC AAP PSEA Task Team Coordinator
- **Preeta Law**, Deputy Director, Division of International Protection, UNHCR
- **Jos Verbeek**, Special Representative to the UN and WTO at the World Bank Geneva

#### VTC (9 in various locations)

- **Patty McIlreavy**, Vice President, InterAction, Washington DC
- **Carolyn Aeby**, Vice President, Membership and Public Engagement, InterAction, Washington, DC
- **Franc Cortada**, Director, Global Programs, Oxfam International, Barcelona
- **Chet Kuchinad**, Chief People Officer at Save the Children, Representing Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response (SCHR)
- **Angela Mwai**, Gender focal point, UN-Habitat, Nairobi
- **Haris Pajtic**, Human Resources officer, UN-Habitat, Nairobi
- **Bonnie Green**, Director of the Ethics Office and WFP's Chief Ethics Officer, WFP, Rome
- **Davide Marzano**, Technical Group member, representing Deputy Director Amir Abdulla, WFP, Rome
- **Manoj Juneja**, Assistant Executive Director and CFO, WFP, Rome

#### UNICEF Championship Secretariat (NY)

- **Tasha Gill**, UNICEF Senior Advisor, Child Protection in Emergencies
- **Katie Wepplo**, UNICEF Child Protection Specialist, PSEA