

# Guidance on minimum requirements for works contractors on Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (PSEAH)

**PSEAH (Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment)** is a term used by the UN and broader humanitarian and development community to refer to measures taken to protect local community members from sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment committed by our personnel or by any personnel of our implementing partners, contractors and sub-contractors.

The contexts and projects we work in bring us into contact with local communities and populations, including vulnerable and marginalized groups. As humanitarian and development personnel, we have access to resources (money, goods, services etc.) that put us in a position of power vis a vis these communities and populations.

While in a contractual relationship with UNOPS, your company becomes part of the humanitarian and development community, and is therefore bound by the UNOPS PSEAH standards.

**The following five areas of action for Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Sexual Harassment are considered minimum standards by UNOPS according to our Terms and Condition of Contract and we expect that all our contractors uphold them.**

## **Area #1: PSEAH awareness (through training)**

- All contractor personnel involved in a UNOPS project must be familiar with the key PSEA concepts:
  - PSEAH definitions;
  - key PSEAH principles and why it is important;
  - consequences of SEAH;
  - contractors' and workers' responsibility on project sites;
  - tools to create an environment free from SEAH such as the Code of Conduct (CoC) and the periodic inspections;
  - obligation to report and reporting channels.

If necessary, training can be provided by UNOPS on these topics.

- UNOPS contractors in turn must deliver a PSEAH induction training to all their project workers about the prohibition of SEA and SH, the content of the Code of Conduct as well as the major topics mentioned above

**Area #2: Code of Conduct**

Upon receiving the PSEAH training, all workers involved in a UNOPS project must sign a Code of Conduct confirming their understanding of its content and their commitment to the PSEAH principles. It is the responsibility of each contractor to keep records of the signed CoCs of its personnel and workers that can be inspected by UNOPS.

**Area #3: Visibility for awareness raising and reporting**

- Contractors must display the UNOPS PSEAH site posters in each project site adapted to the language and context of the area of implementation. PSEAH site posters must contain the local reporting channel(s) for SEA/SH incidents (complaint boxes, hotline, email address, PSEAH focal point contact etc.)

**Area #4: Reporting**

- Reporting channels for SEA/SH cases must be visible, clear and enable the local population to raise their concerns in a safe and confidential manner.
- All Contractors must report SEA/SH cases and allegations concerning contractors' personnel to UNOPS in a confidential and timely manner. Only give details of the case if the survivor gives her/his consent. If no consent is obtained, only report the case/allegation without details.
- Reporting can happen through multiple channels:
  - Submit an SEA/SH report to UNOPS [Speak Up](#) platform
  - Report the allegation to UNOPS Project Manager or PSEA Focal Point
- Responding to reports of SEA/SH should be in line with a survivor-centered approach (see Annex 1 for guiding principles of a survivor-centered approach)

**Area #5: Investigation and corrective action**

- Contractors hold full responsibility for investigating any SEA/SH allegations concerning its own personnel. UNOPS will investigate any allegations related to misconduct of UNOPS personnel.
- Investigating SEA/SH allegations must follow a [survivor-centered approach](#)
- Contractors must take appropriate corrective action against offenders should SEA allegations be substantiated following investigation

**Annex 1****Guiding Principles of a Survivor-Centered Approach****Relevant to Prevention from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) & Sexual Harassment (SH) for  
Contractors****Guiding principles**

Guiding principles provide ethical and practical guidelines for a field of work. The GBV Guiding Principles established by UNHCR In 1995 outline the ethical responsibilities service providers have when working with survivors. These four principles have been largely accepted by the humanitarian community as best practice for GBV case management: 1) respect the wishes, rights, and dignity of the survivor; 2) establish and ensure safety of the survivor; 3) maintain confidentiality; and 4) non-discrimination.

**1. Respect the Wishes, Rights and Dignity of the Survivor**

This principle underscores the importance of interacting with the survivor using a validating, non-blaming and non-judgmental approach. This principle also reminds us that we must value the survivor. We express to survivors that we care about their experiences, their history and what happens to them now and in the future. We let the person know that she/he is valuable and matters in the world and to us. This is particularly important given the relational dynamics of the person's life and/or experiences with violence.

**2. Establish and Ensure Safety**

Ensuring the physical and emotional safety of the survivor is safeguarding the survivor's physical and emotional well-being in the short and long-term. Safety must also be established within the relationship between us and the survivor such that the survivor feels she will not be physically or emotionally harmed by us or our actions.

**3. Maintain Confidentiality**

This principle requires that everyone involved in the care and treatment of survivors protect information gathered about them and agree to only share information about their cases with their explicit permission. This means ensuring 1) the confidential collection of information during conversations; 2) that sharing information happens on a need to know basis only or in line with laws and policies; that permission is obtained from the survivor before information is shared; 3) when making a referral only the details relevant to the referral are shared with the service provider and a decision is reached with the survivor on what should be shared; and 4) case information is stored securely. Maintaining confidentiality also means that we never discuss case details with family and friends, or with colleagues whose knowledge of the abuse is deemed unnecessary.

#### 4. Non-Discrimination

Every adult or child, regardless of his/her sex, should be accorded equal care and support.

Victims/survivors of violence should receive equal and fair treatment regardless of their race, religion, nationality or sexual orientation. We fully recognize and intend to uphold this guiding principle in our work.

#### **Referrals to service provider**

Referrals for survivors of SEA/SH must be done with informed consent from the survivor (in case the survivor is an adult) and from the parent or legal guardian in case the survivor is a child or person with mental disability.

The referring party should make it clear to the person who gives informed consent that the referring party may need to share the information from the referral with professionals in other organizations (such as health or shelter service providers) to make sure the survivors get help.

The referring party should take a clear permission to share the information in the survivor's referral for this purpose (seeking help). The referring party must commit to ensuring the security, safety and confidentiality of the survivor's personal information in the Information Management system it uses.