

Fact sheet¹ Commitment 6

Protection against sexual exploitation and abuse

FAO is committed to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) by FAO personnel and implementing partners and put in place adequate response mechanisms

In October 2003, the Secretary-General's bulletin on special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse² was released, laying out the standards of conduct expected and the related duties of managers. The bulletin binds UN staff and related personnel³ as well as personnel from a wide range of non-UN partners including non-governmental organizations. FAO is a signatory to the Statement of Commitment on Eliminating Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by UN and Non-UN Personnel of 2006. In 2011, FAO committed to appointing a senior focal point and developing and delivering on a PSEA work plan.

FAO is committed to:

Preventing and responding to sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) by FAO personnel and implementing partners by:

1. Developing a framework for effectively addressing issues of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse within FAO
2. Ensuring adherence to the PSEA standards set by the SGB by all FAO personnel
3. Establishing responsibilities on the implementation of PSEA procedures and activities
4. Raising awareness and building capacity of FAO personnel on PSEA
5. Establishing PSEA complaints mechanisms for FAO personnel
6. Ensuring investigation procedures on SEA are in place
7. Raising awareness of community members on PSEA and FAO policies and procedures to deal with it
8. Establishing community based complaints mechanisms (CBCM)

Additional Notes

Humanitarian agencies and NGOs recognise the need for increased efforts to address the issue of sexual exploitation and abuse by humanitarian aid workers. They acknowledge the importance of working collaboratively with communities, establishing an accountability framework and setting up clear reporting mechanisms. They also highlight the importance of leadership commitment and the need for mainstreaming prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse into all their programmes. The importance of sanctions for perpetrators of sexual exploitation and abuse has also been stressed by NGOs and other humanitarian agencies. The UN has been working towards the IASC Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse⁴ clarifying what is considered as sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, what kinds of sexual conduct are prohibited, and how to present a complaint about sexual exploitation and abuse.

Case studies

HAP research on Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)

In 2010, HAP International conducted research⁵ in Haiti, Kenya and Thailand, seeking to capture the views of recipients of humanitarian assistance on the effectiveness of measures put in place to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse by humanitarian workers. Communities in all locations, to a greater or lesser extent, reported that they still feel at risk of exploitation and abuse by humanitarian workers. The research found, however, that such risk decreases when PSEA initiatives are consistently implemented. In Haiti, the risk was seen as highest in the immediate aftermath of the earthquake before PSEA initiatives were introduced. In Kenya, the 2004 – 2007 PSEA project was perceived to have made improvements in the situation. However, since the three-year project ended and PSEA was incorporated into gender based violence work, some

¹ This document supports the FAO in Emergencies Guidance Note on Accountability to Affected Population (AAP) and the IASC CAAP(Commitments on AAP) Tools. It includes: Each FAO commitment as presented in the Guidance Note, Further detail and explanation from other sources, Case studies and examples on each commitment in practice, and Links to external resources.

² ST/SGB/2003/13

³ "United Nations' staff or related personnel" shall include UN staff members, consultants, United Nations Volunteers, civilian police, military observers, staff officers, and military personnel of peacekeeping contingents, and cooperating partners.

⁴ <http://www.hapinternational.org/pool/files/special-measures.htm>

⁵ <http://www.hapinternational.org/pool/files/change-starts-with-us.pdf>

declines were noted. In Thailand, a concerted and coordinated effort has seen the cases of SEA by humanitarian aid workers reduce significantly.

Capacity building for Sexual Abuse in West Africa – HAP Case Study⁶

Since 2004, the Building Safer Organisations learning program has been assisting NGOs to strengthen their capacity to receive and investigate complaints of sexual exploitation and abuse. The learning program aims to train staff of organisations working directly with refugees, IDPs and host populations who will be designated to conduct investigations into allegations of staff misconduct, particularly on sexual exploitation and abuse. One of the trainings was carried out with 14 participants from different parts of Africa, Burundi, Kenya, Democratic Republic of Congo, Niger and Ivory Coast. After one week covering all aspects for handling an efficient and safe investigation, participants felt they would be able to handle an investigation in a competent and professional manner, but that organisations needed to put a lot of effort into their complaints mechanism if they really wanted to succeed in the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse.

Combating Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in Liberia – a Case study⁷

In an effort to combat Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA), the United Nations in Liberia has taken measures to prevent, report, and investigate SEA cases, and to impose sanctions against the perpetrators. One of the measures was the development of the In-Country Network (ICN), a network of representatives from the UN and international NGOs, serving as the primary body for coordination and oversight on prevention and response to SEA among the humanitarian community. Since its establishment in 2005, the ICN in Liberia has taken steps to ensure enhanced accountability, coordination, and communication relating to the prevention and response to cases of SEA by personnel working for the UN, its partners, international NGOs and other humanitarian assistance workers. Working in collaboration with the government of Liberia and local partners, the ICN set up mechanisms to implement international standards and policies relating to the prevention of SEA. These included the Secretary General's Bulletin on Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (ST/SGB/2003/13) and the Statement of Commitment on Eliminating Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by UN and Non-UN Personnel (2006). Despite some of the specific conditions of the Liberian context, such approach to prevention and response to SEA can be adapted to other post-conflict and development settings. Several areas of good practice have been identified, including:

- activities jointly developed with national authorities;
- using existing government structures for PSEA awareness, coordination, monitoring and reporting to ensure sustainability and national ownership;
- ensure government priorities and national plans were in line with the activities;
- a strong technical team coordinating at the central level, including a dedicated post in the Resident Coordinator's Office of the UNCT working on this issue full-time;
- capacity building of local structures and Civil Society as a core function of the PSEA effort;
- a long-term awareness campaign rolled out with a built-in evaluation mechanism for improvement of campaign interventions;
- and SEA Focal Points trained to effectively fulfil their TORs within their respective agencies.

Protection against sexual exploitation and abuse Useful Links and resources

HAP Training resource introducing the role of stronger accountability in reducing the risks of corruption and sexual abuse and exploitation

<http://hapinternational.org/pool/files/1-training-resource-the-role-of-accountability-in-reducing-the-risks-of-corruption-and-sea-english.pdf>

A concrete exercise with role play to discuss the risks of corruption and sexual abuse and exploitation with the staff.

The 2010 HAP Standard in Accountability and Quality Management -

<http://www.hapinternational.org/pool/files/2010-hap-standard-in-accountability.pdf>

The HAP standard sets some guidance for organisations intending to comply with the HAP Principles of Accountability. The resource is also a means to assess organisations against recognised benchmarks of accountability and quality management and to improve its practice.

⁶ <http://www.hapinternational.org/pool/files/hap-activities-in-west-africa.pdf>

⁷ http://www.un.org/en/pseataaskforce/docs/prevention_and_response_to_sexual_exploitation_and_abuse_in_l.pdf

The Interim Guide to the 2010 HAP Standard in Accountability and Quality Management -

<http://www.hapinternational.org/pool/files/interim-guide-to-the-2010-hap-standard.pdf>

According to international standards, guidelines and principles of continual improvement, the HAP 2007 Standard underwent an extensive revision process. The review reflects learning of applying the Standard and accountability practice since 2007. A more comprehensive guide to the HAP 2010 Standard is forthcoming.

The Sphere Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response -

<http://www.sphereproject.org/handbook/>

The SPHERE Project's core standards describe conditions that must be achieved in any humanitarian response in order for disaster-affected populations to survive and recover in stable conditions and with dignity. The inclusion of affected populations in the consultative process lies at the heart of Sphere's philosophy.

People In Aid's Code of Good Practice - <http://www.peopleinaid.org/code/>

The Code of Good Practice is a management tool that helps humanitarian aid and development agencies enhance the quality and accountability of their human resources management.

The Joint Standards Initiative: Humanitarian Standards for Aid Workers - <http://www.jointstandards.org/>

The Initiative aims at supporting the humanitarian system in providing accountable programming that meets accepted standards of quality, both in the immediate humanitarian response, and in the development and implementation of organisational and operational strategies for short and long-term recovery and the prevention of future crises.

Sphere Quality and Accountability Best Practices Guidelines - <http://www.sphereproject.org/resources/>

A set of materials to be used in training workshops or as an introduction to the range of quality and accountability initiatives for humanitarian response. The materials enable participants to understand the approach to quality and accountability of 8 main Accountability initiatives (such as HAP, ALNAP or the Sphere project).

ALNAP's Evaluating Humanitarian Action - www.alnap.org/resources/guides/evaluation/ehadac.aspx

This guide was developed after discussions within the evaluation community about how to strengthen evaluation of humanitarian practice, and how to foster more effective use of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) evaluation criteria. The objective of this guide is to provide practical support on how to use the DAC criteria in Evaluation of Humanitarian Action (EHA). It draws on good-practice material on evaluation and on EHA, including other guides, handbooks and manuals.

The ECB Project's Good Enough Guide

<http://www.ecbproject.org/the-good-enough-guide/the-good-enough-guide>

In this guide, accountability means making sure that the women, men, and children affected by an emergency are involved in planning, implementing, and judging the response to their emergency. This helps ensure that a project will have the impact they want to see. The *Good Enough Guide* was developed by the Emergency Capacity Building Project (ECB). The ECB is a collaborative effort by CARE International, Catholic Relief Services, the IRC, Mercy Corps, Oxfam GB, Save the Children, and World Vision International.