

## **End-of-Year Management Letter on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) and Reporting of SEA Allegations**

In accordance with Section 4.6 of the United Nations Secretary-General's Bulletin on "Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse" (ST/SGB/2003/13) and in accordance with CF/EXD/2004-002, I, Henrietta H. Fore, hereby certify that UNICEF has reported to the Secretary-General all allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse that have been brought to its attention and has taken all appropriate measures to address such allegations, in accordance with established rules and procedures for dealing with cases of staff misconduct.

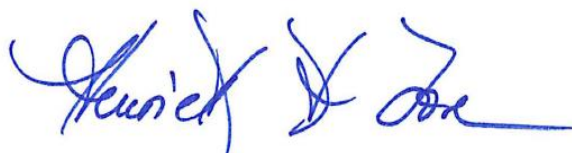
Furthermore, UNICEF has made available to all staff members and affiliated personnel training focused on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse. UNICEF has also raised awareness of its staff members, affiliated personnel and beneficiaries of assistance, insofar as applicable, through appropriate means, regarding the prohibition of sexual exploitation and abuse and ways of reporting such acts.

In addition, UNICEF has taken the following steps in 2020 to strengthen effective prevention and response regarding SEA in implementing partnerships and to foster a victim-centered approach:

- In February 2020, UNICEF launched its Procedure for Managing Risks of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in its partnerships. The procedure establishes requirements for UNICEF offices to operationalize the screening of civil society organizations (CSOs) partnering with UNICEF, as mandated by the United Nations Protocol on Allegations of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Involving Implementing Partners. All UNICEF CSO partners must be assessed on their capacity to tackle SEA. A high-risk rating of partners triggers assurance activities and requires the implementation of an action plan within 12 months to avoid partnership suspension (except where lives would be threatened). The procedure comes with a toolkit to assist UNICEF's implementing partners in improving their PSEA efforts.
- Following the launch of the procedure, UNICEF worked with other UN entities to convert the assessment to a set of inter-agency standards to assess implementing partners more efficiently across the UN system. As a result, PSEA assessments of CSOs partnering with multiple entities will be shared among relevant UN entities.

- UNICEF maintains and promotes a victim-centred approach in all matters related to SEA. UNICEF’s PSEA Toolkit for implementing partners, described above, explicitly endorses the key elements of a victim-centered approach. More broadly, during my tenure as IASC Champion on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, I set three priorities, all grounded in a victim-centered approach: (i) safe and accessible reporting mechanisms, (ii) quality assistance for survivors, and (iii) prompt, confidential, and respectful investigations. UNICEF investment in these priorities has seen the reach of our safe reporting channels triple in 2020, our GBV programme reach increase to 3.3 million in the period 2019-2020 (including in 66 reported SEA cases), and our investigative throughput increase by 209 per cent even as timelines shortened. In 2020, UNICEF contributed to the establishment of an IASC PSEA Field Support Team to help Humanitarian Coordinators, Humanitarian Country Teams, and PSEA Networks accelerate and strengthen their PSEA work.
- UNICEF revised its Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action (CCCs) in 2020 and thereby expanded whole-of-organization commitments on PSEA. The CCCs explicitly mention the need for a survivor-centred approach and will inform the content and application of our upcoming procedures for action at the onset of humanitarian emergencies. The benchmarks for UNICEF’s commitments on PSEA, as described in the CCCs, are aligned with my three IASC Championship priorities on PSEA, above.
- UNICEF collaborated with the UN Office of the Victims’ Rights Advocate (OVRA) and Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to organize a consultation on strengthening access to legal aid for victims of SEA in June 2020. UNICEF, OVRA and OHCHR are taking the recommendations from the consultation forward, among others, to establish a roster of legal aid actors, build capacity among legal service providers to address SEA, and to support local legal aid providers.
- UNICEF is also leading on the development of a technical note to inform implementation of the UN Victim Assistance Protocol, with strong support from DMSPC, IOM, OVRA, UNFPA and UNHCR. The technical note and protocol will be used by all country and field offices when providing victim assistance.

Recognizing the importance of transparency and accountability in the United Nations system with respect to fighting sexual exploitation and abuse, this has been done in good faith.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Henrietta H. Fore".

Henrietta H. Fore  
Executive Director  
27 January 2021

