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## **Update on IFAD's Approach to Address the United Nations Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Sexual Harassment, Sexual Exploitation and Abuse**

### **Addendum**

### **Management's Response to Member States' Comments**

Executive Board — 133<sup>rd</sup> Session  
Rome, 13-16 September 2021

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For: **Information**

Comments from Germany	Management response
<p>Is IFAD participating in the central UN SEA Reporting Mechanism? We can't see a single suspected case in there (and IFAD is not as a reporting entity in the drop-down menu, neither in the table for UN staff, nor in those for implementing partners). Is it because IFAD is not participating or because there are zero suspected cases?</p>	<p>IFAD participates in the Secretary-General real-time sexual exploitation and abuse tracker (UN S-G SEA tracker). See link to the list of United Nations entities participating in the reporting of SEA allegations to the Secretary-General of the United Nations here: <a href="https://www.un.org/preventing-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse/sites/www.un.org/preventing-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse/files/list_of_participating_un_entities.pdf">https://www.un.org/preventing-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse/sites/www.un.org/preventing-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse/files/list_of_participating_un_entities.pdf</a>.</p> <p>However, since IFAD joined the tracker, no SEA allegations have been reported and therefore there is no entry for IFAD.</p>
Comments from United Kingdom	Management response
<p><b>Focal points</b> – it is good to see these are in place. What is the timing for the expansion of the focal point programme to cover all IFAD duty stations? Is there any further feedback from focal points on progress/challenges - particularly around facilitating access to reporting and support mechanisms at field level; working with the RC/HS; and PSEA Networks? It would also be helpful to understand more about the SEA focal point action plans that have been developed.</p>	<p>The expansion of the SEA focal points programme is expected to be rolled out by year-end. In developing the expansion programme, the experience in the UN system as well as the feedback and experience of the current IFAD focal points that performed the role since 2019 were taken into consideration.</p> <p>A plan of activities was developed to support the SEA focal points and includes: local awareness-raising actions; the promotion of IFAD sexual harassment (SH)/SEA policy locally with all partners; making recommendations to improve local SEA prevention strategies and local reporting and support mechanisms; liaising with other UN SEA networks, UN country teams, Resident Coordinators and international financial institutions (IFIs) on SEA-related initiatives.</p>
<p><b>SEA/SH prompt reporting system</b> – this is really interesting and would like to ask whether IFAD could share whatever information Member States can access as part of this and clarify whether this is more than what is reported publicly through the UNSG's online mechanism.</p>	<p>In December 2020, IFAD implemented a confidential and dedicated SH/SEA prompt reporting system on the Member States Interactive Platform. The purpose of the system is to provide timely anonymized information on each SH/SEA report in which sufficient details exist to indicate that the allegation is credible. In order to protect privacy and the integrity of internal processes, minimal information is reported on the status and outcome of cases. Reporting includes SH and also SEA allegations concerning IFAD's workforce as well as personnel of external parties implementing IFAD-funded operations and activities.</p> <p>The UN S-G SEA tracker reports only allegations of SEA while IFAD's prompt reporting system also informs Member States of SH allegations.</p>
<p><b>April 2021 survey</b> – we welcome the survey and wonder whether the results of this have been shared?</p>	<p>The deadline for completion of the 2021 UN SEA survey has been extended to 15 September 2021. The results of the survey will be communicated to Heads of participating UN entities in due course and as per past practice, the Executive Board will be informed through the SH/SEA updates.</p>

<p><b><u>UN PSEA Implementing Partner Capacity Assessment</u></b> - could you confirm whether IFAD is using this?</p>	<p>For each project, IFAD assesses social and environmental risks, including gender-based violence and SH/SEA risks, using the Social, Environmental and Climate Assessment Procedures (SECAP). The recently updated SECAP includes an online screening tool to support borrowers/recipients/partners in identifying and managing risks and impacts, and enhance the integration of mainstreaming priorities into all new IFAD projects/programmes. It captures emerging issues related to non-discrimination, gender-based violence including SEA, disability, and climate change mitigation and adaptation, and ensures that mitigation measures are fully integrated into the final project design.</p> <p>Where insufficient capacity to identify, monitor and respond to SH/SEA risks is identified, mitigation measures are included in the project's environmental, social and climate management plan and monitored during project implementation.</p> <p>The updated SECAP responds to a growing recognition of potential reputational risk for IFAD when the environmental, climate change and social risks and impacts associated with IFAD-supported projects/programmes are not properly and effectively identified and managed.</p>
<p><b>Support to governments</b> – is there any more detail on what initiatives are being discussed in relation to supporting government partners in developing efficient in-country SEA reporting channels?</p>	<p>Through the SECAP, the borrower/recipient/partner will prepare environment and social impact assessments and/or environmental, social and climate management plans/frameworks as early as possible in the project design stage or the planning stage at implementation. In developing such assessments and plans, the borrower/recipient/partner should conduct meaningful stakeholder consultations, identify areas that need to be strengthened such as grievance and reporting mechanisms, and develop appropriate mitigation measures to be integrated in the project design.</p>
<p><b>Action plan</b> – we welcome the updates for 2020 – 2021. Could you confirm when a new action plan will be developed and shared for 2022 and beyond?</p>	<p>IFAD is committed to continue developing and sharing biennium SH/SEA action plans with the Executive Board and with the UN Special Coordinator on improving the United Nations response to SEA.</p>
<p><b>Comments from Netherlands</b></p>	<p><b>Management response</b></p>
<p>NL welcomes the roll out of a mandatory refresher training programme and the development of a stand-alone mandatory Sexual Harassment (SH) in the workplace training module in all four official languages of the Fund. Could management share information on the timeline? When will the SH training be ready for use?</p>	<p>The training module on SH in the workplace is being finalized and will be integrated in the learning management system as part of the mandatory ethics training by year-end.</p>
<p>The SH/SEA policy has a focus on SEA, which we understand. At the same time, we would welcome more specific information on the SH part of the policy. Could management tell us how often SH incidents have been reported?</p>	<p>In addition to the SH/SEA policy, a comprehensive legal framework on harassment, including SH, is fully integrated into IFAD's rules and procedures. Management will continue to promptly inform its Member States of credible SH reports as they are received in IFAD through the dedicated SH/SEA page on the Member States Interactive Platform. The SH/SEA prompt reporting system on the Member States Interactive Platform has been fully implemented in December 2020.</p>

<p>NL encourages the use of ClearCheck, could management elaborate on how it is using ClearCheck?</p>	<p>The ClearCheck database is an online platform that provides access to information from UN entities on individuals (former UN staff and UN-related personnel) who have established allegations related to SEA and SH with the aim of preventing their re-employment within the United Nations system. IFAD conducts reference checks using the ClearCheck database during its recruitment processes and in particular for all shortlisted candidates for an IFAD vacancy.</p> <p>In addition, to ensure more efficient, expeditious and effective recruitment practices, starting in the last quarter 2020, OneHR, a UN specialized service centre providing a range of HR-related services, has been performing reference and criminal checks for positions at P-4 and above. The reference verification procedure in OneHR includes the Security Council Sanctions List, the INTERPOL wanted persons list, and SEA and SH checks.</p>
<p>NL compliments IFAD for working with UN Resident Coordinators and in-country networks on SEA.</p>	<p>Collaboration with partners at the local level is key to a coordinated and efficient strategy to prevent and respond to SEA.</p>
<p>With regards to part C, could management elaborate a bit on its concrete actions and ambitions?</p>	<p>IFAD collaborates with the UN and IFI networks to exchange knowledge and to ensure that IFAD applies the best practices in SH/SEA prevention and response. Concrete actions include IFAD's participation in the ClearCheck database, UN S-G SEA tracker, UN SEA surveys and contribution to local UN SEA action plans. As a result of the collaboration with the UN and IFIs, key documents have been developed and shared, such as guidelines for investigations of SEA for UN investigative bodies and, more recently, the document "Advancing a Common Understanding of a Victim-centred Approach to Sexual Harassment within the Organizations of the United Nations".</p>
<p>What is IFAD's role in the UN CEB TF on Addressing Sexual Harassment?</p>	<p>IFAD is a participant organization in the Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) SH Task Force, which serves as a forum to exchange lessons and share best practices in relation to prevention and response to SH. The task force was established in 2017 by the Secretary-General and reports to the High-Level Committee on Management, which then makes its recommendations to the CEB. The mandate of the task force is to develop a common United Nations system approach to SH through reviewing organizations' policies for addressing SH, and their capacities for investigation of allegations and support to victims.</p>