

PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

TACKLING SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, ABUSE
& HARASSMENT IN THE AID SECTOR

Cross-Sector Progress Report on Safeguarding Against Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (SEAH) 2021-2022

A summary of work between August 2021 and August 2022 by the groups and organisations that made commitments at the October 2018 London Safeguarding Summit, and others working to align their safeguarding work with the long-term shifts identified at the summit.

November 2022

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Introduction

In October 2018, the UK hosted the London Summit on tackling sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment (SEAH) in the international aid sector. The Summit convened stakeholders across the sector and included representatives from the United Nations (UN), UK non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), International Financial Institutions (IFIs), the UK private sector, the Global Fund and GAVI, research funders, CDC Group (now British Investment International), British Red Cross and donors representing 90% of global Official Development Assistance (ODA) at the time of the summit.

Each of the above stakeholder groups at the London Summit made a set of commitments to keep the people we work with safe from sexual harm. These are in line with 4 strategic shifts that framed the Summit's work:

- » Ensure support for survivors, victims and whistle-blowers, enhance accountability and transparency, strengthen reporting and tackle impunity
- » Incentivise cultural change through strong leadership, organisational accountability and better human resource processes
- » Agree minimum standards and ensure we and our partners meet them
- » Strengthen organisational capacity and capability across the international aid sector, including building the capability of implementing partners to meet the minimum standards

The UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) convenes and chairs a Cross-Sector Safeguarding Steering Group (CSSG) which is made up of representatives from all stakeholders who made commitments related to the Summit, alongside independent voices, the CHS Alliance and the Steering Committee

for Humanitarian Response (SCHR). The CSSG continues to meet quarterly as a forum to share progress, challenges and examples of best practice across the sector. It is the only forum that currently exists to monitor progress on SEAH across such a broad group of stakeholder representatives.

In the spirit of accountability, transparency and learning the CSSG prepares an annual progress report to update on work to prevent and respond to SEAH in line with the London Summit commitments. This is the fourth annual progress report and [previous progress report examples](#) can be found online.

Four years on from the London Summit good progress continues to be made. But many challenges remain and much more work is needed to improve the response to SEAH and to tackle a range of issues that enable it to occur in the first place.

Summary

Over the last year progress was made across the humanitarian, development and peacekeeping sectors (although peacekeeping work is not the main focus of this report). Increased training and raising awareness of SEAH for staff has continued across many organisations. Support to victims and survivors remained an area of focus including with work to define a survivor-centred approach and to increase the resourcing available. New policies, guidelines and dedicated teams focusing solely on safeguarding against SEAH have helped to build internal capacity. Despite the progress, many shared challenges remain. Two long-term challenges highlighted through this year's reporting process are how best to record and share data about SEAH cases (see Annex A for a summary of data provided for this report), and secondly how to improve SEAH processes linked to emergency responses such as those linked to the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

In the year ahead, organisations intend to focus on thematic areas including: improving culture and leadership; continuing to update internal processes and develop guidance; and the expansion of existing training and strengthening staffing and resources on the ground to help protect the rights of victims and survivors.

The CSSG will continue to serve as a unique forum for representatives across the sector to discuss progress, challenges and lessons learnt so we can collectively improve our prevention and response to SEAH and continue to support victims, survivors, and whistle-blowers.

Highlights and Trends

In the past year good progress has been made on increased training and raising awareness of SEAH for staff, partners and investees.

- » One-third of Bond members (from UK NGOs) reported an increase in training delivered virtually, making it easier for staff and volunteers to attend.
- » British Investment International (BII) held a training workshop in South-East Asia which included leadership panel discussions on the importance of management in tackling SEAH.
- » Research funder, Wellcome, announced its first-all staff mandatory training modules which include case studies.
- » The Global Fund launched mandatory sexual harassment training for all staff and to build greater awareness around SEAH risk and appropriate response to SEA allegations/ reports ran seven webinars for implementing partners from 42 African countries.
- » Gavi continued to build its internal cultural platform for safeguarding and rolled out mandatory workshops based on the Respectful Behaviour Policy in July and September 2022 attended by over 450 staff and consultants.
- » With support from the British Red Cross (BRC), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) Secretariat developed and launched a Safeguarding Hub which contains new tools, resources and case studies, education materials and video animations about safeguarding.
- » Donors continued to work on training and resources. Examples include: Sweden focused on training for staff joining missions; Germany initiated new rounds of training to include colleagues from missions in Geneva and New York; and the 30 OECD DAC (Development

Assistance Committee) donors held thematic learning sessions and continued to develop a toolbox with pillars, including on training and survivor-centred approaches, to be published in 2023.

Support to victims and survivors of SEAH continued to be an area of focus.

Some organisations reviewed the definition and impact of victim-centred or survivor-centred approaches as part of work to support victims and survivors of SEAH:

- » The UN High-level Committee on Management approved core principles on advancing a common understanding of a victim-centred approach to sexual harassment within the UN system developed by a workstream of the Chief Executives Board for Coordination Task Force on Addressing Sexual Harassment and co-chaired by the Victims' Rights Advocate and representatives of the World Bank.
- » The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Champions worked on a definition of a victim-survivor centred approach for adoption by the UN, and the UN Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate (OVRA) continued to develop a Statement of Victims' Rights.
- » BII's approach to safeguarding is based on a survivor-centred approach which places strong emphasis on the protection of survivors and maintaining confidentiality and responsiveness in relation to incidents. BII strengthened its Safeguarding Domain Practice to support this approach.
- » Various research funders strengthened the reporting mechanisms for victims and survivors to help drive accountability.
- » Strengthening a victim/survivor centred approach was one of the topics of discussion at the UN Strategic Dialogue in May 2022, the

first meeting of this kind between all Member States and the UN on SEAH.

Organisations continued to build internal capacity to prevent and respond to SEAH.

- » In the Global Fund, the PSEAH (Protection from SEAH) Coordination Unit established in June 2021 grew from two staff members to seven, including a Victim Advocate and In-Country Support Coordinator, Case and Project Managers, and Prevention and Monitoring Specialists.
- » The IFRC's Global Safeguarding Action Plan includes an ambitious target for 50 National Societies to have a PSEA policy by end 2025. To date, the IFRC and 30 (of 192) National Societies have a PSEA policy which meets the IFRC standard. This represents an increase of 13 National Societies during this reporting period.
- » Several members of the UK private sector Safeguarding Leads Network (SLN) recruited full-time safeguarding experts, while others set up cross-organisational safeguarding committees or communities of practice, to drive ownership and improve communications on SEAH.
- » Research funders embedded safeguarding principles in the grant making process.
- » Gavi developed new programme funding and vaccine funding guidelines which explicitly state that Gavi funds can be used to design and implement policies and measures to prevent sexual exploitation, assault and harassment (PSEAH) in the immunisation space.
- » For donors, the USA and the Netherlands established safeguarding units and Germany developed a joint PSEAH policy with their peacekeeping department.
- » Building on the [2021 IASC External Review](#), the IASC endorsed in May 2022 a five-year [Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse](#)

[and Sexual Harassment Vision and Strategy 2022-2026](#).

Collecting systematic and consistent data across the sector remains a longer-term challenge.

There continues to be limited data on SEAH. Reasons for this include: lack of reporting of incidents due to concerns about stigma and potential repercussions; the possible reputational risk organisations face when reporting; data protection; and concerns around confidentiality. The UK private sector cited these reasons and the lack of a standard approach for reporting as contributing to the difficulties in data collection. As summarised in Annex A, some organisations saw an increase in the number of reported incidents in the last year, which suggests that despite the challenges around data collection there is more confidence to 'speak up'. Other organisations recorded broadly the same or slightly fewer incidents compared to the previous year for a range of reasons. Some parts of the sector struggle to collect composite data from their membership or operations, which hinders publishing a full overview of SEAH allegations. To address this challenge CHS Alliance, SCHR and FCDO have partnered to develop a harmonised SEAH data collection and reporting approach for aid organisations. As part of the project various organisations in different countries are currently piloting the [draft model framework](#).

The Russian invasion of Ukraine has presented a significant challenge to the sector.

There is a high risk of SEAH to displaced women and children including when crossing borders and seeking assistance as refugees. The risks are exacerbated if humanitarian organisations have not yet established safeguarding policies, structures, systems and culture, and when large numbers of unregistered volunteers arrive to assist at the start of the emergency response.

Ukraine is unfortunately far from unique in terms of these challenges, but one that many CSSG members have been involved in responding to in the past year. Examples of safeguarding-related support include:

- » Governments, including EU/DG ECHO, Germany, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States responded through the Inter-Agency Contingency Plan, providing multipurpose cash (MPC) assistance, food assistance, shelter, health care and protection services.
- » The IFRC deployed its first ever Safeguarding Surge Delegates to the Ukraine Regional Response and committed to building its processes and capacities to ensure safeguarding surge support in future emergencies.
- » The UN deployed a PSEA coordinator and team to Ukraine to support efforts.
- » The UK's Disasters Emergency Committee funded the establishment of a [Safeguarding Resource and Support Hub](#) focusing on Eastern Europe.

Next Steps:

There are several thematic areas that organisations plan to focus on in the next year. These include: leadership and culture to maintain support for safeguarding; updating internal processes to respond better to SEAH allegations and cases; expanding existing training packages; updating policies and codes of conduct; conducting internal audits for safeguarding; and strengthening dedicated staffing and resources on the ground in support of the rights of victims and survivors.

Following constructive dialogue with the UN at the Strategic Dialogue in May 2022, Member States will continue to pursue discussions on progress and priorities for international engagement. Efforts will continue to pursue alignment around international standards, building on successful work to align donor and UN requirements in funding agreements.

The DAC PSEAH Reference Group will develop and launch a SEAH toolkit that covers key themes for member states and the wider sector. The Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate (OVRA) is developing a roster of pro bono lawyers and legal aid organisations which they hope to operationalise later this year, and pilot in countries with Senior Victims' Rights Officers in 2023.

Sector representatives will also discuss and consider how the development of a Global Framework on preventing and responding to SEAH, potentially covering not only humanitarian and development work but also peacekeeping, could help create more coordinated and aligned policies and practices and so help deliver greater impact on this agenda.

1. Donors

Introduction

Four years on from the [London Summit](#), representatives of the [23 signatories to the donor commitments](#) continue to meet quarterly to track progress against those commitments and to support implementation of the 2019 Organisation for Cooperation and Development (OECD) [Development Assistance Committee \(DAC\) Recommendation on Ending Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Harassment \(SEAH\)](#). Donors remain firmly committed to zero tolerance to inaction on SEAH individually, collectively and with all implementing partners. Much progress has been made (see also donor reports [2019](#), [2020](#) and [2021](#)) but there is more to be done. References to specific commitments are included in brackets for ease of reference.

Progress

1. **Strategic Dialogue with the UN on tackling SEAH.** In December 2021 a group of 27 Member States and the EU issued a joint letter to the UN Secretary-General setting out asks of the UN system in tackling SEAH, proposing a strategic dialogue to further explore the challenges and action required by us all to accelerate progress for change. The UN Secretary-General welcomed the initiative, setting up a meeting hosted by the Special Coordinator for Preventing SEA in May 2022. All Member States and the EU were invited.

This was the first meeting of the UN system and Member States to discuss SEAH in such a forum. Topics included: the Secretary-General's ambition for a global framework for cooperation; the need for cohesion across the humanitarian, development and peace

and security sectors; strengthening a victim/survivor-centred approach; and resourcing.

A joint statement was delivered on behalf of 65 Member States. The meeting recognised the significant progress made in tackling SEAH, including that reflected in the [Secretary-General's 2022 Special Measures report](#). However, as the UN Secretary-General himself stated, challenges remain and more must be done. For example, stigma constrains reporting and accountability systems can prove difficult for survivors to access. Discussions will continue with the new Special Coordinator on SEA and other stakeholders (this is relevant to London summit commitment #12 and pillar 5 of the DAC Recommendation).

2. Implementing aligned donor language on SEAH requirements in funding agreements with the UN.

In May 2020, fifteen donors¹ wrote a joint donor letter to the United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), proposing harmonised SEAH language for use in funding agreements between UN System entities and donor Member States. Final agreement, applicable to core and non-core funding, was reached in July 2021, establishing harmonised language that sets out collective expectations of the UN system. An Explanatory Note to support implementation of the provisions, was agreed in June 2022.

Increasing numbers of donors are implementing the language and all are encouraged to do so to maximise the benefits of this collaborative action. This signifies major progress against the

1 Australia, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, UK, USA

donor summit commitment (#15) to strengthen funding templates, reflecting requirements to meet international standards on SEAH. We are already seeing improved sharing of information as a result. Donors and the UN will now discuss the feasibility of updating Standard Administrative Agreements that cover pooled funding agreements.

3. **OECD DAC Recommendation on Ending SEAH – Interim Monitoring exercise** (summit commitment #17). The interim progress report on Member States’ implementation of the DAC Recommendation was finalised in November 2021, with a five-year monitoring report planned for 2024. Evidence of progress was reflected through increased numbers of new initiatives and response measures. These will contribute to the development of a toolkit to be published in 2023.

The multi-stakeholder DAC Reference Group on Ending SEAH continues with regular peer learning sessions to support progress and implementation of the Recommendation. Efforts include communication activities, such as the High Level Round Table: Accelerating Action to End SEAH (May 2022). Convened by the DAC Chair, the meeting brought together senior representatives from the DAC and civil society organisations (CSOs) to discuss urgent action and coordination on ending SEAH.

4. **Evidence.** The dearth of research and evidence on SEAH in the international aid sector has led several donors to focus on ways to research and broker information, as a global public good, accessible to all. Several important initiatives, that engage with countries in the global south, support processes that build capability, raise awareness, develop and share knowledge and support evidence informed policy development:
- (i) The Global Women’s Institute participatory action research programme, Empowered

Aid, funded by the United States Department of State, is a unique SEA research initiative. Findings highlight risk factors for SEA occurring in different sectors and stages of distribution (e.g. Food Aid, Cash, Shelter), with recommendations shaped by women and girls during consultations with them, and in recognition that they are, themselves, field-based “safeguarding” experts. This research has been seminal in informing how PSEA work is implemented at the field level. Outputs include guidance notes and tools for programming.

- (ii) The Resource and Support Hub funded by the UK focuses specifically on support for humanitarian and development organisations to strengthen their SEAH policy and practice, with tools, best practice advice and training in over 10 languages. Hubs operate in the UK, Ethiopia, Nigeria, South Sudan, Middle East, Eastern Europe and South Asia. A recent example of its work includes collaboration with 40 Organisations for Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) in Nigeria to understand challenges in implementing safeguarding policies and developing a guide for disability-inclusive safeguarding.
- (iii) Digna is the Canadian Centre of Expertise on the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse. It aims to support Canadian aid organisations to tackle SEA against their programme participants. In July 2022, Digna started to develop a series of case studies in collaboration with Cooperation Canada’s membership. These include a case study on an international development agency undergoing a SEA investigation, with tools and lessons learned that emerged from the exercise; and a case study on how to develop a PSEA policy that addresses the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Minimum Operating Standards on PSEA, and documents lessons learned during the process.

These are important ongoing initiatives to support the generation of evidence and best practice that can strengthen capability for better policy and practice across all partners (donor commitments #4 and #19). Further research on SEAH is a continuing need.

Challenges and Lessons

1. **System-wide cohesion and collaboration.**

Key challenges remain in tackling SEAH across the aid sector. The 10-year review of IASC PSEA work (December 2021) affirmed that both SEA and SH are rooted in unequal power relations and gender inequality that require urgent action, particularly to strengthen victim-survivor centred approaches, build organisational culture change and support capability. Across the UN system fragmentation is an overarching challenge, and one exacerbated by limitations in the alignment and coordination across humanitarian, development and peace and security approaches. As Member States of the UN system and providers of core funding, donors must continue to support and constructively engage in making progress against the [Special Measures](#), the [2021 IASC review recommendations](#) and promoting system-wide cohesion across the aid and peacekeeping sectors.

2. **War in Ukraine.** The Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 has plunged the country into significant conflict and ongoing fragility. The differential impact upon women, men and children is exacerbating existing inequalities, with significant risk of gender-based violence, including sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment to the affected population within Ukraine and those displaced beyond its borders. The humanitarian community has responded through the Inter-Agency Contingency Plan, with donor countries including EU/DG ECHO, Germany,

Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States providing multipurpose cash (MPC) assistance, food assistance, shelter, health care and protection services.

Donors (including the USA and the UK) are supporting PSEA governance and coordination mechanisms that were established by the Humanitarian Country Team at the onset of the crisis, including deployment of Gender Based Violence (GBV), PSEA and humanitarian experts. Stronger and more systematic SEA risk assessments, creation of PSEA technical standards, the presence of PSEA networks, consultations with women-led and women-focused local organisations, and dedicated PSEA advisers across clusters and organisations are essential actions to further strengthen PSEA response.

Next steps

1. Donor discussions through strategic dialogue with the UN will continue apace. These will link to further discussion and consideration across the sector on how the development of a global framework on the prevention and response to SEAH could further align standards and approaches for a more effective and efficient change across the humanitarian, development and peacekeeping nexus.
2. Continued implementation of the aligned language and learning from the implementation should encourage more donors to use the language in their agreements. Donors will also engage on how SEAH language in UN Standard Administrative Agreements that cover pooled funding can be similarly aligned.
3. The process to develop the OECD DAC Toolkit to support implementation of the DAC Recommendation on Ending SEAH will

continue to enable deep-dives and lesson-learning and help to build capability. Donors will continue to encourage more UN agencies to adhere to the 2019 DAC Recommendation on Ending SEAH.

4. Donors will continue to work on their own systems and with their partners and stakeholders to improve standards and best

practice on tackling SEAH, including on challenges raised in the IASC PSEA review, and will contribute to the implementation of the 2022-2026 IASC PSEA strategy. This prioritises operationalising victim-survivor centred approaches, promoting organisational culture change and supporting capability to tackle SEAH, in priority high-risk contexts.

Case Study UN Trust Fund in Support of Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

Twenty-four member states have collectively contributed over \$4.3m to the UN Trust Fund in Support of Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (summit commitment #5²). The purpose of the fund is to assist survivors/victims of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) by UN personnel, and support projects with UN entities, agencies, funds and programmes and NGOs.

Projects focus on providing survivor/victim assistance and support services, including income generation activities to enhance livelihood options. Participant feedback to capture survivor/victim voices supports efforts to empower them directly and to shape survivor/victim-centred approaches to future programming.

The [2021 Trust Fund report](#) highlights a project in the Democratic Republic of Congo to develop and support Community-Based Complaints Networks (CBCNs), set up by the NGO Samani Ya Mazingira (SYAM), to facilitate reporting and complaints about SEA and to coordinate victim/survivor response actions in six local areas. The project supported 375 beneficiaries through livelihoods training, 83

children through education support, 120 CBCN members in management of and response to PSEA complaints, including a focus on victims' rights, human rights, gender equality and children's rights.

The project demonstrated opportunities and challenges of working with survivors in difficult circumstances, including insecurity and COVID restrictions. The project was able to operate in fragile local areas and work with intended beneficiaries, supporting skills for longer-term income generation activities, tackling stigmatization of SEA survivor/victims through awareness raising, and enabling complaints through an enhanced CBCN. Meanwhile, the security situation necessitated support from the UN Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO), and additional funds were required for security, including basic infrastructure. Supporting victim/survivor-centred approaches in complex environments will always be challenging, requiring context specific strategies that substantially rely on building trust with local communities to move forward and funding requirements commensurate with managing risks and implementing local options.

² Including Donor Technical Working Group members Australia, Canada, Finland, Germany, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Norway, Portugal, Switzerland, the UK and the USA. The TWG is for all who made donor commitments at the 2018 London Summit.

2. The United Nations

Introduction

As outlined in the UN Secretary-General's 2022 Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse report, the United Nations system has taken robust measures to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse by any of its personnel, including by working closely with Member States and civil society. The United Nations recognizes that more must be done to address sexual exploitation and abuse and continues to prioritize this matter. In September 2022, the United Nations Secretary-General appointed a full-time Under-Secretary-General to the role of Special Coordinator to ensure dedicated support and an aligned approach across the United Nations system. The UN Factsheet, updated quarterly, summarizes initiatives, progress and timelines for future action.

Progress

1. **Employment screening.** Advances have been made to prevent individuals with substantiated allegations of sexual misconduct from moving across the various parts of the United Nations through expanded use of the Clear Check database. WHO has used the database to screen potential staff and consultants, including all the polio experts in its database of 2,400 personnel. The United Nations Development Programme and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) expanded screening capacity by including all contract types in Clear Check vetting. UNHCR is piloting participation in the [Misconduct Disclosure Scheme](#). The Secretary-General has encouraged discussion of how these parallel screening systems could operate together.
2. **Inter-agency Standing Committee (IASC).** Building on the findings of the [2021 IASC External Review](#), the IASC endorsed a five-year Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment [Vision and Strategy 2022-2026](#) in May 2022. By adopting the Strategy, the IASC renewed its commitment to protect affected populations from SEA within humanitarian contexts and to support aid workers to deliver assistance free from sexual harassment. The Strategy is centred around three commitments: 1. operationalise a Victim and Survivor Centred Approach, including safe and accessible reporting, quality support and assistance, and enhanced accountability through trauma-informed investigation and vetting and reference checking; 2. promote lasting change in organisational culture, behaviour and attitudes towards all forms of sexual misconduct; and 3. support country capacity prioritizing identified high-risk contexts, ensuring that PSEA capacity is a systematic part of scale-up in response to crises. This year's [IASC Champion on PSEAH](#), the Chair of the Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response, World Vision International, has identified three priorities. These are: 1. to help define an IASC-wide definition of a victim and survivor centred approach and to determine the key principles for its application in prevention, investigations, and response. 2. develop a five-year project to deploy inter-agency PSEA coordinators to the 15 highest risk contexts and to mobilise political support and donor funding, and 3. actively lead and advocate the process of culture change in the humanitarian sector.
3. **Support to victims and implementing a victim-centred approach.** The Victims' Rights Advocate continues to champion

and prioritize the rights and dignity of victims of sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations staff and non-staff personnel. Across the United Nations, the imperative to focus on the rights and dignity of victims of sexual exploitation and abuse is now well accepted through policy and action. In July 2021 the High-level Committee on Management approved core principles on advancing a common understanding of a victim-centred approach to sexual harassment within the United Nations system developed by a workstream of the Chief Executives Board for Coordination Task Force on Addressing Sexual Harassment and co-chaired by the Victims' Rights Advocate and representatives of the World Bank.

To strengthen a system-wide understanding of the victim-centred approach, the Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate together with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the secretariat of the CEB Task Force jointly developed a facilitator-led training module on the meaning and application of a victim-centred approach to sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment. Full-time Senior Victims' Rights Officers (SVROs) were deployed in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti and South Sudan. Supported by the Victims' Rights Advocate, these officers demonstrate that the presence of a trusted person on the ground dedicated to championing the rights of victims makes a real difference. They are the main point of contact for all victims of United Nations staff and non-staff personnel, and the SVROs coordinate assistance and support for victims in collaboration with United Nations entities on the ground to provide urgent medical care and psychosocial support; and facilitate access to legal aid, including on paternity and child support claims. They also keep victims regularly

updated, accompany victims through United Nations investigative processes and help develop projects providing livelihood support for victims financed by the [Trust Fund in Support of Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse](#).

4. **The Trust Fund in Support of Victims of SEA has supported 16 projects since 2017.** New projects in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia and South Sudan were launched in 2022. An annual cycle of proposals was initiated in 2022 to allow for submissions from varied UN and NGO partners across the globe. Extensive outreach with humanitarian, development and peacekeeping actors has enabled several hundred requests, and the review of proposals began with a view to approving and launching projects in 2023.

Challenges and lessons

1. **Reporting of cases and victims' access to services.** Stigma may constrain reporting, evidence may be destroyed or otherwise be unavailable and accountability systems may prove difficult to access for victims, in particular in remote areas. To address some of the challenges, an electronic version of an incident reporting form will be rolled out in 2022 for use at the intake of the initial report of sexual exploitation and abuse. In 2021, the Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate administered a survey in the 13 countries included in its earlier mapping project to update information on progress in realizing the rights of victims to services. The results showed some improvement but also persisting gaps. Among these are that predominantly services are provided through existing gender-based violence programming which is underfunded, and providers may not be familiar with sexual exploitation and abuse, and the singular needs of victims, such as legal support for paternity/child maintenance

claims or livelihood/skills upgrading assistance.

2. **Ongoing allegations of SEA linked to peacekeeping troops.** In response to credible reports of widespread sexual exploitation and abuse, combined with a history of non-responsiveness by national authorities to allegations from earlier years, the UN Secretary-General repatriated a contingent from the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA). The Secretariat established a multidisciplinary team to examine, in close collaboration with MINUSCA and other field missions, the factors that contributed to a higher number of allegations in 2021. The United Nations engages with troop and police contributing countries through dedicated plenary and bilateral meetings and mechanisms unique to peacekeeping. Critical among these mechanisms is Action for Peacekeeping Plus, including a focus on the accountability of peacekeepers, which encompasses upholding the United Nations standards of conduct, highlighted during the United Nations Peacekeeping Ministerial Conference in 2021. High-level engagement with Member States on prevention and accountability for pending allegations of misconduct is ongoing. Work continues on the Pipeline to Peacekeeping Command Programme, aimed at strengthening the leadership capacity of senior and middle-level commanders to foster effective conduct and discipline in a peacekeeping operation.
3. **Lessons learned in the humanitarian arena.** To measure progress in the humanitarian arena over the past decade and identify areas requiring additional efforts, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), as the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Champion on protection from sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment

for 2021, commissioned an independent external review of the Committee's progress on tackling SEAH from 2011 to 2021. The review found, over the past four years, leaders had emphasized strategic priorities, implemented a victim-centred approach and strengthened reporting and investigations. At the global and country levels, accountability for prevention was enhanced and the roles of actors on the ground were clarified, albeit not consistently in all contexts, programme sectors or clusters. However, the scale, predictability and consistency of resourcing remains constrained, and more is required to build an understanding of the content of a victim-centred approach and the requirements for its implementation. The Committee will focus on the application of the recommendations of the review.

Next steps

The United Nations is strengthening its leadership and organizational culture to promote a system-wide victims' centred approach to efforts to prevent and respond to sexual misconduct. The United Nations will enhance its engagement with and support to communities, especially women's groups and grassroots actors. There are three challenges that the Special Coordinator will prioritize as follows:

1. The lack of mutual recognition across the aid sector which results in a lack of coherence in addressing SEAH and a duplication of resources for example on training.
2. The lack of resources (and inconsistency as to how resources that do exist are deployed and used) at the country level for PSEAH coordination, investigations and victim/survivor support.
3. The need for much greater integration of PSEA into programmatic work.

Case Study: Improving Capacity of United Nations' Implementing Partners

The United Nations relies on implementing partners, whose personnel are not under the Organization's direct authority, to deliver many of its programmes. Significant efforts have been made to require them to adopt and implement measures to prevent, respond to and report sexual exploitation and abuse. In 2021, to address the risk that the personnel of implementing partners may engage in these behaviours, the World Food Programme, UNHCR, UNFPA and UNICEF piloted the United Nations' implementing partner prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse capacity assessment, a tool to screen common partners, and provided guidance on operationalising the 2018 protocol on allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse involving implementing partners. In 2021, UNFPA assessed 60 percent of its non-governmental organization (NGO) partners and led an inter-agency team to develop a resource

package for United Nations entities to facilitate a harmonized approach. UNICEF and UNHCR ensure that all implementing partnerships have agreements, training and tools emphasizing the importance of a victim-centred approach, including principles such as safety, confidentiality, respect and non-discrimination. The United Nations Development Programme developed materials, including sample letters and generic presentations, that partners can use and build on to train their personnel and countries can use in discussions with implementing partners. Conscious of the importance of building implementing partners' capacity to investigate allegations, UNHCR developed an e-learning course on sexual exploitation and abuse investigations and a resource kit based on commonly used principles and standards for United Nations system investigations and the UNHCR investigations training programme for partners.

3. International Financial Institutions

Introduction

In 2018, ten International Financial Institutions (IFIs)³ reaffirmed their commitment to advance standards to prevent Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (SEAH). They committed to strengthen efforts to create an environment where SEAH⁴ is not tolerated and take further steps to address and mitigate SEAH. The IFIs agreed to maintain and advance standards to prevent SEAH through seven common principles⁵. Recognising that each IFI differs in its policies and procedures, below is a snapshot of IFIs' SEAH activities over the last year.

Progress: Institutional Measures

1. **Strengthening policies and mechanisms.** All IFIs have continued to advance their commitment to addressing harassment and sexual harassment in the workplace. Several IFIs have introduced new Codes of Conduct, Whistleblowing Policies or independent complaints mechanisms and developed training on these for IFI staff.
2. **Preventing and addressing SEAH.** Promoting psychological safety and ensuring that staff can speak up remains a priority for all IFIs. Many of them have expanded approaches and resources for preventing and addressing sexual harassment and support for survivors, internally and in collaboration with external partners. One IFI introduced a workplace mediation service designed to help staff resolve interpersonal and low-level misconduct issues. Another IFI has introduced the role of the Anti-Harassment Coordinator — which has helped in addressing inappropriate behaviour in the workplace. As the biggest and most immediate need is on early intervention and survivor-centred care, most of IFIs' attention has been on responding to SEAH. However, as systems mature, it is expected that increasing focus will be given to prevention strategies.
3. **Promoting the role of internal focal points and enhancing trainings.** Several IFIs are increasingly appointing locally-based SEAH focal points, as a useful structure for supporting prevention and response to

3 African Development Bank, Asian Development Bank, Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, European Investment Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, International Finance Corporation, International Fund for Agricultural Development, International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank.

4 Note that, as SEAH is a form of gender-based violence, most IFIs refer to the risks around SEAH in their operations under the umbrella of gender-based violence and harassment. Thus, the term GBV (Gender Based Violence) or GBVH (GBV and Harassment) is sometimes used throughout this update report interchangeably with SEAH.

5 **Principle 1:** Foster a culture of respect and high standards of ethical behaviour across institutions; **Principle 2:** Establish and maintain standards aimed at preventing sexual harassment, abuse, and exploitation and other forms of misconduct; **Principle 3:** Provide a safe and trusted environment for those affected by sexual harassment, abuse and exploitation to step forward to report incidents and concerns, with the assurance that they will be treated respectfully and consistently; **Principle 4:** Provide protection for those affected, as well as whistle-blowers and/or witnesses within their institutions, and to take appropriate measures against any form of retaliation; **Principle 5:** Maintain robust policy frameworks and clear institutional mechanisms that address how incidents and allegations will be handled should they arise; **Principle 6:** Provide effective training programs so all staff understand the requirements and standards of behaviour expected of them as international civil servants and; **Principle 7:** Support clients to develop and implement policies and mechanisms that address sexual harassment, abuse and exploitation.

SEAH. One IFI reported that their SEAH focal point programme has been expanded from 20 to more than 70 staff members in all their countries of operation and regional offices. Most IFIs have further been developing and delivering new training programmes aimed at raising awareness and building capacity to respond to SEAH risks. Furthermore, the resumption of in-person contact since the easing of Covid restrictions, calls for further outreach and awareness raising in the workplace and during mission travel. The use of e-learning classes—some of them mandatory—has been widespread across almost all institutions. As an example, one IFI developed a SEAH e-learning, whose completion is a requirement as part of the staff annual performance evaluation process.

Progress: Operational Measures

1. **Enhancement of safeguard policies and procedures.** Several IFIs enhanced or are in the process of enhancing their respective Environmental and Social Policies and Standards to better address SEAH risks. Two IFIs updated their Environment and Social (E&S) Framework and included or strengthened the provisions on Gender Based Violence (GBV) risks and the measures to address, avoid or mitigate such risks. Two IFIs also revised their standard procurement documents to include a code of conduct template, which contains relevant provisions on GBV management for supervision of consultants, contractors and its workers.
2. **Development of new guidance materials.** Over the last year, most of the reporting IFIs have developed or updated guidance and resource materials for their own operations. For instance, two IFIs prepared step-by-step guidance to E&S specialists as well as other staff working on operations to assess the risks of SEAH during project preparation

and to inform the preventive measures to be incorporated at each stage of the project cycle. Two IFIs developed specific 'Good Practice Notes' on preventing, mitigating and responding to SEAH in financed operations involving major civil works. One IFI published an implementation [Toolkit for Community-based Grievance mechanisms for SEAH](#), including guidance on accountability to affected populations.

3. **Improved risk assessment of SEAH.** Several IFIs developed and/or rolled out new risk assessment tools to strengthen identification of risks associated with GBV, including SH and SEA so that appropriate mitigation measures can be applied. For example, one IFI launched a Company GBV Self-Assessment Tool to help private sector companies assess their capacity and frameworks across nine key domains including leadership, culture, human resources, community and stakeholder engagement, and developing roadmaps to address GBV.

Case Study

One IFI applied its GBV risk screening and assessment tools to a Primary Education project in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The Project has been assessed as high risk of SEAH due to various reasons including the socio-cultural context, the scale of the intervention, gaps in GBV expertise and services in some of the target provinces, and the weak existing accountability frameworks and mechanisms within the education systems.

The IFI took a comprehensive and phased approach to address SEAH, reflected in the legal agreement between the Bank and the Borrower. Some critical mitigation measures were linked to the project disbursement indicators and technical assistance with existing in-country GBV actors was provided. Those included a provisional national hotline as part of the Grievance Mechanism with a capacity to refer SEAH survivors to emergency support services, as well as basic service provision and referrals in the target provinces where they were previously not available.

Phase 1 actions include adoption of a Code of Conduct addressing all forms of violence and signed by 183,000 primary school teachers; establishment of a dedicated SEAH complaint resolution channel integrated into the education ministry's grievance mechanism; GBV service mapping and development of localized standard operating procedures and the establishment of gap-filling contracts emergency service provision; and provision of PEP kits. Phase 2 scales up school-level interventions and monitoring, including communication campaigns and mass information dissemination.

Early findings and results on addressing SEAH for this project demonstrate that while challenges persist and efforts will need to be sustained, regularly revised, and broadened, it is possible to design and implement a system-wide complaint mechanism that encourages SEAH reporting, is responsive to complaints and survivor needs, and demonstrates accountability of the education sector to the community.

Challenges and Lessons

1. **SEAH Working Group (WG).** In November 2020, ten IFIs launched the SEAH Working Group to strengthen joint approaches in addressing SEAH in development operations. Supported by discussions in this group, several IFIs have formulated their own respective policies and guidelines to address SEAH issues, developed operational tools and resources, recruited experts, and carried out internal as well as client training. Two sub-groups were created to focus on the creation of a knowledge platform website and the development of a pilot for country

collaboration around specific investments or thematic areas.

The main updates of the WG in 2021 include:

- » The identification of pilot countries for closer collaboration on strengthening SEAH mitigation and response systems at the country level. The aim of the country collaboration is to pilot harmonisation mechanisms through jointly developed practical interventions.

- » The creation of a joint website for Multilateral Financial Institution (MFI) staff to facilitate learning and share latest knowledge, tools, good practice and operational case studies. The website is expected to be launched in late 2022 and will be publicly available.
2. **A number of global challenges have increased GBV/SEAH risks.** Initiatives related to SEAH/GBV are being rolled out during a number of overlapping crises (Covid-19 pandemic, the Ukraine crisis and its global economic fallout, and supply chain disruptions). During the Covid-19 Pandemic, GBV including SEAH risks have increased. However, the continuation of the Covid-19 Pandemic with its related travel restrictions has made it more difficult to collect data, monitor and to conduct normal on-the-ground engagement. Several IFIs highlighted that staff working from home are less likely to report any forms of harassment, including online sexual harassment. As part of its Ukraine crisis response plan, one IFI launched a new Technical Cooperation (TC) programme to support its clients in addressing Gender Based Violence and Harassment (GBVH) issues in Ukraine. The TC provides a rapid assessment and recommendations on how to structure support programmes and will further deliver concise guidance materials for clients and other private sector actors.
 3. **Resources and staff capacity remain a challenge.** Some IFIs have identified gaps in their current policies, practices and resources with regards to SEAH in the context of safeguards. Other IFIs also noted an increasing capacity constraint in the availability of local GBVH consultants.
 4. **Additional due diligence requirements are emerging.** This is due to broader coverage for SEAH specific risk assessment and due diligence. The application of GBV provisions to funds and financial intermediaries (FI) transactions has been highlighted by several IFIs as an emerging challenge, mainly due to the scope of application of Development Finance Institution (DFI) requirements across the FI's portfolio.
 5. **Climate change exacerbates GBVH.** Climate change and environmental degradation exacerbate the risk of GBVH due to factors including displacement, resource scarcity and food insecurity. One IFI highlighted that while there has been increased international attention over the last decade in understanding and addressing gender-climate issues in policies and programmes, the intersections between climate change and GBVH have received much less focus.

Next steps

Over the next year most IFIs will be focusing on the continued implementation of SEAH policies, guidance and action plans, prioritising capacity building and training of both staff and clients (both private and public sectors). This will include the provision of more guidance and compulsory training programmes. Some IFIs are also considering the recruitment of new resources specifically working on SEAH. All IFIs will participate in the ongoing progress of harmonising and aligning Multilateral Financial Institution approaches to address SEAH in their operations.

4. UK NGOs

Introduction

On 18 October 2018, UK international development non-government organisations (NGOs) presented a [set of commitments to tackle sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment \(SEAH\)](#). These were developed by Bond (the UK network for organisations working in international development), in consultation with its over 400 members, and set out the NGO sector's approach to improving the quality and consistency of their safeguarding policies and practices. The safeguarding commitments form part of the Bond charter, which all Bond members sign up to. To accompany these commitments, Bond and members have produced a set of case studies, to demonstrate how NGOs use the commitments and drive forward leadership on safeguarding. Bond continues to support tackling of SEAH alongside our member organisations through our 'Safeguarding Steering Group', our 'Partnership and Local Leadership' working group as well as training, resource sharing and regular learning opportunities hosted by Bond.

The information in this report has been compiled from the 'Bond 2022 Safeguarding Survey' which was completed in August 2022 by 51 Bond member organisations—76% of respondents were the Safeguarding Lead for their organisation. NGOs continue to develop their safeguarding progress with 85.7% of members who completed the survey stating that they had seen progress towards better safeguarding practices within their organisations. In response to the question "Over the last year, have you seen improvements to safeguarding practice that is having a positive impact on communities, victims and survivors," 42.9% of respondents said that they have had a positive impact.

Progress

- 1. Strengthened partner engagement.** In response to the 2018 commitment to strengthen organisational capacity and capability, including supporting implementing partners to meet minimum standards, Bond members continued to strengthen their engagement with partner organisations on safeguarding policies and practices. In the 2021 CSSG report, NGOs reported that a new Safeguarding Partnerships and Local Leadership group was formed. Building on this progress, 31.5% of Bond survey respondents this year reported that their engagement with partners has improved when asked how their organisations safeguarding had improved over the last year.

The survey results also highlight the fact that when an organisation's leadership team commits to safeguarding, this commitment trickles down into their partner organisations and helps improve safeguarding practice. It was felt that some of these improvements stemmed from their organisation's leadership making tangible commitments to make improvements to their safeguarding policies and practices. Organisations that made these comments also shared that their organisation had used the Bond Leadership Tool.
- 2. Bond members continue to increase their knowledge on safeguarding, leadership and culture.** In 2018, Bond members committed to improving safeguarding capabilities by building the awareness and skills of staff, volunteers and trustees, while sharing solutions and expertise so the whole sector can improve. This year, 91.7% of Bond survey respondents said that they had accessed safeguarding resources from Bond's website and accessed other support through Bond.

Bond members also reported that they had accessed resources from the [Resource & Support Hub](#), [Charity Commission for England and Wales \(CCEW\)](#), [NCVO](#), [GOV.UK](#) or other NGOs.

91.8% of those that completed the survey stated that their knowledge had increased. Of those who replied 22.5% felt that their knowledge had increased significantly; 28.5% felt that had increased their knowledge somewhat; 40.8% stated that they had a moderate knowledge increase this year; and 8.2% either didn't feel that they had improved their knowledge or did not answer the question.

Overall, the commitment of an organisation's leadership team continues to be the critical factor when trying to improve safeguarding practice. Bond's Safeguarding Leadership Tool has helped organisations develop action plans and has supported organisations by building the knowledge of trustees and senior leadership team of how to improve understanding of organisational culture.

3. **Safeguarding training is becoming more accessible.** A third of Bond member survey respondents reported that there has been an increase in training within their organisations. The increase in training being delivered virtually (a knock-on effect from Covid-19) has meant that training is now more accessible allowing more employees/volunteers to attend. Organisations feel they have improved their training by accessing resources found on the Bond website, including more content on online safeguarding (due to the increased time spent online during Covid-19) and covering social media as a learning topic. 39.2% of respondents said they had increased resources (budget/staff time) going towards developing their safeguarding training packages.

Challenges and lessons

1. **Locally led safeguarding training for International NGO staff & partners and supporting partner organisations with policy/procedure.** While Bond members saw progress in their engagement with partners and on the delivery of safeguarding training across their organisations, when asked what organisations need additional training in, 55.1% of survey respondents felt that they required more support to better understand what locally led safeguarding training should look like in practice for INGO staff and partners. Organisations stated that the need additional support when developing safeguarding policies and practices with their partner organisations.
2. **Understanding roles and responsibilities of the Board for effective safeguarding.** This was an issue that member organisations shared with us via the 2019 safeguarding survey, and work has been carried out since in response. Since September 2021, 7 organisations have made use of Bond's training offer which tailors Safeguarding training for members of the Board. We see the continuing demand to improve understanding of a Board's role in improving safeguarding policies and practices as a positive sign and will continue to support the sector. However, we also know that a significant number of organisations are struggling to get Boards to engage, possibly because they do not know how, or in what capacity, they can play a role: 43.1% of those who responded to Bond's 2022 safeguarding survey felt that their organisation needed training for their Board to help them understand their roles and responsibilities when it comes to safeguarding.
3. **Leadership/culture within organisations and sustaining safeguarding support.** Despite the survey making it very apparent

that those organisations who have used the Leadership Tool have seen improvements in leadership and culture, levels of engagement within organisations around safeguarding has reduced. For example, the number of responses to our survey was 50% less than 2021. 31.3% of organisations are still reporting that they have not seen an increase in resources (budget, staff time and training) and that this is having a knock-on effect on the organisations, examples include: feeling that they are under constant pressure, unable to organise training and unable to travel to programmes abroad to undertake audits.

Case Study:

All CARE International UK (CIUK) programmes are delivered through CARE Country Offices and delivery partners who work in the communities we support. No two programmes are alike, meaning our safeguarding systems must consider the specific needs of the communities we support, in proximity to the location and type of service we are delivering.

The Bond leadership tool has helped CIUK to frame our approach to planning safeguarding. The tool has guided us to design our PSEAH systems around the social context of the communities where our programmes are delivered.

The questions in the do no harm/safer programming section were used to influence a current high value programme. The questions prompted the design team and safeguarding leads from each partner organisation to map local safeguarding risks and challenges. We consulted economically-disadvantaged women, who are the main target group. The feedback shared with us improved the quality of our approach to safeguarding by using evidence and not making assumptions.

The outcome is a shared workplan which sets out a set of critical actions to implement best practice safeguarding systems. The plan sets out a timeframe to complete the actions meaning progress can be measured.

Next steps

1. **Support for smaller organisations.**

Bond's Safeguarding Steering Group will be hosting a listening exercise in early 2023 for smaller member organisations to share the challenges they face when it comes to safeguarding and PSEAH. Bond's Steering Group hopes to host learning sessions on key findings from the listening exercise and host a series of Question and Answer sessions. This approach aims to both support smaller organisations, but also ensure their concerns and challenges are heard and shared so we can help break any barriers faced by smaller organisations that are preventing them from becoming active participants in the safeguarding community.

2. **Continued sharing of Leadership/Culture tools.**

Bond's Leadership and Culture toolkits are continuing to prove to be a successful and beneficial tool (see case study above) but it is felt that more promotion of these tools is required with Bond members and beyond. Bond is facilitating sessions for other sector bodies and their members to further promote the tool.

3. **Continued resource sharing via Bond's new website.**

Bond's new website will make accessing safeguarding resources even easier. The new platform will be easier to update more regularly which will mean more in-date resource sharing for organisations to access. As mentioned above, we have positive on-going traffic to this part of our website.

5. UK Private Sector Suppliers (represented by Safeguarding Leads Network)

Introduction

The Safeguarding Leads Network (SLN) was established in May 2019. Membership (now standing at 32) is open to private sector implementers of UK ODA programmes who have signed up to the private sector commitments to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment (SEAH), presented in October 2018. The SLN provides members with a forum to monitor progress, share lessons, improve practice, and build technical capacity. The SLN and its members work closely with the FCDO, the CSSG, other bilateral and multilateral development organisations and NGOs. 66% of the SLN members responded to the survey for this report, providing a total of 21 responses, and the report has been collated based on their responses.

Progress

These largely reflect last year's progress areas, reflecting both that SLN members are at different stages of implementing safeguarding measures and that progress builds on previous years' work. This is reinforced by the fact that progress areas are also reflected in the challenges referred to in the next section.

1. **Designing and implementing speak-up mechanisms:** Members showed an increasing recognition of both the need for, and the limitations of, reporting or 'speak-up' mechanisms. Most responders now consider it positive to receive reports and some worked on making reporting mechanisms contextually appropriate, rather than relying on a 'hotline' approach.
2. **Survivor-centred response:** This was increasingly recognised as central to

improving staff confidence in raising concerns, and there are some strong examples of a survivor-centred approach being included in staff handbooks or other guidance. Members indicated that they are more confident about survivor-centred principles (e.g confidentiality) and some organisations demonstrated this by proactively initiating referral pathways in programme countries to ensure survivor support and a survivor centred response to allegations of abuse.

3. **Strengthening in-house capacity:** This continued as a priority. Some members recruited full-time safeguarding experts, while others set up cross-organisational safeguarding committees or communities of practice, ensuring that safeguarding is owned across their organisations, improving communication about SEAH and opening opportunities for identifying and addressing gaps in capacity.

Progress against last year's challenges

2021 Challenge 1: Low reporting of SEAH.

Members continued to report that they receive fewer cases than they would expect and have been working to identify and address barriers to reporting. They included making explicit reference to safeguarding in training and on-boarding and increasing accessibility to reporting mechanisms.

2021 Challenge 2: Training of staff and partners. As well as mandatory staff training on safeguarding, some members created on-line training for both staff and partners, improving accessibility and encouraging take-up by partners.

Challenges and Lessons:

SLN members identified a range of challenges that are interlinked with clear strategies to address them and strengthen their response. There is consensus amongst members of the prevalent challenges and there are a variety of approaches to addressing these and improving arrangements and response to survivors.

1. **Designing and implementing ‘speak up’ mechanisms (for communities, beneficiaries, and others).** This remains a challenge amongst members, who recognised the need to ensure that mechanisms are tailored in a variety of ways to reflect the local context. Members reviewed their current mechanisms and sought new ways to improve to better enable reporting and information sharing amongst all stakeholders and especially local communities.
2. **Members approaches to a survivor-centred response to reported concerns.** Responses are evolving with members (31%) having reviewed and strengthened approaches and procedures. In order to ensure an effective response to survivors, members undertook in-country mapping of existing, reliable referral and support services, and assessed low-cost options that projects can afford to maintain to provide effective services for survivors.
3. **Other prevailing challenges relate to designing and implementing safe programmes, strengthening in house safeguarding capacity, and working with partners (28%).** Approaches to these issues entail the integration of safeguarding risk assessment into a project lifecycle and undertaking due diligence on partners as part of that risk assessment, and ensuring designated budgets for safeguarding activities, including recruitment of safeguarding capacity and training.

Case Study

A male senior staff member on a project made ‘innuendo’ remarks to new junior female staff members, making some uncomfortable and fearful that if they reported the issue, they might be at risk of recrimination from him and lose their jobs. The matter was reported and investigated. The finding was that he had abused his position of seniority to make unwanted and inappropriate comments to new female staff when they first joined but then stopped. The outcome was a final written warning, as any abuse of position of authority and all forms of harassment are subject to a zero-tolerance approach and are managed under the organisation’s disciplinary policy of gross misconduct, the outcome of which is either a final written warning or dismissal.

Next steps

There is a high interest among the SLN members on learning more about the [Misconduct Disclosure Scheme](#), [Project Soteria](#) and [Aid Worker Registration Scheme](#), with an emphasis on safe recruitment. Understanding and implementing survivor-centred response is a strongly emerging theme for organisational and cross-sector capacity-building.

The need for organisational capacity-building remains and SLN members echo previous years’ recommendations for sharing good practice. In line with the SLN ethos of prioritising the commitments over organisational self-interest, members recommend jointly developing training, peer to peer discussions and other capacity-building.

SLN members identified a lack of funding for safeguarding as a constraint against the need to prioritise prevention and response to SEAH.

6. Research Funders (UKCDR)

Introduction

In 2018, five UK funders⁶ of international development research jointly committed to raise safeguarding standards across the sector, in order to prevent and tackle all incidents of harm and abuse, including sexual exploitation, abuse and sexual harassment (SEAH), building on existing good practice. Funders worked closely with the UK Collaborative on Development Research (UKCDR) to develop guidance on how to raise safeguarding standards, which was published in April 2020. Since the joint commitment, UK research funders have been working together and within their organisations to develop and implement their safeguarding policies and guidance—both at institutional level (within the funder organisations) and by embedding safeguarding standards in the funding process (involving funding recipients).

Progress:

1. **Continued commitment to implementation of institutional safeguarding policies and practices.** UK research funders continued to demonstrate commitment to raising safeguarding standards across the sector. UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) developed a monitoring mechanism to capture reports of SEAH, which will be the catalyst for the rollout of a programme of awareness training for staff. UKRI's commitment to safeguarding is further demonstrated through its embedding within UKRI's refreshed partnership agreement with FCDO. The agreement, signed in early 2022, establishes that all international joint partnerships between UKRI and FCDO will

uphold best practice principles to safeguard and prevent harm in research and innovation. UKRI also facilitated the Forum for Tackling Bullying and Harassment in Research and Innovation with partners from funding, policy and regulatory organisations in addition to learned societies and representative bodies. The Forum's objectives are to: (i) raise awareness of bullying and harassment and create culture change; (ii) share learning and practice across organisations; (iii) promote collaboration across policies and resources, and reduce bureaucracy.

Additionally, over the past 12 months, Wellcome drove forward their commitments to safeguarding through a range of activities and projects that aim to identify and reduce their internal risk profile as well as make progress towards sector frameworks of good practice for safeguarding through research funding, including the guidance developed by UKCDR. As illustrated in more detail in the case study below, these activities included the appointment of a Safeguarding Lead (new role established in September 2021), developing a Safeguarding Framework, and reviewing and reforming their internal safeguarding policy. The National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR), part of the UK Department of Health and Social Care, committed to periodically review and update their Safeguarding Policy. The document was originally published in 2020 to set out the standard approach to safeguarding and provide guidance for those involved in managing NIHR programmes. It was updated in 2021. NIHR also continued to raise awareness of safeguarding best practice

⁶ The Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), The Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), Wellcome, UK Research and Innovation (UKRI).

through training, workshops and encouraging contractors and programme teams to access information and courses on the FCDO-funded Safeguarding Resource and Support Hub. Within FCDO, Safeguarding Champions worked to increase staff engagement with the mandatory training on safeguarding, and to actively provide resources and guidance to colleagues (i.e. reiterating the expectation that their approach to research is in line with UKCDR guidance).

2. Increased awareness and readiness to embed safeguarding guidance and policies in the funding process.

Research funders drove efforts to embed safeguarding principles in grant-making processes. For example, all DHSC/NIHR, BEIS R&I ODA grant allocation letters and contracts with partner organisations now include a safeguarding clause. Following the establishment of an internal reporting process, UKRI are working towards formally delivering the Preventing Harm policy and fully implementing it within UKRI grants terms and conditions. UKRI continued to embed a safeguarding and preventing harm approach in the research and innovation sector through its Global Talent Visa programme's endorsed funder scheme. As part of the initiative, UKRI conduct due diligence on research organisations applying to be endorsed and assess their suitability. Checks include the presence of an appropriate safeguarding policy. This process enables wider use of UKRI's standards in this area and raises the profile of their Preventing Harm policy.

Similarly, Wellcome launched a new funding policy on Responsible Conduct of Research (replacing their Good Research Practice guidelines), which highlights researchers' and organisations' (i.e. grants recipients)

responsibilities to take all reasonable means to prevent harm, exploitation, abuse and harassment occurring because of their work. Wellcome also developed a new staff training module on the management of bullying and harassment within research funding, detailing their procedures and approach to identifying and responding to reports and concerns linked to the work of organisations they fund. NIHR ran a webinar in November 2021 on safeguarding for LMIC research applicants and contractors. The event focused on translating NIHR's Safeguarding Guidance into practice, and provided an overview of key elements and considerations of safeguarding in funded research.

- 3. Consistent efforts to improve internal reporting processes.** Efforts to strengthen the reporting mechanisms in place emerged from various funders, showing the sector's willingness to improve internal and external accountability. Since the soft launch of their Preventing Harm (safeguarding) in Research and Innovation policy in 2020, UKRI have been developing a single-entry reporting process for allegations of safeguarding, bullying & harassment, research integrity and other such misconducts within R&I in the UK and internationally. UKRI consulted internally (with their Councils and UKRI governance groups) and externally (with the UKRI Research Organisational Consultation Group) to ensure an appropriate reporting process for UKRI full Economic Costing (fEC) grants⁷, studentships and fellowships is established. NIHR are also consulting stakeholders on the development of a Misconduct in Research Policy, which will be complemented by an Incident Reporting template and Incident Reporting Standard Operating Procedure for programme managers. The organisation also submits an annual report of incidents reported

⁷ Grants where principles of full Economic Costing (fEC) apply.

to the NIHR Board, most recently in April 2022. Wellcome further developed the ability to record, store and report on data that can provide insights, to inform their wider learning and activities—including through potential use of a new organisation-wide recording system. Safeguarding Champions at FCDO have also focused on revising their internal case management process in the last year.

Challenges and Lessons

1. **Research funder coordination on safeguarding best practice.** Between 2018 and 2020, UKCDR convened the Safeguarding Funders Group. The initiative provided a framework for funders to work jointly on the topic, and facilitate the uptake and dissemination of the [Guidance on Safeguarding in International Development Research](#). Building on the legacy of the group, commitment to increasing safeguarding standards in the sector is now championed individually by the funders, through their continuous efforts to update their approach to safeguarding, and bilateral conversations. Subsequently, in the last 12 months there have been fewer activities and discussions among research funders as a collective entity.
2. **Impact of UK ODA cuts to research on safeguarding activities.** ODA budget reductions by the UK government in 2021 have remained a challenge for the implementation of safeguarding policies. As with the previous year's report, funders remain hesitant to place additional strains on international research communities, although they remain committed to tackling harm in R&I.
3. **Awareness Raising.** Among the lessons learned by funders, the importance of awareness raising activities on safeguarding was mentioned. NIHR in particular remarked on this in relation to their efforts to inform

contractors about their Safeguarding Guidance and the Safeguarding Resource and Support Hub. Wellcome are supporting dissemination of their internal policies through communications such as use of their intranet, and a number of awareness raising sessions on safeguarding delivered to staff members by the Wellcome safeguarding team and external experts.

Next steps:

Continued implementation of safeguarding policies, guidance and action plans.

Funders will continue to strengthen their commitment to safeguarding, and work to improve their policies, guidance and action plans. UKRI will continue to drive efforts to finalise a reporting mechanism for SEAH, which is currently being developed. In September 2022 Wellcome will launch their first all-staff, mandatory learning module on safeguarding. The training will focus on three case studies including working with those with lived experience and sexual abuse in a funded research project. It will raise awareness of the organisation's policies, procedures, framework and risk assessment process among staff members. Wellcome's Research Environment and Culture, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion teams also plans to review and further develop principles (and good practice indicators) for equitable funding and research practice. NIHR will continue to hold an annual safeguarding workshop for contractors and programme teams. Stakeholders will be engaged as part of the planning process to ensure that their areas of concern are addressed during workshops.

Discussing the future direction of funders coordination mechanisms.

Building on the legacy of the Safeguarding Funders Group, UK funders might want to consider new mechanisms to coordinate their work in this area. Discussions on the viability of different initiatives will have to take into account the resources available and funders' ambitions.

Case Study

Wellcome's progress implementing safeguarding policies and practices

Managing safeguarding related to Wellcome's funded work remains the primary responsibility of the organisation that receives the funding. In the last year Wellcome have been driving progress in the implementation of the UKCDR guidance (and standards) in its internal safeguarding policies and practices:

Appointment of Safeguarding Lead

In September 2021, Wellcome appointed their first Safeguarding Lead. This role sits within the Ethics, Governance and Compliance function within the Legal department and has responsibility for the development of safeguarding practice within Wellcome.

Safeguarding Framework

From September 2021, Wellcome developed and sought input on their first Safeguarding Framework—a review of Wellcome's regulatory, legal and ethical obligations in safeguarding as it applies across their organisation's work. This framework informed a gap analysis (to identify priority areas against the standards) and an action plan to close these gaps.

Policy

Following approval and introduction of their Safeguarding Framework, Wellcome's internal safeguarding policies were reviewed and brought in line with new updates, procedures and their framework—introduced in April 2022. From October 2022, Wellcome plan to further review and assess the need to integrate safeguarding more completely in their funding policies.

Procedures and tools

Following the introduction of the new internal policies and framework, a risk assessment process was developed for use within Wellcome, (staff-directed activities including the work of Wellcome Collection), including a screening questionnaire to promote understanding of activity risks, and a risk assessment which encourages identification and mitigation of these risks (including risk factors in international working, working with third parties and online). Additionally, a lessons-learned process was introduced for conducting reviews where incidents or concerns emerge as part of these activities.

7. British International Investment

Introduction

Since we made our set of commitments in October 2018 to tackle sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEAH) in the development finance sector British International Investment (BII), the UK's development finance institution (DFI) formerly CDC, has continued to further develop and enhance our approach to safeguarding. We have focussed on incorporating our approach to safeguarding within our portfolio. This has included engaging with investees, various safeguarding training opportunities and extracting a greater level of detail from the incidents we capture, allowing for reflection and a continual improvement process. Below is a summary of progress over the past year (August 2021-August 2022).

Progress

- 1. BII's new Policy on Responsible Investing (PRI) and enhanced clarity on safeguarding expectations.** BII's new PRI, adopted in April 2022, replaced our Code of Responsible Investing. A key difference between the PRI and the Code is that managing safeguarding risks is now a core requirement. We have specified that every investee subject to the Policy is required to assess and manage safeguarding risks and clearer reporting expectations have been provided in relation to safeguarding. The inclusion of such requirements, alongside our awareness raising efforts across the existing portfolio, has led to improved reporting to BII. Focussing on gender specifically, BII has been building the field for gender-lens investing (GLI), including the recent launch of the 2X Collaborative—an industry body advancing best practice in GLI—which BII spearheaded together with 24 other capital providers. The 2X Criteria considers Gender-Based Violence and Harassment (GBVH) risk as a critical factor when assessing 2X eligibility. BII has gone further by specifying that investments can only qualify for 2X if they have an adequate approach to mitigating safeguarding risks or steps to introduce/improve one are incorporated into a binding action plan.
- 2. Build capacity, increase reporting and commitment to addressing SEAH/GBVH in BII investments.** BII recognises that implementing an effective safeguarding process requires high awareness and focus through strong leadership, organisational accountability and human resource processes. As such, BII has continued to build our investees' capacity through dissemination of guidance and raising awareness on BII's reporting and escalation process. Safeguarding featured prominently in two external ESG workshop series aimed at investees, including fund managers and portfolio companies, in October 2021 and January 2022. Additionally, we commissioned the design and delivery of a separate safeguarding module in the ESG workshops for Financial Institutions, delivered in May 2022. Safeguarding was also covered in BII's other workshop programmes such as the social risk workshops, which ran from January 2021 to March 2022.
- 3. Update of Safeguarding Incident Management Process.** BII's approach to safeguarding is based on a survivor-centred approach which places strong emphasis on the protection of survivors and maintaining confidentiality and responsiveness in relation to incidents. As such, we have reinforced our Safeguarding Domain Practice (within our Environmental, Social and Governance Impact (ESG I) team) to ensure alignment of our activities with our Safeguarding Incident

Management Process. BII's Safeguarding team includes a domain leader and two support officers. As part of our commitment towards continual improvement, in June 2022 we revised our Safeguarding Incident Management Process to reflect lessons learned since it was originally developed in August 2020. This Process, which has board oversight, sets out how BII assesses, escalates, records, and reports incidents involving Modern Slavery (MS), Gender-Based Violence and Harassment (GBVH) and abuse or exploitation of children that occur in BII investments and BII Technical Assistance (TA) facility supported projects. The Process also outlines how we support both our investees and BII Plus project partners to manage the risks that are identified.

Challenges and Lessons

1. **BII's support to investees on safeguarding requires further staff capacity-building and training.** BII recognises a continuing need to build and reinforce internal capacity to ensure confidential and survivor-centric responses. The challenges created by COVID-19 (referenced in last year's report) remained during a large portion of this reporting period. As such, BII continued to increase investee safeguarding risk management capacity through various remote training activities, through both larger-scale and ad hoc direct investee support, to accommodate travel and safety concerns during the pandemic. BII is working towards the compilation of additional tools that would support the training initiatives and objectives.
2. **Increased reporting, leveraging and learning from incidents.** As BII builds out its database of incidents, we anticipate being able to leverage data on trends (for example, industry sectors or operating circumstances that generate higher likelihood for incidents) that can be built into due diligence and portfolio management, as well providing insights to target training and capacity building. Unsurprisingly, investees with a reporting system in place report higher number of incidents than those without. While these incidents are important data to consider, it does not imply that SEAH/GBVH risk in the countries/sectors where these incidents were reported are necessarily higher than other geographies/sectors where BII invests. For example, our Indian investees generally report a higher number of incidents, albeit that this is likely to be in part due to the introduction of the Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) Act. As a response to this, BII will continue monitoring trends to support the design and implementation of our SEAH/GBVH prevention practices to target investments where the risk is the highest and evaluate the impact of our risk mitigation practices.
3. **COVID-19 continued to exacerbate safeguarding risks.** Travel restrictions continued to limit the ability of BII staff to visit investments during the first half of the period under review and affected the extent to which BII was able to directly support companies in assessing and managing safeguarding risks and issues, placing additional expectations on local consultants. BII has also noted increasing capacity constraint in the availability of local consultants. In response to this latter challenge, BII is working with other European DFIs to roll out a local capacity building program for consultants (which will include training on GBVH).

Case Study:

Building capacity, increased reporting and commitment to addressing GBVH in BII investments: BII has continued to build our investees' capacity through dissemination of our guidance and raising awareness on BII's reporting and escalation procedure. For example, in the past year, BII has continued to refine and strengthen legal language and reporting requirements for investees and to use its workshop programs to discuss GBVH risks and management with fund managers and other investees. Specifically, BII has held a training workshop for our south-east Asian investees. This incorporated the specific requirements of the Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) Act. This session included a leadership panel discussion to explore business drivers for action toward GBVH/SEAH. Among other aspects, this included the importance of management in tackling GBVH/SEAH, particularly their roles and responsibilities, points of intervention, and safeguarding management. The session was

attended by more than 100 participants from across the region. A BII Non-executive Director, who is also our Board safeguarding champion, set the context of BII's priorities and provided examples of safeguarding management through the participation of portfolio companies from the region.

We note that investees, whilst they may have committed to certain safeguarding clauses, do not always have a sound understanding of safeguarding reporting requirements, including a survivor centric mechanism and investigation procedures. Investees have however illustrated a willingness to learn and adopt the correct approach to these sensitive matters. Certain sectors have emerged as being more prone to GBVH related incidents.

BII will incorporate the above learnings into further developing our safeguarding system and ensuring our investees implement sound safeguarding management systems of their own.

Next steps

1. Continue to update our Safeguarding Incident Management Process, the revision of which is driven and informed by precedent, experience and institutional knowledge gathered from all parts of the organisation as well as from experts and other DFI and CSSG members. Revisions will further refine the definition and processes describing how to assess, escalate, record, report and work with investees and BII Plus partners as appropriate to manage safeguarding incidents.
2. Continue to provide expert support to review safeguarding incident management and day to day safeguarding activities as needed. In particular, the consultant will continue to support in the review of current cases, development of recommendations for next
3. Provide proactive support to sectors where we can assume there are elevated safeguarding risks—the ESG I team will continue to review sectors where we can assume elevated risks and prioritise our work with deal teams and investees to increase awareness and mitigate risks. BII's focus for the forthcoming reporting period will primarily look at building capacity of investees to better equip them to proactively prevent safeguarding incidents, as well as to report on and respond to incidents when they do occur, in line with good practice and BII's Safeguarding Incident Management Process.

8. The Global Fund

Introduction

The Global Fund to Fight Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria (Global Fund) is a Geneva-based financing agency that receives funding from public and private sources. It is a significant donor to health programmes in Africa, Asia-Pacific, Eastern Europe & Central Asia, and Latin-America. In 2018, the Global Fund together with Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, made [joint commitments to prevent and respond to SEAH](#) in their own and their partners' operations.

Progress

1. **Policy and Partnership. Embedding PSEAH practices within the Global Fund Secretariat.** Over the past year, we continued to evolve the Global Fund's protection from sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment (PSEAH) infrastructure. Mandatory training on PSEAH continued for key staff including all Senior Managers, PSEAH Steering Committee members, and PSEAH Working Group members. A mandatory sexual harassment training was launched to all staff, and SEAH awareness included in the mandatory onboarding for newcomers. The PSEAH Coordination Unit established in June 2021, scaled up from two staff members to seven, including a Victim Advocate and In-Country Support Coordinator, Case and Project Managers, and Prevention and Monitoring Specialists. Looking outward, the Global Fund continued to participate in the CSSG and Inter-Agency Standing Committee PSEA Technical Expert Group and began collaboration on PSEAH

among key partners within the health sector, including Gavi, WHO and UNITAID. The health sector partners' collaboration will be strengthened in the coming reporting cycle through a series of collaborative workshops.

2. **Prevention. Developing a SEAH risk management approach.** SEAH was included as a standalone risk in the Organizational Risk Register in formal recognition that SEAH can negatively impact the organization's ability to deliver on its mission. The Global Fund's SEAH risk management approach was endorsed by the PSEAH Steering Committee in April 2022. The approach includes a) an internal SEAH risk index specific to Global Fund countries of implementation; b) implementer-level PSEAH compliance and capacity assessment accompanied by capacity building support, and c) grant-level risk mitigation process designed to incorporate safer programming directly into program design from inception. In addition, to build greater awareness around SEAH risk and appropriate response to SEA allegations/reports, the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) teamed up with the Global Fund Secretariat to run seven SEAH webinars for implementers and members of the Country Coordinating Mechanisms⁸, reaching partners from 42 African countries.
3. **Response. Consolidating a victim/survivor centred approach to PSEAH.** To ensure a victim/survivor-centered approach, the Global Fund continued to devote substantial time to the development of victim/survivor support services protocols

8 Country Coordinating Mechanisms (CCMs) are national committees that submit funding applications to the Global Fund and oversee grants on behalf of their countries. CCMs include representatives of all sectors involved in the response to the diseases: academic institutions, civil society, faith-based organizations, government, multilateral and bilateral agencies, nongovernmental organizations, people living with the diseases, the private sector and technical agencies.

and related guidance to help support our Recipients and Suppliers adhere to the updated Codes of Conduct⁹. Using the cross-cutting PSEAH Steering Committee and Working Group to build consensus, together we drove organization-wide ownership of PSEAH best practices.

Victim Advocate plays a key role in creating a comfortable and safe space for the victim/survivors to disclose and begin the process of healing and recovery. The Victim Advocate offers in-person advocacy and support to victim/survivors throughout the interview process.

Challenges and Lessons

1. Operationalising PSEAH at country level.

As ever, marrying our business model of in-country ownership with the immediate need for efficient and effective scale-up has its accompanying challenges and tensions. Despite confidence that we are charting the right path with our PSEAH approach in-country, our struggle remains appropriately pacing the effective operationalisation at country level to ensure a victim/survivor-centred, trauma-informed response in each and every instance where SEAH is alleged.

2. **Strengthening reporting channels in countries.** Our investigations highlighted the need for implementers to establish more robust reporting channels and improve their awareness of SEAH risks. Some implementers have the investigative capacity to undertake specialist investigations, but where this is not the case the OIG provided technical expertise.

3. **Limitations of remote investigations and case management.** Easing of Covid 19 restrictions allowed us to conduct more investigations in the field. We found that often the victims' identity is not known and that only after in-country investigative steps have been undertaken is the full extent of the abuse clear. Fear and shame can prevent survivors from giving a full account of the abuse and they may not be comfortable confirming they engaged in a sexual act. The Global Fund

Next steps

Over the next year, the Global Fund will focus on operationalising our PSEAH Framework in-country, mitigating SEAH risk where possible and responding appropriately to allegations where needed. On the prevention side, we will continue to expand our PSEAH awareness-raising activities both at the Secretariat and among implementers, roll out the PSEAH compliance and capacity assessment/building project, and work to integrate risk mitigation measures within grant interventions. On the response side, we will work to strengthen our case management system to allow for enhanced reporting and further refine our victim/survivor support and advocacy work, including through exploring the creation of a victim/survivor services support fund and the coordination of our implementers with established PSEA networks and local support service providers.

⁹ Further reference can be made to relevant codes of conduct.

9. Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance

Introduction

Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance is a Geneva-based financing agency which receives funding from public and private sources. It is a significant donor to health programmes in lower-income countries. Gavi has contributed to the immunisation of over 981 million children, delivered over 1.4 billion vaccinations through campaigns in lower income countries, and helped prevent more than 16.2 million future deaths from vaccine-preventable diseases. In 2018, Gavi made a commitment alongside the Global Fund to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse, and sexual harassment (SEAH) in its partners' operations.

Progress

1. **Cementing safeguarding provisions in Gavi policies and processes and practice.** Gavi continued to build its internal cultural platform for safeguarding. Gavi rolled out mandatory workshops based on the Respectful Behaviour Policy in July and September 2022. By the end of September, approximately two-thirds of the entire Gavi workforce (including staff, consultants, interns and secondees) had attended the workshops. For those members who could not attend a session and for future new joiners, an e-learning module will be mandatory to complete.

Gavi worked on making enhancements to the recruitment process to make it more robust and to have stronger checks in place to ensure that Gavi does not recruit individuals with a proven history of misconduct or inappropriate behaviour. The enhancements include: wording on Gavi's webpage and on all vacancy announcements to reflect

that Gavi has zero tolerance for sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse and any form of discrimination or harassment and mentions Gavi's commitment to create a safe and professional work environment; enhanced reference check questions on candidates' behaviour, compliance with guidelines and policies on behaviour, cooperation during disciplinary procedures; and also the introduction of self-declaration questions at the application stage to check if the candidate was sanctioned as a result of any misconduct proceedings.

To continue its internal dialogue on the importance of respectful behaviour, Gavi worked on a plan to regularly engage with the workforce on different elements of safeguarding. This includes e-learning (to serve as a refresher of the Respectful Behaviour Policy workshop), frequent informational emails, and using the intranet page to give practical and useful information on safeguarding consolidated in one place. The intention is to focus on regularly reminding the workforce of the importance of being vigilant about their own behaviour as well as intervening when required when they witness inappropriate behaviour. This is contributing towards enhanced safeguarding provisions and a respectful culture at Gavi.

2. **Creating an enabling environment to prevent sexual abuse, exploitation and harassment in the immunisation space.** In 2022, new programme funding guidelines and vaccine funding guidelines were developed which explicitly state that Gavi funds can be used to design and implement policies and measures to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment

(PSEAH) in the immunisation space.¹⁰ During the application process, countries have been made aware of this new focus of the use of funds.

A new capacity building initiative was undertaken in partnership with the Global Women's Institute. The two training courses on addressing gender related barriers in immunisation programmes include modules on PSEAH. To date 75 staff from the Secretariat and Alliance partners have been trained and the target is to train 150 staff by December 2022. This is contributing to increase the PSEAH capacity of Gavi and Alliance partners.

In Quarter 4 2022, a request for quotes (RFQ) will be launched to identify a partner to work with to better understand the extent of SEAH in vaccine campaigns and in routine immunisation, as well as policies and measures in place to prevent SEAH, measures to protect and provide support to victims and ensure there is an adequate reporting and response processes in place.

Gavi reported last year that it had added a provision to its standard services agreements with contractors and consultants, requiring them to promote a culture that prevents sexual exploitation and abuse. Gavi's Procurement and Legal teams worked together to ensure that those provisions are passed along to service providers, both those that are country-facing and those that provide services directly to the Gavi Secretariat. The COVAX Humanitarian Buffer programme worked with expanded partners over the last

two years and has systems in place to assess the PSEAH measures of potential partners applying to work with Gavi. This includes requiring expanded partners to agree to affirmative legal obligations to prevent PSEAH. In the past year, Gavi updated its agreement templates with Alliance and expanded partners (including in the Zero-Dose Immunization Programme (ZIP) programme) to include prohibitions on SEAH.

3. **Re-evaluating Gavi's safeguarding risk and increased collaboration and alignment with peer organisations.** Gavi continued to build capacity for PSEAH both within Gavi and partner organisations, which has contributed to addressing accountability challenges. Gavi's Risk Committee, chaired by the CEO, had an ad hoc meeting in October 2021 on safeguarding risk to re-evaluate the Secretariat's exposure to SEAH risks given the evolving context and to discuss whether existing measures remain fit for purpose. This brought together all stakeholders across the Secretariat and allowed for a cross-cutting assessment and discussion on Gavi-specific exposures on the secretariat and country level and vis-à-vis contractors and partners.

Gavi's Risk Function also engaged in Public Health Collaboration for PSEAH through working closely with the Global Fund (TGF), WHO and UNITAID within meetings and workshops involving representatives of the four organizations. The objectives of the first workshop were to identify our common goal, strengths, desired deliverables and commitments, and brainstorm on how to

¹⁰ Examples of encouraged activities include "Design, implement and monitor safeguarding policies and accountability measures for gender-based violence as well as sexual exploitation and abuse; Conduct gender audits of immunisation and HRH policies and practices to identify gaps between policy and implementation and identify areas to strengthen a positive work environment; Implement gender-transformative interventions to address negative gender norms in health systems and actively work to change them; Conduct gender assessment of health systems, health facilities, household decision-making processes, power dynamics and access to resources to inform service delivery design; Implement safeguarding policies and practices to ensure the safety of users and providers.

better ensure government ownership of PSEAH. Gavi attended a second workshop in 2022, with the objective to exchange information on SEAH risk management and capacity assessment, and on government ownership and accountability.

Challenges and Lessons

1. **Holistic approach and internal accountability.** Last year we identified the challenge of coordinating the various activities on PSEAH across the organisation. There has been some progress on this with our finance, legal, risk, country programmes and resource mobilisation teams working together on the issue of safeguarding. Gavi's approach to PSEAH, which encompasses internal and external facing functions, needs further development to ensure clear internal accountabilities in order to ensure coordinated and structured monitoring, mitigation, and management. Gavi is undertaking an internal audit on its approach to PSEAH at both the country level and within the Secretariat to assess and strengthen Gavi's capacity in this area.
2. **Ensuring continued commitment and engagement of Gavi's workforce.** Given the high demands on Gavi's workforce, a key challenge will continue to be ensuring ongoing commitment and engagement, recognizing the importance of PSEAH. Gavi's Respectful Behaviour Policy training was mandatory this year, and through regular communication and support from Gavi leadership, two-thirds of the entire Gavi workforce (including staff, consultants, interns and secondees) had attended the training by September. Going forward, it will be important to maintain this momentum to ensure continued contributions towards a respectful workplace, as well as focus on strengthening internal and external facing approaches to PSEAH.
3. **Commitment to PSEAH at the country level.** While Gavi promotes PSEAH through providing support to countries to design and implement PSEAH policies and measures, it is ultimately not able to control countries' policies and approaches. This is a challenge that is being addressed through the inclusion of PSEAH in programme funding guidelines, as well as staff training to follow up and promote PSEAH approaches with countries. At the same time, Gavi works with Alliance and expanded partners in-country which we aim to ensure have PSEAH measures in place or are working towards this measure. In Gavi's 2021-2025 strategy, "5.0", there is an increased effort to engage new partners, primarily civil society organizations working at district and community levels, to best reach missed communities with immunisation. This increased engagement with new partners, brings opportunities as well as challenges in ensuring that PSEAH is embedded in agreements and there is stringent selection of new partners.

Next steps

Over the next year, Gavi will focus on continuing to strengthen internal and external facing approaches to PSEAH. Gavi's Risk Function will continue to monitor the safeguarding risk closely, promote progress in mitigation activities, establish clearer risk ownership, and instil a SEAH risk awareness culture across the organisation. In terms of prevention, Gavi will build on the progress it has had in strengthening the requirements to prevent PSEAH in its legal agreements with Alliance partners. Gavi will dedicate strategic focus area funding to test interventions to support countries to develop PSEAH policies.

Gavi's Audit and Investigations work plan, approved by the Audit and Finance Committee, recognises the importance of this issue. In order

to assess and strengthen Gavi's capacity an internal safeguarding audit is being undertaken. The country-facing part of this audit has been largely completed and the secretariat-facing part will start in October 2022. Gavi's Human Resources department will closely monitor how the enhancements relating to safeguarding are impacting recruitment processes and candidate selection and also focus, together with the leadership, on continuing engagement and momentum within the Secretariat on different aspects relating to the Respectful Behaviour Policy and safeguarding.

10. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and British Red Cross (BRC)

Introduction

The IFRC network is represented on the CSSG by the IFRC Secretariat and British Red Cross (BRC). In 2019, a pledge to prevent and respond to SEAH in humanitarian action was presented at the 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, reiterating the Movement's long-standing commitment to preventing and responding to sexual exploitation and abuse. The IFRC Secretariat coordinates monitoring and reporting on PSEA and Child Safeguarding across the network, with reference to the Global Safeguarding Action Plan (2022-25). BRC has worked together with the IFRC to provide an update on progress.

Progress

1. **Leadership and culture.** In December 2021, four Secretaries General in the southern Africa region¹¹ signalled their leadership in safeguarding in the IFRC network when they signed up to an ambitious plan for strengthening a culture of safeguarding and safe and inclusive programming. A new position was created within each of the National Societies (NS) to lead coordination and implementation of this work. In April 2022, the Namibian Red Cross Society hosted a workshop which brought together the new Safe and Inclusive Officers for training and

learning exchange alongside the Secretaries General and programme directors of their National Societies. Facilitated by the BRC and IFRC, this workshop set an important precedent for the role of leadership in driving forward a positive culture for safeguarding. With support from the BRC and other partner NSs, IFRC now has in place regional Safeguarding Officers to support National Societies in Africa and MENA. In September 2022, the Secretary General of the IFRC Secretariat took the important step to appoint a Head of Safeguarding responsible for leading the development and adoption of a culture which supports safeguarding throughout the IFRC Secretariat offices and delegations globally.

2. **Safeguarding policies.** The IFRC's Global Safeguarding Action Plan includes an ambitious target for 50 National Societies to have a PSEA policy and 60 to have a Child Safeguarding policy by end 2025. To date, the IFRC and 30¹² (of 192) National Societies have a PSEA policy which meets the IFRC standard. This represents an increase of 13 National Societies during this reporting period. A further 21¹³ National Societies have a draft PSEA policy in progress. 33¹⁴ National Societies have adopted a Child Safeguarding policy during the course of the reporting period and a key focus in 2023 will be to

11 Eswatini, Lesotho, Namibia and Zimbabwe Red Cross Societies.

12 Australia, Bangladesh, Bahamas, Burundi, Cameroon, Core d'Ivoire, Eswatini, Fiji, Finland, Kenya, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nigeria, Panama, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, South Sudan, Sweden, Syria, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Uganda, UK, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

13 Afghanistan, Bolivia, Botswana, Colombia, Denmark, Ethiopia, Libya, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Netherlands, Norway, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Palestine, Philippines, Serbia, Somalia, South Africa, Ukraine, Vanuatu

14 Eswatini, Kenya, Mozambique, Tanzania, Argentina, Bahamas, Canada, United States, Australia, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Solomon Islands, Timor Leste, Tonga, Vanuatu, Vietnam, Denmark, Ireland, Ukraine, UK, Syrian Arab Republic, Lebanon.

expand this further in line with IFRC's global commitment to Child Safeguarding across our Membership in every context. Furthermore, the IFRC Secretariat has made Child Safeguarding Risk Analysis a requirement for all new IFRC programmes; the risk analysis focuses on SEA and violence against children.

3. **Safeguarding Hub.** With support from the BRC, the IFRC Secretariat has developed and launched a [Safeguarding Hub](#) which supports the IFRC and National Societies to access resources and take action to strengthen safeguarding in our organisations and programmes. The Hub contains numerous new tools, resources and case studies developed in response to requests from safeguarding focal points in the IFRC network. As well as providing information on how to report and respond to safeguarding concerns, the Hub provides guidance, tools, education materials, video animations and case studies to support the institutionalisation of safeguarding. The Hub will be continuously developed based on user feedback.

Challenges

1. **Safeguarding in emergencies.** The risks of SEA against children and adults by humanitarian workers are heightened in situations of crisis, conflict and forced displacement. Groups most at risk of SEA e.g. women, children and people with disabilities may be even more at risk in emergency situations. The risks are exacerbated when humanitarian organisations have not yet established safeguarding policies, structures, systems and culture. This underlines the need for upscaling support for safeguarding institutionalisation and integration of safeguarding Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to disaster management and contingency plans. IFRC deployed its first ever Safeguarding Surge Delegates to the Ukraine Regional Response with responsibility to coordinate with Movement units and external clusters, identify safeguarding risks and support operational sectors to integrate safeguarding minimum standards. IFRC is committed to building and strengthening its processes and capacities to ensure needed safeguarding surge support in future emergencies. Additional screening, training and technical support to emergency surge actors will be developed and delivered to prevent, interrupt and respond to risks of abuse and sexual exploitation in high-risk contexts.
2. **Community engagement and accountability.** In contexts where community engagement and accountability (CEA) mechanisms are not well established, it is particularly challenging to ensure trusted channels for reporting safeguarding concerns. A joined-up approach is needed with CEA staff and focal points to help ensure; a) communications campaigns which raise awareness on safeguarding and mainstream key safeguarding messages; b) meaningful participation of groups particularly at risk of SEA and child abuse; and c) mainstreaming of safeguarding into all programmes, services and emergency operations.
3. **Victim/survivor-centred response.** As understanding of the needs of victims/survivors has evolved, an urgent review of the definition and impact of victim-centred approaches is required as is a determination to move beyond compliance. This will require organisational shifts in understanding of the location and implementation of accountability regarding safeguarding from policy through to management training and performance management, organisation wide information sharing including around the effectiveness and enforcement of organisational rules and regulations and the development of coherent approaches to victim support.

Case Study

Four National Societies (NS) in southern Africa (Eswatini, Lesotho, Namibia and Zimbabwe) are implementing a safeguarding strengthening programme in partnership with BRC and the IFRC's Country Cluster delegation for Southern Africa.

Each National Society has developed their own action plan based on assessment and analysis of their respective needs and priorities for safeguarding in their country context. Bi-weekly technical support meetings and quarterly peer learning and exchange meetings contribute to knowledge sharing among the four National Society Safe and Inclusive Officers and facilitate access to technical support for implementation of the safeguarding plans.

All four National Societies recognise the critical importance of having a policy basis for safeguarding and have developed a PSEA policy which has been approved by their Board and the IFRC Secretariat. They also have Child Safeguarding policies and safeguarding procedures in development, for example in Eswatini screening guidelines for volunteer recruitment have been developed. In Zimbabwe, the PSEA policy commitments have been integrated to a range of National Society strategies, plans and proposals.

Sensitisation and socialisation of the policies and implementation plans has been a major focus for each National Society. Sensitisation exercises have introduced governors, headquarters and branch staff and volunteers to safeguarding and reminded them of their obligation to report misconduct. In Zimbabwe,

all headquarters and provincial managers and project coordinators participated in a comprehensive training which resulted in great management support and motivation for safeguarding.

Through engagement with safeguarding networks, technical working groups and local organisations, safeguarding partnerships have been established and referral pathways are now in place for each National Society. In Namibia, the establishment of a committee, including representatives from many local authorities and organisations, has resulted in the National Society being recognised in their role in safeguarding by stakeholders such as government ministries, community leaders and local organisations. Safeguarding and protection awareness raising sessions have been carried out in numerous schools in Lesotho and Namibia. In Lesotho, a far-reaching communications campaign has helped to raise awareness on the role of the National Society in safeguarding through radio interviews, news bulletins, posters and banners, and safeguarding and protection training¹⁵.

Each National Society has identified at least one programme in which to integrate minimum actions for safe and inclusive programming and programmatic child risk assessments have been undertaken. Mitigating measures have been implemented, for example in Lesotho community-based complaints mechanisms have been strengthened to mainstream PSEA and Child Safeguarding.

¹⁵ Nearly 800 children, youth and adults received safeguarding and protection training through Lesotho Red Cross projects during quarter 3 of 2022.

Next steps

Our [Global Safeguarding Action Plan \(2022-2025\)](#) identifies PSEA and Child Safeguarding as two priority areas of focus for the IFRC network. The Action Plan includes indicators and targets for joint advocacy, institutional and operational capacity strengthening across the IFRC network. Priorities over the next year include:

1. **Expanding capacity in the IFRC Secretariat to support and lead safeguarding in the network** through updating of core policies and the IFRC Code of Conduct to assure a more effective victim-centred approach and to clarify the role of managers in establishing a culture of zero tolerance for sexual misconduct. Practical actions to enhance safeguarding management response, victim support and organisational culture will include; enhanced safeguarding training for leaders and managers; quarterly newsletters highlighting regional activities, trends and disciplinary measures related to Safeguarding; and monthly safeguarding technical information sharing and issue based “clinics”. Work will start on identifying a standardised minimum package of short- and long-term support to victims, and also on regulations regarding the rights and fair treatment of alleged perpetrators.
2. **Working with National Society partners to strengthen their institutional structures, systems and culture for Safeguarding** by supporting focal points to conduct safeguarding self-assessments and take action to address gaps. For example, developing and/or strengthening policies and procedures and supporting the mapping and implementation of referral pathways, providing training and mentorship, implementing internal and external communication/referral messages, and ensuring practical actions to mitigate risks at community level.
3. **Building-up capacity and processes around Safeguarding in Emergencies**, including additional screening, training and capacitating of surge staff, and applying a safeguarding lens to planning and to promote risk-informed programme design. SOPs will be developed and implemented for safeguarding in IFRC emergency operations and Rapid Response capacity will be strengthened and increased.
4. **Contributing to Safeguarding learning in the IFRC network**, generating evidence for the benefits of PSEA and Child Safeguarding and emerging practice within the IFRC network, facilitating peer learning and application of learning, including through regional and in-country networks.

Annex A: Reports of Cases

Understanding the prevalence of SEAH in the aid sector is an ongoing challenge. Fear of reporting due to stigma, reprisals and further harm for both the survivor and witnesses, linked to the perpetrators and the communities they live and work in, means that SEAH is undoubtedly under-reported. The 2018 Safeguarding Summit highlighted the need to strengthen reporting to better understand the problem and specifically to increase accountability to survivors.

Continuing work is required to better align reporting and information sharing practices which are consistent with survivor-centred approaches, that guarantee the safety and protection of survivors and witnesses (London summit donor commitment #2) and support accountable and transparent systems that ensure follow-up and permit analysis of prevention and response priorities (commitment #4).

Each year the CSSG report includes an overview of reporting from summit signatories. The aim is to illustrate progress being made and to encourage the sector to get behind the idea of publishing more data and analysing the trends and implications in the interests of transparency, accountability and better prevention and response. Takeaways include:

- » Work to strengthen data systems is difficult and remains a priority;
- » Number of cases received and reported remains unrealistically low in most organisations, particularly internal cases;
- » Few organisations publicly report data (the UN i-report excepted), though some organisations would like to do more; and
- » Challenges cited include: lack of guidance; lack of consistency in reporting across the system; reputational risk; perception of potential for funding penalties; and data protection.

The [UN i-report](#) remains a critical tool for reporting in the UN sector. The work of the CHS Alliance and the Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response to pilot a SEAH Harmonised Reporting Scheme for NGOs and the private sector in the coming year, taking into account the UN reporting mechanism, should help to address some of the challenges outlined above and galvanise progress in reporting and sharing of data.

1. Donors

All those Donor Technical Working Group (TWG) members reporting case numbers this year have systems in place, or are improving systems, to encourage reporting from implementing partners and to enhance internal reporting systems. Donors not listed are not yet in a position to share data.

Australia, Germany and the USA have experienced upward trends in caseloads over the last year, with the UK, the Netherlands and Switzerland experiencing a slight drop, which in one case seems to be linked to a reduction in the overall number of programmes funded. As work continues to strengthen data systems it is difficult to compare caseload year on year but interesting overall observations include: reporting on internal cases remains low; and both donor and partner reporting systems require continued attention.

SE= Sexual Exploitation; SA = Sexual Abuse; SH = Sexual Harassment. Numbers lower than 5 are shown as <5

Country	Number of external reports <small>(unless otherwise indicated)</small>	Outcome	Disaggregated Data ¹⁶	Trend
<p>Australia</p> <p>Incidents should only be reported where it is safe to do so and where it is in line with the victim/survivor's wishes. Information that identifies individuals does not need to be reported.</p>	<p>External: 86</p> <p>SE (child): <5</p> <p>SA (child): x`18</p> <p>Total: 22</p> <p>SE (adult): 10</p> <p>SA (adult): 25</p> <p>SH (adult): 29</p> <p>Total: 64</p> <p>Internal: <5</p>	<p>42 substantiated</p> <p>16 unsubstantiated</p> <p>11 deemed out of scope</p> <p>17 still to be determined</p> <p>Arrested: 9</p> <p>Counselled and/or reprimanded: 11</p> <p>Employment terminated: 14</p> <p>Resigned: <5</p> <p>Perpetrator Unable to be Identified: <5</p>	<p>External Notifications:</p> <p>OPEN (18)</p> <p>b. Child: <5</p> <p>Adult: 14</p> <p>c. Commercial Supplier: 6</p> <p>NGO: 6</p> <p>Other: <5</p> <p>TBD: <5</p> <p>CLOSED (68)</p> <p>b. Child: 18</p> <p>Adult: 50</p> <p>c. Commercial Supplier: 12</p> <p>NGO: 30</p> <p>Academic Institution: <5</p> <p>Partner Government: <5</p> <p>Other: 23</p>	<p>Rise in the number of external reports received in this financial year.</p> <p>Employment termination is the most common perpetrator outcome. Counselling and /or reprimanding is also a common outcome.</p>
<p>Canada</p> <p>Please note there can be multiple victims reported in a single report so the disaggregated data representing the number of victims is higher than the number of reported cases.</p>	<p>1 Jan 2021 to December 31, 2021</p> <p>External: 15</p>	<p>In various states</p>	<p>a. Sex/gender:</p> <p>Woman: 17</p> <p>Man: 0</p> <p>Unknown: <5</p> <p>b. Age:</p> <p>Above age 18: 11</p> <p>Below age 18: <5</p> <p>Unknown (no age reported): <5</p>	<p>Data based on reports submitted by implementing partners and is not reflective of cases of SEA or SH with other holders of financial agreements.</p>

16 a) sex/gender of alleged victim b) child/adult alleged victim c) type of implementing partner reporting cases d) status of alleged victim/survivor e) status of alleged perpetrator

Country	Number of external reports (unless otherwise indicated)	Outcome	Disaggregated Data ¹⁶	Trend
<p>Finland</p> <p>SEAH is being emphasised in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' (MFA) development cooperation risk management processes. This has led to a growing number of SEAH risks being assessed and considered during the planning and implementation phase of work. Therefore, MFA expects to see an increase (although likely modest) in the reporting cases in the near future.</p>	<p><5 external</p> <p><5 internal</p>	<p>NA</p>	<p>NA</p>	
<p>Germany (GFFO)</p>	<p>29 total: 20 external 9 internal: SE: 12 cases; SA: 4 cases; SH: 13 cases</p>	<p>14 closed 8 substantiated 7 unsubstantiated 14 unclear cases, 15 ongoing (including unclear cases) Dismissal is most common outcome</p>	<p>a) 17 adult female b) 12 children (6 boys and 6 girls) c) 4 International organisations, 25 NGOs d) 20 aid workers, 9 beneficiaries</p>	<p>Upward trend, 9 additional cases compared to 2021 data report</p>

Country	Number of external reports (unless otherwise indicated)	Outcome	Disaggregated Data ¹⁶	Trend
Japan (JICA) Several SEAH reporting mechanisms: Peer counsellors (with option for complainant to report to JICA); JICA's Personnel Department Hotline or whistleblowing line; externals can contact Ethics Administrators or e-mail the SEAH reporting address.	<5	<5	<5	same level as last year
Netherlands SEAH Unit established in MFA Feb 22, with more comprehensive SEAH data being registered. Reporting will become more streamlined and consistent.	26 integrity reports, 18 of which are SEAH related	14 closed 12 ongoing of total		Slight decrease from last year's figures.
Sida/Sweden	42	26 ongoing 16 concluded (of which 8 substantiated)	NA	
Switzerland	10	4 substantiated 2 unsubstantiated 4 open	a) 10 female b) <5 c) 7 INGOs, <5 Multilaterals, <5 other d) 5 beneficiaries, <5 aid workers, <5 other e) 8 IPs, <5 subcontractor staff	Numbers dropped—unclear why. Based on increased interactions with and support to partners to establish PSEAH mechanisms, numbers would be expected to increase

Country	Number of external reports (unless otherwise indicated)	Outcome	Disaggregated Data ¹⁶	Trend
<p>UK</p> <p>The UK has been doing a lot of work internally to raise awareness of sexual harassment and to encourage staff to report when incidents do occur. Mandatory training has been introduced for all staff, guidance and resources developed, and messaging amplified from the senior leadership team on FCDO's zero-tolerance approach to SEAH. The increase in reporting suggests rising staff confidence that when concerns are reported that they will be looked into and that disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, is taken when allegations are upheld.</p>	<p>SEA – 88, SH – 52. Total – 140</p>	<p>External reports:</p> <p>Status of allegation: Cases ongoing 67% Cases closed 33%</p> <p>Outcomes of closed cases: Disciplinary action or criminal process 37% Allegations not upheld/no evidence 35% Partner took other action (ie updated Safeguarding Policies or training) 20% Survivor non engagement 8%</p> <p>Internal reports: 37 cases</p>	<p>External reports:</p> <p>a) Female 97% Male 3%</p> <p>b) Child 25% Adult 75%</p> <p>c) Civil Society Organisation 36% Private Sector 29% Multilateral 19% Other 16%</p>	<p>There has been a fall in the number of external reports received this year. The caseload is likely to have fallen this year as a result of the impact of COVID and remote working models employed by partners across the world. FCDO has also streamlined its programme portfolio during 2021/22.</p> <p>The number of internal cases reported has risen. Internal cases are classed as those where either the survivor and/or the subject of complaint are FCDO employees.</p>
<p>USA (USAID)</p> <p>As USAID strengthens its reporting processes and methodology, the increase in reports could be due to a number of reasons and cannot currently be compared year to year.</p> <p>Continuing efforts to strengthen Agency processes related to SEAH, and developing standard operating procedures related to the intake of allegations, as well as a centralized incident management system.</p>	<p>121 reports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEA, 85 • SH, 21 • Both, 15 	<p>In various states.</p>	<p>b) 34% children (where information is known)</p> <p>c) 75% CSOs (including grantees, contractors, and sub-awardees); 25% multilaterals</p> <p>d) 66% beneficiaries (where information is known).</p>	<p>The number of reports increased from last year.</p>

Work continues across donors, civil society and the UN system to strengthen data. The initiative to align SEAH requirements in UN funding agreements requires use of the UN Secretary-General's online SEA reporting mechanism, with additional prompt reporting to donors. The UK is also working with the CHS Alliance and the Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response to pilot a SEAH Harmonised Reporting Scheme. A steering committee, including USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance, FCDO's Safeguarding Unit, NGOs and the private sector, oversees this work. These initiatives should galvanise wider efforts to incentivise reporting and support global analysis and identification of trends that will support learning, advocacy and policies to tackle SEAH. These analyses of trends would lead to evidence-informed policies / strategies that will ultimately prevent cases and also result in better outcomes for victims / survivors and alignment between implementing partners and donors on a harmonised reporting framework will greatly boost such efforts, incentivise partners and assure their success.

2. The United Nations (UN)

The UN publishes data on sexual exploitation and abuse allegations in real time against all United Nations staff and related personnel, non-United Nations personnel working for implementing partners and non-United Nations international forces authorized by Security Council mandates.

In 2021, 194 allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse related to United Nations staff and affiliated personnel across the United Nations system were reported. Of those allegations, 75 were reported in peacekeeping and special political missions, an increase from the 66 allegations reported in 2020 and above the average of 69 reported annually

in the previous 10 years. With respect to the personnel of implementing partners not under the authority of the United Nations, 251 allegations were reported in 2021 compared to 227 reported in 2020. Four allegations of SEA involving members of a formerly deployed non-UN security force were reported in 2021, an increase from three in 2020. The majority of perpetrators, if not all, are male and most victims/survivors of SEA allegations are female.

In peace operations and special political missions there was an increase in the proportion of all allegations made in 2021 involving sexual abuse of a child, with 25 allegations relating to 51 children. A total of 5 allegations in 2021 related to the sexual abuse of adult victims and 45 allegations involved the sexual exploitation of adult victims. There were 75 paternity claims associated with the allegations in 2021. The number of alleged perpetrators (162) increased in 2021.

3. International Financial Institutions (IFIs)

There has been a similar trend to 2020 in reporting across the IFIs¹⁷. The latest consolidated number of cases reported in the considered timeframe is 16, consistent with the previous reporting year (where cases identified were 15).

- » All organisations except two reported only on cases which related to their staff. Only two IFIs reported on a case related to a project;
- » Across the IFIs, 30 percent of cases were substantiated, while a number of cases were still being investigated at the end of the reporting year.

Institutions used a range of measures to follow up on substantiated cases, including termination

¹⁷ Not all reporting years for IFIs are the same: some report by fiscal year, and others report by calendar year. Not all investigations are concluded in the same year that the report is made, so some conclusions and follow-up information may relate to cases reported in previous years.

of employment, suspension, written reprimands, and other disciplinary measures

4. Bond (Representing UK NGOs)

Bond's recent safeguarding survey asked respondents how the number of reported safeguarding cases compared to a year ago. 59% of respondents reported that the number of incidents had remained the same (69% in Bond's 2021 survey data). 27% of respondents stated that their reported incidents had increased (in comparison to 21% from last years' survey) and 14% stated that their reported incidents had decreased (11% in 2021). 37% of Bond members do not report safeguarding incidents publicly at present and the remaining 63% either publish the number of incidents via their Annual Report or their own website or share the information publicly in other ways. 32% of respondents felt that they would like to report publicly but would need guidance or a standardised approach to do so.

5. The UK Private Sector (Safeguarding Leads Network)

Most SLN respondents, 12 out of 21 survey responses (57%), said that reporting numbers were unchanged in the latest 12-month period. None reported reductions, four (19%) reported an increase and the remainder weren't sure. Most reports of SEAH related to sexual harassment in the workplace. There are few reports by community members and beneficiaries. Some reports relate to emerging concerns and enquiries rather than actual incidents.

Organisations recognise that reporting levels are still lower than they should be and that there is much work required to overcome barriers to reporting. Over the last year organisations report, in the main, that they had been working to enhance their existing reporting mechanisms, rather than designing new ones, although some detailed the development of new in-house

reporting systems. A few organisations spoke of introducing the safeguarding focal point model to support face to face options for reporting, recognising this is often the preferred way to report. Organisations also spoke of ensuring that from leadership down there is a championing of a culture where reporting is encouraged and supported. Organisations also showed a willingness to share best practice across the sector.

Over the last year there has been an increase in organisational understanding of the survivor-centred response and the centrality of this in case management. Over half the organisations included in the survey stated that they had no safeguarding cases over the last year, and therefore had not had recourse to provide survivor support. However, there is a shared recognition that mapping of survivor support services is an essential component of the safeguarding response, to ensure that gaps are identified and that organisations could work together to map quality services. Most respondents to the survey cited sign-posting survivors to psychological support, but there were some interesting examples given, including the clear signposting to, for example, PEP kits, and how to access this, and also on financial support to survivors to enable them to become self-sufficient, namely by supporting with livelihood development.

Collecting systematic and consistent data across the sector remains difficult. Reasons include:

- » Reputational risk, data protection, confidentiality and other reasons for reluctance to share information (63%)
- » Lack of uniformity across the sector (44%), sector wide guidance, definitions and a formal and centralized mechanism for reporting)
- » Lack of knowledge and expertise in the sector (19%)

- » Diversity of the sector and the nature of SLN members' work

6. Research Funders (UKCDR)

Collecting harmonised and aggregated data across the entire international development research sector remains a challenge, as there is currently no standardised approach to reporting cases or collection of safeguarding data across all UK research institutions. In general, investigation of cases is the responsibility of research institutions rather than funders. However, most research funders' policies stipulate that cases should also be reported to them, to ensure they are aware of ongoing cases and investigations. As mentioned in the Progress section, several funders have been intensifying their efforts in this sense.

Some funders have detailed internal reporting mechanisms in their policies, whilst others are in the process of establishing them as they implement their safeguarding policies and plans. UKRI are currently developing a reporting mechanism for SEAH, therefore there is no data available at the moment. Wellcome on the other hand record Bullying and Harassment cases, which may include SEAH. The number of SEAH cases is low and therefore providing further details threatens anonymity. BEIS have a process in place for monitoring and escalating safeguarding disclosures, but no disclosures were reported during this period (August 2021-August 2022). At NIHR there have been under five cases of SEAH reported in the period of August 2021-August 2022. This was handled in accordance with the contracted organisation's Safeguarding Policy, with a formal investigation and action plan for further improvements. All incidents are reported to the NIHR Board annually.

7. British International Investment (BII)

For the period under review, BII has become aware of 72 incidents within our portfolio, of

which 6 were categorised as severe, a further 1 potentially severe pending further clarification/information, and 65 of lower severity. We have noted an increase in the number of safeguarding incidents reported: in the previous review period we recorded 25 incidents between August 2020 and August 2021. This increase is likely to be due to improved reporting as a result of the increased outreach and awareness raising with investees, as well as a direct result of the revisions made to our investment and legal agreements to include safeguarding reporting requirements.

All incidents reported relate to GBVH (Gender Based Violence and Harassment) and/or child abuse related incidents. All of these events have been treated in line with BII's Safeguarding Incident Management Process including support to the investees to ensure the implementation of a survivor-centred approach when managing such incidents.

BII has commissioned third party independent support in reviewing safeguarding incidents management, risk classification and safeguarding activities. In particular, the consultant is supporting the review of cases and development of recommendations and tools, delivered training, and refined the incident assessment criterion used to determine the level of severity of safeguarding incidents.

8. The Global Fund

The OIG (Office of the Inspector General) undertakes SEA investigations that involve Global Fund beneficiaries. When abuse is alleged, we strive to provide a victim and survivor-centered, trauma-informed response in each instance. Through the investigation process, we aim to mitigate the risk and reduce the incidence of any such abuse to the degree possible.

OIG reports on all its activities in the interests of transparency and accountability. All the results of its work are published on the Global Fund website in line with the disclosure policy outlined

by the Board. For SEA matters, we consider each case individually, tailoring the level and substance of reporting in line with the principle of 'do no further harm'. In 2022, the OIG undertook five SEA investigations and oversaw five implementer-led investigations. Of these cases, three have been closed, three are in reporting stages and four are being assessed/investigated further.

The intake of new allegations slightly increased as compared to last year. Most of the reports were received from implementers and the Secretariat; however, this year as compared to last, there have been a few instances where whistle-blowers have reached out with concerns.

A combination of root causes, specific vulnerabilities, and risk factors can make beneficiaries in certain contexts particularly vulnerable to SEA. We have seen that some Global Fund activities are more prone to this type of abuse, such as peer educator programs. SEA is often under-identified, or not acted on by those who are aware, or have concerns.

Recognizing that SEA has profound and damaging consequences for the individuals affected, the OIG continues to promote awareness. Recently we developed an SEA booklet and poster for implementers to increase awareness and the need to build reporting channels that are easy, safe and confidential.

Since Joining the Global Fund in February 2022, the Victim Advocate has collaborated with the OIG's Investigations Unit by accompanying investigators during OIG investigative missions and offering in-person advocacy and support to victim/survivors throughout the interview process. The collaboration between the Victim Advocate and the OIG has been invaluable in creating a comfortable and safe space for the victim/survivors to disclose and begin the process of healing and recovery.

In addition, in 2022, the Ethics Office, PSEAH Coordination Unit, has significantly scaled up its own SEAH case management capacity, recruiting

skilled practitioners to support implementer- and third party-led investigation into allegations of SEAH within the Ethics Office remit. In the first 9 months of 2022, the PSEAH Coordination Unit received four referrals from the OIG that were all opened for case management. Two of these have been closed and two are ongoing.

9. Gavi

No cases were reported through any of the available reporting channels from 1 August 2021 to 1 August 2022.

10. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and British Red Cross (BRC)

Up to December 2021, the IFRC Secretariat:

- » Received 17 new SEA concerns leading to 4 investigation cases being opened.
- » Received 6 new SH concerns leading to 3 investigation cases being opened.
- » During the year, IFRC closed 9 SEA investigations and 2 SH cases.
- » Of the cases closed, 5 cases of SEA and 2 SH cases were substantiated.
- » 2 cases were passed to IFRC National Societies to investigate.

2021 saw a two per cent increase in SEAH allegations relating to the IFRC Secretariat compared to 2020. Nine per cent of total complaints raised with IFRC's Office of Internal Audit and Investigation (OIAI) related to SEA, and three per cent related to sexual harassment, a slight increase from 2020. It should be noted that these figures relate only to the IFRC Secretariat's operations. Composite data for IFRC total membership is not available.

OIAI has continued to refine and enhance its SEA and SH investigation capacity. The OIAI has embedded SEA and SH investigation capacity

into our own team and outsourcing contracts. The development of PSEA skills within OIAI has allowed the team to provide SEAH prevention training both internally and across IFRC's membership.

Between August 2021 and August 2022, the British Red Cross received a total of 9 allegations, 6 of which were SEA and 3 SH. 3 SEA concerns related to BRC personnel. 3 SEA concerns and 3 SHs concerns related to personnel in the IFRC network:

- » 3 SEA allegations relating to BRC personnel led to an internal investigation where the concerns were substantiated, personnel dismissed, and cases closed.
- » 2 SEA allegations have ongoing investigations by implementing partners.
- » 1 SEA did not lead to an investigation by the implementing partner and was dismissed.
- » 2 SH allegations have ongoing investigations by an implementing partner
- » 1 SH allegation did not lead to an investigation by the implementing partner and the case was dismissed.

We recognise that these numbers continue to be low, possibly due to underreporting by internal staff and volunteers and by implementing partners. To address this, we are working towards improving our internal reporting mechanisms and the overall safeguarding culture. 67% of the allegations received relate to partner staff and volunteers, so we are also working with our partner National Societies to strengthen their institutional policies, structures, systems, and culture for safeguarding and to integrate practical measures for PSEA and Child Safeguarding to National Society programmes, services, and emergency operations.

