



# CEB TASK FORCE ON ADDRESSING SEXUAL HARASSMENT WITHIN THE ORGANIZATIONS OF THE UN SYSTEM

## FACTSHEET (May 2022)

### Overview

Harassment of any type is antithetical to the principles of the UN, and sexual harassment in particular undermines its credibility, denies the principles of non-discrimination on the basis of sex and gender, and degrades its personnel. The Secretary-General and UN system leaders committed to zero-tolerance for inaction on sexual harassment, to strengthening victim-centred prevention and response efforts, and fostering a safe, equal and inclusive working environment across the UN system. To realize these commitments, the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) established in November 2017 the [CEB Task Force on Addressing Sexual Harassment within the Organizations of the UN system](#) ('Task Force'), chaired by the Vice-Chair of the High-Level Committee on Management.

In its first phase of work the Task Force created the fundamentals of a common UN approach by filling policy gaps. It established a uniform definition of sexual harassment and a system-wide Model Policy, by providing UN entities with prevention instruments like a Code of Conduct for UN system events and developing tools such as the Clear Check database to prevent the rehiring of perpetrators.

The second phase of work focused on reporting, data and promoting a victim-centered approach across the UN system. The release of a UN Common Understanding of a Victim-Centred Approach to Sexual Harassment helped advance the normative framework, while the Manual for the Investigation of Sexual Harassment Complaints in the United Nations was a first step towards implementing that approach. These tools were complemented by peer to peer knowledge-sharing with Member States and partners. The Task Force furthermore informed itself of progress and remaining gaps by an annual survey among UN system entities, which continues to build an evidence base and measure impact as a system.

The Task Force will launch the third phase of its work in 2022. Common threads running through all work of the third phase will be the sustainability of approaches to addressing sexual harassment and the centrality of communication, both external and internal.



In this third phase the Task Force will focus on four areas of work and their corresponding proposed deliverables:

1. Prevention and Behavioural Science
2. Victim Engagement and Support
3. Data and Results
4. Enhanced Cooperation





## SELECT PRODUCTS AND PROGRESS

The below is a non-exhaustive collection of select products and initiatives delivered by the CEB Task Force since its establishment at the end of 2017. Phase three products are marked with an asterisk and remain in their early stages of development\*

Policy	
INITIATIVE	→ STATUS
Uniform definition of “sexual harassment” and development of common principles representing ‘best practices’ to harmonize policy on sexual harassment across the UN system	✓ Completed May 2018
The <a href="#">UN System Model Policy on Sexual Harassment</a> intended to strengthen sexual harassment policies throughout the UN system, includes, among others, model provisions for formal and informal reporting of sexual harassment, prevention, support to affected individuals, and protection against retaliation.	✓ Approved by HLCM 2018 on behalf of CEB. Implementation at organization level and monitoring of its adoption is ongoing.
<a href="#">Principles for Advancing a Common Understanding of a Victim-centred Approach to Sexual Harassment within the Organizations of the United Nations System</a>	✓ Approved by HLCM and published in 2021
Develop a roadmap for how the UN system and its entities engage with survivors from prevention strategies through to the completion of the investigation and beyond.	* Under development
Accountability	
INITIATIVE	→ STATUS
Launch of the system-wide screening database ‘ <a href="#">ClearCheck</a> ’ to avoid rehire of individuals whose working relationship with an organization ended because of a finding they had perpetrated sexual harassment or whose employment with an organization ends while allegations are pending	✓ Completed 2018
Expansion of ClearCheck and integration with organisational talent management systems	🔄 Ongoing

Administration of an internal annual system-wide questionnaire on improved reporting of sexual harassment in the UN system	 Ongoing (Next survey in spring/summer 2022)
In addition to the aggregate results of the system-wide questionnaire, detailed and confidential benchmarking reports were provided to participating entities for their targeted action.	 Completed 2021, next benchmarking in 2023
Design a results framework to measure impact and progress in addressing sexual harassment in UN system entities with the use of forward-leaning indicators.	* Under development

## Support and Outreach

INITIATIVE	→ STATUS
Common <a href="#">Guide for Managers</a> to prevent and respond to sexual harassment in the workplace, including 'check list', as a tool for outreach and communication	 Completed in 2018, ongoing deployment at organization level
Development of a framework of various Hotlines/Helplines solutions with reference to best practices and deployment of different Hotlines/Helplines at organizational level	 Development completed in 2019; deployment ongoing in entities
Development and promulgation of a <a href="#">Model Code of Conduct to Prevent Sexual Harassment at UN Events</a>	 Completed and launched July 2019 Ongoing implementation at organization level
Organization of <a href="#">peer-to-peer learning dialogues</a> with key stakeholders and other outreach activities	 Ongoing, five dialogues with Member States, civil society and academia partners held in 2021
Integrate behavioural change design recommendations in existing trainings and develop and pilot new learning frameworks based on behavioural science strategies.	* Under development
Develop an enhanced collaboration plan to secure the maximisation of support and cross-fertilization among UN entities, duty stations and functions.	* Under development

## Strengthening Investigations

INITIATIVE	→ STATUS
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Coordination of UN system investigations with Network of UN Representatives of Investigations Services (UN-RIS)



Ongoing

Coordination of the Task Force and Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) members with heads of investigatory bodies



Ongoing

Development of guidance notes to UN decision makers when considering sexual harassment matters



Jurisprudence of Tribunals on Evidentiary Standards



Assessment of Evidence and Credibility



Summary Note on Disclosure of an Investigation Report

[Investigators' Manual for the Investigation of Sexual Harassment](#)



Approved and published 2021

Development system-wide training programme for investigators



Ongoing (under OIOS training programme)