

UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES, FILIPPO GRANDI'S **IASC CHAMPIONSHIP ON PROTECTION FROM SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

SEP 2019 – DEC 2020

As the 2020 Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Champion on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) and Sexual Harassment (SH), High Commissioner Filippo Grandi outlined three main priority areas to deliver on during his tenure: **Bolstering Prevention, Expanding Safe Spaces, and Promoting Respectful Use of Authority.**



Efforts to prevent and respond to SEA around the world have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, requiring adaptation and creativity to overcome increased restrictions and lack of access. While cognizant of the challenges and risks posed by the pandemic, the foreseen Championship deliverables were not significantly affected. The shift from face-to-face to online delivery and tools allowed us to reach larger numbers of UNHCR and partner personnel. In addition, several of the Championship initiatives proved to be particularly relevant in the context of the pandemic and responded to some of the obstacles it posed.

At the beginning of 2020, just before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, High Commissioner Grandi and UNICEF Executive Director Fore, with Diane Goodman, UNHCR Senior Coordinator on prevention from and response to SEA and SH, held a Town Hall meeting on sexual misconduct with their staff around the world. © UNHCR/Susan Hopper

2020 Championship Initiatives

INTRODUCTION

In the context of his Championship, High Commissioner Filippo Grandi launched several initiatives aimed at furthering his priority areas of bolstering prevention, expanding safe spaces and promoting respectful use of authority.

Emphasis was placed on the role of leadership and the respectful use of authority as cornerstones in meaningfully strengthening the work around prevention and safe spaces. Some of the initiatives delivered under the Championship aim to support leaders and managers in using their power and authority to set the tone on the prevention of sexual

misconduct and to build open, respectful and inclusive working environments where everyone feels safe and empowered to speak up.

In addition to the broader efforts to tackle underlying factors in organizational culture, several initiatives in the area of learning, capacity development and awareness-raising, targeting both humanitarian workers and members of affected communities were developed as crucial prevention tools that also serve to help create a safe environment to speak up.

The deliverables outlined below therefore target one or more of these priority areas.

“Saying NO to Sexual Misconduct”

LEARNING PACKAGE FOR PARTNERS

In May 2020, an interactive learning package titled [Saying NO to Sexual Misconduct](#) was launched to sensitize partner staff and capacitate them to define, detect, and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment.

Jointly developed with IOM, WFP, UNHCR and other agencies and NGO partners, the package includes videos, case studies and testimonies. It fosters creative engagement and dialogue on issues relating to sexual misconduct with the aim of supporting participants to better understand the impact of sexual misconduct by putting themselves in the victim’s shoes, the implications of power differentials, and their responsibilities as humanitarian workers. The package is easily tailored for different audiences and contexts, and is available in English, French, Spanish, Arabic, and a number of other languages, with further translations underway.



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The initial on-line launch of the package benefited 375 participants from 40 organizations, including 25 Inter-agency PSEA coordinators from 20 countries. Since then it has been used widely in the field, in virtual format or face-to-face delivery where allowed.

E-LEARNING ON INVESTIGATIONS FOR PARTNERS

In an effort to better respond to all incidents of SEA and boost partner investigative capacity, an e-learning on SEA investigations intended for partner organizations was developed. This online tool, created by investigators for investigators, places emphasis on the rights and protection of victims/survivors and provides clear guidance on key investigation principles and methods. It uses easily accessible language and engaging learning methodologies, and will be available online in the course of 2021.

PSEA COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATIONS FUND

In April 2020, the [PSEA Community Outreach and Communications Fund](#) was launched jointly by UNHCR and the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA), with the support of several technical experts from IASC member organizations. The Fund provides small scale grants to NGO projects that support community-led efforts in raising awareness on PSEA, such as the non-conditionality of humanitarian assistance, safe reporting,



1 Childline Zimbabwe organized awareness-raising campaigns for 600 children and 1,000 adults in the Tongogara refugee camp. The campaigns focused on clarifying different types of sexual exploitation and abuse and available reporting channels. Zimbabwe. © UNHCR/Andreea Campeanu

and emphasizing a victim-centered approach. In the initial call for applications, an astounding 1,600 applications were received, highlighting both an enormous gap and the tremendous capacity available in locally-led initiatives.

The initiative was launched at a critical time when the COVID-19 pandemic and severe access restrictions increased challenges in the fight against SEA. [Nineteen grants were awarded to organizations from across all regions](#). Many of the initiatives targeted marginalized

groups and hard-to-reach communities, covering a range of age, gender, and diversity considerations. A number of them identified alternative ways of accessing communities and creatively built on COVID-related measures, such as by attaching PSEA information to public health messaging.

The High Commissioner will continue to support this fund in 2021, and support from others is encouraged in order to help ensure sustainability.



1 Radio talk show in the studios of Radio Nyagatare where YWCA Rwanda developed, recorded and broadcasted five mini radio drama sketches on PSEA for residents of the Nyabiheke refugee camp. © YWCA Rwanda

COMMUNICATIONS PACKAGE FOR IASC PRINCIPALS AND MANAGERS

In September, the High Commissioner released a **Communications Package** to guide IASC Principals in meaningful dialogue with staff on issues of sexual misconduct. The tool facilitates often uncomfortable discussions and aims to promote transparency and a speak-up culture. Although the package was designed for face-to-face engagement, it lends itself to on-line use and can be adapted for discussions led by managers more broadly.



Visual from "Voices" video, used in the Communications Package. © UNHCR/DÉTROIT

The Communications Package provides two scenario options – with impactful videos – for facilitated dialogue. In one option, the video is intended to guide a safe and open discussion in reaction to the viewing of real, anonymized testimonies from victims, while the other is designed to trigger reflection and conversations on how everyone can use their power to initiate change. The package is available in English and French.

COLLECTION OF GOOD PRACTICES ON CULTURE CHANGE

A **collection of good practices on organizational culture change** was developed. It showcases the innovative work done by different humanitarian and development organizations on a range of themes to curb the power imbalances in the workplace that give rise to sexual misconduct and other forms of abuse. Highlighted projects include initiatives to create safe spaces and promote respectful attitudes, values, and culture, with a particular focus on exploring power dynamics, promoting dialogue, addressing unconscious bias, confronting issues around masculinities, supporting capacity building, and measuring impact.

IASC PRINCIPALS SESSION ON ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE CHANGE



Recognizing that meaningful culture change also requires setting the tone at the top, the High Commissioner hosted a session with all IASC Principals on values, attitudes, and organizational culture in January 2021. The session provided a forum for experiential learning and reflection for leaders on the underlying factors in organizational culture that give rise to sexual misconduct, including power and gender differentials. This session was also delivered to the [UN system Chief Executives Board for Coordination's Task Force on Addressing Sexual Harassment within the organizations of the UN system](#), chaired by UNHCR's Deputy High Commissioner, Kelly Clements. As a follow-up to the IASC and CEB Task Force sessions and on request of participants, a [facilitators' guide](#) was developed, allowing leaders to kickstart important discussions within their organization by holding similar sessions.

Identifying and filling in some of the existing gaps in the prevention of and the response to sexual misconduct has been a major part of the High Commissioner's Championship. Strong inter-agency collaboration will continue in further advancing the fight against sexual misconduct.

While it remains early to measure the impact of the Championship initiatives, their widespread use across organizations and in multiple contexts highlights both the gap in demand they fill as well as the need to do more. These initiatives are part of the larger groundwork to building a sector free from sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment.

