

Lesson 1.3- Other Key Actors in Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA)– Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), Office of the Victims’ Rights Advocate (OVRA) and the Office of the Special Coordinator on improving United Nations response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (OSC)



The Lesson

Slide 1




Getting Started



While preparing for this session, trainers need to be aware that majority of the learners would not be familiar with these entities of the UN. However, it is important to note that these

offices have significant roles and relevance to the work of the NIOs in the field. For an interactive start to this Lesson, ask the trainees if they have prior knowledge on or experience of working with any of the organizations covered in this lesson. Ask them to tell the group about their understanding of the roles and functions of OOS, OVRA and OSC. You may also ask learners if they can relate their work or why and how they benefit for the works of these offices. However, trainers should not expect good prior knowledge of the participants on the subject.

 **Note to instructor** – recommend that lesson 1.3 be presented by an instructor who is well versed with the works of Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), Office of the Victims’ Rights Advocate (OVRA) and the Office of the Special Coordinator on improving United Nations response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (OSC). Past or current experience of working with any of these entities would be an added advantage for an instructor of this lesson. Alternatively, Subject Matter Experts can be connected from respective offices to provide their insight during the conduct of this class. At the national training centres, NIO trainers with past field experience of investigation in peacekeeping are likely to have the knowledge and experience to explain the organization and functions of these entities. The instructor should encourage questions from the trainees and aim for an interactive discussion. All trainees should be encouraged to contribute to the group discussions and learning activities.

Introduce the following (using the Introductory Slides):

- Lesson Topic
- Relevance
- Learning Outcomes
- Lesson Overview

The topic and language can be difficult for NIO trainees. As you move through the lesson remind learners of the relevance of this lesson to their specific functions as NIOs. Review the key purpose and roles of different entities for the lesson. A suggestion is to present each entity and its purpose on individual sheets of different colored paper and post on the wall for learners to easily refer to during the course of the training.

You may wish to print out examples of cooperation between NIOs and the named entities. Print out the titles on individual sheets of paper. These include Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), Office of the Victims’ Rights Advocate (OVRA) and the Office Special Coordinator on SEA (OSC).

Aim

To explain the various entities who are mandated to deal with cases of misconduct and sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) to include Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate (OVRA) and the Office of the Special Coordinator on improving United Nations response to sexual exploitation and abuse (OSC)Special Coordinator on SEA.

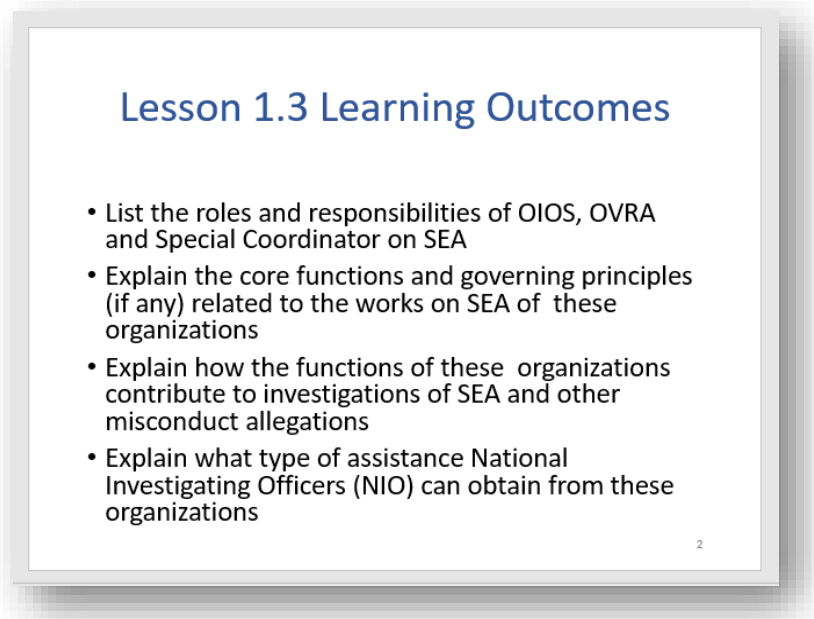
Relevance

As NIO practitioners and trainers, it is important that for you to know understand the organizations, roles and functions of the different UN entities in the UN those that deal with allegations of misconduct and sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA). This will enable the NIOs to draw benefit from the works of these organizations while carrying out their investigation work.

Learning

Outcomes

Slide 2



The slide is titled "Lesson 1.3 Learning Outcomes" and lists four bullet points. A small number "2" is visible in the bottom right corner of the slide content area.

- List the roles and responsibilities of OIOS, OVRA and Special Coordinator on SEA
- Explain the core functions and governing principles (if any) related to the works on SEA of these organizations
- Explain how the functions of these organizations contribute to investigations of SEA and other misconduct allegations
- Explain what type of assistance National Investigating Officers (NIO) can obtain from these organizations

- List the roles and responsibilities of OIOS, OVRA and OSC.
- Explain the core functions and governing principles (if any) related to the work of these entities.
- Explain how the functions of these entities interact with organizations investigations of SEA and other misconduct allegations.
- Explain the type of assistance National Investigating Officers (NIO) can obtain from these entities.

Recommended Lesson Duration: 45 minutes total

1-2 minutes per slide

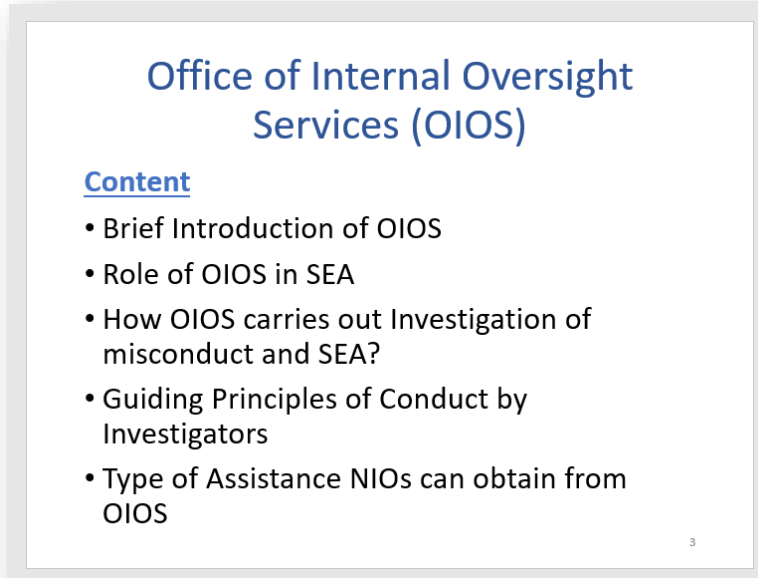
Use short option learning activity

The Lesson	Pages 3-33
Starting the Lesson	Intro Slides 1-2
Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) - Content	Slide 3
A brief introduction	Slide 4
Role of OIOS in SEA	Slide 5
How OIOS carries out Investigations of misconduct and SEA	Slides 6-7
Guiding Principles of Conduct by Investigators	Slide 8
Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate (OVRA) - Content	Slide 9
Background	Slide 10
Roles and responsibilities	Slide 11
What are the Guiding Principles and Rights of Victims?	Slide 12
Assistance and support to the victims	Slide 13
How do Field VRAs work?	Slide 14
What are Troop and Police Contributing Countries' obligations to VRA?	Slide 15
Areas of cooperation between NIOs and FVRAs	Slide 16
Office of the Special Coordinator on improving the United Nations response to sexual exploitation and abuse (OSC) - Content	Slide 17
A brief Introduction	Slide 18
Responsibilities and Role	Slides 19-20
Cooperation with other UN Entities	Slide 21
Cooperation with field duty stations	Slide 22
Cooperation with Member States	Slide 23
Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights/Human Rights Components in missions	
Summary of Key Messages	Slides 24-25

Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS)

Content

Slide 3



Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS)

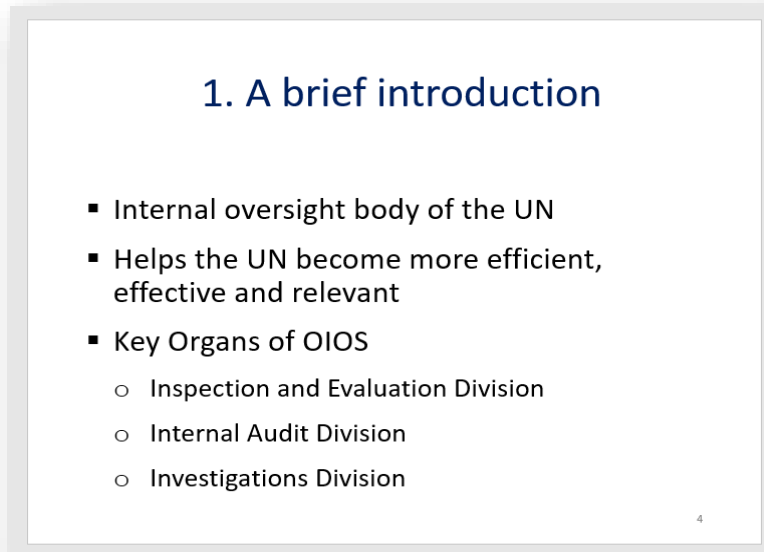
Content

- Brief Introduction of OIOS
- Role of OIOS in SEA
- How OIOS carries out Investigation of misconduct and SEA?
- Guiding Principles of Conduct by Investigators
- Type of Assistance NIOs can obtain from OIOS

3

Introduction

Slide 4



1. A brief introduction

- Internal oversight body of the UN
- Helps the UN become more efficient, effective and relevant
- Key Organs of OIOS
 - Inspection and Evaluation Division
 - Internal Audit Division
 - Investigations Division

4

OIOS is the internal oversight body of the United Nations (UN). The Office assists the Secretary-General in fulfilling his oversight responsibilities in respect of the resources and staff of the Organization through the provision of audit, investigation, inspection and evaluation services.

The roles of the key organs of OIOS are as under:**The Inspection and Evaluation Division (IED)** aims to help the Organization be more relevant, efficient and effective in accordance with its mandate ([A/RES/48/218 B](#)). IED strives to be the best source of information for helping the United Nations work better.

Their evidence-based inspections and evaluations:

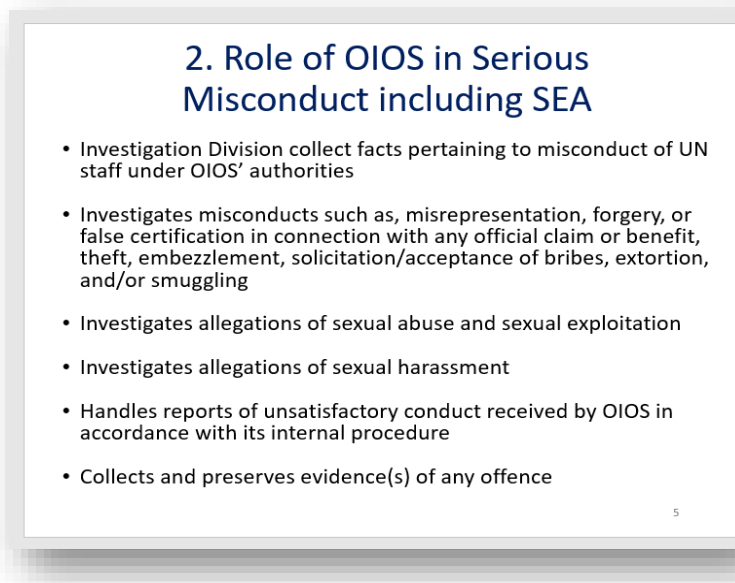
- provide accountability to Member States and the public for the activities and resources of the Organization.
- help programmes deliver better results to obtain their objectives and mandates.
- foster institutional learning by UN management, staff, stakeholders and partners.

Internal Audit Division – Audits assess the adequacy and effectiveness of internal controls for the purpose of improving the Organization’s risk management, control and governance processes. The internal auditing function is an independent and objective assurance and advisory activity designed to add value and improve the Organization's operations. To carry out OIOS’ mandate for audit ([A/RES/48/218 B](#)), the Internal Audit Division helps the Organization to accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to assess and improve the effectiveness of governance, risk management and control processes.

Investigations Division – Investigations establish facts related to reports of possible misconduct to guide the Secretary-General on appropriate accountability action to be taken. The role of this division relates to the functions of NIOs.

Role of OIOS in Serious Misconduct including SEA

Slide 5



2. Role of OIOS in Serious Misconduct including SEA

- Investigation Division collect facts pertaining to misconduct of UN staff under OIOS' authorities
- Investigates misconducts such as, misrepresentation, forgery, or false certification in connection with any official claim or benefit, theft, embezzlement, solicitation/acceptance of bribes, extortion, and/or smuggling
- Investigates allegations of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation
- Investigates allegations of sexual harassment
- Handles reports of unsatisfactory conduct received by OIOS in accordance with its internal procedure
- Collects and preserves evidence(s) of any offence

5

One of the key organs of OIOS is Investigation Division. OIOS aims to foster greater transparency and accountability within the Organization. The Investigations Division strives to protect the human and financial resources of the UN by investigating fraud, corruption, sexual exploitation and abuse and other misconduct in the workplace in line with OIOS' mandate ([\(A/RES/48/218 B\)](#)).

The operational mandate of OIOS includes handling reports of unsatisfactory conduct received by it in accordance with its internal procedure. Nothing in the present instruction shall be construed to limit the operational independence of OIOS with regard to its mandated activities. Furthermore, nothing herein shall limit the discretionary authority of OIOS to undertake investigations into any and all matters concerning the Organization, before or after the separation of a staff member.

The Division collects facts pertaining to misconduct of UN staff under OIOS' authorities. Misconducts range in nature. For instance, they cover:

- Fraud and Corruption (for example, misrepresentation, forgery, or false certification in connection with any official claim or benefit, theft, embezzlement, solicitation/acceptance of bribes, extortion, and/or smuggling). For more information see the United Nations Secretariat Information Circular on Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption for mishandling of contract obligations and relations with third parties leading to loss of property or assets, or generating liabilities for the Organization
- Conflicts of Interest, such as failure to disclose an interest or relationship with a third party who might benefit from a decision in which the staff member takes part
- Allegations of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation as defined in ST/SGB/2003/13

- Allegations of sexual harassment as defined in ST/SGB/2019/8
- Unauthorized outside activities, procurement violations, misuse of ICT resources, misuse of funding to implementing partners, and other violations of UN regulations, rules and administrative issuances.

How OIOS carries out an Investigation of misconduct and SEA?

Slide 6

3. How OIOS carries out Investigation of misconduct and SEA?

- An administrative fact-finding activity
- Investigations conducted in a professional and impartial manner
- Does not initiate disciplinary proceedings or to institute corrective action
- Operates a reporting mechanism to facilitate receipt of reports

Cont...
6

An OIOS investigation is an administrative fact-finding activity, involving collecting evidence to support or refute the alleged violations. The focus is on possible misconduct by individuals and prohibited practices by vendors/third parties; however, some systemic issues might be analyzed at the same time.

Investigations are conducted by OIOS in an impartial manner. Where evidence of misconduct is established, the Investigations Division will send the Secretary-General the results of its investigation, together with recommendations, to guide his decision on the appropriate action to be taken.

OIOS is not responsible for deciding whether to initiate disciplinary proceedings nor to institute corrective action as a result of its investigations.

To facilitate receipt of reports of possible wrongdoing, the Investigations Division operates a reporting mechanism. OIOS protects the confidentiality of those who make reports to it in good faith, irrespective of whether the investigation substantiates the report. Intentionally false complaints, where established, constitute misconduct, which is subject to possible sanction.

Slide 7

3. How OIOS carries out Investigation of misconduct and SEA?

- OIOS also has the right to direct and prompt access to all persons engaged in activities
- Provides global investigative services

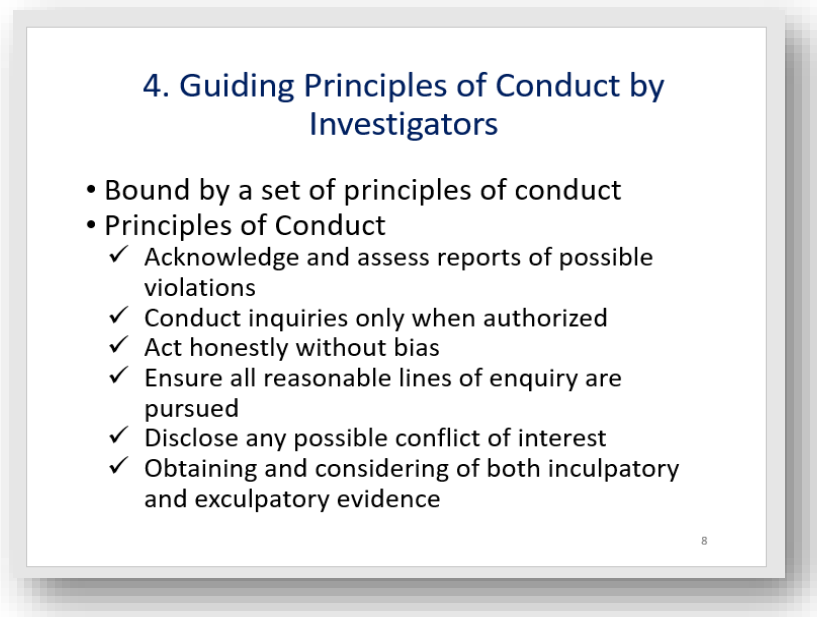
7

All staff members are required to cooperate fully with official investigations. OIOS also has the right to access to all persons engaged in activities under the authority of the Organization, as well as all records, documents or other materials, assets and premises and obtain information and explanations it considers necessary to fulfill its responsibilities.

Headquartered in New York, the Investigations Division provides global investigative services through regional investigation centers in Entebbe, New York and Vienna, field offices in Nairobi and five United Nations peacekeeping missions: Haiti (BINUH), Central African Republic (MINUSCA), Mali (MINUSMA), South Sudan (UNMISS), and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO).

Guiding Principles of Conduct by Investigators

Slide 8



4. Guiding Principles of Conduct by Investigators

- Bound by a set of principles of conduct
- Principles of Conduct
 - ✓ Acknowledge and assess reports of possible violations
 - ✓ Conduct inquiries only when authorized
 - ✓ Act honestly without bias
 - ✓ Ensure all reasonable lines of enquiry are pursued
 - ✓ Disclose any possible conflict of interest
 - ✓ Obtaining and considering of both inculpatory and exculpatory evidence

8

OIOS is bound by a set of principles of conduct as professional investigators who are to be respected, trusted and strive for service excellence.

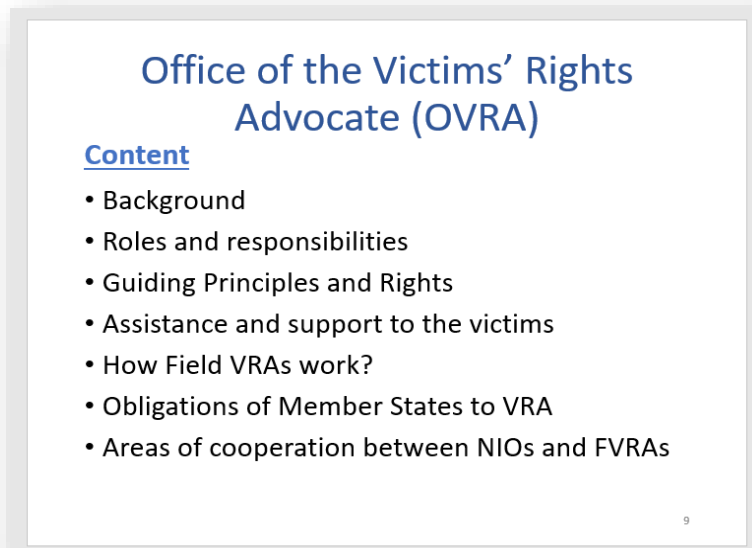
Principles of Conduct --Members of the Investigations Division of OIOS will –

- Acknowledge and assess reports of possible violations of United Nations regulations and rules, and administrative issuances
- Conduct inquiries only when authorized and in compliance with the OIOS Investigations Manual and related guidance materials
- Act honestly without bias and communicate in a courteous and open manner
- Ensure all reasonable lines of enquiry are pursued, including the examination of both inculpatory and exculpatory evidence
- Disclose any possible conflict of interest to their supervisor and recuse themselves if any personal or outside interests may prejudice an investigation
- Obtaining and considering of both inculpatory and exculpatory evidence

Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate (OVRA)

Content

Slide 9



Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate (OVRA)

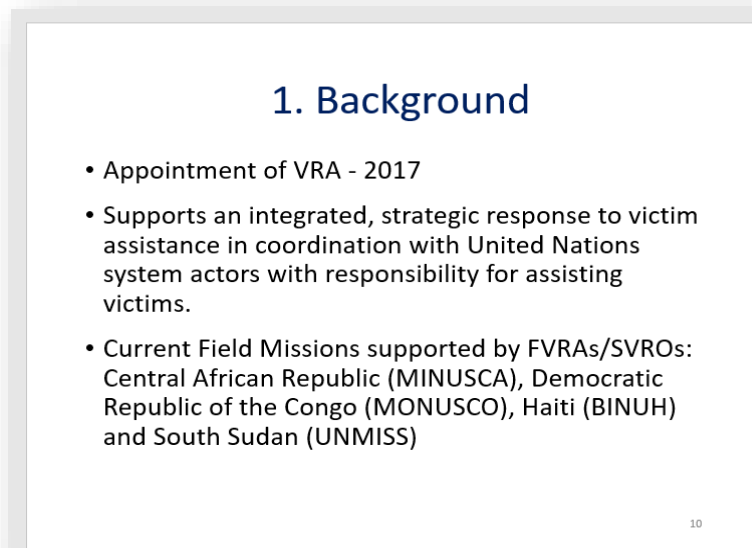
Content

- Background
- Roles and responsibilities
- Guiding Principles and Rights
- Assistance and support to the victims
- How Field VRAs work?
- Obligations of Member States to VRA
- Areas of cooperation between NIOs and FVRAs

9

Background

Slide 10



1. Background

- Appointment of VRA - 2017
- Supports an integrated, strategic response to victim assistance in coordination with United Nations system actors with responsibility for assisting victims.
- Current Field Missions supported by FVRAs/SVROs: Central African Republic (MINUSCA), Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), Haiti (BINUH) and South Sudan (UNMISS)

10

The appointment of the first Victims' Rights Advocate in 2017 and the subsequent designation of the Field Victims' Rights Advocates, operationalized the central part of the Secretary-General's strategy to put the victims at the forefront of the United Nations response to sexual exploitation and abuse.

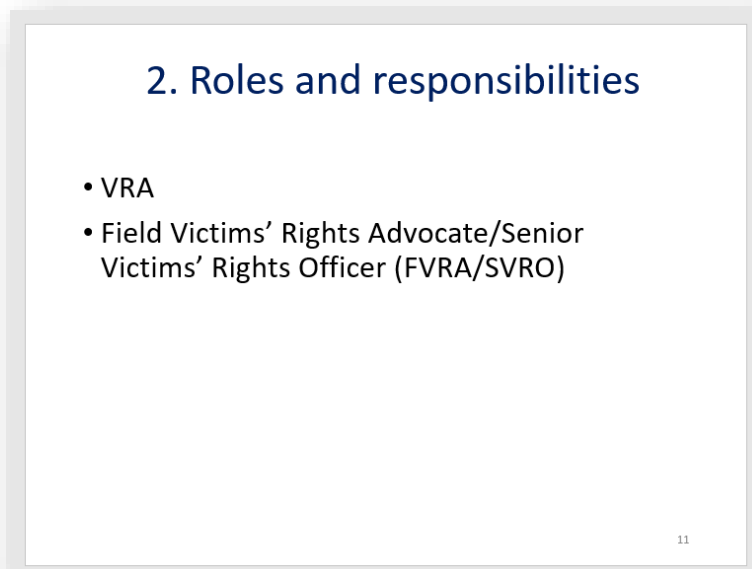
All victims of sexual exploitation and abuse have the right to adequate protection, appropriate assistance and recourse to accountability processes . The Secretary-General appointed a senior human rights expert, at the Assistant Secretary-General level, to serve as a system-wide victims' rights advocate reporting to the Secretary-General through the Chef de Cabinet.

The VRA's activities are designed to ensure that reliable, gender-sensitive pathways exist for every victim or witness to file complaints and that assistance is rapidly and sensitively delivered.

Currently, four countries from which the highest numbers of sexual exploitation and abuse cases have been reported, namely, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti and South Sudan have a mid-to-senior level staff to perform the functions of the Field Victims' Rights Advocate on the ground. While these posts are reflected in the peace and special political mission budgets located in the countries concerned, their role is system-wide and not confined to victims of misconduct by mission personnel.

Roles and responsibilities

Slide 11



2. Roles and responsibilities

- VRA
- Field Victims' Rights Advocate/Senior Victims' Rights Officer (FVRA/SVRO)

11

VRA

The Victims' Rights Advocate has a system-wide role to monitor, oversee and coordinate the strategic vision for victims' assistance and support with all relevant United Nations Entities at Headquarters and in the field. The Victims' Rights Advocate provides policy support and advice to United Nations system organizations, including the agencies, funds and programmes and coordination mechanisms with responsibilities for the provision of assistance and support to victims.

Field Victims' Rights Advocate/Senior Victims' Rights Officer (FVRA/SVRO)

FVRAs/SVROs are the main contact for all victims of sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations staff and related personnel on the ground. They take steps to ensure that a coherent victim-centered, gender- and child-sensitive and non-discriminatory approach is integrated into United Nations support to victims of sexual exploitation and abuse by UN staff and related personnel. The Advocates have a system-wide mandate and report to both the Victims' Rights Advocate and the Secretary-General's Special Representatives. They work with colleagues from entities across the UN system, including agencies, funds and programmes on the ground, conduct and discipline teams, gender-based violence specialists, child protection officers and gender advisors/focal points. The Advocates also work with other humanitarian actors, local authorities, civil society, national human rights institutions and local human rights organizations. FVRAs are full time United Nations personnel with other functions which serve as focal points for victim's support and assistance. SVROs hold full time positions dedicated to this role.

What are the Guiding Principles and Rights of Victims?

Slide 12

3. What are the Guiding Principles and Rights of Victims?

- Support provided irrespective of whether the complainant's allegation is pending investigation.
- Access to support does not depend on whether, or how the victim cooperates with any investigation.
- Victim-centred and non-discriminatory approach: victims should always be treated with respect and not judged, blamed or held responsible for harm suffered.
- Do no harm: maintain privacy and confidentiality
- Victims have the right to seek information about the processes and procedures of investigations and accountability processes and to be kept updated.
- Victims are entitled to pursue applicable accountability measures as desired and have the right to be protected throughout any national proceedings.

12

The following guiding principles and rights must be respected and carefully monitored at all stages in the provision of assistance and support.

- Assistance and support will be made available to all complainants and victims of sexual exploitation and abuse irrespective of whether the victim initiates or cooperates with an investigation or any other accountability procedure.

- Assistance and support shall be provided in a manner that is victim-centred, rights-based, age, disability-and gender sensitive, non-discriminatory and culturally appropriate. Victims should not be discriminated on the basis of race, ethnicity, nationality, class, caste, religion, belief, sex, language, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, health, disability, residence status, or any other reason.
- The rights and best interests of victims shall guide how assistance and support are designed and provided. Assistance and support to child victims (under age 18) shall be provided in a manner consistent with the rights enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, in particular the “best interests of the child.”
- Assistance provided to victims shall adhere to the principle of “do no harm” and be provided in a manner that seeks to uphold their rights, dignity and well-being. This may entail provision of safety measures to protect against retaliation, re-victimization and re-traumatization. Victims should always be treated with respect and not judged or blamed for harm suffered. Questions such as “what were you wearing?” or “why were you out so late?” are not relevant and should not be asked.
- The rights of victims to privacy, confidentiality and informed consent in respect of assistance shall be respected. Victims (or their parents/caregivers where appropriate) have the right to decide on the assistance they need, and information should be provided on the full range of options available. Victims should be informed of the progress and outcomes of actions or processes that concern them.
- Victims are entitled to pursue applicable accountability measures, including legal redress where desired. The United Nations will cooperate with States on all available measures to hold perpetrators of sexual exploitation and abuse accountable, while respecting due process, confidentiality and the principle of informed consent.
- Victims have the right to be protected from any contact with the alleged perpetrator during any national proceedings.

Assistance and support to the victims

Slide 13

4. Assistance and support to the victims

- Safety and protection
- Medical care
- Psychosocial support
- Education, livelihood support and basic material assistance
- Support for children born as a result of SEA
- Legal services

13

Assistance and support for complainants and victims of sexual exploitation and abuse are provided in a holistic, integrated manner with the support of a designated case manager where feasible and/or service provider with the necessary expertise and capacity as outlined in the United Nations Comprehensive Strategy on assistance and support to victims of sexual exploitation and abuse by UN and related personnel adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2007 (A/RES/62/214, Annex). Assistance is provided on a case-by-case basis, in accordance with the needs of the victim. Common services for victims of sexual exploitation and abuse include:

Safety and protection entail the development of an immediate safety or protection plan to address the risk of retaliation, possible breaches of confidentiality or other further violence against the victim. The safety response should clearly set out roles and responsibilities, as well as capacities of designated or relevant actors. Subject to a risk- assessment, and based on the victims' consent and best interest, the safety or protection plan may include relocation support where necessary and appropriate.

Medical care: includes the provision of necessary treatment for conditions directly arising from sexual exploitation and abuse. In cases of sexual abuse, this includes informing victims about the importance of seeking medical care within 72 hours and providing the necessary referral to services, including HIV post-exposure treatment, post exposure prophylaxis (PEP), and reproductive and sexual health care as needed and desired. Medical care should be provided by the designated United Nations system organization or relevant partner.

Psychosocial support: comprises the provision of basic psychosocial support, including psychological first aid, and psychosocial counseling to assist victims, in addition to evidence-based, focused mental health and psychosocial support network (MHPSS) interventions and facilitating referrals to more specialized mental health care, as needed. Support may also

include facilitating access to basic services, peer-to-peer support, enhanced social support through reconnecting victims with family members, friends and neighbours, and/or fostering social connections and interactions through existing community networks.

Education, livelihood support and basic material assistance: entail the provision of food, clothing, shelter, school re-integration and livelihood support, in particular for victims in the most vulnerable situations to help address their immediate needs. In cases involving children, support and assistance should be provided for children’s families or caregivers when determined to be in the best interests of the child. In such cases, the provision of food to host families, and provision of clothing and hygiene kits to victims may also be included.

Support for children born as a result of sexual exploitation and abuse: the United Nations will facilitate the pursuit of paternity and child support claims for victims, where desired by the victim and legally applicable, in cooperation with the relevant State.

Legal services: may entail the referral by the United Nations to providers of legal assistance if desired by the victim. In cases involving alleged perpetrators who are not nationals or permanent residents of the host country, legal service providers should be capable of handling cases that may involve multiple jurisdictions.

How Field VRAs work?

Slide 14

5. How Field VRAs work?

- Serves as the main contact person for complainants and victims.
- Supports a coherent victim-centered, gender- and child-sensitive and non-discriminatory United Nations approach to supporting victims.
- Works with entities across the UN system on the ground to follow up on individual cases where required in a supportive and advisory capacity.

14

Advocates in the field work with and under the guidance of the Victims’ Rights Advocate at Headquarters to implement policies, procedures and programmes to maintain direct and regular contact with the victims and assist them in gaining access to the assistance and support they may require.

Wherever possible, the Advocates draw on existing expertise and service providers available in the country concerned and known to missions and United Nations country teams. Mostly, direct assistance to victims will be provided by local implementing partners and service providers.

As the main UN contact person for all victims in any country, FVRAs/SVROs have an overview of assistance and support available and provided to all known victims. In accordance with their system-wide mandate, they may follow up on individual cases handled by other UN entities in a supportive and advisory capacity.

FVRAs/SVROs do not investigate cases, nor provide oversight or manage support provided to complainants and victims by United Nations entities or their local implementing partners.

The dignity of victims must be respected, and the system-wide FVRAs work to uphold their rights as investigations and accountability processes unfold.

Advocates may work closely with Member States and non-governmental organizations to this end.

What are Troop and Police Contributing Countries' obligations to VRA?


Slide 15

6. What are Troop and Police Contributing Countries' obligations to VRA?

- Full cooperation with the United Nations
- Focal points in capitals
- Measures for the protection of victims and witnesses as required.
- Establish protocols to ensure child- and victim-sensitive investigations
- Appropriate judicial decisions and remedies be enforced

15

United in a common purpose, UN and the T/PCCs should work in a positive partnership to protect the rights of victims and make a difference to their lives, and the lives of their children. While the United Nations does all it can to support the efforts of the Member States, there are many essential tasks that are within their authority and jurisdiction of Member States. They should:

- a) Commit to full cooperation with the United Nations' Secretariat's efforts to protect victims' rights. Departments and Offices involved in these efforts include the Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate, the Department of Management, Strategy, Policy and Compliance (DMSPC) and the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS).
 - b) Appoint focal points in capitals to serve as a direct liaison for the protection of victims' rights. The role of the focal point is to facilitate the resolution of paternity and child maintenance claims in civil cases through the prompt collection of DNA samples and testing, and the facilitation of accountability processes. This may involve holding *in situ* military courts martial or facilitating civil court cases and the provision of legal support (e.g. pro-bono lawyers) as needed by victims to address the multiple challenges of navigating transnational jurisdictions. Focal points should also facilitate action on civil proceedings and on referrals for criminal prosecution made by the UN secretariat.
 - c) Identify and take measures for the protection of victims and witnesses during investigations and judicial proceedings.
 - d) Develop and implement protocols to ensure child- and victim-sensitive investigations and make provisions for the special status of children. (e.g. national investigators to wear civilian clothing to appear less intimidating to victims during interviews and to ensure that victims can bring a trusted support person during investigations).
-  **Note to instructor** – The above point must be highlighted and emphasized by trainers as it is especially pertinent for the work of NIOs.
- e) Ensure that all appropriate disciplinary and judicial decisions and remedies are enforced (e.g. that court-ordered child maintenance payments are duly received by the victim). This may involve the need to facilitate the opening of bank accounts for victims, which is not easily in many countries.

Areas of cooperation between NIOs and FVRAs

Slide 16

7. Areas of cooperation between NIOs and FVRAs


- Facilitate contact with victims.
- Advise on victim centred approach to investigations.
- Facilitate transportation of victims to sites of DNA testing and serve as liaison with the Victims' Rights Advocate at UN Headquarters.
- Facilitate provision of legal advice and support to victims in the context of investigations.

16

Field Victims' Rights Advocates are trusted by victims and can facilitate contact with victims and help them and witnesses to come forward (if they wish) to participate in national investigation processes (including together with a support person). Some victims may not wish to be involved in national investigatory processes.

They may advise on ways to ensure that national investigation processes respect the rights and dignity of victims. FVRAs may provide advice on the type of NIO to send, unless there is one embedded (e.g. not all men; their department (e.g. not in uniform, with weapons); and qualifications and training in respect of particular victims, such as children and persons with disabilities. The FVRA may also support the victim through the process, including by observing the interview

Field Victims' Rights advocates may be able to facilitate national investigation processes, such as through arranging transportation of victims to sites of courts martial, investigation interviews or DNA testing. The extent of support provided will be dependent on the capacity in each setting.

 **Note to instructor:** Such provision of support (e.g. transportation for victims) should not be taken as a given. Resource constraints may limit the assistance provided to NIOs, and some victims may not wish to meet NIOs. FVRAs can provide victim-centered advice ranging from the type of NIO to send (unless there is one embedded) – e.g. not all men; their department e.g. not in uniform or with weapons (some victims may find this intimidating); and qualifications and training in respect of particular victims, such as children and persons with

disabilities. The FVRA/SVRO would also expect to support the victim through the process, including by observing the interview.]

They may also seek to facilitate the provision legal advice and support to victims in the context of national investigations.

Office of the Special Coordinator on improving United Nations response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (OSC)

Content

Slide 17

Office of the Special Coordinator on improving United Nations response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

Content

- Brief Introduction
- Key Responsibilities and Role
- Cooperation with other UN entities
- Cooperation with field duty stations
- Cooperation with Member States

17

Introduction

Slide 18

1. A brief Introduction

- Appointment following the review of the High-level Panel on CAR
- To coordinate amongst all pillars in peace operations, humanitarian and development settings – ONE-UN approach
- To coordinate the systemic issues, fragmentation and other weaknesses
- To ensure sustained and high-level attention to PSEA

18

The designation of the Special Coordinator is part of a series of ongoing measures derived from the Secretary-General’s analysis of the High-Level External Independent Review Panel on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by International Peacekeeping Forces in the Central African Republic that submitted its report on 17 December 2015.

In February 2016, to ensure a collective UN response, the Secretary-General appointed a “Special Coordinator on Improving the United Nations Response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse” (Special Coordinator) with the mandate to measurably strengthen the ability of the United Nations system to prevent and respond to incidents of sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations staff and related personnel, as well as to strengthen the response to SEA by non-United Nations international forces authorized by Security Council mandates.

The Secretary-General is committed to ensuring that the systemic issues, fragmentation and other weaknesses identified are fully addressed in a timely manner and, in so doing, to uphold the trust that must underpin all international engagements

The Special Coordinator ensures sustained and high-level attention to prevent and protect from sexual exploitation and abuse

Key Responsibilities and Role

Slide 18

2. Key Responsibilities and Role

- Follow-up to the recommendations outlined in the SG’s report on Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse: (A/71/818)
- Coordinate the implementation of the strategy across the United Nations system and ensure a harmonized approach through the development of aligned mechanisms and procedures, standardized protocols and tools.

19

Trainers to highlight key recommendation outlined in A/71/818

- Put victims’ rights and dignity at the center

- End impunity through strengthened investigations and reporting
- Engage Member States, civil society, outside experts and organizations
- Strategic Communications (internally and externally)

Point 2 of the S-G strategy: to end impunity through strengthened investigations and reporting is a key element of OSC coordination. Numerous initiatives under the umbrella of the OSC relate to its work with OIOS-Investigation Division (OIOS-ID). OSC is to support OIOS-ID strengthening of this mechanism, including but not limited to, the development of the Incident Reporting Form (IRF) and now the electronic IRF (eIRF), strengthening and aligning reporting of OIOS-ID and DMSPC/CDS allegations through public reporting; supporting OIOS-ID in its role in UNRIS and strengthening OIOS-ID's work with interviewing victims and engagement with the OVRA, the agencies, funds and programmes (AFPs) and the resident coordinators (RC), etc.

Slide 20

2. Key Responsibilities and Role (continued)

- Work with senior leadership to prevent and respond to SEA
- Encourages leadership accountability, which translates into sustained engagement at senior levels, in the field and with all AFPs.
- Work with Member States, regional bodies, and other Heads of UN entities to provide continued guidance in the implementing the S-G's initiatives.

20

The OSC works with and reviews country-level action plans* on PSEA submitted by SRSGs and the RC and humanitarian coordinators (HC) to prevent and respond to SEA.

*[*Brief note on Country Action Plans: The plans must include provisions for community engagement, complaint reporting, outreach to and protection of victims, as well as measures that may be necessary to ensure the protection of witnesses and family members. They must identify specific staff positions and incumbents with responsibilities to take complaints, provide assistance and facilitate protection. Plans will also include the level of personal engagement that would be required of SRSGs and RCs and HCs, specifically with regard to victims and the support to be provided to]*

OSC encourages leadership accountability, which translates into sustained engagement at senior levels in the field and with all agencies, funds and programmes (AFPs).

OSC works with the Member States, regional bodies, civil society organizations and other Heads of UN entities to provide continued guidance in the implementing the S-G's initiatives.

Cooperation with other UN Entities

Slide 21

3. Cooperation with other UN Entities

- Cooperate with each AFPs in order to promote and implement initiatives on PSEA
- Hold meetings of the High-Level Steering Group and bimonthly meeting with SEA working group
- Collaborate with CDS, OMA and PD on specific uniformed personnel regulations
- Make available standardized collection (eIRF) and reporting (public reporting) tools and processes, training, action plans
- Collaborate with entities on the 'Clear Check' screening tool to prevent the rehiring of staff with substantiated allegations of SEA

21

SEA working group (SEA WG) -- includes representatives from focal points nominated by members of the High-Level Steering Group (HLSG) including working-level experts in conduct and discipline, human rights, child protection, conflict-related sexual violence, and international humanitarian law, with broad department and agency representation. The purpose of SEA WG is to: a) through consultation, identify, organize and prioritize strategic initiatives which can be developed and implemented across the UN to combat SEA; b) integrate and align related workflows across the system; c) serve as the coordinating body and information-sharing mechanism to ensure alignment of organization wide initiatives underway to combat SEA; d) periodically review progress and impact of agreed system-wide measures and initiatives to enhance and update strategies and tools across the system to prevent and respond to SEA;

OSC collaborates with the Conduct and Discipline Services (CDS), the Office of Military Affairs (OMA) and the Police Division (PD) on specific uniformed personnel regulations (i.e., Military Aide-memoire, Force Commanders/Police Commissionaire directives and SOPs on sexual exploitation and abuse, etc.

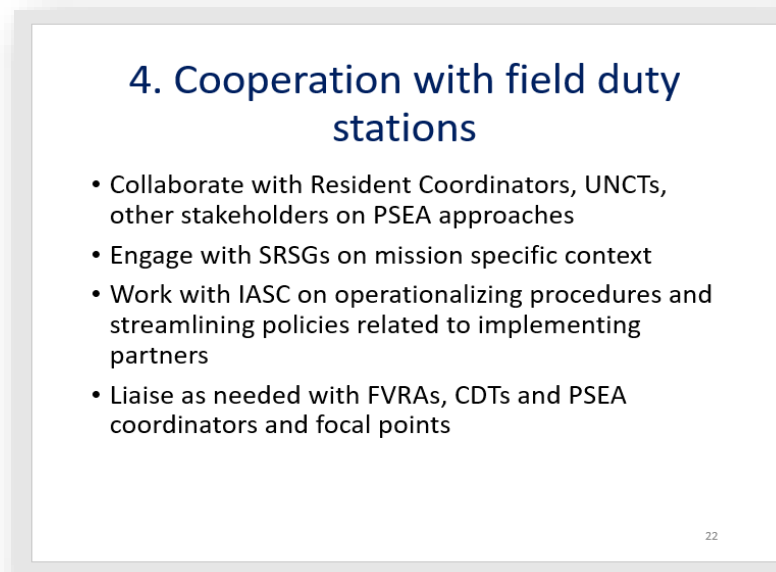
eIRF -- The objective of the Incident Reporting Form (IRF), developed and endorsed by the Secretary-General's HLSG in 2017, is to (i) streamline and harmonize the collection of intake data related to first allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA); (ii) minimize the number of times a victim/witness (the "Declarer") is interviewed; (iii) initiate administrative action and or an investigation; (iv) facilitate victims' assistance; and (v) ensure compliance with personal data protection principles. In 2020, the paper version of the IRF was transformed to a digitized electronic version (eIRF) to streamline workflow, enhance data protection and increase user friendliness in the receipt and action of allegations related to SEA.

iReport SEA Tracker (e.g. public reporting) -- the iReport SEA Tracker is used to facilitate alignment of data related to agencies, funds and programmes and their implementing partners and [data on allegations system-wide](#) are publicly available.

Clear Check -- a digital screening tool, was established to prevent the re-employment of individuals against whom allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse have been substantiated or who left the Organization prior to the conclusion of an investigation into such allegations in any part of the United Nations.

Cooperation with field duty stations

Slide 22



4. Cooperation with field duty stations

- Collaborate with Resident Coordinators, UNCTs, other stakeholders on PSEA approaches
- Engage with SRSGs on mission specific context
- Work with IASC on operationalizing procedures and streamlining policies related to implementing partners
- Liaise as needed with FVRAs, CDTs and PSEA coordinators and focal points

22

Collaborate with RCs, UNCTs, other stakeholders on PSEA approaches: country-level action plans, survey facts and perceptions of United Nations Personnel on prevention of and response to sexual exploitation and abuse.

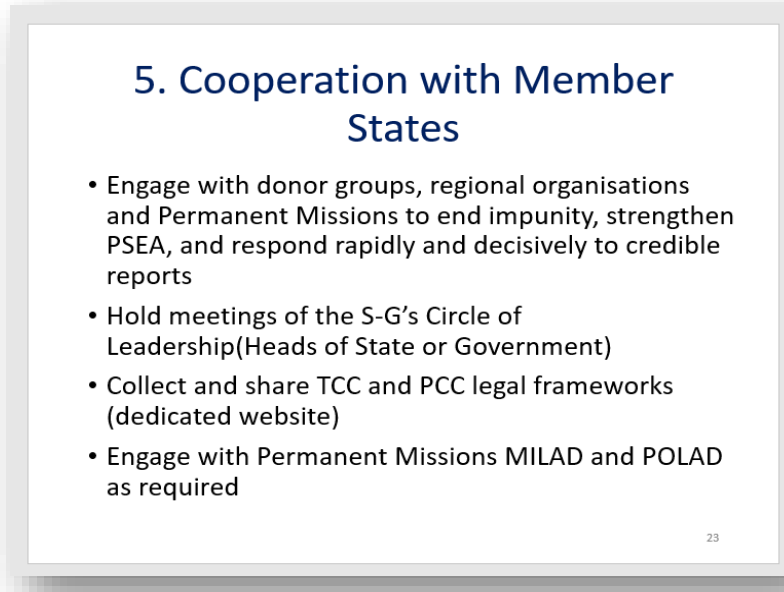
Engage with SRSGs on mission specific context.

Work with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) on operationalizing procedures and streamlining policies related to implementing partners (International Organizations, Non-Government organizations).

Liaise as needed with FVRAs, CDTs and PSEA coordinators and focal points.

Cooperation with Member States

Slide 23



5. Cooperation with Member States

- Engage with donor groups, regional organisations and Permanent Missions to end impunity, strengthen PSEA, and respond rapidly and decisively to credible reports
- Hold meetings of the S-G's Circle of Leadership (Heads of State or Government)
- Collect and share TCC and PCC legal frameworks (dedicated website)
- Engage with Permanent Missions MILAD and POLAD as required

23

Given a shared responsibility to protect and assist victims and individuals that report misconduct, and to take appropriate action against perpetrators, the partnerships with Member States continue to be strengthened through the [Voluntary Compact](#) on preventing and addressing sexual exploitation and abuse; the [Trust Fund](#) in support of victims of sexual exploitation and abuse; and the Secretary-General's circle of leadership on the prevention of and response to sexual exploitation and abuse in United Nations operations.

Circle of leadership: Since 2017, the representatives of the circle of leadership have held numerous meetings to increase awareness and to exchange ideas informally on progress made, good practices and related issues and how these can be highlighted in the margins of the yearly General Assembly (2018, 2019 and 2020). Also, the members were called upon to passionately contribute on initiatives to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse in United Nations operations (2018 – Collective statement, 2019 – Twitter moment). (<https://www.un.org/preventing-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse/content/circle-leadership>)

Legal frameworks – To improve transparency and accountability in the handling of cases of misconduct, the Department of Peace Operations has requested that each Troop and Police Contributing Country (T/PCC) provide the legal framework applicable to its contingent and/or officers when deployed to a UN Mission. While the information contained in the Member State fact sheet is periodically updated, the United Nations does not guarantee that the information provided is correct, complete or up to date. The fact sheet reproduces content received from the Member States and, therefore, the United Nations is not responsible for the content nor can it guarantee its accuracy. (https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/standards-of-conduct#quicktabs-troops_police_legal_framework1(https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/standards-of-conduct#quicktabs-troops_police_legal_framework1))

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights/UN Human Rights

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights has the lead role within the UN system to monitor, investigate, report and follow up on allegations of SEA involving non-UN forces. As in other situations where violations are alleged to have taken place, UN Human Rights field presences monitor and investigate the allegations at the country level. The investigation of such allegations follows OHCHR methodology, which is publicly available, most importantly in the OHCHR Manual on Human Rights Monitoring. Based on the findings of investigations, data on such allegations involving non-UN forces is included in the annual report of the Secretary-General on special measures for protection from SEA, in line with the mandate provided by the

In responding to allegations via investigations and communication with the Member State or regional organization concerned, UN Human Rights follows a series of principles, remarkably informed consent of the victim and declarer; protection; confidentiality and do no harm. When allegations are credible and informed consent has been provided, it informs the relevant Member State and/or regional organisation, following procedures for the confidentiality of information, of allegations against a perpetrator affiliated to them, and it requests that they undertake an investigation, with adequate safeguards for victims, to seek accountability and prosecutions where appropriate.

UN Human Rights is working to implement a human rights-based approach to prevention of and response to sexual exploitation and abuse, and to harmonize standards of conduct with regard to SEA regardless of the affiliation of the perpetrator, most remarkably to ensure non-UN security forces operating under a Security Council mandate comply with the same principles

and standards as UN personnel, in order to ensure coherence in response to SEA in terms of accountability by individuals and Member States, as well as for assistance to victims. Participants in this training course may be required by their Troop Contributing Country, in any present or future assignment, to investigate allegations of SEA involving members of non-UN Security Forces operating under a Security Council mandate, and the same skills and knowledge will need to be applied in their investigations as for United Nations military.

The implementation of this mandate has provided the UN Human Rights office with valuable expertise that it has put at the disposal of other UN entities and Member States.

In respect of the relevant principles, national investigation officers may share information on allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse that may amount to violations of international human rights law or international humanitarian law with the UN Human Rights office, which in turn can advise on the conduct of investigations with a human rights-based approach, including victim/witness protection and informed consent.

Summary of Messages

Slide 24

Summary of Key Messages

OIOS

- OIOS assists the SG in fulfilling his oversight responsibilities by conducting fact finding investigations into reported cases of serious misconduct, including SEA.
- Investigations are conducted by OIOS in a professional and impartial manner
- OIOS Acts honestly without bias and communicate in a courteous and open manner and ensures all reasonable lines of enquiry are pursued

24

OIOS

OIOS is the internal oversight body of the United Nations (UN). The Office assists the Secretary-General in fulfilling his oversight responsibilities in respect of the resources and staff of the Organization through the provision of audit, investigation, inspection and evaluation services.

Investigations are conducted by OIOS in a professional and impartial manner. Where evidence of misconduct is established, the Investigations Division will send the Secretary-General the results of its investigation, together with recommendations, to guide the Secretary-General in deciding on the appropriate action to be taken.

OIOS Acts honestly without bias and communicate in a courteous and open manner. It ensures all reasonable lines of enquiry are pursued, including the examination of both inculpatory and exculpatory evidence.

Slide 25

**Summary of Key Messages
(continued)**

OVRA

- The VRA's activities are designed to ensure that reliable, gender-sensitive pathways exist for every victim or witness
- FVRAs/SVROs are the main contact for all victims of SEA by UN staff and related personnel on the ground
- The rights and best interests of victims guide how assistance and support are designed and provided

25

OVRA

The VRA's activities are designed to ensure that reliable, gender-sensitive pathways exist for every victim or witness to file complaints and that assistance is rapidly and sensitively delivered.

FVRAs/SVROs are the main contact for all victims of sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations staff and related personnel on the ground. They take steps to ensure that a coherent victim-centered, gender- and child-sensitive and non-discriminatory approach is integrated into United Nations support to victims of sexual exploitation and abuse by UN staff and related personnel.

The rights and best interests of victims shall guide how assistance and support are designed and provided. Assistance and support to child victims (under age 18) shall be provided in a manner

consistent with the rights enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, in particular the “best interests of the child.”

Slide 26

**Summary of Key Messages
(continued)**

OSC

- OSC coordinates the implementation of the strategy throughout the UN system
- Encourages leadership accountability
- Engages with donor groups, regional organisations and Permanent Missions

26

OSC

OSC coordinates the implementation of the strategy throughout the United Nations system.

Encourages leadership accountability.

Engages with donor groups, regional organizations and Permanent Missions to end impunity, to strengthen PSEA measures, to respond rapidly and decisively to credible reports of such acts, and to meet the needs of victims quickly and appropriately.