

## **Responses to questions raised during webinars on PSEA module in the United Nations Partner Portal (UNPP)**

### **For Civil Society Organisations and Partner Organisations**

#### **1. The UNPP PSEA module**

##### **What is the PSEA module of the UNPP?**

The PSEA module is an integrated online tool that supports the joint efforts of UN and its partners to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse by digitizing the Interagency Standing Committee (IASC) [Harmonised Implementation Tool on PSEA capacity](#).

The harmonised implementation tool was developed based on extensive consultation between United Nations and CSO partners to operationalize the [United Nations IP Protocol](#) and has been agreed to be used by all United Nations agencies. The tool: a) outlines requirements to ensure adequate safeguards and appropriate action are in place when working with partners; b) gives United Nations entities the necessary assurance of partner's organisational capacities on PSEA; c) aims to ensure the United Nations does not partner with organisations who fail to address or respond to instances of SEA.

In sum, the module will facilitate the assessment and determination of the organisational capacity of United Nations partners to prevent and respond to with SEA. It will also facilitate working together to strengthen partner capacities on PSEA.

##### **How can my organisation access the PSEA module on UNPP?**

We invite you to login using your organisation's login credentials. In case your organisation does not have a profile on the UNPP, we invite you to register on the portal. More information on how to register is available [here](#).

##### **Should my organisation conduct the self assessment even if we are not currently in a partnership with a UN agency?**

Yes, we recommend your organisation to undergo the self assessment process as part of its profile creation and regular management.

##### **Does the system send notifications when actions are completed by the UN agency?**

At this stage, there is no email notification through the module. The module is updated automatically every time an action is undertaken by you or the UN agency. For some actions, a visual alert button appears. For this reason, it is important to maintain communication between your UN partner throughout the whole process.

##### **I wish to change the responses submitted by my organisation. How can I do this?**

For Section 1 (Introductory Questions), you can modify your responses till a UN agency verifies and submits this section. Once the UN agency submits this section, it is not modifiable.

For Section 2 (Preliminary Self-Assessment and Rating), you can modify your responses till a UN agency scores your assessment. In case you wish to modify your responses after the UN has scored your assessment, you can request your UN agency focal point to unlock the self-assessment for you. For more details, please see page 15 of the [user manual](#).

### Can the module and the user resources be accessed in any other languages?

Currently, the module is only available in English but we are working on translating it into French and Spanish as well. The various resources in the UNPP resource library are available in different languages as listed on the library.

### Who can I contact for help with the module?

If you are currently an active partner working in partnership with a UN agency, you can reach out to your UN counterpart focal point for support. If you do not have a UN agency focal point yet, you may get help from UNICC using the “Ask Rafiki” feature. If you are selected for a partnership, the UN partner agency will conduct the scoring of your assessment and this agency will also support in your capacity strengthening implementation plan (CSIP).

You can also refer to the [UNPP Resource Library](#) and the technical guidance document provided in Section 1 (Introductory Questions).

### Can non-UN agencies use this tool to assess its partner?

Yes. An editable version of the tool is available for download on the [IASC site](#) and in the [UNPP Resource Library](#).

## 2. Roles and responsibilities

### Who is responsible and accountable to do this assessment and capacity strengthening?

Your organisation should designate at least one focal point to lead this process from your side. However, it is important to remember that the assessment and strengthening of PSEA capacity requires the efforts and ownership of the organisation as a whole. Hence, all relevant individuals should be involved in the development and implementation of the capacity strengthening implementation plan (CSIP), and all personnel of the organisation must follow the PSEA systems.

### Can several individuals of an organisation do the self-assessment?

Yes, multiple individuals from the organisation can coordinate using the “Save for Later” feature at the bottom of the page (see page 14 of the [user manual](#)).

## 3. Scope of assessment

### Can sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) and sexual harassment (SH) be incorporated together?

Yes, as long as sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment are clearly defined, covered and differentiated. As some aspects of prevention and response may differ between SEA and SH, this must be done adequately.

### Can SEA be incorporated as part of safeguarding or sexual misconduct?

PSEA systems **might be integrated as part of a broader umbrella terminologies of policies** on 'sexual misconduct', 'safeguarding' or 'undesirable behaviours'. In such cases, SEA must be explicitly and clearly listed as part of the broader umbrella term or policy, and prevention and response mechanisms specific to SEA should be present.

### How are beneficiaries defined for the purposes of this module?

Beneficiaries of assistance, as defined under the UN IP Protocol, are individuals who are direct or indirect recipients of a partner's or the UN's action. In other words, this refers to people who a partner or a UN agency works with and/or serves or seeks to assist and are typically in situations of vulnerability and dependence vis à vis the partner's or UN agency's personnel.

### Why use the term "beneficiary" and not "affected community" or "person of concern"?

SEA may happen in both humanitarian and development contexts. The terms 'affected community' or 'person of concern' are used in humanitarian situations only, while 'beneficiary' more generally refers to individuals who are recipients of service or assistance by a CSO or the UN.

### For international non-governmental organisations (INGOs), are the assessments done at the level of its headquarters (HQ) and/or country operations?

No, INGOs working with a UN office in a country are to be assessed at the level of their country operations. The rationale behind this is really to ensure the PSEA capacity assessment is conducted based on the local realities that heavily determine the risks of SEA. When an INGO has been assessed at its HQ level, the global assessment should be taken into consideration when conducting the country level assessment. This is because some PSEA policies and systems assessed as part of the PSEA assessment of INGO parents may apply to country or regional level operations. However, the self-assessment must reflect whether these policies and systems are applied at the national or local level. For example, the organisation may have a policy on mandatory training but the policy might not be enforced at the national level (*a template will be made available in upcoming weeks to support INGOs assessments*).

### If my organization subgrants to other CSOs, can we consider this as a case of "no contact with beneficiaries"?

No. As you are the main partner implementing with the UN and have to implement activities that entail contact with beneficiaries, you will still be deemed as having contact with beneficiaries. For example this could be the case for an INGO working with a local NGO. This also implies that you need to fulfill core standard 2 of the capacity assessment, i.e., your organisation's contracts and partnership agreements include a standard clause requiring subcontractors to adopt policies that prohibit SEA and to take measures to have PSEA systems in place to prevent and respond to SEA.

Although not mandatory, your organisation may use the Harmonised Implementation Tool on PSEA capacity to assess your partner organisations when subcontracting activities.

#### 4. Previous assessments

##### What kind of past assessments should be uploaded onto the module?

Only verified assessments conducted and communicated to you by a UN agency in the past five years (i.e. 2018-2023) are accepted.

##### If my organisation has previously been assessed by a UN agency in the past five years, what should I do?

If your organisation has a past assessment that is not older than five years, there are two options:

- First, UNICC may have already migrated your organisation's past assessment into the module. The only data that will be migrated is the date of the past assessment, agency who scored the assessment and the rating.
- Second, you or your UN partner can upload the assessment on your organisation's UNPP profile under Section 1 (Introductory Questions) of the module, by responding "yes" to the question "Have you been assessed on PSEA by another UN agency in the past five years?". If you have undergone more than one assessment (meaning you have been reassessed) in the past five years, please upload only your latest assessment. Please refer to page 8 of the [user manual](#).

If there have been organizational changes since the previous assessment, we invite you to submit a reassessment through the UNPP PSEA module by requesting your UN partner to unlock the self-assessment for you.

##### My organisation has been previously assessed with a SEA risk rating under 6 core standards. Should I upload it onto the module?

Yes. The PSEA assessment conducted by UNICEF until November 2022 was using 6 core standards. The assessment under the UNPP is essentially the same and looks at the same key PSEA pillars, but the way the rating is calculated is a bit different.

When uploading your past assessment with an SEA risk rating, make sure to translate the SEA risk rating into a PSEA capacity one using the table [here](#).

##### If my organisation has undergone a previous assessment, and is currently implementing a capacity strengthening plan, how can it be migrated to the UNPP?

In this case, we invite you to enter the information and upload the assessment on your organisation's UNPP profile under Section 1 (Introductory Questions) of the module, by responding "yes" to the question "Have you been assessed on PSEA by another UN agency in the past five years?". Here, you can upload both the verified assessment and the capacity strengthening implementation plan. Your UN partner will work with you to build the capacity plan in the system under Section 3 (CSIP).

##### My organisation has a past assessment with low or medium capacity, how will we be reassessed?

In this case, there are three options.

- First, you could ask your UN counterpart to unlock the self-assessment section and you will be required to upload your documentation and core standard rating.

- Second, you could share your updated documentation via email and your UN counterpart can directly conduct the reassessment in Section 2 (Preliminary self-assessment and rating).
- Third, your organisational capacity strengthening implementation plan will be entered by the UN in Section 3 (CSIP) and a reassessment will be undertaken.

### In case my organisation wishes to retake the assessment due to organisational changes since the previous assessment, how do we proceed?

If you submit your past assessments in the system (or if these have been migrated for you by the UN), Section 2 will be locked. If you would like to retake the self-assessment, please ask your UN partner to unlock it for you. Once unlocked, you will be able to retake the self-assessment (see page 15 of the [user manual](#)).

## 5. Preliminary Self-assessment and Rating

### What supporting documentation should be uploaded?

The supporting documents for each core standard differ, a suggested list of documentation can be found [here](#). It is important to note that only formally approved or official documents will be accepted; drafts are not considered eligible.

### Do active cases of allegations need to be mentioned in the self-assessment?

Yes, Core Standard 8 requires your organisation to disclose past and ongoing allegations of SEA along with providing supporting evidence that corrective actions are being implemented. Kindly note that you are not required to disclose sensitive information such as the names of victim(s) and/or perpetrator(s).

### How long does it usually take for the UN to review the assessment?

There is no strict timeline. However, we invite you to maintain ongoing communication with the UN agency and notify it once the self-assessment is submitted from your side.

### What happens if my organisation is assessed as low or medium capacity for PSEA?

The aim of the PSEA capacity assessment process is not to disqualify organisations from entering into a partnership. The aim of the assessment is to determine the systems your organisation must have to prevent and respond to SEA. If your organisation is assessed as low or medium capacity, this means you will need to work with your UN partner to develop and implement a capacity strengthening implementation plan to address any gaps identified in the assessment. Having low capacity for PSEA means additional risk mitigation measures may be required. The only situation where the organisation will be ineligible for partnership is when your organisation has been assessed with “no” for core standard 8, i.e., your organisation did not take adequate corrective measures to a past allegation nor did it provide indications that this will be addressed.

### In which cases will a UN agency request a reassessment or unlock the rating?

The ‘Unlock Self-Assessment’ is used when the UN organisation requires your organisation to make changes and/or complete a new self-assessment due to changes to your organisational structure, contact with beneficiaries, expiration of your most recent assessment, or to edit/correct a response.

The unlock rating is used when the UN organisation needs to make changes to its own response in order to edit or correct a response, or update the rating based on a monitoring result or allegation finding.

### Is there any limitation for the length of the comments?

Yes, the comments are limited to 5000 characters. If there are very extensive comments that need to be added to the self-assessment, we encourage you to upload a word document instead using the “Supporting Documents” feature, with the detailed information that you would like to share.

## **6. Capacity Strengthening Implementation Plan (CSIP)**

### What is a CSIP and in what cases is it needed?

When a partner has contact with beneficiaries and scored less than full capacity, the UN partner may work with the partner to develop a capacity strengthening implementation plan covering relevant core standards.

### What support can my organisation expect from the UN in the capacity strengthening process?

When developing your capacity strengthening implementation plan, we highly encourage you to discuss with your UN partner the specific activities of the plan where you may need additional support. We also encourage you to discuss at any point with your UN partner any need or challenge you may have in implementing the activities outlined in the plan. Your UN partner will support you in implementing the CSIP. There are also numerous resources in the [UNPP PSEA Resource Library](#) (IP Protocol for PSEA resources) to support you with the implementation of activities identified under the CSIP.

### What happens once my organisation has fully implemented the CSIP?

The CSIP is a living document and is expected to be updated regularly by one or more UN agencies working with your organization as part of regular programme monitoring. Once the status of all the required activities changes to “completed”, the rating of the core standard will change to “Yes”. Once all activities are completed and the CSIP is concluded, your capacity rating will automatically change to “Full Capacity”. You will then be required to maintain compliance to the core standards.