

**Minimum Operating Standards**

**PROTECTION FROM  
SEXUAL EXPLOITATION  
AND ABUSE BY OWN  
PERSONNEL**

IASC Protection from Sexual  
Exploitation and Abuse  
Task Force Members

**2012**

## Minimum Operating Standards

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### Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by own Personnel (MOS-PSEA)<sup>1</sup>

To provide protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) by own personnel the compliance with a set of Minimum Operating Standards for PSEA (MOS-PSEA) is required. The MOS-PSEA are modelled after the well-known Minimum Operating Security Standards for Staff Safety (or MOSS) compliance mechanism, which is mandatory for the UN System to ensure there is a common set of requirements that all agencies follow in order to ensure staff safety.

#### What are the MOS-PSEA?

The MOS-PSEA are based on:

1. The Statement of Commitment on Eliminating Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by UN and Non-UN Personnel, August 2008
2. The Global Review of protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by UN, NGO, IOM and IFRC Personnel, July 2010
3. IASC Six Core Principles Relating to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, June 2002

#### What are the key elements of the MOS-PSEA?

The four pillars of the current PSEA work provide the framework for the mechanism. These are:

1. **Management and coordination:** Effective policy development and implementation; Cooperative arrangements; Dedicated department / focal point committed to PSEA.
2. **Engagement with and support of local community population:** Effective and comprehensive communication from HQ to the field on (a) what to do regarding raising beneficiary awareness on PSEA and (b) how to establish effective community-based complaints mechanisms.
3. **Prevention:** Effective and comprehensive mechanisms to ensure awareness-raising on SEA amongst personnel; effective recruitment and performance management.
4. **Response:** Internal complaints and investigation procedures are in place.

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<sup>1</sup> These MOS have been discussed among IASC PSEA TaFo Members; the document is work in progress and reflects the status of the Task Forces' current thinking.

	PSEA Minimum Operating Standards	Key Indicators
1	<b>Effective Policy Development and Implementation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A policy stating standards of conduct, including acts of SEA, exists and a work plan to implement the policy is in place.</li> <li>• The policy/standards of conduct have been conveyed to current staff and senior management (at HQ and field level) <u>on repeated occasions (such as inductions and refresher trainings)</u>.</li> </ul>
2	<b>Cooperative Arrangements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SG's Bulletin (ST/SGB/2003/13) or respective codes of conduct are included in general contract conditions.</li> <li>• Procedures are in place to receive written agreement from entities or individuals entering into cooperative arrangements with the agency that they are aware of and will abide by the standards of the PSEA policy.</li> </ul>
3	<b>A dedicated department/focal point is committed to PSEA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A dedicated department/focal point have the overall responsibility for the development and implementation of PSEA policy and activities.</li> <li>• The responsible department/focal point is required to regularly report to senior management on its progress on PSEA through the Senior Focal Point on PSEA.</li> <li>• Staff members dealing with PSEA have formalised responsibility for PSEA in their job description, performance appraisal or similar.</li> <li>• They have received systematised training on PSEA and the time committed to PSEA is commensurate with the scale of implementation required under the current situation of the organization.</li> </ul>

4	<p><b>Effective and comprehensive communication from HQ to the field on expectations regarding raising beneficiary awareness on PSEA</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The HQ has communicated in detail the expectations regarding beneficiary awareness raising efforts on PSEA (including information on the organization’s standards of conduct and reporting mechanism).</li> <li>• The HQ has distributed examples of awareness raising tools and materials to be used for beneficiary awareness raising activities.</li> </ul>
5	<p><b>Effective community based complaints mechanisms (CBCM), including victim assistance.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The HQ urges its field offices to participate in community based complaint mechanisms that are jointly developed and implemented by the aid community adapted to the specific locations.</li> <li>• There is guidance provided to the field on how to design the CBCM to ensure it is adapted to the cultural context with focus on community participation.</li> <li>• There is a mechanism for monitoring and review of the complaint mechanism.</li> <li>• The organization has written guidance on the provision of victim assistance.</li> </ul>

6	<b>Effective recruitment and performance management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The organization makes sure that all candidates are required to sign the code of conduct before being offered a contract.</li> <li>• Each organization commits to improving its system of reference checking and vetting for former misconduct.</li> <li>• Supervision and performance appraisals include adherence to participation in Code of Conduct trainings (or similar) that includes PSEA.</li> <li>• Performance appraisals for Senior Management include the adherence to create and maintain an environment which prevents sexual exploitation and abuse and promotes the implementation of the ST/SGB/2003/13 or code of conduct.</li> </ul>
7	<b>Effective and comprehensive mechanisms are established to ensure awareness-raising on SEA amongst personnel</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff receives annual refresher training on the standards of conduct, learn about the mechanism to file complaints and reports of misconduct and the implications of breaching these standards.</li> <li>• Training on misconduct (specifically mentioning SEA) forms part of the induction process.</li> <li>• Staff members are aware of their obligation to report SEA/misconduct and are aware that there is a policy for Protection from retaliation in place.</li> </ul>

8	<b>Internal complaints and investigation procedures in place</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Written procedures on complaints/ reports handling from staff members or beneficiaries are in place.</li><li>• Staff members are informed on a regular basis of how to file a complaint/report and the procedures for handling these.</li><li>• Standard investigation operating procedures or equivalent issued and used to guide investigation practice.</li><li>• Investigations are undertaken by experienced and qualified professionals who are also trained on sensitive investigations such as allegations of SEA.</li><li>• Investigations are commenced within 3 months and information about out-come is shared with the complainant.</li><li>• Substantiated complaints have resulted in either disciplinary action or contractual consequences and, if not, the entity is able to justify why not.</li></ul>
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