

INFORMATION BRIEF

PSEA Assessment & PSEA Toolkit

For CSO Partners

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for every child



PSEA Assessment and PSEA Toolkit

In February 2020 UNICEF will roll out a requirement to conduct PSEA Assessments for all CSO partners, together with a PSEA Toolkit. The objective of the PSEA Assessment and the PSEA Toolkit is to facilitate a sustained improvement in SEA prevention measures and a reduction of SEA risks in programme implementation across the development sector. The Assessment and Toolkit have been developed through a consultative process with a range of stakeholders, including CSO partners and other UN agencies, during 2019. This document aims to provide relevant information to partners about the PSEA Assessment process and its implications, and about the Toolkit.

Key features of the PSEA Assessment:

- PSEA Assessment is required for all CSO partners and is valid for five years.
- The Assessment rates organisational capacities to prevent SEA. The organisational capacity rating converts to a SEA risk rating, i.e., high organisational capacity on PSEA converts to low SEA risk rating, and vice versa.
- The Assessment covers 6 core standards: 1. Organisational Policy; 2. Organisational Management and HR Systems; 3. Mandatory Training; 4. Reporting; 5. Assistance and Referrals; and 6. Investigations.
- Based on field testing, an Assessment takes 1-2 hours to complete by UNICEF & partner together.
- INGO HQ's will be assessed at HQ level, and the rating will be applied to all relevant country offices of the HQ. However, some questions, or parts of some questions, may need to be assessed at country level.
- PSEA Assessment for national CSO's is completed together with the partner either by UNICEF staff or third-party service provider.
- At rollout date, all partners will be assigned a high risk assumed rating in UNICEF system, and this risk rating will remain in place until the PSEA Assessment has been completed.
- Low risk assumed rating is available when there is no risk of SEA, e.g., for desk-based research projects.
- SEA high risk assumed or high SEA risk triggers additional programmatic visits by UNICEF, with focus on beneficiary level monitoring with SEA questions.
- PSEA Toolkit and training package are resources to be used in conjunction with the Assessment to increase understanding, capacity and systems on SEA prevention and protection.
- Partners are encouraged to use the PSEA Assessment included in the Toolkit as a self-assessment and to use the tools in the PSEA Toolkit to proactively initiate improved policies, procedures and systems on PSEA, prior to the UNICEF PSEA Assessment.
- Partners with a High SEA risk rating are encouraged to develop an Action Plan to address PSEA organisational capacity gaps highlighted through the PSEA Assessment process.

- PSEA toolkit may be used as a resource to develop SEA prevention policies, procedures and systems.
- Assessment is updated, and SEA risk rating revised after partner notifies UNICEF of improved policies, procedures and systems to improve prevention of SEA.
- UNICEF cannot continue to work with a Partner with a High SEA risk or High SEA risk assumed rating for more than twelve months. Partnerships still at High SEA risk or High SEA risk assumed rating after 12 months will be terminated.
- With medium or low SEA risk rating, future PSEA Assessment process can be completed in tandem with the Microassessment process. Risk ratings remain separate.
- Consolidated findings from PSEA Assessments in any given country, including lessons learnt about the effectiveness or lack thereof of specific strategies, should be shared with other actors in the sector.
- UN agencies have agreed to accept the findings of PSEA assessments completed by other UN agencies (provided the assessment tool meets a minimum set of 6 established criteria), and thereby avoid duplication of PSEA Assessments by multiple UN agencies on shared partners.
- Target dates for rollout: implementation from 1 February 2020 in two phases, starting with high risk contexts in 34 countries as phase1. A list of the Phase1 and Phase2 countries is attached at Annex B.

The Process

- For national CSO: Assessment is completed jointly between UNICEF programme officer or consultant, and partner programme manager. Partner provides evidence to support responses to each of the six core standards. A list of suggested supporting documents which should be gathered together before the Assessment is found at Annex A attached, in the Proof of Evidence column. UNICEF and partner together go through the Assessment questionnaire and review the supporting documents to confirm they meet the Core Standards.
- For INGO's: Assessment will take place primarily at HQ level, and the results will be applied to all country level entities of the INGO HQ in UNICEF systems. **INGO HQs are now requested to self-complete the PSEA Assessment and upload the completed Assessment, together with relevant supporting documents (considered as Proof of Evidence of meeting the required standard) into the UNPartner Portal.**

This exercise is completed remotely by the INGO HQ through the following steps:

1. INGO HQ self-completes the attached Annex A PSEA assessment following the instructions included. INGO provides any relevant comments to explain the self-assessment rating in the Comments field. For any Core Standard which needs to be responded to by INGO country office, INGO HQ indicates "country office" in the comments field. If partial elements of the criteria are not determined by INGO policy, procedure or systems, i.e., they are determined at country office of the INGO, those elements of the procedure should be highlighted in the self-assessment form with a corresponding note in the Comment section.
2. INGO HQ uploads the completed form and any supporting documents in UNPP, Other Information tab. (UNPP allows a maximum of 3 files in total to be uploaded here, with a size limit of 25MB per file. It is suggested to zip all documents for the PSEA Assessment into one zip file to upload. INGO HQ should email INGO-HQ-PSEA-Assessment@unicef.org if any difficulties are encountered with the document upload.)

3. INGO HQ emails INGO-HQ-PSEA-Assessment@unicef.org to inform UNICEF HQ DAPM/PIU (Division of Data, Analytic & Planning/Programme Implementation Unit) that the self-assessment has been completed and zip file uploaded.
4. UNICEF reviews the completed PSEA assessment and verifies the ratings assigned by the INGO or requests clarification.
5. UNICEF HQ shares INGO HQ-level assessment with UNICEF COs.
6. UNICEF CO completes the incomplete (“country office”) questions and the final SEA risk rating for INGO in that country is calculated.

For national CSOs and INGOs:

- The outcome (including overall SEA risk rating) is shared by UNICEF with partners.
- Partners who are rated High SEA risk are notified that partnership will be terminated if necessary gaps in PSEA policies procedure and systems have not been addressed sufficiently to achieve a moderate or low SEA risk rating within twelve months from date of original assessment.
- As partner implements new policies, procedures or systems to address PSEA gaps identified through the PSEA assessment, these are shared with UNICEF, and rating for the specific core standard or standards is revised accordingly, along with the overall SEA risk rating.

The [PSEA Toolkit](#) has been developed to support implementing partners to establish and/or strengthen PSEA policies, procedures and systems within their organisation. The Toolkit covers five topic areas: Foundations; Prevention; Reporting; Assistance; Investigations. The partner may use the Toolkit to develop an Action Plan to address PSEA gaps identified through the PSEA Assessment process. The Toolkit includes templates and references for multiple PSEA policies, procedures and systems to support partners to address gaps.

The [PSEA Toolkit Training](#) may be undertaken by the partner to develop understanding of the PSEA Assessment and the PSEA Toolkit which is developed to support partners to address PSEA systems gaps.

These tools (Assessment, Toolkit and Toolkit Training) have been developed to operationalize UNICEF’s response to the requirements of the UN Protocol. They are also in line with the commitments to improve management of SEA risks and invest in capacity development of partners to implement the PSEA requirements included in the revised General Terms and Conditions of the Programme Cooperation Agreements.

Other Information

Table 1: Available SEA Risk Ratings

SEA Risk rating	Based on:
High	PSEA Assessment of organizational capacities as Low
Medium	PSEA Assessment of organizational capacities as Needs improvement
Low	PSEA Assessment of organizational capacities as Adequate
High Risk Assumed	PSEA Assessment not yet carried out
Low Risk Assumed	Representative decision that IP is low risk and PSEA Assessment is not required

Table 2: Schedule of Minimum requirements for programmatic visits

Cash transfer amount in the year	Risk rating	Minimum programmatic visits in the year
High Up to \$2,500	All risk levels	Not required ³
\$2,501 - \$100,000	All risk levels	1
\$100,001 - \$500,000	Low	1
	Medium	2
	Significant or High	3
More than \$500,001	Low	2
	Medium	3
	Significant or High	4

A high-risk rating in the PSEA Assessment triggers additional programme assurance activities. CSO IPs also have a risk rating derived from the micro assessment (or high risk may be assumed if no micro assessment is done). The higher of the two ratings from the micro assessment and the PSEA assessment is used to determine the minimum required programmatic visits in the year. Where PSEA Assessment risk rating is high, the minimum required programmatic visits for those IP's include beneficiary level monitoring with specific SEA questions.

Further information and resources can be found at the [UNICEF Civil Society Partnerships website](#).

Annex A: PSEA Assessment

This assessment is intended to give UNICEF and its partners a baseline for tracking progress of partners’ organizational capacities on PSEA. These standards are aligned with the United Nations Protocol On Allegations Of Sexual Exploitation And Abuse Involving Implementing Partners.

Partners and UNICEF counterparts (i.e. programme officers) (or UNICEF’s 3rd party service providers) go through this assessment together before entering into a partnership to have a shared understanding of the partner’s organizational strengths and areas of improvement on PSEA moving forward. The PSEA Toolkit contains a more detailed self-assessment checklist, which partners can use at any time to improve their organisational capacities on PSEA.

Partners are encouraged to use the findings to develop an action plan that reflects identified areas for improvement on PSEA (see PSEA Toolkit Tool 1: Sample Template for Action Plan on PSEA) that UNICEF and partners can revisit at regular intervals (i.e. every 6 or 12 months). The assessment can also help identify areas where external support from UNICEF or other partners is needed, such as trainings, technical advice, funding or increased coordination with inter-agency activities. In addition, UNICEF records the total score of each partner’s capacity assessment as an “SEA Risk Rating” and uses it to determine the number of programmatic assurance visits needed by UNICEF staff and other follow-up actions.

To support partners’ efforts in addressing identified capacity gaps, the PSEA Toolkit provides practical guidance on PSEA as well as an extensive list of additional resources in each section.

Instructions on the rating system for the assessment:

The table below provides (a) core standards on PSEA organizational policies and procedures and (b) criteria for assigning ratings to each of these standards. Each standard includes a set of three criteria that the organization should consider for the rating. Organizations should use the “comment” section to document the organization’s recent progress as well as support needs.

1 – Absent:

The organization is not working towards this standard. Give this score if the organization does not meet the standard.

2 – Progressing:

The organization has made some progress towards applying this standard, but certain aspects need to be improved. Give this score if the organization partially meets the criteria.

3 – Adequate:

The organization fully meets this standard. Give this score if the organization meets the standard.

After reviewing and scoring the organization’s compliance with these standards, add up the totals for each standard to obtain a total score. This total score indicates the organization’s current capacities on PSEA and its related risk rating.

Total score	PSEA organizational capacities	SEA Risk Rating
8 or less	Low	High
9 – 14	Needs improvement	Moderate
15 – 18	Adequate	Low

Core Standard	1	2	3	Proof of Evidence
<p>Core Standard 1 Organizational Policy</p> <p>Refer: PSEA Toolkit Section 4.2.1. Policies</p> <p>Required 1: An organizational policy on PSEA exists and describes appropriate standards of conduct, other preventive measures, reporting, monitoring, investigation and corrective measures.</p> <p><i>(UN IP Protocol para 15 & Annex A.4)</i></p>				<p><input type="checkbox"/> Code of conduct</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> PSEA policy</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Documentation of standard procedures for all personnel to receive/sign PSEA policy</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify):</p>
<p>Core Standard 2 Organizational Management and HR Systems</p> <p>Refer: PSEA Toolkit Section 4.2.2. Procedures</p> <p>Required 1: The organization’s contracts and partnership agreements include a standard clause requiring contractors, suppliers, consultants and sub-partners to commit to a zero-tolerance policy on SEA and to take measures to prevent and respond to SEA.</p> <p>Required 2: There is a systematic vetting procedure in place for job candidates (e.g. reference checks, police records, Google searches) in accordance with local laws regarding employment, privacy and data protection, including checking for prior involvement in SEA.</p> <p><i>(UN IP Protocol para 11; 15; & Annex A.1, A.2)</i></p>				<p><input type="checkbox"/> ToR (e.g. PSEA-related responsibilities)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Contracts/partnership agreements</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment procedure (e.g. reference check with questions related to SEA/child safeguarding)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify):</p>
<p>Core Standard 3 Mandatory Training</p> <p>Refer PSEA Toolkit Section 4.3.1. Training</p> <p>Required 1: The organization holds mandatory trainings for all personnel on the organization’s SEA policy and procedures and the training includes 1) a definition of SEA (that is aligned with the UN's definition); 2) a prohibition of SEA; and 3) actions that personnel are required to take (i.e. prompt reporting of allegations and referral of survivors).</p> <p><i>(UN IP Protocol para 17 & Annex A.5)</i></p>				<p><input type="checkbox"/> Annual training plan</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Training agenda</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Attendance sheets</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify):</p>

Core Standard	1	2	3	Proof of Evidence
<p>Core Standard 4 Reporting</p> <p>Refer PSEA Toolkit Section 4.3.2. Awareness-raising and Section 5.2. Reporting Mechanisms</p> <p>Required 1: The organization has mechanisms and procedures for personnel, beneficiaries and communities, including children, to report SEA allegations that comply with core standards for reporting (i.e. safety, confidentiality, transparency, accessibility) and ensures that beneficiaries are aware of these.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">For more information please visit the UNICEF CIVIL SOCIETY PARTNERSHIPS WEBSITE</p> <p>(UN IP Protocol para 19 & Annex A.3)</p>				<p><input type="checkbox"/> Communication materials</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> PSEA awareness-raising plan</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Description of Reporting Mechanism</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Whistle-blower Policy</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify):</p>
<p>Core Standard 5 Assistance and Referrals</p> <p>Refer PSEA Toolkit Section 6.2. Assistance and Referrals</p> <p>Required 1: The organization has a system to ensure survivors of SEA, including children, receive immediate professional assistance, referring them to qualified service providers</p> <p>(UN IP Protocol para 22.d.)</p>				<p><input type="checkbox"/> List of Service Providers</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Description of Referral Process</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Referral form for survivors of GBV/SEA</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify):</p>
<p>Core Standard 6 Investigations</p> <p>Refer PSEA Toolkit Section 7.2. Investigation Procedures.</p> <p>Required 1: The organization has a process for investigation of allegations of SEA and can provide evidence that it has appropriately dealt with past SEA allegations, if any, through investigation and corrective action.</p> <p>(UN IP Protocol para 20, 22.a., & Annex A.6)</p>				<p><input type="checkbox"/> Written process for review of SEA allegations</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Dedicated resource for investigation(s) and/or commitment of partner for support</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> PSEA investigation policy/procedures</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify):</p>
TOTAL PER RATING (i.e. count all 1s, 2s and 3s)				SEA Risk Rating
GRAND TOTAL (i.e. 1s + 2s + 3s)				
PSEA organizational capacities				
SEA Risk Rating				

PSEA Assessment of [Name of the IP]: _____

Assessment completed by: _____

Email address: _____

Signature: _____

Date of Assessment: _____

Annex B Phased Rollout Offices

Phase 1: Procedure is effective 1 February 2020 for the following offices:

Bangladesh	Libya	South Sudan
Central African Republic	Mali	Sudan
Democratic Republic of Congo	MENARO	Syrian Arab Republic
ESARO	Myanmar	WCARO
Ethiopia	Nigeria	Yemen
Haiti	Somalia	Zambia
Iraq		
Jordan		

Burkina Faso	LACRO	Philippines
Burundi	Lebanon	ROSA
Cameroon	Mauritania	Turkey
Chad	Mozambique	Uganda
Colombia	Pakistan	Ukraine
EAPRO	Palestine	Venezuela

Phase 2 : Procedure is effective 1 July 2020 for all other offices.

All other offices may optionally begin application of the Procedure at any time prior to the designated effective date of 1 July 2020.

