

The first Victims' Rights Advocate (VRA) was appointed by the United Nations Secretary-General in August 2017. The Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate (OVRA) began its work in January 2018 and focuses on integrating a victim-centred approach into all United Nations' policies and efforts related to the prevention and response to sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations personnel. This is in line with the [Secretary-General's strategy](#) on these issues which consists of (i) prioritizing the rights and dignity of victims; (ii) ending impunity; (iii) engaging with civil society and external partners; and (iv) improving strategic communication.

What we do

The OVRA supports the VRA who seeks to put the rights and dignity of **victims of sexual exploitation and abuse** by United Nations staff and related personnel at the forefront of the United Nations' prevention and response efforts. The **mandate of the VRA encompasses the entire United Nations system** which means that OVRA works with all United Nations entities so that victims get the assistance and support they need. Operationalizing the role of the VRA, Field Victims' Rights Advocates and Senior Victims' Rights Officers are in place in four countries and are the main point of contact for victims on the ground. As with the VRA, their role is system-wide.

They work closely with humanitarian structures, protection from sexual exploitation and abuse networks, conduct and discipline teams, gender-based violence focal points, child protection officers, gender advisors and others to bolster support to victims. In collaboration with United Nations and other stakeholders, they conduct **outreach, awareness-raising and sensitization sessions, and facilitate victims' access to services**, including to medical assistance and to psychosocial care. They facilitate DNA sample collection to expedite efforts to resolve paternity and child maintenance claims and in developing livelihood projects financed by the Trust Fund in Support of Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse. The Advocates also provide on the ground support to victims in United Nations and Member State investigations.

The OVRA supports the VRA's collaboration with State institutions, civil society, including national, legal and human rights organizations to provide assistance and support to victims in line with the Secretary-General's strategy and the United Nations Comprehensive Strategy on Assistance and Support to Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by United Nations Staff and Related Personnel adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2007 ([A/RES/62/214, Annex](#)).

The OVRA supports the preparation and conduct of visits by the VRA to countries where the United Nations is present to gain firsthand understanding of how sexual exploitation and abuse are addressed. During visits, where possible, the VRA connects with victims directly to hear and learn from them so the design of prevention and response to sexual exploitation and abuse is centered around victims' needs.

Victim assistance and support

Assistance with the
investigatory process

Child support

