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All complainants and victims of sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations staff and non-staff personnel have the right to receive assistance and support in accordance with their individual needs, regardless of sex, gender, age, status, or other personal circumstances. In most cases, there are no clear-cut criteria for determining the scope and duration of assistance and support. The merits of each case should be considered by the United Nations entities involved. The United Nations should prioritize the rights and dignity of victims in a manner that fulfils its duty of care and responsibility taking account of the services available in a country where it operates.

This document provides guidance from the Victims' Rights Advocate on the victims' rights approach to the scope and duration of assistance for victims. For further information contact the United Nations Office of the Victims'

abuse by members of non-United Nations international forces and personnel





mother and child. The needs of the mother for longer-term assistance and support should be taken into consideration.

■ **What happens when a victim is abusive towards United Nations staff?**

Victims may express frustration towards the United Nations. It is important to understand the impact of harm suffered by victims by sexual exploitation and abuse and how these wrongs have been dealt with by United Nations staff. Sometimes victims may threaten or behave violently toward United Nations staff. These behaviours should be brought to the attention of the Victims' Rights Advocate and be addressed in consultation with all concerned stakeholders on a case-by-case basis which may decide that support may cease.

■ **What kind of livelihood support are victims entitled to receive, and for how long?**

Victims of sexual exploitation and abuse should be provided with tools to recover from the wrongs they have experienced so they can rebuild their lives, including through strengthening their capacity to sustain themselves financially. Victims able to sustain themselves regain dignity, can support themselves and their children and contribute to their families and communities. This bolsters their self-esteem and reduces vulnerability to further victimization and has a protective effect. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, victims who received skills training in tailoring, maize flour production, mushroom farming and basket weaving through projects supported by the [Trust Fund in Support of Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse](#) (Trust Fund) have been able to generate an income as they have goods to sell. Some women use their income to expand their income-generating activities, contributing to the well-being of their families and communities. Victims in Haiti who acquired skills through Trust Fund projects were able to open small businesses.

The provision of livelihood support may range from short-term interventions to those that extend over several months. Limited financial support can be provided through peacekeeping and special political mission budgets in line with the Secretary-General's instruction (A/70/729, para 77). This is encouraged by the Victims' Rights Advocate. United Nations entities in non-mission settings are encouraged provide similar support. Longer-term livelihood assistance and support projects can be delivered through sustainable income-generating projects funded by the Trust Fund or other funding sources available through United Nations agencies, funds, and programmes.

■ **Does assistance and support for children born of sexual exploitation and abuse 'time out' when the child reaches majority?**

This depends on the specific case. Individual needs should be addressed in line with the specifics of the case and the child's best interests. The Comprehensive Strategy provides that children born as a result of sexual exploitation and abuse should receive, in accordance with their individual needs, assistance and support addressing the medical, legal, psychosocial consequences directly arising from sexual exploitation and abuse in their best interests. This can include support for school fees and ancillary costs. These children may face short-term or longer-term health-related consequences, including as a result of disability, requiring medical care. Assistance and support should be provided in a manner that does not increase their trauma or cause further stigmatization.

The United Nations may facilitate the access of children born of sexual exploitation and abuse to education and legal services after they have reached the age of majority, including for resolution of paternity claims. In line with international human rights law, they have the right to know the identity of their fathers and access ancillary rights, such as citizenship.

Is there a difference in the scope and duration of support available to victims of sexual exploitation and victims of sexual abuse?

No. The Comprehensive Strategy makes no distinction between victims of sexual exploitation and abuse in terms of the scope and duration of assistance and support. In some cases, victims may not wish to receive assistance and support and these should not be imposed.

Which service providers provide support to victims of sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations staff and non-staff personnel?

The Comprehensive Strategy and the Victims' Assistance Protocol indicate that assistance and support to victims should be provided, first and foremost, through existing services, programmes and their networks, which are usually based on partnerships, bilateral agreements or other arrangements between United Nations entities and service providers. Most services are provided through regular gender-based violence and child protection programming (although these may not exist, particularly in remote areas). Services may be provided through Governmental, international, or national civil society organizations. Where needed, the United Nations is encouraged to consider development of new services, while not developing duplicative structures (Comprehensive Strategy, A/RES/62/214, para 10).

How can the Organization ensure that service providers to which victims are referred can deliver appropriate support of adequate quality?

The pilot mapping project undertaken by the Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate revealed that services for victims of sexual exploitation vary in quality, and may be limited or unavailable in some contexts, such as remote areas or those affected by conflict or health emergencies. Services

may not be accessible to all populations, including for example, refugees, stateless and internally displaced persons. Services should be identified and routinely mapped as in the case of gender-based violence and child protection mappings. The quality of those services should also be analyzed on a regular basis, including by listening to victims who are recipients of those services. The Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate is currently developing methodologies to gather feedback from victims, which adheres to the victims' rights approach. This is an important addition to mechanisms that have already been developed to improve accountability to affected populations.

The Victims' Rights Advocate encourages all United Nations Country Teams to carry out sexual exploitation and abuse risk assessments using available risk planning tools and clarify the role and capacity of State authorities to facilitate access to services for victims, ideally through Common Country Analysis and United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework with host Governments. These frameworks can serve as entry points to working with the host Government to advocate for improvements in the provision and quality of services for all victims.

The Victims' Rights Advocate encourages United Nations entities to ensure that service providers can offer specialized care, including through providing victims with a choice of women or men doctors, who follow gender-based violence best practice (m)-10.2 (o)-13.6 (j)-9.05 c)-13.5 (e) a) w4-7.3 (i)-11.4 (t)-2.2 (h t)-2.

the importance of seeking medical care within 72 hours and providing the referral to services, including HIV post-exposure treatment, post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) and reproductive and sexual health care, as needed and

may support the pursuit of accountability in countries of jurisdiction. Victims should receive information from the United Nations on how to access legal assistance, including paternity and child support claims. Victims should have access to legal assistance at the time they report an allegation so they can be informed of options such as pursuit of civil proceedings or reporting to local authorities and time limitations relating to potential claims.

The United Nations should cooperate with Member States to facilitate claims. Many victims are not able to access legal services themselves, especially in host countries of alleged perpetrators, so the Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate has developed a roster of lawyers and legal aid organizations to whom victims can be referred.

Senior Victims' Rights Officers and other staff in contact with victims facilitate access to legal services for them by establishing contacts with national focal points, lawyers, legal aid organizations and national human rights institutions. In United Nations peacekeeping missions, the United Nations has covered the costs of transport for victims, judges, prosecutors, and investigators, including in respect of mobile courts martial in countries where allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse were made.

■ What support should children born as a result of sexual exploitation and abuse receive?

The Comprehensive Strategy provides that children born as a result of sexual exploitation and abuse should receive, in accordance with their individual needs, assistance and support addressing the medical, legal and psycho-social support, in the best interests of the child. This may include support for school and ancillary fees, medical care including for illnesses which may develop at a later stage of the child's life. Paternity/child support claims are governed by national laws, and the processes of the State or States which have jurisdiction related to the claims. The United Nations cooperates with Member States and victims to facilitate these claims.

■ What safety and protection measures should be taken to ensure the safety and protection of victims and witnesses?



limits of United Nations capacity to provide protection so they can make informed decisions on how they wish to proceed with their case.

How should expectations of victims of sexual exploitation and abuse be managed?

Advocate encourages all United Nations entities to take this approach. She

