

EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF IOM'S APPROACH TO PROTECTION AGAINST SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT

August 2023

This evaluation brief presents a summary of the key findings, conclusions, and recommendations, as identified by the evaluator(s) for use by key stakeholders, including internally by IOM staff and externally by partners. More details can be found in the full evaluation report.

Evaluation type: Strategic/thematic
Evaluator(s): Julia Weinstock / Celine Calve
Final report date: 19 October 2022
Evaluation period: 2016-2022
Commissioned by: PSEAH Unit
Managed by: PSEAH Unit

Evaluation purpose: To assess IOM's approach to Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment (PSEAH)

Evaluation criteria: Relevance, internal and external coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability

Evaluation methodology: Desk review; data from existing UN system-wide and IOM surveys; interviews and semi-structured questionnaires conducted internally and with external partners and donors

INFORMATION:

Geographical coverage	Global
Activity type:	IOM overall strategic approach
Gender marker:	PSEAH - 2b
Activity period:	2011-2022
Donor:	Multiple funding sources

BACKGROUND SUMMARY

The International Organization for Migration (IOM), the leading organization promoting humane and orderly migration, became a United Nations related-agency in 2016. With a robust operational presence, it employs a workforce of more than 17,000 staff and approximately 7,500 third-party contracted (TPC) personnel and numerous implementing partners (IP). Notably, IOM has experienced a significant increase in its workforce dedicated to addressing Protection against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) globally, growing from 11.5 dedicated PSEA staff across five countries (January 2022) to 60 dedicated PSEA staff across 41 countries.

Over the last decade, IOM has been a key and active contributor to Protection against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment (PSEAH) efforts and recently increased its investments toward addressing the issue. Amongst such substantial contributions, IOM became the first Inter-agency Standing Committee (IASC) PSEA Champion and in line with its commitment established an inter-agency PSEA team in IOM dedicated to supporting collective PSEA action.

The launch of the IOM PSEA Policy in 2016, coupled with the establishment of a senior-level PSEAH Global Coordinator position and a dedicated PSEAH Unit in 2022, reinforced IOM's strategic positioning and efforts to strengthen PSEAH

globally. Additionally, IOM's Strategy on PSEAH closely aligns to international and UN standards. More recently, as part of the UN Chief Executive Board (CEB) Task Force on addressing Sexual Harassment, IOM co-leads the Prevention and Behavioural Science workstream.

In 2019, IOM rolled out the We Are All In platform, a confidential and secure misconduct reporting channel within the Organization which led to an increased number in reports to IOM's Office of Inspector General (OIG). This endeavour was complemented by an array of innovative interactive PSEA training modules that were adopted by the UN and IASC systems. Additionally, in 2022, the IOM PSEAH Toolkit was launched internally, as part of the Organization's efforts to provide operational guidance and enhance practical application at the field level.

The objective of the External Evaluation was three-fold: i) Review IOM's progress, best practices, gaps, and opportunities related to PSEAH; ii) identify key recommendations to strengthen IOM's PSEAH strategy; and iii) enhance IOM's risk management approach concerning PSEAH. The Evaluation took place between May and October of 2022.

Among the 62 recommendations, arising from the Evaluation, 46 were accepted, 14 partially accepted and two (2) rejected.

KEY FINDINGS

As a result of IOM efforts, the Organization has made significant strides at the institutional, policy, programming, and operational levels and has created an environment where staff acknowledge IOM's stance on the "Zero Tolerance" policy, across range of cultures, languages, and sensitivities.

IOM's technical capacity in preventing Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and its successful track record, provide the Organization with a wealth of institutional knowledge and best practices that can be easily transferrable to PSEA, particularly on victim assistance and ensuring a victim-centred approach (VCA).

Targeted efforts by IOM's top management to integrate PSEA across projects and budgets hold positive promise.

IOM's use of unearmarked contributions and core funds to sustain a flexible funding model dedicated to reinforcing PSEAH has proven cost-effective in channeling resources where they are most needed. The investments made in the development of IOM PSEA training modules stand as testament to its efficacy in globally raising awareness on PSEA. A similar success story is recounted in the operationalization of IOM's PSEAH approach at the field level, evidenced by the creation and launch of a practical Toolkit and guidance on PSEAH.

Weaknesses are, however, noted. In terms of investment, the size of the PSEAH Unit is small to adequately support IOM's global initiatives across diverse operational contexts and participate in a multitude of UN and IASC PSEAH initiatives. While funding derived from unearmarked contributions is welcomed, its predictability falls short of facilitating long-term strategic planning and execution.

Systematic monitoring of certain indicators used to track global PSEAH efforts requires reinforcement, and there is a lack of indicators to gauge the performance of IOM's internal justice system. Although the misconduct reporting platform (WAAI) introduced by IOM is welcomed, further integration to link with community-based reporting and feedback mechanisms and victim assistance is recommended.

IOM investigation processes are sometimes perceived as unclear and lengthy, which may reinforce a general feeling of mistrust among both staff and beneficiaries, creating barriers to reporting, fear of stigma and retaliation, and a perception that the process is not victim-centred and the abuser will go unpunished. Furthermore, IOM's Chiefs of Mission (CoM) see themselves as sidelined in sexual misconduct discussions which could negatively affect their commitment and engagement in prioritizing and effectively resourcing PSEA activities at the field level. Enhanced communication could play a pivotal role in fostering trust in the system and fostering behaviour change throughout IOM.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The External Evaluation makes 62 recommendations. Key thematic recommendations are summarized below:

- Develop and implement a VCA with corresponding operational guidance for missions, as well as establish a senior-level global Survivor Care Officer position.
- Develop an institutional risk-informed approach to inform PSEA strategies and programming at the field level, both in terms of resource allocations and concrete actions to mitigate risk.
- Improve the WAAI reporting platform to ensure data trends are collected and linkages to Complaint Feedback Mechanisms (CFMs) and victim assistance are strengthened.
- Enhance human, technical, and linguistic capacities to meet the requirements of victim-centred investigations.
- Strengthen strategic and systematic communication on PSEAH to foster behavioural change and foster trust within IOM.
- Implement more consistent partner PSEA capacity assessments, targeted capacity building (especially in complaints handling and investigations), and monitoring efforts amongst IPs and Third Party Contractors.
- Develop a robust Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework to measure the collective performance and impact of IOM's PSEAH strategic approach.
- Identify and secure predictable and sufficient funding to support global PSEAH efforts, contributing to sustainable IOM's efforts in the long run.
- Develop more audience-tailored PSEAH trainings and induction for CoMs, Managers, dedicated PSEA Officers and Focal Points, etc.
- Establish a dedicated PSEA Regional Officer/Roving Officer to support emergency and humanitarian responses.