



# UN Victim Assistance Protocol

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## Questions and Answers

### 1. What about the role of the media in supporting the rights of child victims?

The media plays an important role in reporting human rights violations, including sexual violence: media reports can increase public awareness and prompt actions to ensure better protection of human rights, including strengthening of response services for anyone affected and holding perpetrators accountable.

Reporting on human rights violations involving children and young people presents some specific challenges. In some instances, media reporting on these groups can place them and / or their families at risk of harm, stigmatisation, or reprisal. When reporting on children and women who have experienced human rights violations, it is critical to take all measures possible to protect their dignity, security and privacy and minimise the likelihood of additional harm that could result from the information being made public. The media should consult and follow safety and ethical guidelines and exercise maximum care to protect children and women and other potentially vulnerable groups from further harm.

For more information related to Media Guidelines for reporting on Children: [UNICEF Guidelines for journalists reporting on children](#)

For more information on Media Guidelines for reporting on gender-based violence in humanitarian contexts: [GBV AoR Media Guidelines for Reporting on Gender-Based Violence in Humanitarian Contexts](#)

### 2. The most important limitation to these models is the local understanding of certain issues (e.g., harassment, sexual exploitation), or local perceptions of trauma. How do you factor these in your models? And how are you trying to overcome them?

Improving participation of Affected Populations in programme design and engagement around appropriate behaviour for humanitarian workers is essential. More information can be found through the [Empowered Aid initiative](#).

### 3. In terms of keeping the record of perpetrator, is there any agreement for how many years we should keep records? Especially for CSOs, LNGOs and INGOs.

If an investigation confirms abuse or exploitation occurred, the perpetrator should be marked as 'do not rehire' and prospective employers should be made aware. We strongly encourage signing on to the [Misconduct Disclosure Scheme \(MDS\)](#) in support of this.

**4. Sometimes the victim does not know he/she has been abused, who is responsible to take lead in such cases to put case on table if no one from the organisation is not aware**

When responding to SEA allegations received from someone other than the victim, or when the victim is unknown, it is very important that we do not seek out the victims because this can put them at further harm. There are some actions that should be taken, such as conducting SEA or GBV risk assessments and awareness-raising activities in targeted areas, in coordination with the PSEA Coordinator and network, PSEA Focal Point and support from GBV/CP sub-cluster coordinators. The aim of these activities is to engage communities on PSEA and to provide information on their rights, how to report concerns and receive assistance. These activities should be taken in parallel to any internal administrative investigation that the organisation of the perpetrator might undertake in line with their procedures.

**5. Under the victim assistance services presented by Manuel, can you clarify the form of economic empowerment that is provided?**

The form of economic empowerment that PRADET provides to individual clients is all about livelihood/business. It is provided to individual clients, and this is part of continuation support to the clients after reintegrating them to their family and community. The economic empowerment program is also part of encouraging clients to start making change within the family and also to show to perpetrators that women have capacity to contribute and support the family economically and not be totally dependent on the husband. The aim is also to promote gender equality within the family itself. PRADET does this by:

1. PRADET conducts an assessment (exploring personal skills) when clients access PRADET services.
2. We then provide basic training on basic accounting management, cash saving and business skills. Types of economic empowerment support provided to clients This includes kiosks (selling daily basic needs), selling fuel/petrol, selling second hand clothes, growing and selling vegetables, raising animals etc. The training for clients is co-facilitated with partners such COOPERATIVE agencies, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Impresa Diak etc.
3. Distribution of materials support to clients.

4. Monitoring and evaluation.
5. Organise refresher training including invited those clients that have good successful story of running business to share experience to motivate other clients.

PRADET has many successful stories providing this economic empowerment support to the selected clients that need the support.

**6. The NGOs must be aware of that as most of them didn't understand that aspect of the victim assistance?**

UNICEF is working with the IASC to adopt and update the current Technical Note on Victim Assistance for the whole of IASC and the role of NGOs will be clearly included. The technical note is being rolled out alongside a training package, which UNICEF is rolling out for HC/HCTs, RC/UNCTs and inter-agency PSEA networks and coordinators. To date, over 1,200 PSEA, GBV, and CP practitioners have received a briefing or a full training. The training is available in English, French, Spanish, Arabic and Portuguese. For more information about the training, please see the [training flyer](#).

**7. With a protocol/process in place which are the performance process indicators used to monitor the efficiency of the process?**

In terms of monitoring and making sure that the Protocol is fully implemented, UNICEF is leading the overall work to track and monitor progress on PSEA acceleration, on behalf of the IASC. UNICEF is currently tracking two indicators at a global level related to victim assistance, integration of GBV referral pathways in PSEA network SOPs and population with access to SEA/GBV assistance, that the interagency PSEA coordinators are reporting on. The indicator data is collected annually, reported and visualised through a [Global Dashboard](#), which was developed and is being led by UNICEF for the broader IASC community.

**8. How to challenge the victim to say what happened, because they are afraid to say that:**

Victims have the right to decide what information they will disclose and what information they will not. Our role is to provide non-judgemental support and inform them about all available services and assistance, how confidentiality works, including limits to confidentiality and what information will be reported as part of any mandatory reporting obligation and let the victims decide how much information they want to share. Assistance should be provided regardless of whether or not a victim/survivor chooses to cooperate with an investigation or identify/name the perpetrator.

**9. What about the victim's family? How is support provided to them in case the family rejects the victim?**

Where the victim is a child, the child's caregivers should have access to assistance, based on their and the child's needs and wishes. Where the family is no longer caring for the child, there should be a determination made on a case-by-case basis whether assistance to the family is still required and appropriate.

**10.Regarding referral systems, what process do you employ to evaluate the risks associated with different referral options? For example, in some locations, referral to justice institutions may risk putting the individual in more harm.**

All decisions regarding referrals and services should be based on the Victim/Survivors wishes and needs and information should be shared with them to allow them to individually assess risk. They are not obligated to seek justice remedies should they have concerns about their safety.

Where specialised GBV services are available, the victim/survivor should be offered to be connected with a GBV case management provider who can assist them to evaluate the risks and develop an immediate safety or protection plan to address protection risks as necessary.

**11.What is informed consent- didn't get it when you explained the principles.**

Informed consent means making an informed choice freely and voluntarily by persons in an equal power relationship. It is a key starting point in the provision of victim assistance where the victim must be informed about all available options, and fully understand what she or he is consenting to as well as the risks, including the limits of confidentiality, and benefits before agreeing. The full range of choices should be presented to the victim, regardless of the service provider's individual beliefs. The victim should not be pressured to consent to any service, interview, exam, assessment, etc. A victim can withdraw consent at any time.

Related to informed consent is informed assent, which is the expressed willingness to participate in services. For younger children, who are by definition too young to give informed consent but are old enough to understand and agree to participate in services, the child's 'informed assent' is sought. ([Technical note](#), p.22).

**12.What are the guiding rules for handling a survivor's case?**

[UN Comprehensive Strategy on Assistance and Support to Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse \(2007\)](#)

[UN Protocol on the Provision of Assistance to Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse \(2019\)](#)

[Technical note on the Implementation of the UN Victim Assistance Protocol \(2021\)](#) - *this link has all the translations of the Technical Note (EN, FR, SP, AR, POR, UA) as well as the Protocol (EN, FR, SP, AR, UA)*

Supporting survivors of sexual exploitation and abuse: A how-to guide for creating support resources

- 13.** I would be interested to understand if the victim-survivor does not wish to access services via the existing GBV/ CP pathways and requests financial assistance, what is the organisation of the perpetrator accountable for?

Depending on the case and in line with their wishes, the organisation is responsible for support and assistance to victims which can include medical care; safety and protection; psychosocial support; legal services, and support for children born as a result of sexual exploitation and abuse; basic material assistance such as food, clothing, shelter and transportation to access services. The assistance can also include provision of education assistance (e.g., to prevent dropout or promote school reintegration) and livelihood support (examples are income-generating initiatives, vocational training and cash-for-work for adults and skills training and savings schemes for older adolescents). Where the victim is a child, the child's caregivers should have access to livelihoods assistance based on their and the child's needs. If the relevant agencies providing these services are not present, the organisation whose personnel is responsible for the allegation should buy items for the victim that they may need immediately such as food, clothing, dignity kits, medication.

If the financial assistance is sought for child support or similar, in line with their wishes, the organisation or the UN entity of the perpetrator should ensure victims have access to legal assistance and should facilitate the pursuit of claims of paternity and child support and ancillary benefits, such as the nationality or citizenship, for example, by linking them with the appropriate officials in the country where they wish to bring their claim.

The organisation is nonetheless responsible to conduct an investigation and should balance of probabilities indicate that the incident did happen, the perpetrator should be disciplined up to and including termination of employment and 'Do Not rehire' indicated on their file and shared with perspective future employers via the MDS and/or Clear Check as appropriate.