**Sexual Exploitation**

Focus is on prevention and measures taken to prevent and address sexual exploitation by humanitarian workers, including UN personnel, peace-keepers, civilians, police, as well as implementing partners in the field, IOs and INGOs.

**Main Points:**

Overview/Context: Description of the 6 standards for code of conduct as described in the UNSYG Bulletin on Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (issued October 2003). Document was distributed. Bulletin was issued in response to 2002 Save the Children Report on the abuse of young women by humanitarian workers in West Africa.

- While sexual exploitation has always been prohibited the 2002 Save the Children Report called attention to the issue. It is commonly recognized that trying to implement given standards is a challenge.
- What are the obligations of humanitarians in this issue?
  - In the context of ongoing conflict, the peacekeeper has the role of providing care and protection. This particularly includes protection against rape and sexual violence which are considered war crimes.
  - When a person who is there to protect becomes the crime perpetrator, a serious problem is at hand. Consequences include security risks to humanitarian efforts, loss of trust, and the inability for the UN to operate and deliver their mandate.
  - When poverty and gender based violence are part of the conflict itself peacekeepers must be above reproach with a policy of zero tolerance.
- What measures have been developed to respond and prevent sexual exploitation?
  - Setting up UN implementation of the code of conduct
  - Making it a top priority to investigate allegations (dispatch investigative staff to the field in as little as 10 days)
  - Agreements with implementing partners to include clearly outlined expectations, code of conduct, obligations & remedies
  - Publicize outcome of investigations among communities to establish accountability
- What are the Challenges and Successes
  - Overcome the disbelief that staff and/or colleagues are involved in alleged exploitation
  - Children are usually considered as least credible
  - Victims’ unwillingness to report abuse (sometimes in fear of retaliation, or being ostracized by community)
  - Challenge of insufficient information to investigate
  - Difficulties in conducting interviews, due among others to the sensitivity of subject to be discussed with investigator
  - To identify funding resources to respond and prevent abuse
• For UN personnel, difficulties due to large turnover, vast territorial coverage, with limited investigative resources
• To have appropriately trained staff conduct interviews, including child-specific training
• Language and cultural norms play a role in communication
• Respect due process for staff
• Successes include efforts by UN agencies, Governments, IOs and INGOs, such as IRC. Commitments of members states, trainings conducted, including among top management

• What needs to be done:
  • Help address needs for funding, training
  • Need for donors to take into account capacity-building, and INGO capacity to respond
  • Need for frameworks that address accountability, access to reporting, systems that are safe & confidential for the beneficiaries, and includes appropriate punitive measures, remedies for the victims, and prevention of further incidents
  • Need for trained professionals for child sensitive interviewing process when gathering data from alleged victims
• Explore prevention strategies with/for NGOs
  • UNSYG is starting point, but not user-friendly or field-friendly (needs to be translated, or put in a format that can be understood even if audience is illiterate)
  • Examples: Kenyan association of NGOs to share training and techniques and resources, FILMAID
• Questions:
  o We heard about training for staff, how about training for communities so they know about sexual exploitation, the resources available?
    A: Some work has been done: prevention campaign among minors and adolescents in the DRC. Other examples include INGOs in Kenya, and radio spots for Liberia (reflecting different tactics between outreach to returnees vs. outreach within camps).
    A: WFP has focal points, conducts M&E on food distribution, including monitoring of effective complaint mechanism.
  o Have there been any successful prosecutions among UN Peacekeepers? And have any U.S. citizens working for the UN system been reported under the PATRIOT Act?
    A: Under the MOU, it is the responsibility of the sending country to follow up on allegations of sexual misconduct. However, the UN has the authority to have an individual repatriated. For WFP, there have been no incidents reported under the PATRIOT act.
  o How do we investigate cases without causing adverse reactions such as driving operations further underground?
    A: Focusing on prevention through exploring gaps where women and children are more vulnerable as well as standardizing investigations, and providing organizations with the capacity to respond.