

A HUMAN RIGHTS FRAMEWORK FOR PREVENTING AND RESPONDING TO SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, ABUSE, AND HARASSMENT

Annex #1: Definitions

Gender-based violence: UNHCR defines gender-based violence as “harmful acts directed at an individual based on their gender. It is rooted in gender equality the abuse of power and harmful norms.” This document uses the UNHCR definition, but explicitly recognizes that individuals of all genders can and do experience gender-based violence.

Human-rights-based approach: Using international human rights standards to ensure that people’s human rights are put at the very center of policies at practice. A human rights approach empowers people to know and claim their rights. It increases the ability of organizations, public bodies and businesses to fulfil their human rights obligations. It also creates solid accountability so people can seek remedies when their rights violated. [Elements of good practices under a human rights-based approach include:](#)

- Participation is both a means and a goal.
- Strategies are empowering, not disempowering.
- Programs focus on marginalized and excluded groups.
- Programs aim to reduce disparities and empower those left behind.
- Analysis includes all stakeholders, including the capacities of the state as the main duty-bearer and the role of other non-state actors.
- Human Rights standards guide the formulation of measurable goals, targets and indicators in programming.
- Strategic partnerships are developed and sustained.

PSEAH: Prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment

SEAH: Sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment

Sexual Abuse: an actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.

Sexual Exploitation: any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power or trust for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another.

Sexual Harassment: a continuum of unacceptable and unwelcome behaviors and practices of a sexual nature that may include, but are not limited to, sexual suggestions or demands, requests for sexual favors and sexual, verbal or physical conduct or gestures, that are or might reasonably be perceived as offensive or humiliating. Sexual harassment has widely been understood to relate to the workplace (see ‘Workplace sexual misconduct’ below), but is also included in the spectrum of behaviors that are not acceptable conduct by our staff, be it in the workplace or with affected populations.

Survivor or victim: the person who is, or has been, sexually exploited or abused. The term ‘survivor’ implies strength, resilience and the capacity to survive. The term ‘victim’ has protective implications, as it implies the victim of an injustice which we should seek to redress. People who have experienced SEAH may choose different terms to describe their experience.