Purpose

The Independent Oversight and Advisory Committee for the WHO Health Emergencies Programme (IOAC), was established by the WHO Director-General to provide oversight and monitoring of the development and performance of the Programme and to guide the Programme’s activities. The Committee advises the Director-General on issues within its mandate and reports its findings to the World Health Assembly.

The prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment has been identified as a priority by the IOAC in 2021. The WHO Director-General on 23rd July 2021 accepted a proposal by the IOAC Chairs to establish a sub-committee (SC) of the IOAC to advise him on matters related to prevention and response to sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment in beneficiary communities and in the workplace (PRSEAH).

The Sub Committee will formulate preliminary recommendations on how to strengthen current systems, processes, and internal mechanisms within WHO on behalf of IOAC, within the context of emergency operations, to prevent and respond to SEAH in order to bring these into line with global good practice and to strengthen the Organization’s overall efforts to prevent and respond to SEAH. The Sub Committee reports to the IOAC, which in turn will present its recommendations to the 150th session of the Executive Board in January 2022 and will continue to advise the Director-General on issues within this mandate throughout the 2022-2023 biennium.

Functions

The functions of the IOAC Sub Committee on PRSEAH shall be:

i. Work closely with the PRSEAH Task Team of WHO to oversee, advise and monitor the implementation of recommendations made to improve prevention and response to SEAH
ii. To constitute and consult with a Reference Group of interested Member States representing diverse geographic perspectives, and including states affected by emergencies, to advise on good practices in safeguarding against SEAH, including in emergency settings;

iii. To review current operational practice in preventing and responding to SEAH in emergencies in other organizations including UN, NGOs and other institutional partners with a view to establishing parameters for ‘best in class’ for policy, procedures and practice for end-to-end systems;

iv. To establish WHO’s current status in preventing and responding to SEAH, and to monitor and report on progress and areas for improvement;

v. To prepare a report on its activities, containing the sub-Committee’s recommendations, for submission by the IOAC to the 150th Executive Board.

COMPOSITION

The sub-committee will be comprised of IOAC members who volunteered for this purpose.

i. Ms Geeta Rao Gupta (Lead)
ii. Professor Chris BAGGOLEY
iii. Dr Felicity HAVERY
iv. Ms Malebona Precious MATSOSO
v. Mr Elhadj As SY

ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS

The administrative arrangements, terms and conditions applicable to the IOAC will apply to the Sub Committee. WHO Secretariat will ensure coordination with other mechanisms including IEOAC. Additional support will be provided by the Office of the Director a.i. Prevention & Response to sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment in the Office of the Director-general.