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UNFPA Management Response

Report of the Ethics Office 2017 (DP/FPA/2018/7)

Reports of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS Ethics Offices

Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS
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1. The management of UNFPA acknowledges with appreciation the work of the UNFPA Ethics Office, and the accomplishment of its mandated activities for 2017. Management commends the Ethics Office for its continuing work to promote a culture of integrity, and encourage ethical behaviour among all UNFPA personnel.
2. In particular, we would like to commend the Ethics Adviser for responding to 443 requests from across the organization regarding ethical issues, noting the considerable increase, compared to 2017.
3. Further, we would like to share our appreciation for the work of the Ethics Office, which has most increased in the area of providing advice and guidance. Management concurs with the Ethics Office's assessment that this increase is a positive sign that UNFPA personnel are more aware of ethical issues, and want to ensure that their behaviour as well as the programmes and practices of UNFPA are in line with ethical standards.
4. Management also notes the Ethics Office finding that for financial disclosures, 14 out of 49 sampled cases were not fully accurate, and finds this concerning. We will continue working with the Ethics Office to address this issue.
5. As for the protection against retaliation, management notes that cases have been found where retaliation claims were found to be substantiated, and finds this to be a sign that the policy and the safeguards that were put in place are effective in addressing the issue.
6. Management also noted with great appreciation the increase in training, education and outreach activities, as well as the launch of the new online training programme, 'Ethics and Integrity at UNFPA' in January 2017.
7. The Ethics Office's strong collaboration within the Ethics Panel of the United Nations (EPUN) and the Ethics Network of Multilateral Organizations is well noted and management commends the Ethics Adviser for her new role as the Alternate Chair of EPUN. It also appreciates that as part of these and other coherence activities, the Ethics Office is taking an active role in the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, including the adaptation of the UN Secretariat's training programme on this matter.
8. Also reflecting the organizational priority and focus, management notes the recommendations for UNFPA to become more involved to end sexual exploitation and abuse on a system-wide level. However, management also notes that it could be an over commitment for UNFPA to lead preventing or ending SEA incidents "under the United Nations flag". Nevertheless, UNFPA is committed to eradicate such incidents. That is why we have redoubled our efforts to ensure that the measures we have in place, are known by all UNFPA personnel. This includes the introduction of a dedicated training. Further, the UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Management) has been appointed as

the senior focal point for Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in UNFPA. She will be assisted by a dedicated staff member to ensure that we have a coordinated and effective response to all aspects of sexual exploitation and abuse, including programming. In addition, resources to the UNFPA Office of Audit and Investigation Services have been increased to enhance its investigative capacity.

9. Management also takes notes of the recommendations to strengthen further the UNFPA Ethics Office, including by reviewing its resources, and will take this into account in any future budget decisions, noting the value that the Ethics Office adds to the mandate of UNFPA.
10. As in previous years, UNFPA compliments the Ethics Office on continuing to strengthen the services that it provides under its mandated areas of work, and will continue to provide strong support to its work. Management looks forward to further discussing the recommendations made by the Ethics Adviser, and to a continuing fruitful collaboration to foster a culture of ethics and integrity in UNFPA.
