



# **UNFPA management response**

to

**Report of the Ethics Office 2022 (DP/FPA/2023/3)**

Reports of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS Ethics Offices

Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS  
Annual session  
2023

New York

1. The UNFPA management acknowledges with appreciation the work of the UNFPA Ethics Office and the accomplishment of its mandated activities for 2022. Management commends the Ethics Office for its continuing work to promote a culture of integrity and to encourage ethical behaviour among all UNFPA personnel.
2. In particular, management would like to commend the Ethics Adviser for responding to a total of 857 requests from across the organization regarding ethical issues in 2022 under the categories of advice, retaliation, financial disclosure, standard-setting, coherence, general information, and training.
3. Further, management would like to share its appreciation for the work of the Ethics Office, which included providing guidance and advice to staff, personnel and management; the administration of the financial disclosure programme; standards development, training and education. Management takes note that requests for advice and guidance constituted 44 per cent of all services in 2022.
4. Management notes the Ethics Office's role of managing the financial disclosure programme; the financial disclosure programme is an important tool for UNFPA to help identify, resolve and mitigate conflict of interest risks arising from staff members' personal financial assets, liabilities, investments and outside activities. Overall, 974 disclosures were completed, and all reviewed fully (167 potential conflicts of interest were identified and resolved). In addition, 45 cases were independently sampled by a third-party verification, disclosing in seven cases persons omitting to declare all of their financial assets. Management is happy to report that no conflicts of interest were identified upon final review of completed declarations.
5. Management further commends the Ethics Adviser for her proposing and leading the establishment of the UNFPA "Integrity Group," a trusted internal justice system coordinated by the Office of the Executive Director that includes representatives from the Ethics Office, the Ombudsman, the Division of Human Resources, the Office of Audit and Investigation Services, and the Coordinator for Prevention of Sexual Abuse and Exploitation and Sexual Harassment.
6. Management recognizes the work of the Ethics Office in supporting the organization with guidance on ethics standard-setting throughout UNFPA. This included collaborating with UNFPA offices on 71 occasions to review, provide input and seek clarification on new and revised policies and-procedures.
7. Management notes that the office received nine formal requests for protection against retaliation and eight retaliation-related inquiries, and that significant efforts have taken place in reviewing the merits of the allegations and the areas of concern. Management notes that two complaints had insufficient evidence to refer the matters for investigation; two were withdrawn by the complainants; two complaints are currently under investigation; and three were referred for investigation, with recommendations for protective measures implemented. Indeed, all recommendations for protective measures made by the ethics office in response to request for protection from retaliation were implemented. Management finds this to be a sign that the policy and the

safeguards that have been put in place are effective in addressing the issue. Management commends the Ethics Office on this follow-through. Management will continue to work with the Ethics Office to raise awareness and encourage the use of these services.

8. Management also notes with great appreciation the focus on training, education and outreach activities, which assisted in reinforcing the core values and principles of the United Nations and the international civil service, as well as increased knowledge of ethics-related policies. Management congratulates the Ethics Office on successful awareness and training-related achievements, including the live training of 3,130 personnel – representing an increase of 163 per cent from 2019. In addition, a 372 per cent increase since 2019 in online engagement, which includes the Ethics intranet page, a YouTube Channel and several micro-ethics courses. Management further positively notes that compliance of the newly launched mandatory online ethics training course, which includes a mandatory statement of commitment to UNFPA standards of conduct training programme, reached 74 per cent in 2022, up from 72 per cent in 2020, for the previous online version. This encourages further promotion of this training programme to staff and personnel.
9. The Ethics Office’s strong collaboration within the Ethics Panel of the United Nations (EPUN) and the Ethics Network of Multilateral Organizations (ENMO) is well noted and welcomed. Management further congratulates the Ethics Adviser on the completion of her term as Alternate Chair of EPUN.
10. Noting the value, the Ethics Office adds to UNFPA in carrying out its mandate, and given the importance of this function, the Ethics Office was strengthened under the current Integrated Budget, 2022-2025.
11. 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 a continuing fruitful collaboration to foster a culture of ethics and integrity in UNFPA.

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