

**NATIONS UNIES  
HAUT COMMISSARIAT AUX DROITS DE  
L'HOMME**



**UNITED NATIONS  
HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN  
RIGHTS**



**United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery  
Guidelines of the Fund for the use of Grantees and Applicants<sup>1</sup>**

**I - MANDATE OF THE FUND**

1. According to General Assembly resolution 46/122, grants from the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery (hereafter referred to as “the Fund”) shall be given to extend, through established channels of assistance, humanitarian, legal and financial aid to individuals whose human rights have been severely violated as a result of contemporary forms of slavery.
2. Contemporary forms of slavery which qualify for project grants include traditional slavery, serfdom, servitude, forced labour, debt bondage, the worst forms of child labour, forced and early marriage, the sale of wives and inherited widows, trafficking in persons and of human organs, sexual slavery, sale of children, commercial sexual exploitation of children and children in armed conflict.
3. Projects that address other violations of human rights that exhibit the primary characteristics of ownership, control and violent coercion may also qualify for project grants, subject to the availability of funding.

**II - ADMISSIBILITY OF PROJECTS**

4. As a rule, only applications by non-governmental organizations are admissible. Applications by governmental, parliamentary or administrative entities, political parties or national liberation movements are inadmissible.
5. For the purpose of the present Guidelines, the Fund distinguishes between the following categories of applicant organizations:

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<sup>1</sup> Version amended by the Board of Trustees at its 28<sup>th</sup> session (November 2023).

- a) **First-time applicants:** organizations which have never received a grant from the Fund;
  - b) **Returning applicants:** organizations which have received a grant from the Fund in the past but not in the previous year;
  - c) **On-going applicants:** organizations which are currently receiving a grant from the Fund, divided in two sub-categories:
    - i. organizations submitting a continuation of a funded project proposal in the same country of implementation;
    - ii. organizations submitting a different project in the same country of implementation or a project in a different country of implementation.
6. The present Guidelines are applicable to all categories of applicant organizations, unless otherwise specified.
  7. As a rule, organizations should only submit one application under each call for applications. The project for which funding is sought may address the needs of more than one target group.
  8. In order to avoid retaining fees on the funds channeled and to maintain control over its use, the Fund does not, as a rule, authorize the re-granting to another Organization.
  9. Priority in allocating grants is given to projects aimed at reparation, empowerment and integration of victims of contemporary forms of slavery through the provision of direct assistance. Assistance may include medical, psychological, social, legal, humanitarian, educational assistance, vocational or skills training or other support to their independent livelihood. The Board, from time to time, may determine areas of focus in relation to yearly calls for applications.
  10. Beneficiaries of projects must be victims of contemporary forms of slavery and, when applicable, members of their families. Projects may include components aimed at preventing the re-victimization of assisted victims.
  11. Project grants cannot serve the purpose of direct financial compensation to victims.
  12. As a rule, the Fund will not support the capital costs of projects for construction work (e.g. for the building of shelters, schools, etc.).
  13. Projects should consider the victims' need for inclusion into society and their rights to dignity, security and education.
  14. Organizations submitting applications for projects should indicate the estimated number of victims assisted, directly or indirectly, and should demonstrate:
    - i. that the project takes into consideration the needs and views expressed by victims;
    - ii. that the organization has adequate experience in dealing with contemporary forms of slavery issues and/or addressing their root causes and/or assisting victims of human rights violations;
    - iii. that the project has a potential impact on the redress, empowerment and integration of the victims;
    - iv. that the project takes gender dimension into account
    - v. how the project will be able to continue without further additional financial assistance from the Fund.
  15. Funds will be generally allocated to organizations that can demonstrate at least two years' activities and experience in projects relating to contemporary forms of slavery.

PROJECTS DIRECTED AT ORGANIZING TRAININGS AND SEMINARS

16. Applications for projects seeking to organize training and seminars aiming at improving the quality of professional assistance to victims of Contemporary Forms of Slavery may be considered, subject to the availability of funding. A separate application should be submitted for such projects.

#### PROJECTS DIRECTED AT STUDIES, RESEARCH, PUBLICATION OF NEWSLETTERS

17. As a rule, applications for projects concerning investigations, studies, research, and publication of newsletters or similar activities are inadmissible, unless they address the causes of contemporary forms of slavery and they are subject to the availability of funding.

### III - SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS FOR GRANTS

18. By applying for a grant, Organizations abide by the present guidelines. Once the High-Commissioner's decision to approve the grant has been transmitted to the grantee, the concerned Organization accepts to strictly comply with the United Nations' financial and administrative obligations related to the use of the grant. By submitting a revised budget, Organizations accept to comply with any other conditions mentioned in the agreement sent by the Secretariat of the Fund informing them about the High-Commissioner's decisions.

#### APPLICATION PROCESS THROUGH THE ON-LINE GRANT SYSTEM

19. Organizations that present an application to the Fund for the first time need to request their registration through the on-line grant system before they are allowed submit an on-line application. First time applicants will then receive an automatic notification by e-mail of the approval of their registration request, along with the password to their on-line accounts. Organizations unable to access the Internet must contact the Secretariat of the Fund to get instructions on the way to proceed with their application. Applications have to be submitted in English, French or Spanish.
20. The Secretariat will declare inadmissible all applications which are not submitted within the established deadline using the on-line grant system of the Fund, which do not provide the necessary information in all its fields, or in any other manner do not comply with the present Guidelines.
21. A request for funding from a previous grantee of the Fund that has overdue financial and narrative reports will not be considered.

#### DEADLINE

22. In order to be admissible, applications must be submitted to the Fund's Secretariat by 1 MARCH every year. Applicants are also requested to submit the printout of the last page of the on-line application by fax, mail or e-mail (scanned copy) duly signed and dated by the project leader, to the Secretariat of the Fund postmarked by 1 MARCH.

#### PERIOD TO BE COVERED BY THE GRANT

23. Grants requested from the Fund can cover a period of up to 12 months during the calendar year 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> December, following the year of application. Organizations are reminded that any grant awarded must be used within the given implementation period. Unspent amounts or carry-overs equal to or above USD 150 will have to be refunded. Under exceptional and unforeseen circumstances, no-cost extensions may be granted by the Fund's Secretariat.
24. A new grant for the continuation of a project may be requested each year consecutively for a

maximum of five years, provided that the narrative, financial and audit reports on the use of previous grants have been declared satisfactory by the Board and provided that funding will be available the following year. After a time lapse of two years, the same organization may re-apply to the Fund.

## BUDGET

25. Organizations can request yearly grants ranging from US\$ 15 000 to US\$ 35,000. Grants awarded by the Fund may be lower than the amount requested by Organizations. The amount requested from the Fund should generally not exceed two thirds of the submitted budget of the project. As a rule, no project should be totally dependent on the Fund. Organizations must provide proof (in the form of applications to donors or pledges by donors) that other donors are contributing to the project. Secured sources of funding must also be distinguished from those merely envisaged. Exceptionally, the Board may recommend financing projects which do not attain one-third of their total budget in matching funds.
26. In order to be admissible, budgets should be based on realistic local costs and salaries and should be presented in US dollars. Over-budgeting shall result in the inadmissibility of the application or the obligation to refund all, or part of, the grant.
27. Budgeted items of expenditure for which the Fund's participation is requested can cover different types of expenditures, but should focus on providing direct assistance to victims of contemporary forms of slavery. Administrative costs should not exceed 15 % of the total cost of the budget requested to the Fund, unless the Board decides otherwise in exceptional circumstances.
28. The proposed budget must reflect the total cost of the project and not only the amount requested to the Fund and it should indicate in detail the items and sub-items of expenditure to be covered with the grant requested from the Fund.
29. Organizations should refer to the Users' Manual for further assistance on how to prepare a budget using the on-line grants system. Organizations should use the fields for comments available to explain and provide additional information on each individual budget line, type of expense and calculation behind the cost per unit indicated.
30. Organizations are requested to submit a revised and detailed budget for the period adjusted to the amount awarded within the deadline indicated in the agreement.

## INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTS TO BE PROVIDED BY ORGANIZATIONS

31. Organizations which submit an application to the Fund and have not been previously funded should provide:
  - i. documentary evidence that its staff has relevant experience in providing direct assistance to victims of contemporary forms of slavery (their curriculum vitae should be attached);
  - ii. copy of the statutes and organizational structure of the organization;
  - iii. copy of the valid legal registration certificate of the organization (if available);
  - iv. confirmation and proof of non-profit status of the organization (if available);
  - v. one reference letter and contact details of two referees within competent organizations (preferably an internationally recognized or well-known organization) in the field of contemporary forms of slavery);
  - vi. copies of bank statements (last 3 months) and recent annual accounts (signed by the chair or treasurer on behalf of the management committee or board of trustees);
  - vii. list of principal members of the directorate or board of trustees the organization with their titles/ positions;

32. All supporting documents should be submitted to the Secretariat through the on-line grant system. Exceptionally, and upon justification, organizations may submit those documents by post ore-mail. If organizations cannot produce some of these documents, they should explain why.

#### FIVE CASE STUDIES

33. Organizations shall include as part of the application, five descriptions of victims assisted recently or to be assisted with the grant from the Fund. These descriptions should be drafted according to the format available on the on-line grant system. Names of beneficiaries may be withheld but the internal registration number should be provided.
34. Case studies should include the following information:
- i. The history of the victim (including abuses and exploitation suffered by the victim);
  - ii. When and how the victims were referred to and/or identified by the organization;
  - iii. The type of assistance provided and methodology used by the organization to assist the victim, highlighting the components to be supported with the Fund's grant;
  - iv. The results expected from the assistance provided with the grant in respect of the redress, empowerment and integration of the victim;
  - v. The future assistance to be provided to the victim, if available.
35. The information included in the descriptions will be kept confidential and will serve only for the internal use of members of the Secretariat of the Fund and Members of the Board, who are United Nations experts appointed by the Secretary-General. The purpose of these case studies is to assess that the assistance to be provided under the project falls within the mandate of the Fund, as well as to understand the specific services offered by the Organization and the challenges it may face in assisting victims.

#### INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTS TO BE PROVIDED FOR PROJECTS CONCERNING TRAINING AND SEMINAR

36. In addition to the general requirements outlined in para 29 above, applications for grants to organize training, seminars, which aim to promote or develop the provision of professional direct assistance to victims of contemporary forms of slavery, should be submitted using the on-line grants system of the Fund and should include:
- i. The draft programme and objectives of the training and/or seminar;
  - ii. A provisional list of speakers and trainers;
  - iii. Information on the target group of participants;
  - iv. The expected benefit(s) in direct assistance to victims of slavery or slavery like practices.
  - v. CVs of the personnel involved in the project;
  - vi. CVs of the trainers;
  - vii. Proof of other sources of funding (in cash or in kind), if available;
  - viii. Indicators of success.
37. As a general rule, speakers' fees are not eligible to be covered by a grant of the Fund. However, pre-agreed fixed honorarium for trainers could be covered. Expenses to cover accommodation and daily allowances for trainees resident in the same city where the training takes place are not admissible. Co-funding is desirable but not required.
38. These applications should be sent well in advance of the meeting, since the Board does not subsidize

events which have already taken place.

39. After the meeting, the final lists of speakers, participants and documents must be sent to the Secretariat, as well as a report on the training/seminar and any documentation relating to assistance to victims of contemporary forms of slavery or other outcomes, such as books, videos, etc.

#### CONTACT DETAILS AND BANKING INFORMATION OF ORGANIZATIONS

40. Organizations should check that all the data regarding their mailing address, contact numbers and banking information, are accurate, since they are essential for communication with the Secretariat and the payment of grants. Organizations must inform the Secretariat of the Fund about any changes concerning this data as soon as they occur.
41. Failure to update contact details/banking information as well as failure to communicate these changes to the Secretariat of the Fund may lead to the cancellation of a grant.
42. Organizations applying for a grant should provide all the banking details requested in the banking information form available on the on-line grant system, including the IBAN and SWIFT codes, where applicable. Since grants are paid in US dollars by bank to bank transfer, the organization's bank account must be able to receive foreign payments in that currency. The name of the beneficiary of the bank account must be the name of the applying organization. If the bank account is in the name of a private individual, the application will, as a general rule, be declared inadmissible by the Secretariat of the Fund.
43. The Fund will not cover any banking fees originated from delays in payments caused by outdated or incorrect information.

#### **IV - FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE OBLIGATIONS OF ORGANIZATIONS RELATED TO THE USE OF THE GRANT**

##### REVISION OF BUDGET

44. By applying for a grant, Organizations abide by the present guidelines. By submitting a revised budget, Organizations accept to comply with any other condition mentioned in the agreement sent by the Secretariat of the Fund informing them about the High-Commissioner's decision on the awarded grant.
45. The above-mentioned condition is meant to ensure that the organization will use the grant in conformity with the application and budget it has submitted to the Fund and on the basis of which the grant was approved.
46. In case of award, organizations should submit a satisfactory and detailed budget adjusted to the amount awarded. Failure to submit a revised budget within the established deadline indicated in the agreement will lead to the cancellation of the grant. Any expenditure which was not included in the revised budget will have to be refunded to the Fund.
47. In principle, budget revisions or adjustments should only be made to amounts in the lines included in the initial proposal and Organizations will not be able to add a new line or expense at the time of the revision of the budget. Addition of new lines or expenses in revised budgets will only be authorized on an exceptional basis.
48. Grants will not be released until a satisfactory revised budget is submitted and approved by the Secretariat of the Fund.

49. Organizations requiring minor budget adjustments have discretion to redeploy funds within existing budget lines for up to 10% of overspending per each budget line, without prior approval from the Fund's Secretariat. The Secretariat will not be liable for any expenditure incurred in excess of the awarded grant. For any other changes in the existing budget lines or the creation of new budget lines, organizations must seek authorization from the Fund's Secretariat, prior to incurring the unforeseen expenditure. Under exceptional and unforeseen circumstances, organizations may be granted additional discretion to redeploy funds within existing budget lines for up to 20% per budget line, excluding salary costs, upon an express written communication from the Secretariat to this effect. No budget redeployment shall result in administrative costs exceeding 15% of the awarded grant.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF FUNDING

50. As soon as the grant has been received in the organization's bank account, and no later than 1 MARCH, an executive officer of the organization must return to the Secretariat of the Fund the acknowledgment of receipt, downloadable from the website, duly signed and dated.

#### RETENTION OF RECORDS

51. Organizations are required to maintain a record of expenses including all receipts and invoices documenting how grants are spent. Moreover, Organizations are required to maintain separate records of expenses documenting how grants are spent including:
- i) Financial records (all receipts/invoices);
  - ii) Victims' files with information on the specific assistance provided in the context of the project's expenses;
  - ii) Records on the management of administrative and other resources.
52. With due regard to any legislation, this information should be available at the organization's premises for a period of five years for inspection by the Board of Trustees of the Fund or members of its Secretariat.
53. All Organizations subsidized by the Fund shall allow the UN staff undertaking a visit on behalf of the Fund or members of the Board, as well as needed non-UN authorized personnel accompanying them (auditor, translator, etc.) full access to their financial and other records relevant to the project at any time.

### V - REPORTING ON THE USE OF THE FUND'S GRANTS

#### REPORTING FORM

54. Unless otherwise stated in the agreement, organizations receiving a grant must submit a progress report by **15 JULY** reflecting the first six months of project implementation, and a final narrative and financial reports on the use of the grant by **1 MARCH** following the year of implementation of their project. Reports may be drafted in English, French or Spanish.
55. A Users' Manual to assist Organizations in preparing reports on the use of grants through the on-line grants system is available in three languages (English, French and Spanish) in the webpage of the Fund.
56. Should a report be declared not satisfactory, the Organization would still have to submit a report by

the new deadline provided by the Secretariat of the Fund. Failure to do so may lead to the refund of the grant.

57. In cases where awards are received from national, regional or international courts as a result of successful litigation, legal fees paid by the Fund need not be returned, in accordance with the conditions under which the grant was allocated. However, the Fund encourages Organizations to use any such awards for the continued protection of victims of contemporary forms of slavery and to keep the Secretariat of the Fund informed as to how Organizations intend to use any such future awards.
58. The Secretariat of the Fund keeps records of Organizations which have not complied with its reporting requirements, in particular those requested to refund a grant, and reserves the right to share this information with other donors and/or partners.

#### SATISFACTORY NARRATIVE REPORT

59. The narrative and financial report should provide answers to all the items requested in the online report template and must show precisely how the grant of the Fund was used to assist victims of contemporary forms of slavery.
60. Organizations should provide disaggregated data on numbers of victims assisted under the following categories:
  - i. form of slavery;
  - ii. gender;
  - iii. age;
  - iv. nationality; and
  - v. type of assistance provided.
61. The narrative and financial reports on a project that received continuous support by the Fund for 5 years should include comprehensive information on the impact of the work undertaken, as well as good practices gathered in the delivery of assistance to victims.
62. Project coordinators are requested to certify that all the information provided in the narrative and financial reports is accurate and true. They must also confirm their awareness that failure to comply with this obligation might result in the refund of the grant.

#### SUBMISSION OF FIVE CASE STUDIES

63. Every organization should include as part of its narrative report, description of two cases of victims assisted with the grant awarded by the Fund. Case studies must be drafted according to the instructions available in the corresponding screen of the on-line system.
64. The information included in the case studies will be kept confidential and will serve only for the internal use of members of the Fund's Secretariat and Board of Trustees, who are United Nations experts appointed by the Secretary-General. They will only handle this information in private meetings within the United Nations. The purpose of these studies is to understand, through examples of individual cases, the type of assistance provided by the organization to victims of contemporary forms of slavery.

#### REPORTING ON TRAINING AND SEMINARS



65. The narrative and financial report on the use of a grant approved for training or seminar activities should include the following final documents:
- i. the final programme;
  - ii. the final list of speakers/trainers;
  - iii. the final list of participants with their contact details;
  - iv. results obtained (including benefits and results for victims of contemporary forms of slavery);
  - v. evaluation made by the participants; and
  - vi. follow up envisaged/carried out.
66. The Secretariat of the Fund reserves its right to directly contact participants to ask for their feedback about the training provided.

#### FINANCIAL REPORT

67. All Organizations supported by the Fund shall provide a financial report on the use of the grant paid by the Fund. The financial report should be presented in US dollars showing the currency exchange transactions in accordance with the generally accepted accounting principles.
68. The final report must be accompanied by a Financial Statement showing details of the actual expenditure of funds compared with the revised budget approved by the Secretariat of the Fund.
69. All organizations which received grants by the Fund should allow the Secretariat full access to their financial and other records relevant to the project and provide a financial report on the use of the grant paid by the Fund, following the indications mentioned in the reporting form of the Secretariat.
70. Organizations which have been randomly selected or otherwise selected for audit by an independent external evaluator registered in the country will be notified by the Secretariat in the agreement. When grantees are requested to provide an audit report on the use of the Fund's grant, the costs relating to the audit may be covered by the grant within reasonable limits.

#### OBLIGATION TO SUBMIT REPORTS

71. If satisfactory reports on the use of a previous grant have not been received by the assigned deadline, the Board will not consider any new application for a grant from that organization.

### **VI - FIELD VISITS TO GRANTEES AND APPLICANTS**

72. In order to better understand and evaluate the work done and planned, members of the Board, the Fund's Secretariat and/or UN staff or authorized personnel may visit projects of grantees and applicants and meet with staff members of the organization implementing the project, as well as with victims of contemporary forms of slavery or members of their families assisted with the Fund's grant. The Secretariat may inform organizations in advance when such a visit is scheduled to take place. All organizations are expected to cooperate fully with the official undertaking the visit. A confidential report on this evaluation will be prepared for consideration by the members of the Board at their annual session or sooner, if necessary.
73. The organization has the obligation to provide access to their financial and other files relevant to the project to the official(s) during the visit. Should the evaluation of the project not be satisfactory, or incomplete due to the limited access to files, staff and/or beneficiaries, the Secretariat of the Fund or the Board of Trustees will cancel any pending grant, discontinue funding for the project, or request a

total or partial refund of the grant, as appropriate.

## COOPERATION WITH UNITED NATIONS ORGANIZATIONS AND MECHANISMS

74. Information may be provided or requested by the Fund on projects it subsidizes to other United Nations staff posted in the field and to representatives of other United Nations Agencies, Funds or Programmes, as well as the Special Rapporteurs on Contemporary Forms of Slavery; on the sale of Children, and; on Trafficking in Persons. If an evaluation visit by those officials to the project is decided; the Fund's Secretariat shall inform the project leader in advance and request his/her full cooperation.
75. The Fund's Secretariat may inform United Nations representatives on site that grants have been approved for projects in the country concerned, so that they are aware of the Fund's relationship with the organizations in charge of those projects.

## VII - PAYMENTS

76. The Fund's Secretariat does not process payments of grants but requests the Financial Services of the United Nations to do so. Organizations should take into account that this standard UN procedure takes at minimum few weeks. Any discrepancy or incomplete financial and bank information submitted by Organizations will result in severe delay in the release of the grant (see paragraphs 41 to 44, above).
77. The Fund shall not be held responsible for the cost incurred if an organization is liable to pay tax on the grant received.

## WITHHOLDING OF PAYMENTS

78. Should information on a project received after the annual session of the Board of Trustees raise doubts concerning over-budgeting or mismanagement, the Secretariat can decide, if needed upon consultation with the Chairperson to withhold the payment of a grant or to request a project leader not to spend a grant already paid until the situation is clarified.

## VIII - MISMANAGEMENT OR FRAUD

79. For the purpose of these Guidelines, mismanagement, fraud and misuse of funds are defined as: the engagement of the organization in proscribed practices including, but not limited to, corruption, coercion, collusion, or any other unethical conduct; any other use of the funds of the awarded grant in activities different from the ones foreseen in these Guidelines and the agreement, or incompatible with the aims and objectives of the United Nations or the Fund's mandate to ensure the protection of their beneficiaries, staff and other persons of concern; the use of the grant, all or in part, in expenditures other than those mentioned in the proposal submitted to, and approved by the Fund; the submission of false information in the documentation requested, including but not limited to, the finance questionnaire; and failure to provide satisfactory supporting documents for the financial management of the grant(s) when requested.
80. In cases where the Fund receives allegations or otherwise learns about possible fraud, mismanagement or misuse of funds by a grantee, the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees will be informed. The Fund reserves the right to take actions oriented to determine the situation, including but not limited to: request clarification from the organization; contact other donors and partners; request an audit of the concerned organization, including its financial and administrative data; conduct an on-site visit to the organization at either short or no notice; and refer the case to the United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services.

81. Where it is established that the organization mismanaged, embezzled or misused the grant, the Fund reserves the right to take any appropriate measures in the circumstances, including but not limited to: cancelling the grant; estimating the amount mismanaged, misused or embezzled and requesting a refund, and/or using all relevant legal procedures. No further application shall be accepted from the organization during the ten years following the refund or satisfactory settlement of the matter.

#### **IX. ENSURING PROTECTION FROM SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE, AND FROM CHILD SAFEGUARDING VIOLATIONS**

82. The Fund adheres to the United Nations policies and protocols on Safeguards against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and the organizations that it supports are expected to have internal policies and practices to prevent such practices.

83. The Fund is also governed by the United Nations' zero tolerance policy on prohibited conduct. This policy requires that organizations cooperating with the United Nations adhere to the zero tolerance policy on prohibited conduct<sup>2</sup> and commit to taking adequate action if faced with allegations of prohibited conduct. The United Nations requires an effective response to any report of possible misconduct, from receiving a complaint to ensuring that appropriate disciplinary action is taken.<sup>3</sup>

84. In particular, the Fund adheres to the zero tolerance policy towards sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA), defined as follows:

a) Sexual exploitation is 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.

b) Sexual abuse means actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive condition.

85. The Fund does not cooperate with entities that fail to address SEA through appropriate preventive measures, investigation and corrective action. Such failures shall constitute grounds for the termination of the grant awarded by the Fund.<sup>4</sup>

86. United Nations staff are required to report allegations of SEA to the Secretary-General. It is the responsibility of the organizations supported by the Fund to report promptly allegations of SEA to the Fund's Secretariat, as part of their reporting obligations, and to investigate those allegations.

87. The Fund's Secretariat reserves the right to refer any SEA allegation involving an organization receiving a grant and its associated staff to the responsible United Nations institutions for investigation, notwithstanding any related investigations undertaken by the organization or national authorities. Where the United Nations does not conduct the investigation directly, the Fund reserves the right to seek further clarification and relevant information and to obtain the results of any investigations undertaken, in order to determine whether the organization has taken appropriate investigative and corrective actions including guarantees of non-repetition.

88. In the event of credible SEA allegations made against an employee(s) or associated staff and volunteers

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<sup>2</sup> Prohibited conduct is the collective term for discrimination, harassment (including sexual harassment) and abuse of authority: <https://hr.un.org/page/what-is-prohibited-conduct>

<sup>3</sup> Secretary-General's bulletins ST/SGB/2019/8 and ST/SGB/2003/13.

<sup>4</sup> For details on the entities cooperating with United Nations, please refer to the [United Nations Protocol on Allegations of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Involving Implementing Partners](#)

of the organization supported by the Fund and a failure of the organization to take adequate measures to prevent, investigate or correct SEA, including taking measures to avoid the repetition of these acts,<sup>5</sup> the Fund reserves the right to request a full or partial refund of any grant awarded to the organization. The Fund will also identify a number of conditions and corrective measures that need to be taken by the organization for any future grant applications to be considered in line with the UN Guidelines on Safeguards against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, notwithstanding the reparations and remedies resulting from judicial or non-judicial procedures undertaken by national authorities.

89. The Fund further adheres to the zero tolerance policy towards child safeguarding violations, which is defined as conduct by the employee(s) or associated staff and volunteers of the organization supported by the Fund that actually or likely causes significant harm to a child,<sup>6</sup> including any kind of physical, emotional or sexual abuse, neglect or exploitation. The above-mentioned paragraphs 83-86 concerning the preventive as well response measures apply to any allegations of child safeguards violations.

## **X - REFUND OF GRANTS**

90. The Secretariat of the Fund or the Board of Trustees may request organizations to totally or partially refund a grant when:
- i. the project was not implemented in full or in part;
  - ii. the grant was spent for expenditures other than those mentioned in the revised budget proposal submitted to, and approved by the Secretariat of the Fund;
  - iii. no narrative, financial or audit report was submitted within the deadline established by the present guidelines;
  - iv. a narrative report and/or a financial report submitted was deemed not satisfactory;
  - v. an evaluation of the project was deemed not satisfactory; and
  - vi. any other reason provided to the Board of Trustees.

## **XI - EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE**

91. On an exceptional basis and subject to the availability of funding, organizations and other established channels of assistance can submit an application for emergency assistance during the inter-sessional period for projects which provide direct humanitarian, legal and financial assistance to victims of contemporary forms of slavery and which encounter unforeseen financial difficulties such as the considerable influx of victims.
92. Organizations should send their requests for emergency funding on the Secretariat's application form, to be provided upon request, as well as a detailed letter of introduction explaining the reason for this request.
93. Applications for emergency assistance grants can amount up to US\$15,000, pending the availability of funding.

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<sup>5</sup> As a minimum, the organizations supported by the Fund that are facing credible SEA allegations should take the following steps:

- a) Ensure that appropriate actions are taken regarding staff of the organization involved in perpetrating SEA, including termination of the staff contract and/or referral for criminal accountability, if appropriate;
- b) Withhold further cash and/or supply transfers to the organization, if appropriate;
- c) Share information on the allegation with relevant authorities as appropriate, upon a protection risk assessment and in line with informed consent;
- d) Immediate referral of the victim to safe and confidential victim assistance, including legal assistance, where available, based on their needs and consent.

<sup>6</sup> For the purposes of the present Guidelines, a child means every human being below the age of eighteen years. Sexual activity with any person less than 18 years of age, regardless of any laws relating to consent or age of majority, shall constitute the sexual exploitation and abuse of such person. Mistaken belief in the age of a child shall not constitute a defence under these Guidelines.

94. During the inter-sessional period, the application will be submitted for recommendation to the Chairperson of the Board and the member of the Board from that particular geographic region, or at least one other member of the Board. All other Board members should be notified of the application.

## **XII - SPECIAL CALLS**

95. On an exceptional basis and subject to the availability of funding, the Board of the Fund may issue, during the inter-sessional period, thematic or geographic special calls for applications to organizations and other established channels of assistance a) delivering direct assistance to victims of **contemporary forms of slavery underrepresented** in the current annual grants portfolio of the Fund (thematic); or b) providing such assistance in **countries underrepresented** in the current ongoing grants overall portfolio of the Fund (geographic).

## **XIII - USE OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND OHCHR LOGOS**

96. Organizations supported by the Fund must not use the United Nations logo for any purpose. Organizations supported by the Fund wishing to use the logo of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) should contact the Secretariat of the Fund for permission and instructions on how to proceed.

## **XIV - COMMUNICATION WITH THE SECRETARIAT**

97. The Secretariat should be informed of any change of contact person or the person in charge of the project. Any changes in the banking details or in respect of the organization's address, telephone, Fax, e-mail or other contact information should also be immediately notified to the Secretariat of the Fund to ensure that communication between the Secretariat and the organization is maintained.
98. Organizations are responsible for ensuring regular and smooth communication with the Secretariat of the Fund by corresponding either with the person in charge of the project or by sending any queries to the general e-mail address of the Fund [ohchr-slaveryfund@un.org](mailto:ohchr-slaveryfund@un.org)

### **CONTACT DETAILS**

**United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery (UNVFCFS)**

**Palais des Nations CH-1211 GENEVE 10;**

**Fax: (41 22) 917.90.17; Tel: (41 22) 917.93.15**

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**Internet: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/about-us/funding-and-budget/trust-funds/united-nations-voluntary-trust-fund-contemporary-forms-slavery>**