

# UNFPA Ethics Office

## Annual Report 2021





# Ethics Office Mandate

2



**Secretary-Generals bulletin 2007/11:** UNFPA Ethics Office activities are strictly aligned to ensure functional independence.

**Our most important function:** hold a safe space for staff, help them speak up, and encourage people to listen when they do. Everything we do, is in service to that mission.

**Objectives:** visibility, accessibility, confidence in the office and extend our reach.

**Outputs:** expanded virtual outreach, increased training programmes, and modernized the tone, content and delivery of communications.

**Results:** Record number of services provided, including advice, training and outreach.

# Operating Environment

3



**Expectations about mental health and well being at work have changed:** more people will speak up and ask for help.

**Covid-19 is not just a health crisis, it is also a psychological crisis:** increasing the risk of wrongdoing, making workplaces less safe.

**Political, social, health and public sector crises in the global context:** demands greater transparency, accountability, and responsiveness to misconduct and retaliation than ever before.



# Organizational Context: Management

4

- **Tone at the top:** consistent and clear.
- **Ethics Office recommendations on retaliation cases:** all implemented.
- **Investment in an ethical culture:** diversity and inclusion, staff wellbeing and a culture change program.
- **Investment in a more survivor-centered, transparent, proactive and accessible internal justice system:** the 'Integrity Family' initiative.
- **Investment in ethics resources and capacity:** P4 post endorsed (since approved by the Board).
- **Prioritizing the Ethics mandate:** Ethics briefings to the Executive Committee.
- **Demonstrated commitment to constructive dissent:** monthly dialogue between the Ethics Office and OED, in which there is a full and frank exchange on ethics-related trends, risks, and organizational priorities in pursuit of adherence to UN values and standards.





# Organizational Context: Confidence in Ethics

5

**Global Staff Survey:** 58% response rate.

- 82% believe UNFPA has strong values and operates to a high ethical standard.
- 87% are aware of the Ethics Office and services provided.
- 71 % said they would contact the Ethics Office to address workplace conflict.
- 72% believe that UNFPA imposes sanctions when abuse is proven.
- 65% believe if they reported misconduct they would be protected from retaliation.

## **Requests for services:**

- More than doubled in 2021 (996 in total).
- 117% increase in requests for advice and guidance (455).
- 129% increase in the number of personnel who attended live training (2,641).
- Ratings of between 89 and 90% on relevance and efficacy of the training.

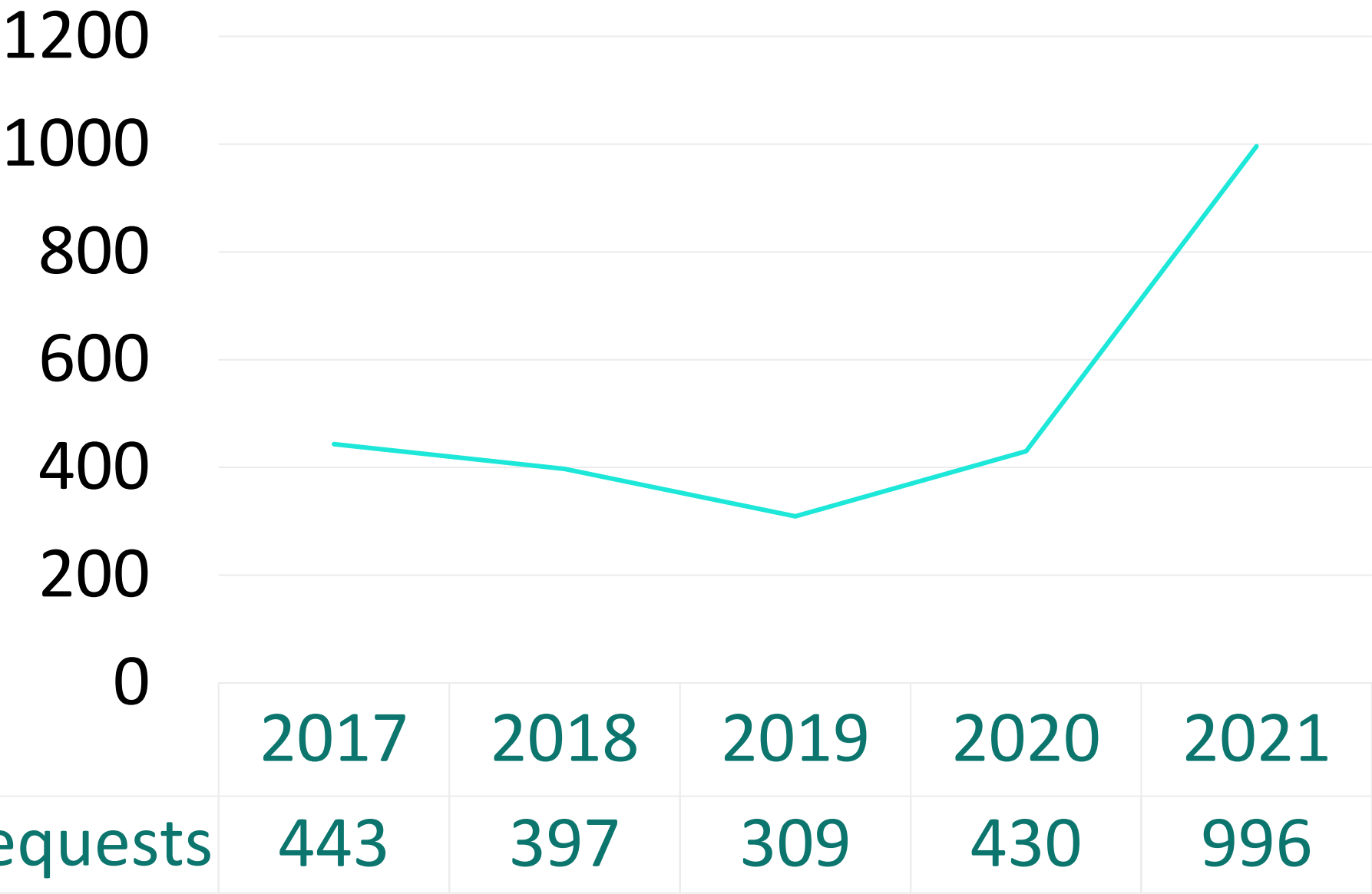
**Staff engagement:** 43,814 views of ethics-related content on the Ethics Vlog.





# Provision of Services

Request for Services



- Provision of services more than doubled in 2021 .
- 117 % increase in individuals seeking advice and guidance.
- 250% increase in advisory requests related to interpersonal conduct, fair application of rules and policies, and wrongdoing.
- 89% of requests for advice and guidance came from fixed-term staff.
- Field-based requests increased overall, but the proportion of headquarters versus field-based requests declined (from 33 per cent of all requests in 2020 to 21 per cent in 2021).

# Advice & Guidance

- 48% concerned conflict-of-interest issues, including participation in outside activities and employment.
- 221 % increase in requests related to interpersonal conduct, fair application of rules and policies, staff welfare and wrongdoing.



455 Requests for Advice & Guidance				
Guidance that related to harassment, SH, abuse of authority, incivility, discrimination, or misconduct	2018	2019	2020	2021
Total	22	29	34	111



# Training



## Training Feedback Poll (91% response rate)


- 95% reported that they learned something new.
- 97% cent believed the session was a worthwhile investment of time. 89% said that their substantive knowledge had improved.
- 93% reported that they felt better equipped/empowered to take ethical decisions or actions.

**2020**

↑129% in No. of People Trained Live  
(up from 1,150 in 2019 and 317 in 2019)

72% Compliance with Online Training





### Ethics

The community for guidance and resources for UNFPA personnel about expectations for ethical behavior and other ethics information you can use.

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Leanne Kinsella


May 4, 2022

Staff Member Loses Appeal To Remove Alleged Harasser As Supervisor

When a supervisee alleges harassment and abuse of authority by their supervisor, he or she often asks to change reporting lines. This is understandable. We, in the UN, rarely pay attention to what happens to teams after an allegation of harassment or abuse has been investigated.

During the investigation, the parties to the complaint often become highly invested in their conflict story – jobs, reputations, and livelihoods are at stake, as well as the

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Leanne Kinsella

May 2, 2022

Diversity Versus Belonging

“IT’S CALLED ‘REVERSE ALBINISM’”

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Leanne Kinsella

May 3, 2022


Shared with Women@UNFPA

UN P-4 Staff Member Fired For Sexual Harassment: Ethiopia

Mr. Adriantseheno was a Statistician at the P-4 level with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Mr. Adriansteheno was fired for sexually harassing two staff members. He appealed the decision to terminate his contract to the UN Appeals Tribunal, claiming that the administration had insufficient evidence to sustain the claim of harassment. Mr. Adriansteheno's appeal was not successful. Following is a summary of the case. You can

See more



**New outreach initiatives:** anonymous ‘ask ethics’ virtual portal, intranet page with extensive guidance, and a ‘bite-size ethics’ information campaign.

**Engagement:** Ethics Vlog views increased by 544% (43,814 views, up from 6,798 in 2020).

# Requests for Protection from Retaliation

Requests for Protection from Retaliation	Closed: Insufficient Information	Referred for Investigation	Outcome of Investigation
8 ➡	5	3	1 Concluded: No Retaliation  2: Ongoing





# Financial Disclosure



- 503 financial disclosure statements.
- 100 per cent compliance.
- 48 statements were subject to external verification.
- 8 persons had assets or transactions that were not reported in their financial disclosure statements. However, no conflict of interest was identified.
- 1 potential conflict of interest was identified; a staff member had failed to obtain approval to engage in a leadership role in an external organization. The matter was assessed and addressed by the Ethics Office.

Revision of the Financial Disclosure Programme is required, with a greater emphasis on identifying conflicts of interest versus asset disclosures. This will be undertaken in 2022.

# Coherence & Policy



The UNFPA Ethics Adviser continued her role as Alternate Chair of the Ethics Panel of the United Nations.

## Coherence & Policy in 2020

- Reviewed 9 Appeals to decisions by the UN Ethics Office on Protection against Retaliation claims.
- Provided advice on 8 Protection against Retaliation case decisions by the former Alternate Chair of EPUN.
- Contributed to: the culture change initiative (to operationalize UNFPA values and standards into everyday working practices), and the 'integrity family initiative' (to promote the informal resolution of interpersonal conflicts, greater reporting of misconduct and survivor-centered approach to the administration of justice).
- Provided ethics expertise and input to United Nations system entities and review processes, including the JIU.





**Thank You**