



UN Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict

Strategic Framework 2020 – 2025

9 November 2022

Overview

United Nations Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict (UN Action) unites efforts across the UN system with the goal of preventing conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV), meeting survivors' needs and enhancing accountability for CRSV. Launched in March 2007, the network currently embraces 23 UN system entities, namely: CTED, DPO, DPPA, IOM, ITC, OCHA, ODA, OHCHR, OSAPG, OSGEY, OSRSG-CAAC, OSRSG-VAC, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNDGC, UNEP, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNOCT, UNODC, UN Women and WHO, as well as the Office of the SRSG on Sexual Violence in Conflict (OSRSG-SVC) and is supported by a Secretariat located in the Office of the SRSG-SVC in her capacity as Chair of the network.

In June 2007, the Secretary-General's Policy Committee endorsed UN Action as "a critical joint UN system-wide initiative to guide advocacy, knowledge-building, resource mobilization, and joint programming around sexual violence in conflict". In all relevant resolutions, the Security Council mentions UN Action as a critical interagency coordination forum to address CRSV.

In line with relevant Security Council resolutions 1820 (2009) SCR 1888 (2009), SCR 2106 (2013) and SCR 2467 (2019), UN Action seeks to synergize efforts of humanitarian, human rights, development, political, peacekeeping and security actors to address CRSV – reinforcing good practice, strengthening coordination and avoiding duplication of effort. To achieve this synergy of action, UN Action harnesses the comparative strengths of each UN entity for a force-multiplier effect, recognizing that sexual violence requires a broad-based, multisectoral response.

UN Action is the main forum through which the Special Representative of the Secretary General on Sexual Violence in Conflict (SRSG-SVC) promotes cooperation and coordination of efforts among all relevant stakeholders (SCR 1888). The SRSG-SVC, Ms. Pramila Patten, has articulated a three-pillar priority strategy that serve as a guiding approach for the 2020 – 2025 Strategic Framework of UN Action:

- a) Converting cultures of impunity into cultures of deterrence;
- b) Addressing structural gender-based inequality as the root cause and invisible driver of sexual violence in times of war and peace; and
- c) Fostering national ownership and leadership for a sustainable, survivor-centred response that empowers civil society and women's rights defenders.

Guiding Principles

UN Action's efforts are guided by the following core principles:

- Rape is not an inevitable consequence of conflict. It must be prevented.
- Gender-based violence (GBV), including sexual violence, is a violation of fundamental human dignity and rights.
- A survivor-centred, gender-sensitive approach is needed. While the majority of victims are women and girls, perpetrators also target men, boys, and people of diverse sexual orientation and gender identity.
- To prevent CRSV, its root causes must be addressed. Consequently, attempts to end sexual violence must be based on interventions that promote gender equality by empowering women and girls and protecting and promoting their human rights.
- The constructive involvement of men and boys is vital.
- Advocacy and programming efforts to end conflict-related sexual violence must be guided by local women's groups, particularly those that provide direct support to survivors.
- Sexual violence in conflict is one of history's greatest silences. We all have a duty to act.

Problem Statement

Several factors contribute to CRSV and impede adequate prevention and response.

Structural gender-based inequalities and harmful social norms, which drive sexual violence in peacetime, further expose affected populations (in particular, women and girls) to sexual violence when protective systems and structures are weakened or destroyed during conflict. Lack of access to and availability of comprehensive, multisectoral services for CRSV survivors impedes their recovery and resilience, and a lack of comprehensive analysis of CRSV trends, risks and patterns limits evidence-based and impactful solutions to CRSV. Ineffective coordination of simultaneous engagements by different UN actors in supporting protection, peace and development in conflict and post-conflict countries results in missed opportunities to foster national ownership for prevention and sustainable, holistic survivor-centred responses, and restricts the UN's ability to deliver a system-wide, strategic and value-added approach to tackling CRSV.

To address contributing factors and barriers to effective prevention and response, the UN Action network commits to work towards five strategic outcomes during 2020 – 2025 in order to contribute to the overall goal that CRSV is prevented, survivors' needs are met, and accountability is enhanced.

Theory of Change

The underlying premise of UN Action's theory of change (ToC) is rooted in the Sustainable Development Goals, specifically SDGs 5 and 16: gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, and peaceful and inclusive societies with access to justice for all and effective, accountable and inclusive institutions, are the foundations for preventing CRSV, meeting survivors' needs and enhancing accountability.

The ToC outlines the goal that UN Action strives towards and maps backwards to articulate the five outcomes that need to be achieved for this goal to be realized¹. Each output describes the conditions that

¹ UN Action recognizes that system-wide efforts and collaboration between States, UN entities including the Team of Experts, non-governmental organizations and civil society is required to realize this goal.

are necessary to ensure that the outcomes are achieved. In this way, the ToC articulates a means-end relationship (i.e. *if ABC, then XYZ*). The ToC should be read from the top, vertically downward.

1) **If** the UN Action network fulfils its role as a consultative forum on CRSV and a platform for coordinating advocacy and implementing joint gap-filling CRSV-focused interventions, **then** UN agencies cooperate and share information to reinforce coordination and coherence and improve the system-wide response and implementation of UN Security Council resolutions on CRSV.

2) **If** comprehensive and multisectoral assistance, including medical, psychosocial, livelihoods and justice services are available and accessible to survivors, **and** CRSV prevention and risk mitigation measures are implemented in a survivor-centred manner, including through strategies and plans to implement Joint Communiqués, **then** survivors and at-risk groups are supported and protected and CRSV risks are prevented and mitigated.

3) **If** joint and sustained advocacy targets duty-bearers and decision makers to make and implement commitments to address CRSV, including its root causes **and** capacity and technical expertise of institutional, operational, national and other key actors is strengthened to prevent CRSV, respond to survivors' needs and strengthen legislation, investigations and prosecutions in line with guiding principles and a survivor centred approach, **then** duty-bearers and decision-makers take action to address both the immediate risks as well as the root causes of CRSV at the global and national level and promote compliance and accountability.

4) **If** guidance policies and tools are developed to fill gaps in knowledge, practices, advocacy and technical expertise for improved prevention of and response to CRSV and its root causes in conflict prevention/resolution, political, peacekeeping, peacebuilding, humanitarian and development processes, **and** such guidance, policies and tools are shared within the UN Action network and other relevant actors, **then** UN action member entities contribute to advancing the CRSV/WPS agenda in a way that is informed by relevant guidance, policies and tools on addressing CRSV and its root causes.

5) **If** safe, ethical, and gender-responsive data management and analysis methods are used, WPAs are deployed and the MARA is strengthened, **and** safe, ethical, and effective coordination is promoted across CRSV information management platforms, **then** reliable, timely, and objective information on CRSV trends, risks and patterns supports evidence-based high-level advocacy, enhances pressure on parties to conflict and informs impactful, survivor-centred solutions.

UN Action Theory of Change



Problem statement

Structural gender-based inequalities and harmful social norms, which drive sexual violence in peacetime, further expose affected populations (in particular women and girls) to sexual violence when protective systems and structures are weakened or destroyed during conflict. Lack of access to [and availability of] comprehensive, multisectoral services for CRSV survivors impedes their recovery and resilience, and a lack of comprehensive analysis of CRSV trends, risks and patterns limits evidence-based and impactful solutions to CRSV. Ineffective coordination of simultaneous engagements by different UN actors in supporting protection, peace and development in conflict and post-conflict countries results in missed opportunities to foster national ownership for prevention and sustainable, holistic survivor-centred responses, and restricts the UN's ability to deliver a system-wide, strategic and value-added approach to tackling CRSV.

Approach

UN Action works through a network of Focal Points at the technical level based the headquarters of each member entity. Focal Points implement activities for the network, which they identify and are included as priority activities for a given period in the last section of the 2020 – 2025 Strategic Framework. The Focal Points also support the link to UN Missions and UN Country Teams, which is critical for preventing CRSV, meeting survivor's needs, and enhancing accountability. The Focal Points meet on a monthly basis to discuss ongoing priorities and issues of concern.²

Strategic decisions on addressing CRSV are taken by the UN Action Steering Committee, in which all UN Action member entities are represented at the Principal level.³

The network is supported by a Secretariat, located in the Office of the SRSG on Sexual Violence in Conflict, headed by the UN Action Coordinator.⁴

The work of UN Action is generally supported through a dedicated window in the **Conflict-related Sexual Violence Multi-Partner Trust Fund (CRSV-MPTF)** aimed at supporting global and country efforts to prevent CRSV and respond more effectively to the needs of survivors.⁵ The fund intends to: (i) streamline joint programming, (ii) strengthen governance and financial management systems, and (iii) standardize reporting to donors.⁶

UN Action coordinates its activities with other related coordination- and action-oriented structures such as the Gender-Based Violence Area of Responsibility (GBV AoR), given the heightened risks of violence, exploitation and abuse in humanitarian settings. UN Action and the Team of Experts (TOE) coordinate their efforts at the country level in the areas of strengthening the rule of law, access to justice and ensuring accountability for CRSV. UN Action also works in complement to the Global Focal Points for Rule of Law, in line with the priorities outlined in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which calls for addressing the structural drivers of conflict and building stable, equitable societies by reinforcing institutions that uphold the rule of law and therefore, provide adapted, gender-sensitive and accessible responses to survivors of CRSV and groups at risk.

As a network, UN Action provides strategic support to country-level action on CRSV, contributes to advocacy and strengthening a system-wide approach to CRSV, and helps to build the evidence base for effective and timely prevention of and response to CRSV. To this end, members of UN Action regularly coordinate and work collectively to contribute high-level advocacy, human resources, financial resources, and technical expertise including through direct field support, capacity building, development of policies, guidance, best practices, and lessons learned.

² See: Terms of Reference for UN Action Focal Points

³ See: Terms of Reference for the UN Action Steering Committee

⁴ See: Terms of Reference for UN Action Secretariat

⁵ The SRSG-SVC, as the Chair of UN Action, shall make every effort to secure funds to implement the Network's Strategic Framework. The OSRSG-SVC shall consider the use of its extra-budgetary resources to ensure the business continuity of the UN Action Secretariat under circumstances of severe funding constraints of the CRSV-MPTF.

⁶ See: TORs of the CRSV-MPTF and TORs of the UN Action Window for more information on the governance structure of the Trust Fund.

GOAL				
CRSV IS PREVENTED, SURVIVORS' NEEDS ARE MET, AND ACCOUNTABILITY IS ENHANCED				
Outcomes				
GENERAL OUTCOME	UN agencies cooperate and share information to reinforce coordination and coherence and improve the system-wide response and implementation of UN Security Council resolutions on CRSV	General Output Indicators	General Output	Indicators
		1. Focal points perceive an increased level of cooperation, coordination and coherence within the Network 2. The UN Action Network is well functioning at HQ with reinforced coherence and coordination at the country level	UN Action fulfils its role as a consultative forum on CRSV and a platform for coordinating advocacy and implementing joint gap-filling CRSV-focused interventions.	1. # of joint gap-filling CRSV-focused interventions, such as projects and Focal Points initiatives 2. # of coordinated advocacy initiatives on CRSV that contribute to improved system-wide response and implementation of UN Security Council resolutions on CRSV 3. # of UNA coordination meetings by Focal Points and the Secretariat with other relevant GBV-related networks and actors 4. # of joint or coordinated activities with other GBV-related networks and actors 5. % of action points from each Focal Points meeting that are implemented
		Baseline 1. TBD based on initial 2021 survey with FPs 2. TBD based on initial 2021 survey with FPs, WPAs and UNCTs		Baseline 1. 0 2. 0 3. 0 4. 0
		Target 1. "Well-functioning" based on numerical scale and examples from FPs survey 2. "Well-functioning" based on numerical scale and examples from FPs, WPAs and UNCTs		Target 1. 8 annually (incl projects and FPs initiatives) starting in 2021 2. 2 annually 3. 0 in 2020, then 2 annually 4. 0 in 2020, then 1 annually 5. 80%
		Measuring tools⁷ 1. Annual survey with Focal Points, containing question(s) about collaboration and UN Action's "force-multiplier" effect synergies 2. Annual UN Action progress report, NFRs of Focal Points meetings, survey with Focal Points, WPAs and UNCTs		Measuring tools 1. Project documents, Record of UN Action Secretariat of gaps assessments 2. Annual survey with UN Action Focal Points 3. NFR of meetings with other relevant coordination networks and actors 4. Reports of joint or coordinated activities 5. UN Action Secretariat tracking table of action points of meeting notes

⁷ The number of the measuring tool corresponds to the number of the indicator above

OUTCOME 1	Survivors and at-risk groups are supported and protected and CRSV risks are prevented and mitigated (Res 1820)	Outcome 1 Indicators	Output 1.1	Indicators (1.1)	Output 1.2	Indicators (1.2)
		1. Survivors and at-risk groups have increased access to multisectoral response services through UN Action funded projects 2. Survivors of CRSV are satisfied with the multisectoral services received 3. Increased actions to contribute to safety and security of survivors and at-risk groups	Comprehensive and multisectoral assistance, including medical, psychosocial, safety/security, livelihoods and justice services are available and accessible to survivors	1. Increased UN Action advocacy for prioritization of GBV/CRSV ⁸ related activities in humanitarian response plans (HRPs) and refugee response plans (RRPs) and regional refugee and resilience plan (3RPs) 2. % survivor satisfaction with services to which they are referred 3. % of UN Action-funded projects that include two or more sectors of assistance for survivors	CRSV prevention and risk mitigation measures are implemented in a survivor-centred manner, including through strategies and plans to implement the Joint Communiqués	1. % of UN Action-funded projects that tackle the root causes of CRSV 2. % of strategies/action plans to implement Joint Communiqués (JC) developed in consultation with local women's organizations 3. # of Missions and UNCTs that use early warning indicators on CRSV developed by UN Action in order to take action to prevent and mitigate the risks of CRSV
		Baseline 1. 0 2. 0 3. 0		Baseline 1. 0 2. 0 3. 0		Baseline 1. 0 2. 0 3. TBD based on initial survey w WPAs & UNCTs
		Target 1. 0 in 2020. Then 500 survivors benefitting from increased access to services annually 2. 80% average client satisfaction level for projects implemented through the MPTF 3. 0 in 2020, then 10 annually (8 from projects, 2 from actions taken by WPAs/ UNCTs)		Target 1. 2 Annually (at HQ level) 2. 80% average client satisfaction level for projects implemented through the MPTF 3. 80%		Target 1. 100% - contribute to tackling root causes of CRSV 2. 100% 3. TBD after setting baseline
		Measuring tools 1. Project reports and project monitoring documents 2. Client satisfaction survey implemented by project GBV service providers 3. Project reports (UN Action Secretariat will draft and share sample indicators with project entities) and consultations with WPAs		Measuring tools 1. UN Action Secretariat tracking table of joint advocacy initiatives 2. Client satisfaction survey implemented by project GBV service providers 3. UN Action project documents		Measuring tools 1. UNA project documents 2. OSRSG-SVC and UN Action members to share information on participation of local women's organizations on an annual basis. 3. Annual WPA meeting or other consultation with WPAs

⁸ CRSV survivors receive services through GBV referral pathways

OUTCOME 2	Duty-bearers and decision-makers take action to address both the immediate risks as well as the root causes of CRSV at the global and national level and promote compliance and accountability.	Outcome 2 Indicators	Output 2.1	Indicators (2.1)	Output 2.2	Indicators (2.2)
		1. # of countries that dedicate resources for addressing CRSV to the CRSV-MPTF 2. # of Joint Communiqués turned into implementation plans with support from UN Action 3. # of actions included in implementation plans that are implemented with support from UN Action 4. % of target countries ⁹ with a. laws, b. policies, c. national strategies addressing CRSV and its root causes in line with international standards as a result of UN Action support	Joint and sustained advocacy targets duty-bearers and decision makers to make and implement commitments to address CRSV, including its root causes.	1. # of times UN Action advocates for commitments to be made following support to develop or review Joint Communiqués and implementation plans 2. # of normative/legislative development/review processes on CRSV and its root causes initiated in countries as a result of UN Action members' advocacy / support	Capacity and technical expertise of institutional, operational, national and other key actors are strengthened to prevent CRSV, respond to survivors' needs and strengthen legislation, investigations and prosecutions in line with guiding principles and a survivor-centred approach.	1. # of governments supported to develop and implement policies and laws that address CRSV, including its root causes 2. # of UN Action activities on justice and accountability 3. % of those activities coordinated with the TOE 4. # of capacity-building activities on addressing CRSV in line with guiding principles and a survivor-centred approach supported by UN Action. 5. % of these activities explicitly addressing: a. root causes of CRSV b. prevention of CRSV or c. directly targeting women's organizations
		Baseline		Baseline		Baseline
		1. 0 2. 0 3. 0 4. 0		1. 0 2. 0		1. 0 2. 0 3. 0 4. 0 5. 0
		Target		Target		Target
		1. 3 new contributions annually 2. 1 annually from 2021 3. 4 annually from 2021 4. 50%		1. 4 advocacy products / events annually 2. 2 annually from 2021		1. 6 annually 2. 2 annually from 2021. 3. 90 % 4. 8 annually from 2021 5. a. 50%, b. 50%, c. 25%
		Measuring tools		Measuring tools		Measuring tools
		1. MPTF Gateway 2. UNA Secretariat tracking table 3. UNA project documents; Annual FPs survey, OSRSG-SVC and quarterly reports from WPAs		1. Advocacy products / events, network M&E and UN Action Secretariat tracking table 2. OCHA information on tools for compliance on humanitarian		1. UN Action project reports; Annual Focal Points survey; UN Women to share inputs for yearly WPS reporting;

⁹ Target countries are countries on the agenda of the Security Council, Countries covered in the annual report of the Secretary-General on CRSV, and countries with NAP 1325 that contains provisions on CRSV related to refugees

		4. From OCHA: information on tools on compliance on humanitarian access; 5. UN Women: information on countries with NAP on 1325 regarding progress updates on policies, laws and national strategies. Survey with WPAs and UNCTs		access; UN Women provides information on countries with NAPs on 1325 regarding progress updates on policies, laws and national		2. Records of UN Action Secretariat and survey with Focal Points 3. Same as 2. 4. UN Action project reports, TOE M&E and country level capacity building documentation 5. Same as 4
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OUTCOME 3	UN Action member entities contribute to advancing the implementation of the CRSV/WPS agenda in a way that is informed by relevant guidance, policies, and tools on addressing CRSV and its root causes	Outcome 3 Indicators	Output 3.1	Indicators (3.1)	Output 3.2	Indicators (3.2)
		1. # of downloads of guidance documents from website 2. Increased uptake of relevant guidance, policies and tools	Guidance, policies and tools are developed to fill gaps in knowledge, practices, advocacy and technical expertise for improved prevention of and response to CRSV and its root causes in conflict prevention/ resolution, peacekeeping, peacebuilding, humanitarian and development processes.	1. Mapping and gap analysis of guidance, policies and tools ("guidance") conducted 2. % of guidance developed or updated based on gaps identified during the mapping exercise 3. % of guidance products explicitly addressing a. root causes of CRSV b. prevention of CRSV c. response to CRSV	Guidance, policies and tools are shared within the UN Action network and other relevant actors to consistently integrate measures to address CRSV in conflict prevention/ resolution, peacekeeping, peacebuilding, humanitarian and development processes.	1. Indicators for each guidance document (e.g. dissemination activities for that product) 2. # of events such as webinars or meetings on guidance 3. # of guidance products shared through UN Action website
		Baseline 1. 0 2. 0		Baseline 1. 0 2. 0 3. 0		Baseline 1. Roll-out plan implemented - No 2. 0 3. 0
		Target 1. 120 Annually 2. TBD		Target 1. Initiated in 2020, updated as needed 2. 2 annually from 2021. (Out of # identified in mapping). 3. a. 40%, b. 50%, c. 50%		Target 1. Roll out plan implemented - Yes 2. 1 per guidance document 3. Every new guidance product developed by UN Action is shared
		Measuring tools 1. UN Action website analytics 2. Annual survey with WPAs and UNCTs		Measuring tools 1. UN Action Secretariat records 2. Measured against the gap analysis, recorded in UNA Sec tracking table 3. UN Action Secretariat tracking of guidance products developed or updated		Measuring tools 1. UN Action Secretariat tracking of guidance roll-out plans 2. UN Action Secretariat record of webinars; Survey on use and roll-out of guidance; Self-reporting by entities; Assessment of use of new products

						3. UN Action Secretariat website analytics
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OUTCOME 4	Reliable, timely and objective information on CRSV trends, risks and patterns supports evidence-based high-level advocacy, enhances engagement with and pressure on parties to conflict and informs impactful,	Outcome 4 Indicators	Output 4.1	Indicators (4.1)	Output 4.2	Indicators (4.2)
		1. Reliable, timely and objective information and analysis on CRSV trends, risks, and patterns is submitted by UN Action entities to OSRSG SVC to inform advocacy and interventions 2. UN senior management uses reliable, timely and objective information on CRSV trends, risks and patterns for advocacy and engagement on CRSV 3. Improvement of service provision by UNCT/HCT and implementing partners as a result of information and UN Action support 4. Strengthened national policies on CRSV as a result of information provided by relevant information mechanisms and UN Action support	Safe, ethical and gender-responsive data management and analysis methods are used, WPAs are deployed and the MARA is strengthened.	1. % of situations of concern ¹⁰ where the MARA working group meets on at least a quarterly basis ¹¹ 2. % of situations of concerns with deployed WPAs 3. # of MARA working groups supported through joint capacity building on safe and ethical collection, use, sharing and analysis of CRSV data 4. Development of supplementary guidance on analysis of CRSV data and dissemination of this guidance to all situations of concern	Safe, ethical, and effective coordination is promoted across CRSV information management platforms	1. % of countries where both MARA ¹² and GBVIMS are in place that have an agreed protocol for CRSV information sharing that aligns with the global guidance note 2. Interactions on analysis and reporting of sexual violence at the country level between MARA and MRM are assessed and recommendations to strengthen synergies are made 3. Coordination with relevant protection networks and actors for impactful solutions
		Baseline 1. 0 2. 0 3. 0 4. 0		Baseline 1. 100%. TBC with WPAs 2. 44% (16 situations of concern, 7 WPAs deployed) 3. 0 4. No		Baseline 1. 63% (8 situations where MARA working group exists, 5 situations with ISPs as of August 2020) ¹³ 2. 0 3. TBD based on initial 2021 survey with WPAs, UNCTs and FPs (Information captured on current efforts being undertaken

¹⁰ Situations of Concerns = 19 countries covered in SG's report, minus those in post-conflict sections: That means 16 countries as of August 2020

¹¹ Where MARA working groups exists

¹² Where MARA working groups exists and meets on monitoring, reporting and analysis of CRSV. As of August 2020, this is in Somalia, South Sudan, CAR, Iraq, Mali, DRC, Sudan and Myanmar

¹³ CAR, Iraq, Mali, South Sudan, Somalia. The only other country as of August 2020 where both MARA and GBV IMS are in place is Myanmar, yet no ISP exists

	survivor-centred solutions				to coordinate with rel. protection networks)
		Target 1. 100% of information requests by OSRSG-SVC responded to. 2. At least 2 times annually per entity in 2021, then revisited based on progress monitored. 3. 3 documented examples of improvement in services in 2021 then revisited based on progress monitored. 4. 3 documented examples of progress towards strengthened national policies in 2021 then revisited based on progress monitored.		Target 1. 100% 2. Annual increase to 75% by 2025. 3. Capacity building for MARA working groups piloted in 2021 in one country; from 2022 onwards at least four MARA WGs per year receive support. 4. Yes – from 2021	Target 1. 100 % 2. Interactions are assessed in 3 situations by 2022 and assessed in all situations by 2025. 3. Increase in efforts undertaken to coordinate with relevant protection networks
		Measuring tools 1. SRSG SVC statements; OSRSG-SVC shares information on submissions received 2. Head of entities and other senior leadership's statements and talking points including CRSV; UNA Sec reporting on joint advocacy activities 3. Survey with field, quarterly reports by peace operations 4. Survey with field, quarterly reports by peace operations		Measuring tools 1. Annual survey with WPAs, quarterly report by peace operations (quarterly report cables go to DPO) 2. OSRSG-SVS record-keeping 3. UNA, GBVIMS global team and MARA support team reports on training 4. UN Action meeting NFRs and survey with Focal Points on guidance dissemination	Measuring tools 1. Information provided by GBVIMS global team OSRSG-SVC. 2. Annual survey with WPAs and UNCTs. 3. Anecdotal information from annual surveys of WPAs, UNCTs and FPs.