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# **SUPPORT TO DEVELOPMENT FINANCE INSTITUTIONS**

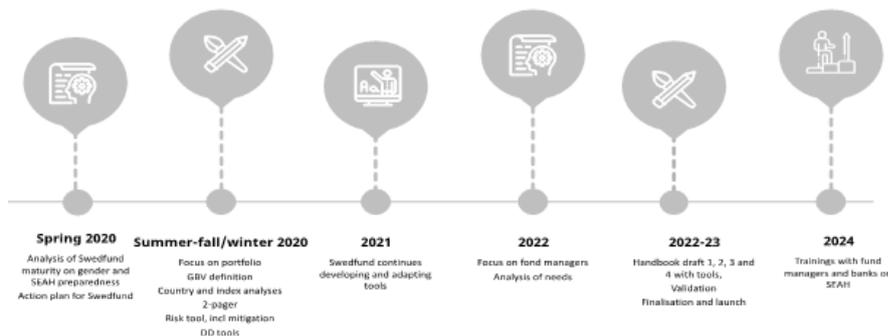
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PREVENTION AND RESPONSE TO SEXUAL  
EXPLOITATION, ABUSE AND HARASSMENT

## THE PARTNERSHIP

In 2020, The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation initiated a partnership with Swedfund, the Swedish Development Finance Institution<sup>1</sup>, to build capacity and knowledge around Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (SEAH) to align efforts for women’s empowerment and gender equality.

The main focus has been to develop and share concrete tools to put international standards like UNGPs<sup>2</sup>, 2X Challenge Criteria<sup>3</sup>, the International Labour Organization’s Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work as well as ILO190<sup>4</sup> and UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights<sup>5</sup>, into practice. The ambition is to establish a systematic approach on how to concretely prevent and respond to gender-based violence in the investment process and portfolio management.



## RESULTS AND LEARNINGS

The idea to create a partnership between a Development Finance Institution (DFI) and a Women’s Rights Organisation supporting local women in conflict contexts has proven very successful since it has drawn on the respective in-depth expertise, creating space for sustainable change by understanding each other’s perspectives. The cooperation has evolved over time, and enabled learnings at both Kvinna till Kvinna and at Swedfund. By allowing Kvinna till Kvinna to get closer to, and a deeper understanding of, the investment processes, it has been possible to develop and validate tools which today are tailored to the investment cycle and daily tasks of in particular Environment, Social and Governance (ESG) teams, and Impact managers.

<sup>1</sup> [Poverty Reduction Through Sustainable Business - Swedfund](#)

<sup>2</sup> UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, [guidingprinciplesbusinesshr\\_en.pdf \(ohchr.org\)](#)

<sup>3</sup> [2X Challenge](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Convention C190 - Violence and Harassment Convention. 2019 \(No. 190\) \(ilo.org\)](#)

<sup>5</sup> [guidingprinciplesbusinesshr\\_en.pdf \(ohchr.org\)](#)

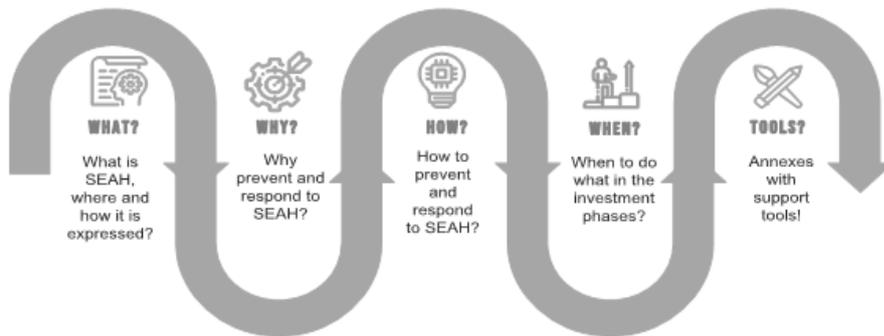
An important first step of the cooperation was to carry out a full organisational capacity assessment and analysis of Swedfund's preparedness to prevent and respond to SEAH. This allowed a dialogue about entry-points for improvements, facilitating the identification of needs and hands-on solutions.

### **WHAT HAS CHANGED DUE TO THE COOPERATION?**

- Increased awareness and understanding of what, why, how and when to prevent and respond to Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment in investment processes (learning across **all** staff and managers at Swedfund and Kvinna till Kvinna).
- Improved dialogue between Swedfund and portfolio companies, funds and banks on SEAH by Swedfund investment team and ESG team alike.
- Improved knowledge and access to tools for Swedfund's portfolio companies, fund managers and banks.
- Improved Due Diligence processes being undertaken by Swedfund.
- Branding of Swedfund as a go-to-partner amongst DFIs on prevention and response to SEAH.

### **WHAT WERE THE MAIN PRODUCTS?**

- **Good Practice Handbook on Prevention and Response to SEAH** on what, why, how and when to prevent and respond to SEAH.



#### **The Handbook includes the following tools:**

- ✓ SEAH Risk identification tool.
- ✓ SEAH prevention and response organisational maturity index.
- ✓ SEAH support questions, methods and survey example.
- ✓ SEAH site visit guidelines.
- ✓ SEAH policy guidance.

- ✓ SEAH mitigation measures at organisational and individual (staff level).
- ✓ ToR for procurement of SEAH expert.
- ✓ KPIs to measure progress/set-backs at company and investment level.
- ✓ SEAH information leaflet for initial dialogue and spreading further information.

## **WHAT TRAININGS HAVE BEEN UNDERTAKEN**

- Organisational capacity on SEAH for all staff.
- What is SEAH – focus on definitions.
- Trainings with ESG and Impact team on prevention and response to SEAH.
- Trainings with Nordic Development Finance Institutions on SEAH.
- Training with Swedfund portfolio Fund managers and Banks on prevention and response to SEAH.

## **WHAT KVINNA TILL KVINNA CAN OFFER**

The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation can support organisations, authorities as well as companies and investors in the private sector to establish a systemic approach on how to concretely prevent and respond to gender-based violence, and specifically to sexual exploitation, abuse and sexual harassment in their supply chains as well as their immediate context. In order to align with international standards and requirements such as ILO190, 2X Challenge<sup>6</sup>, EU Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD)<sup>7</sup> and EU Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD)<sup>8</sup> which large companies must comply with since July 2024.

Depending on the need and context we can offer a variety of support, including capacity assessment and analyses of the companies'/organisations' preparedness, trainings, development of tools and indicators and expert advice. Responding and preventing SEAH is fundamental to strengthen women's economic empowerment and rights.

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<sup>6</sup> [2X Challenge](#)

<sup>7</sup> [Corporate sustainability reporting - European Commission \(europa.eu\)](#)

<sup>8</sup> [Corporate sustainability due diligence: Council gives its final approval - Consilium \(europa.eu\)](#)

## **KVINNA TILL KVINNA**

The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation has defended women's rights since 1993. For every woman and girl's right to be safe and to be heard.

Today, we are one of the world's leading feminist women's rights organisations, working directly in areas affected by war and conflict to strengthen the women's influence and power. We work closely together with more than 100 local partner organisations across 20 countries to end violence against women, reach lasting peace and close the gender gap once and for all. The future is equal. And together, we are change.

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Visit [kvinnatillkvinna.se](https://kvinnatillkvinna.se) to find out more about our work.