SAFEGUARDING AND PSEA LEARNING CORNER # 2:

ENGAGING WITH GOVERNMENTS ON THE PROTECTION AGAINST SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE (PSEA)

Date: Monday 17 July 2023 at 9-11:00 CET

ABOUT THE LEARNING CORNERS

As part of its 2023 Plan of Action, the Regional Safeguarding and PSEA Network is organizing a series of "learning corners" to promote exchange, learning and documentation of promising practices across operations and organisations involved in the Ukraine refugee response. The learning corners will focus on thematic areas within safeguarding and PSEA which require additional attention across country operations and organizations. The first learning corner was organized on 22 May 2023 and focused on SEA investigations. Others will be organized upon the request of network members.

TARGET PARTICIPANTS

- Members of the Regional Safeguarding and PSEA Network
- Members of the national PSEA Networks in the Ukraine refugee response
- Other organisations or agencies working in the Ukraine refugee response

OBJECTIVES OF THE LEARNING CORNER

- Explore the common challenges and opportunities in engaging with different government authorities for the protection from sexual exploitation and abuse;
- Present and exchange on promising practices from different organizations/agencies;
- Seek to identify possible ways to support, including by the PSEA Networks at national and/or regional level, to enhance such engagement

Regional Refugee Response for the Ukraine Situation

AGENDA AND SPEAKERS

1. **Opening and setting the scene** (Caroline Dulin Brass and Rawan Abukhadra, Regional Network Co-chairs)

2. **Presentation of the UNICEF/UNHCR collaboration with the Italian Civil Protection,** Marta D'agosto, UNHCR Italy, and Ivan Mej, UNICEF Italy

3. **Presentation from the pilot training with Interpol for the Polish National Police,** Irene Berenice Coello Collada, PSEA Coordinator and National PSEA Network Co-Chair, and Theodora Suter, Regional Coordinator for IOM

4. **Engaging with the Government of Romania on the inclusion of PSEA and anti-trafficking safeguards in the Government Action Plan and advocacy through capacity building,** Konstantina Loupeidou, PSEA Coordinator and Elena Larisa Cofaru, Terre des Hommes (National PSEA Network Co-Chairs)

5. **Engaging the Government of Türkiye in the large-scale PSEA efforts,** Eda Özyurt Kılınç, GBV & PSEA Expert, UNFPA Türkiye

6. **Tour-de-table/plenary discussion:** Including updates from the National PSEA Networks and member organizations on their ongoing efforts to engage government counterparts and ideas for further collaboration.

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BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

In the Ukraine refugee response, government authorities are in the lead in delivering humanitarian assistance and protection, with the support of UN, NGOs, and civil society actors. An effective and comprehensive approach to safeguarding and PSEA therefore requires engagement with various government authorities, both at central and local level. This can include, for example, advocacy, capacity building, and/or joint projects with national police, border guards and reception authorities who are on the frontline of the response, as well as with social workers, child protection authorities, local municipalities, and others who are providing services directly to refugees and other persons fleeing from Ukraine.

A number of promising practices are developing across Europe, including in Italy, where UNICEF, UNHCR and the Italian Civil Protection has launched a Toolkit (Practical Guide) for risk mitigation in the reception system (in Italian, to be translated), and in Poland, where IOM and UNHCR have piloted a joint training on PSEA for the Polish police, in collaboration with Interpol. In Romania, the PSEA Network is engaging on the Government Action Plan, conducing capacity building for government staff, and working to enhance safeguards at border crossing points and accommodation centers.

At the regional level, the Regional Protection Working Group for the Ukraine response issued a set of concrete recommendations for government counterparts in the context of vetting and registration of volunteers and volunteer organisations, which was identified as a particular area of risk, including of SEA, across the humanitarian response.

While work is ongoing at global level to develop a Global Government PSEA Cooperation Framework (led by UNICEF), a number of policy issues remain to be resolved. This learning corner therefore seeks to highlight the ongoing practices at country level in the region, facilitate an open dialogue on the different experiences, challenges, and opportunities so far, and capture the lessons learned.

FURTHER RESOURCES

- UNHCR/ Regional Protection Working Group, Vetting and registration of volunteers and volunteer organisations supporting the Ukraine refugee response (2022): https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/97709

- UNICEF, Entity Level Action Plan to Prevent and Respond to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (2023): https://www.unicef.org/executiveboard/media/16166/file/2023-UNICEF-PSEA-action-plan-EN-2023-05-04.pdf

- UNICEF/UNHCR/Italian Civil Protection, Toolkit (Practical Guide) in Italian (to be translated): https://www.unhcr.org/it/wp-content/uploads/sites/97/2023/05/TOOLKIT_DPC-web.pdf