

PSEA Network

An Introduction

08 March 2023

Sofia, Bulgaria



Background:

- Safeguarding and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) are key priorities
- The Ukraine situation is one of the largest forced displacement crises in the world today, with more than 8 million refugees across Europe.
- The emergency is characterized by **a number of heightened risk factors, such as a high incidence of family separation, and of women and children travelling alone**, as well as a wide range of new actors involved in the response, many of whom have limited experience and capacity on PSEA.
- In line with the **Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Six Core Principles and the Secretary General's Bulletin Special Measures for Protection from SEA**, as well as agency and organisation-specific commitments, *all personnel involved in the delivery of humanitarian assistance are expected to always uphold the highest standards of personal and professional conduct to protect beneficiaries of assistance.*
- Given the continued risks seen in this emergency, an agreement was reached by the Regional Refugee Coordination Forum (RCF) on the need to establish a PSEA Network in each country (Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Romania, and Moldova).

Introduction:

- PSES is an integral and cross-cutting component of the refugee response plan and is mainstreamed across the refugee response plan.
- It requires dedicated and proactive collective efforts to mitigate and prevent risks. such as joint PSEA risk assessments, partner capacity assessments, capacity building, and training, as well as community outreach and awareness raising with the refugee community.
- **Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Network (hereafter: PSEA Network or network)** is the primary body for technical-level coordination and oversight of PSEA activities in line with the PSEA Action Plan and high-level Strategy in Bulgaria.
- The presence of the PSEA Network **does not lessen the responsibility of individual network members to develop, implement, and strengthen internal PSEA programs at the country level**. Senior management within each member organization is accountable for PSEA within their organizations.

Network Responsibility:

- Implementation of a coordinated activities between the members to minimize the risk of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA)
- To ensure effective response when incidents to arise and awareness of PSEA in Bulgaria
- The network activities will follow a victim-centered approach and will respect the principles of **safety, confidentiality, respect and non-discrimination**
- The network is not responsible for investigating or adjudicating complaints. These functions rest exclusively with the entity that employs the individual against whom a complaint has been alleged.

Membership:

- The PSEA network is co-led by UNHCR and UNICEF and one National NGO (to be elected).
- Each member organisation will be presented by their PSEA focal point. Share on internal PSEA initiatives and coordination of activities under the Action Plan (to be developed).
- The network may form smaller, time-bound task teams of regular members to carry out specific deliverables as needed.
- Network membership is open to all UN agencies, I/NGOs operating in Bulgaria and responding to refugee situation
- The network will convene on monthly basis and additional ad-hoc meetings may be requested.

Tasks of Network (1/3)

- **Management and Coordination**

- Establish and implement a measurable PSEA Network Action Plan with defined time frames and responsibilities of network members based on specialty and capacity.
- To monitor the Action plan deliverables and provide additional support, as required
- Monitor the PSEA activities of Network members to avoid duplication and fill gaps.
- Identify training needs and resources to coordinate trainings for all PSEA focal points and senior management on their specific PSEA roles and responsibilities.
- Advocate for the strengthening and/or establishment of internal PSEA policies and practices for all organizations.

Tasks of Network (2/3)

- **Engagement with and support of the affected population**
 - Raise awareness about the rights of affected population, what is SEA
 - Support members to assess and improve the effectiveness and appropriateness of PSEA activities within the targeted communities
 - Through the engagement of affected population, support members to create and adopt their aid delivery models to address power disparities and actively given those in more vulnerable positions a sustained voice in how aid is delivered.
- **Prevention**
 - Advocate for PSEA to be a priority through the programming and support actors working in operational areas to embed SEA risk mitigation
 - Supplement network members internal initiatives to strengthen SEA prevention through joint activities and sharing good practices.
 - Encourage network members to carry out induction and refresher training on SEA for all personnel and support such trainings.

Tasks of Network (3/3)

- **Response**

- To map trusted and functional complaint feedback mechanism in Bulgaria
- To identify the gaps and provide safe access to affected population to report on SEA.
- To support in establishment of new complaint channels to fill the gaps
- Establish an Inter-Agency community-based complaint mechanism (CBCM)
- Linking network members to the complaint and feedback mechanism through agreed standard operating procedures (SOPs).
- Collectively advocate and work with the relevant sub-sectors and implementing partners to address existing gaps so that needs of all survivors are met.
- To maintain accountability for complaint handling process at country level.

Thank you