

November highlights

The Snr SGBV Officer attended the first ever WFP and UNHCR Joint Regional PSEA Focal Point Workshop from 29 October-01 November, 2019. The workshop which was facilitated by colleagues from the ethics offices of the two organizations brought together over 40 Country Focal Points from the two organizations. In their opening remarks, both the Regional Directors for UNHCR and WFP underscored the high priority placed on PSEA and lauded the cordial collaboration existing between the two organizations which have footprints in the most humanitarian settings, among all the other UN Agencies. Two decades after the first damning SEA reports that shocked the humanitarian world have seen a number of policies and measures put in place to address SGBV and for staff to speak up.

The key areas covered during the workshop included PSEA Key Concepts, Overview and Updates, Risk Assessment and Inter-Agency Coordination through PSEA In-Country Networks. The UN Protocol on Allegations of SEA involving Implementing Partners was discussed in detail, in as far as engaging partners on Protection against SEA and the implications of non-compliance on organizations partnering with the United Nations. The workshop underscored the need to more proactively implement this Protocol to ensure strict compliance by partners. Real life case scenarios were also discussed to give practical insights on how to approach complex cases. The team also had interactive sessions via skype on SEA Reporting and Investigations procedures with the UNHCR IGO team and on Victim Assistance with Ms Jane Connors Victims' Rights Advocate for the United Nations.

A check-list of minimum actions required at country level was discussed and UNHCR Uganda was mostly compliant, having undertaken a lot of prevention, mitigation and response activities in the last year. However, the one area where there was a gap is in the production of locally adapted Information, Education and Communication materials which will be embarked on in the first quarter of 2019. A further follow-up from the meeting will be to organize joint sensitizations with WFP at country level, by end of December 2019. The revival of the National Task Force on Protection Against SEA will also be on top of the next steps agenda, with support from the Resident Coordinator's office. The later has failed to take off as per expectation despite a number of attempts by UNHCR, owing to the lack of a dedicated coordinator at the RC's Office who should assume the lead role. It is hoed that the planned secondment of a PSEA Coordinator at the RC's office will move things along, in this regard. At UNHCR level, a training will be organized for all the newly appointed PSEA Focal Points from the various Sub-offices, in the first quarter of 2020.

SASA Together Training: UNHCR SGBV staff participated in a three- day training on SASA! Together programing organized by UN women and the Resident Coordinator's Office in Entebbe. The training which was facilitated by Raising Voices and Centre for Domestic Violence (CEDOVIP) was aimed at supporting the UN to have a deeper understanding of SASA! Together with a bid to strengthen quality programing and enable positive change in communities where SASA is implemented. In attendance were staff representatives from the 5 UN organizations receiving funding from the EU spotlight Initiative.