

Hungary Task Force on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)

Terms of Reference

Background

Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) is a critical priority of the refugee response in Hungary, requiring dedicated and coordinated action across all programmatic areas, from the outset of the emergency. The risks of sexual exploitation and abuse may be particularly high in the Ukraine emergency, where women and children comprise the majority of refugees. These risks may be further compounded by the overall volatility of the crisis, a lack of awareness amongst refugees regarding their rights and the services available to them, and the large and diverse nature of the actors working in the response, including many volunteers.

PSEA Task Force Responsibilities

Under the auspices of the Refugee Coordinator (UNHCR Representative), the Task Force on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (hereafter: PSEA Task Force) is the primary body for technical-level coordination and oversight of PSEA activities in Hungary. The PSEA Task Force is an integral coordination body of the broader [Refugee Coordination Forum](#) in Hungary.

The PSEA Task Force is responsible for implementing coordinated activities to minimize the risk of sexual exploitation and abuse by individuals and entities involved in the refugee response; to ensure effective response when allegations do arise; and to raise awareness on PSEA in Hungary. The PSEA Task Force activities follow the [victim-centred approach](#) and respect the principles of safety, confidentiality, respect, and non-discrimination.

The presence of the PSEA Task Force does not diminish the responsibility of individual members to develop, implement, and strengthen internal PSEA programs. Senior management within each member organization remains accountable for PSEA within their organizations. At a minimum, all humanitarian organizations in Hungary should ensure that their staff, volunteers and partners, and the beneficiaries of their projects, are aware of PSEA. All organizations should be able to receive and address complaints against their own staff and volunteers, regardless of their relationship to the PSEA Task Force.

The PSEA Task Force is not responsible for investigating or adjudicating individual complaints: these functions rest exclusively with the entity that employs the individual against whom a complaint has been alleged, in line with internal policy and procedures.

PSEA Task Force Roles

The PSEA Coordinator, hosted by UNHCR, supports the PSEA Task Force in the fulfillment of its responsibilities under these TORs and the PSEA Task Force Action Plan. The PSEA Coordinator is responsible for reporting on Task Force activities and progress against PSEA Action Plan indicators, and on anonymized trends, if available, to the Refugee Coordinator. The PSEA Coordinator represents the Task Force in relevant coordination bodies and advises actors in Hungary on good practices to support effective PSEA implementation.

The PSEA Task Force is encouraged to identify an NGO member organization to serve as co-chair. The co-chair will have an active role in convening and managing meetings and events, in coordinating and overseeing activities under the Action Plan, and in leading on thematic areas where they have capacity

and expertise. In situations where the PSEA Coordinator is temporarily unavailable, the coordination role will be performed by the co-chair.

The Task Force may form smaller, time-bound task teams of regular members to carry out specific deliverables as needed.

PSEA Task Force Membership

PSEA Task Force membership is open to all UN agencies, INGOs, and NGOs operating in Hungary. Each member organization is represented in the Task Force by one PSEA Focal Point. PSEA Focal Points shall actively participate in the PSEA Task Force activities, share updates on internal PSEA initiatives, and engage in the activities of the Action Plan. Within their respective organizations, they are responsible for technical support and coordination on PSEA, under the leadership of their senior management.

Membership to the Task Force is also open to Working Groups chairs, to improve two-way coordination on PSEA.

The Task Force will continue to engage in outreach with non-member organizations.

PSEA Task Force Meetings

The PSEA Task Force will convene on a quarterly basis.¹ In the event that the PSEA Focal Point of a Task Force member cannot attend a regularly scheduled Task Force meeting, the member organization will be represented by a dedicated and sufficiently briefed alternate.

PSEA Task Force meetings provide a supporting environment where to discuss technical aspects of PSEA: they are not envisaged as an occasion where to discuss individual SEA individual cases. Any reference to SEA allegations or cases during meetings shall be anonymized.

Meeting notes will be made available to all PSEA Task Force members.

PSEA Task Force Tasks

Management and Coordination

- Carry out SEA risk assessments in Hungary as appropriate and as needed, identifying potential risk factors and areas of concern. The risk assessment outcomes will inform strategic decision-making of senior leadership and the PSEA Task Force Action Plan.
- Collectively establish and implement a measurable PSEA Task Force Action Plan with well-defined timeframes and responsibilities, based on members' capacity and expertise.
- Coordinate the PSEA activities of Task Force members to avoid duplications and gaps.
- Work closely with other coordination bodies in Hungary to mainstream PSEA across all sectors and in the RRP response.
- 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 operating in Hungary, and offer support for this aim as needed, regardless of whether an organization is a Task Force member or not.

¹ In addition, ad-hoc meetings may be requested by any member to address urgent needs, new developments or specific topics requiring dedicated discussion.

Engagement with and support for the affected population²

- Raise awareness about the rights of affected populations, binding standards of conduct (including sexual conduct) for aid workers, the fact that aid workers have a duty to actual or suspected instances of sexual exploitation and abuse, and the various methods to submit complaints and how to access victim assistance services in Hungary.
- Support Task Force members to assess and improve the effectiveness and appropriateness of PSEA activities within the targeted communities.
- With the particular engagement of women and girls with specific needs in the affected population, support members to create and/or adapt their aid delivery models to address power disparities and actively give those in more vulnerable positions a sustained voice in how aid is delivered.

Prevention

- Advocate for the mainstreaming of PSEA throughout programming and support actors working in different operational areas to embed SEA risk mitigation in needs assessment, project design, implementation, and monitoring based on identified trends.
- Supplement Task Force members' internal initiatives to strengthen SEA prevention through joint activities and sharing good practices.
- Encourage Task Force members to carry out induction and refresher trainings on PSEA for all personnel and support such trainings with jointly developed contextualized materials.

Response

- Jointly map trusted and functional complaint and feedback mechanisms in Hungary to identify where there are gaps in the affected population's safe access to report SEA, and support members to establish complaint channels that are safe, confidential, accessible, transparent, and informed by community preferences.
- Establish agreed-upon inter-agency Standard Operating Procedure (SOPs) for the reception, response and referral of allegations of SEA, incorporating the GBV and child protection referral pathways.
- Raise the awareness and support training of protection, GBV, child protection actors, as well as other aid workers who may work with SEA survivors, on how to support (alleged) victims based on the victim-centred approach.

These Terms of Reference shall be reviewed on an annual basis, or as needed, and revised as appropriate.

Budapest, September 2023

² All engagement with populations should be done in coordination with actors working with affected populations, including in protection, GBV and Child Protection, to avoid duplication of efforts and to inform community engagement.