

GBV Sub-Working Group and PSEA Task-Force Moldova

Tip sheet on applying a survivor-centred approach to handling of SEA incidents, including assistance to victims

Understanding the differences between GBV and SEA	
<p>GBV is an umbrella term for any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person’s will and that is based on socially ascribed (i.e. gender) differences between males and females. It includes acts that inflict physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering, threats of such acts, coercion, and other deprivations of liberty. These acts can occur in public or in private.¹</p>	<p>Sexual Exploitation and Abuse are forms of GBV.</p> <p>Sexual Exploitation means any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another.</p> <p>Sexual Abuse means the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.²</p>
Consequences	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Physical, health, mental, economic and social. ✓ Feeling of disempowerment. ✓ Isolation from the community and the family. ✓ Fear of exposure. ✓ Fear of not having livelihoods or financial support when leaving a situation of violence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Physical, health, mental, economic and social. ✓ Feeling of disempowerment. ✓ Isolation from the community and the family. ✓ Fear of exposure. ✓ Fear of retaliation for reporting organizations that are providing assistance. ✓ Fear of being excluded from assistance. ✓ Victims can be reluctant to receive support services for fear of being stigmatized and losing assistance, especially if the alleged perpetrator is employed by the organization providing the service.
Applying a survivor-centred approach to reporting SEA and supporting victims³	
<p><i>For the purpose of providing victim assistance, all individuals who report are assumed to be victims, in order to best meet their needs and also to secure the best possibility of gathering evidence in due course.</i></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Providing safe, quality assistance is part of the accountability of the UN system’s response to SEA. ✓ Every child and adult complainant and victim of SEA has the right to receive services irrespective of whether they cooperate with the investigation or other procedures, regardless of decisions to proceed with an investigation, and regardless of the outcome of the investigation. ✓ Victims are not required to identify the perpetrator or prove that they are victims of SEA to access services. ✓ Assistance should be provided by competent service providers in line with a ‘do no harm’ and victim-centred approach, and respecting informed consent. ✓ Victims should be able to access services, including immediate assistance, such as urgent medical care, safety and protection, shelter, basic material assistance (food, clothing, transportation), psychosocial support, legal services, and support to children. ✓ If available, GBV case management services should be provided, and a case manager or social worker should accompany them throughout the process of service provision. ✓ A victim has the right to make their own decision, including to refuse assistance at any time, even after they began receiving it. They have the right to access support at a later stage if they wish. 	

¹ [UNHCR GBV Policy](#)

² [IASC Victim-Centred Approach to SEA](#)

³ [Technical Note on the Implementation of the UN Protocol on the Provision of Assistance to Victims of SEA](#)

Practical tips to help you implement a survivor-centred approach with SEA victims

- ✓ Know who is your organization's PSEA Focal Point. Do not delay reporting an incident of SEA.
- ✓ Do not try to obtain information about the incident or to conduct an investigation. Doing so can put both you and the victim at risk.
- ✓ Do not share information on the incident, the alleged perpetrator, or the victim with anyone else.
- ✓ Explain to the victim the availability of services and offer support to access them, either in another location or via another service provider, depending on the severity and the risks.
- ✓ When receiving an **SEA allegation that does not come from the victim**:
 - Refer the information to your PSEA focal point, while respecting the confidentiality of the information and of the person making a report.
 - Do NOT seek out the victim to provide assistance as this may create risk of harm to them.
 - Provide information about resources that may be available based on referral pathways.
 - Encourage the person who shared the allegation with you to share this information confidentially with the victim.
- ✓ When receiving an **SEA disclosure directly from the victim**:
 - Treat the victim with dignity and respect. It is your duty to inform them properly about the assistance they are entitled to.
 - Provide the victim with truthful and realistic information.
 - Do not share information about things you are not sure or aware of. This can cause harm.
 - Remember the following steps and **LOOK, LISTEN** and **LINK**.
 1. Introduce yourself (name, role, organization) and assess if the surroundings are safe and confidential, and if there are immediate physical and health risks to the victim.
 2. If there is immediate danger of serious harm, and needs of immediate protective action, urgently refer the case to a GBV actor or Child Protection actor (if the victim is a child).
 3. If you are not a GBV case manager, it is not your role to provide case management to the victim, including to develop a safety or protection plan.
 4. Inform the victim about their rights and your obligation on mandatory reporting of GBV and explain limitations to confidentiality so they evaluate their options and possible outcomes.
 5. If you are not sure about what to do when you encounter a situation of mandatory reporting, contact the GBV and Child Protection Sub-Sectors' leads. See contacts below.
 6. If the victim is a child, always contact a Child Protection actor.
 7. Listen and validate victims' experiences, allowing them to share as much, or as little, information. Do not force them to give information and do not ask probing questions.
 8. Do not try to convince victims to seek support if they do not want to.
 9. Inform the victim about services available and refer them, if they request.
 10. Review the information provided by the victim about the incident, and ask them how and if they would like to be contacted for follow up.

Your role (if you are not the PSEA Focal Point or a GBV service provider) ends here.

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