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TOOLKIT: RESPONSIBLE CASH

Internal and partner capacity strengthening

Strengthening safeguards

What is this document about?

This document provides practical tools to strengthen safeguards in cash transfer programming. The tipsheet on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) explains prohibited conduct, staff responsibilities, and key resources to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse. The consultations guide offers clear steps for engaging with communities, safely and respectfully.

Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) is a key part of safeguarding

The aim of this tipsheet is to help humanitarian actors ...

- understand their **roles and responsibilities** in SEA prevention.
- equip humanitarian actors with tools to **identify risks, prevent and respond to SEA** in Cash operations.
- **build PSEA capacity** and ensure **performance of partners is assessed** (including private sector partners).

Important: PSEA trainings should be delivered by trained PSEA Focal Points or people with appropriate expertise.

IASC PSEA Principles – Prohibited Conduct



NO SECOND CHANCES

- 1** SEA constitutes **acts of gross misconduct** and are grounds for termination of employment.

NO SEX WITH CHILDREN

Sexual activity with children (< 18 years) is **prohibited**.

2

DON'T HIRE/BRIBE ANYONE FOR SEX

3

Exchange of money, employment, goods or services for sex is prohibited, **including hiring prostitutes**.

NO SEX WITH PEOPLE ASSISTED

Any sexual relationship **with people assisted** is prohibited.

4

ALWAYS REPORT SEA

5

Humanitarian workers are **obligated to report** any concerns regarding SEA.

DISCOURAGE SEA AROUND YOU

Humanitarian workers are **obligated** to create and maintain an environment which prevents SEA.

6

To better understand each principle, refer to the [IASC resources here](#)

Definition:

Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA)

Who? Staff + Person the organisation assists

What?

- Abuse of vulnerability, differential power, trust
- Victim's sexual activity generates benefits
- Physical intrusion of a sexual nature
- Use of force or coercion

Examples

- Offering money, gifts, a job (incl prostitution)
- Withholding due services, blackmailing
- Humiliation
- Unwanted kissing, touching, rubbing
- Raping
- Sexual activity with a child (<18 years)

! Your responsibilities !

- ☐ Always **treat the people you assist** with dignity and respect, **follow the IASC principles on PSEA** and **expect this from others**
- ☐ Promptly **report SEA**
- ☐ Undertake internal **training to build capacity** to identify, prevent and respond to SEA
- ☐ Check your partner's (incl. **private sector**) SEA capacity before hiring them, **build their capacity** and request them to adhere to set-up a strong **Customer Protection system**, including ...
 - ☐ A **Code of Conduct**
 - ☐ A strong **feedback & complaints mechanisms, including safe referrals & reporting**

... as part of your contract with partners. To start with, we can provide them with the [Customer Protection Checklist](#).

Key tools & resources:

- ✓ [Inter-Agency Standing Committee \(IASC\) Learning package \[various\]](#)
- ✓ [PSEA at the Frontline – Together We Say No | IASC \[various\]](#)
- ✓ [Prevention of SEA UNICEF. Self-paced e-Learning \[EN\]](#)
- ✓ [Guide to Responding to Sexual Violence in the Aid Workplace \[EN\]](#)
- ✓ [World Bank Toolkit - Supporting Companies to Develop and Manage Community-Based Grievance and Feedback Mechanisms Regarding SEAH \[EN\]](#)



Tips to ensure safe and inclusive consultations with diverse communities

- Consulting communities is key to designing and running good programmes. To do this well, we need to ensure everyone feels included. **Pay attention to specific needs** of [persons with disabilities](#), [indigenous/minority groups](#), [children](#), the elderly etc.
- KEEP IN MIND** Some consultations **may trigger strong emotions and distress**, especially for people facing difficult situations. Here are the key steps on how to handle these situations respectfully and effectively.

Dos and Don'ts during consultations

Do's

- ✓ Engage persons with different abilities, ages, genders, ethnicities & backgrounds. It's usually a good idea to have separate groups for men/women, to ensure people can freely share.
- ✓ If there are barriers to participation (e.g. mobility or other accessibility needs), speak to community members to understand how to facilitate better access to the consultations in advance.
- ✓ Use accessible venues and reduce mobility barriers.
- ✓ Ensure the environment is **safe and non-intimidating & ensure privacy**. If interrupted, find a more private space (where others cannot hear, but see you) to continue or re-schedule.
- ✓ Speak clearly and use simple language - where necessary provide sign language interpreters or other aids.
- ✓ **Listen attentively**. Use phrases like "I see," or "Please continue" and positive body language to prompt sharing.
- ✓ If someone shows signs of distress (panic attacks, or severe trauma), follow the **key steps on the right** and prioritize connecting them with professionals.
- ✓ Keep **local support services contact info at hand**.
- ✓ Offer a break if the discussion feels triggering.
- ✓ Terminate the consultation if the person wishes to stop or if continuing could cause harm.
- ✓ **Be open** to adjusting plans based on participant feedback.

Don'ts

- ✗ **Don't assume** needs or judge: Avoid generalizing or making assumptions about e.g. disabilities, cultures or preferences.
- ✗ **Don't rush**: Allow people to share at their own pace.
- ✗ **Don't interrupt** people – listen carefully.
- ✗ **Don't dismiss** people's feelings or ignore emotions.
- ✗ **Don't make promises you can't keep**.
- ✗ **Don't impose** advice or actions; allow people to choose.

Explore these existing tools

- [GBV Pocketguide](#) [EN]
- [Recognising and Referring Child Protection Concerns Rapid guide for all humanitarian workers](#) [EN]
- [UNDIS: Consulting Persons with Disabilities](#) (Part 3) [EN]

How to communicate with people in distress

Here are the key steps adapted from the inter-agency approved approach for **psychological first aid from the IASC**:

1... Prepare

- Seek information on **referral pathways** (e.g. context-specific key messages and referral contact for gender-based violence, child protection issues, etc).

2... Look

- Remain alert to **sensitive issues**. Allow people in distress to approach you.
- Address **urgent basic needs** (e.g. first aid, shade, water).
- Recognize what you can and cannot manage. If necessary, ask someone else to step in.

3... Listen

- **Without judgement and with respect** to the confidentiality of the information received.
- Allow people to share as much or as little information as they would like to.
- It is not your role to provide counselling.
- *Remember: Being present while demonstrating active listening is supportive in itself. Here are some tips:*
 - Let people talk without interrupting. Show you're listening and stay engaged (such as nodding, making eye contact, or saying things like "I am listening"/ "It sounds like a difficult situation...")
 - Do not investigate or ask probing questions to avoid causing harm.

4... Link

- Where required, link the survivor/person to relevant services, ensuring the right of the person to make **their own decision**.
- Refer: "I am not an expert in this, but I can connect you with someone who can...you."

Note: If a child is at risk of harm, refer directly to [child protection actor](#).

Adapted from the IASC [GBV Pocketguide](#)

REMEMBER: Engaging on sensitive topics can also be overwhelming for humanitarian staff. Reflect and decompress with colleagues and if necessary, reach out to professional support to protect your mental well-being.