



RESOURCE
& SUPPORT
HUB

Country Safeguarding Assessment

The Resource and Support Hub

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Acronyms

CBCM	Community Based Complaints Mechanism
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DFID	Department for International Development
GBV	Gender Based Violence
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IEC	Information, Education and Communication Materials
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
NNGO	National Non-Governmental Organization
PSEA	Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
PWD	Persons with Disabilities
RSH	The Resource and Support Hub
SEA	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
SEAH	Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment
SGBV	Sexual and Gender based Violence
UNDP	United Nations Development Fund
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNMISS	United Nations Mission in South Sudan
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WFP	World Food Programme

Executive Summary

This report provides an analysis of the safeguarding landscape in South Sudan with the aim of informing the design and operationalization of the South Sudan Resource and Support Hub. The South Sudan country assessment is intended to provide more details on the legal, policy, practice and culture on safeguarding, what has been done to address SEAH / safeguarding, the resources available, strength, gaps and needs. It further identified priority areas of focus, key stakeholders and provide recommendations on what should be the immediate priorities and opportunities for the operationalization of the South Sudan hub.

Conducted between September 2020 - January 2021, the country assessment utilized a combination of desk review of secondary data, online survey and an in-depth number of key informant interviews with UN agencies, NGO sector, government institutions and CSOs. The scope of the assessment was limited COVID – 19 restrictions. National restrictions that curbed social gatherings prevented face to face and focus group discussions of the targeted stakeholders. Similarly, limited access to internet especially for local organizations restricted their participation in the online survey.

The report provides a background on the assessment, the rationale and the methodology. It then delves on the country context for SEAH systems, the legislature and rights instruments and its applicability to the aid sector. This is followed by mapping key stakeholders and influential actors and a synopsis of safeguarding tools, resources available and accessibility to the national and local users. The report further assesses the safeguarding capacity of national and local actors and body of studies and evidence on SEAH in South Sudan. It concludes with recommendations on how the RSH can complement the existing initiatives, possible interventions, priority areas and key stakeholders.

South Sudan has ratified a number of international conventions as well as developed key legislations that safeguards and protects the rights of children and adults since its independence in 2011. Specifically, it has enacted legal instruments that criminalizes sexual harassment at work through the Penal Code and the Labour act. Rape, sex work, adultery are also prohibited by both the statutory and customary laws of South Sudan; when reported to authorities, they can be treated as criminal cases. Whilst the country does not have expressed provisions under its law that govern homosexuality, discriminatory attitudes towards homosexuality are widespread in South Sudan and it is considered a taboo issue. This creates a significant risk and has impact on staff safeguarding. It necessitates that aid and development organizations promote understanding of local laws and ensure that safeguarding policies are aligned to the local context.

However, despite the availability of laws and rights instruments, it must be underscored that sexual and gender-based violence are widespread. Patriarchal norms, gender inequality, negative social norms embolden an environment that tolerate SEAH among society as well as the aid sector. The RSH will be operating in this context, it however can play a role in creating a space for dialogue and advocacy, encourage localization of global safeguarding policies and support CSOs by strengthening their capacity in governance and accountability for safeguarding.

Safeguarding is spearheaded by the aid sector in South Sudan. The PSEA taskforce is the main coordinator and covers all UN agencies, INGOs and NNGOs and has laid a foundation for a system wide planning, implementation including coordination of interventions on PSEA in South Sudan. Other key stakeholders include the NGO forum that provides PSEA capacity building for its members, the GBV sub cluster, the South

Sudan Civil Society Forum and the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare that bridges the aid sector and the government.

In terms of the safeguarding tools, resources available, it is evident that the tools and resources available are useful for larger organisations, and of good quality. Existing tools and resources, whilst of good quality, have, however, been developed by larger organisations and are not easily used or adapted by smaller organisations. There is demand to provide technical guidance and support through resources that are better suited to CSOs and small organizations that have limited capacity and knowledge on safeguarding.

Many organizations extend their internal safeguarding policies and procedures with partners and with beneficiaries in form of awareness on reporting complaints mechanism. Examples of referral pathways so far proved effective in addressing SEA in communities. The PSEA taskforce together with the GBV sub cluster developed the referral pathway to facilitate timely access for survivors and promoted the implementation of common standards on preventing and responding to SEA. Regular meetings have given access to many to share information and learn from other partners. However, case reporting remains fairly low, the legal context for reporting cases may be preventing individuals from raising concerns whilst also hampering organisations' efforts to handle cases effectively.

Key findings of the assessment also confirm that there remains a **lack of understanding or implementation of an organization development approach which identifies how to strengthen organisational capacity across the different teams or departments** that play a significant role on safeguarding. Partnership arrangements are proving particularly challenging with the larger partners often working to a safeguarding policy, but the smaller partners lacking policy, procedures and knowledge on how to effectively develop and implement these. This suggest that there is an opportunity for the RSH to facilitate learning around successful implementation of safeguarding policies.

There is **an established body of research and evidence on safeguarding in South Sudan** but there remains little evidence available in South Sudan on the scale and prevalence of the issue and the impact of existing measures to prevent and respond to SEAH. RSH South Sudan can make global or other country evidence available to CSOs but can also explore opportunities for supporting or conducting research into SEAH.

The RSH will need to situate itself as a resource point and establish itself as a key player in the community of practice in South Sudan. The hub needs to strengthen collaboration and information sharing with stakeholders. Stakeholder engagement efforts need to build upon the coordination and engagement that is already being done by the PSEA Network but extend that reach to encompass CSOs who are not currently benefitting from the PSEA network activities. In addition, the RSH can play a valuable role in working with government on setting safeguarding standards for the aid and development sector working within the country and on strengthening effective and safe mechanisms for reporting and referral to formal authorities.

Since many of the CSOs who will be RSH target audience are based in states with limited internet connectivity, **RSH will need to explore alternatives to reach those who are not virtually connected.** This might involve assessing with the local resource centres at the states level where some offline learning and support can be provided for local organizations.

The Country Assessment includes seven recommendations for RSH:

1. Build capacity of organisations to increase knowledge on specific risks and issues that organisations face in South Sudan and strengthen approaches to risk management

2. Strengthen organisations to develop and maintain a safeguarding culture and adopt effective leadership, governance and accountability approaches for safeguarding
3. Support organisations to adopt disability inclusive safeguarding practices
4. Strengthen organisations' capacity to establish effective reporting mechanisms and adopt survivor centred responses
5. Facilitate opportunities to discuss and agree on how to more effectively integrate safeguarding in partnerships
6. Coordinate and collaborate with stakeholders across different sectors in South Sudan to increase knowledge and implementation of good practices on safeguarding
7. Build the capacity of CSOs through a blended learning approach

1. Introduction

As part of the initiatives announced at the 18 October 2018 international summit on *Putting People First: Tackling Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment in the Aid Sector*, the Resource and Support Hub (RSH), a programme funded by the UK Department of International Development (DFID) aims to support organisations in the aid sector to strengthen their safeguarding policy and practice, particularly against Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Sexual Harassment (SEAH). South Sudan has been identified as a pilot country to establish a Resource and Support Hub given its conflict related context and the presence of a large humanitarian and development aid sector in the country.

The South Sudan country assessment consequently aims to provide an in-depth analysis of the safeguarding landscape in the country that can inform the design of the national hub. Specifically, it will assess what has been done in addressing SEAH in South Sudan, resources available, strengths and gaps and identify priority areas of focus for the operationalization of the South Sudan hub. The primary source of data for the assessment will include desk review, online survey and key informant interviews with key stakeholders.

This report examines fundamental areas that the ensuing findings will contribute to achieving the overall purpose of the of the program.

First, analyses the country context for SEAH /safeguarding systems. It analyses the legislation and rights instruments, draw issues that are prevalent and impact on SEAH and identify protection risks. This section further analyses the applicability of these instruments to the aid sector, its scope and coverage and gauge whether there are monitoring mechanisms to ensure effectiveness of services that support safeguarding in South Sudan;

Second, the report maps key stakeholders for safeguarding such as influential actors who bring about change that impact at country level. It assesses key successes and challenges and take note of effective approaches whether these are organizationally led, government driven or indigenous practices with communities. This section then provides an overview of effectiveness and relevance of available safeguarding initiatives in the country;

Third, the report assesses the safeguarding capacity of national and local actors. This is conducted by means of an online survey targeting respondents nationwide. Targets include majorly local organizations and focuses on responses to prevent and respond to SEAH, challenges and capacity gaps. Findings from the survey is further analysed to identify existing strengths and gaps;

Fourth, the report provides a synopsis of safeguarding tools and resources available and accessibility to national and local users. It analyses the quality, relevance and usefulness of such tools and resources and whether they are consistent with international standards. This section further compiles a database of service providers in country;

Fifth, it maps the body of studies and evidence on SEAH/ safeguarding in South Sudan and compiles all relevant researches on SEAH in the aid sector and summarize the state of evidence, main strengths and gaps;

Finally, the report draws recommendations that will inform interventions and priority areas for the South Sudan hub. These includes potential key stakeholders, national priorities and capacity building areas.

2. Methodology

The country assessment was conducted between September 2020 - January 2021. The primary research conducted combined desk review of secondary data, online survey with a total number of 58 respondents nationwide, majorly national and community-based organizations and an in-depth number of key informant interviews with UN agencies, NGO sector, government institutions and CSOs. Findings from the data was subsequently analysed to identify the different initiatives on safeguarding, existing strengths and gaps, draw lessons and identify priority areas.

The scope of the assessment was limited by a number of factors. The national restriction imposed by the Government of the Republic of South Sudan as a response to curb the spread of COVID-19 was a major setback to the assessment. These restrictions among others prohibited social gatherings hence curtailed efforts to reach many organizations through face to face meetings or focus group discussions. The spread of the pandemic similarly led to an unprecedented cut in funding from donors and as a result some national organizations had to close their operations.

Although effort was exerted to reach organizations nationwide through the online survey, the response was limited as many local organizations and particularly rural ones do not have access to internet. In the context of South Sudan, internet is quite costly and many at the states or grassroots beyond the capital Juba struggle with accessibility. Face to face or focus group discussions could have been the best alternative for data collection had it not been for the COVID-19 restrictions.

3. Country context for SEAH/safeguarding – systems mapping

3.1. Legislation and rights instruments which support SEAH/safeguarding

South Sudan is the newest country in the world that gained independence on 9 July 2011. It has however been ravaged by a number of conflicts since 2013 that subjected its citizens to enormous violence including sexual and gender-based violence raising serious challenges in relation to safeguarding children and adults from violence, sexual exploitation and abuse. Impunity is pervasive and remains a major challenge.

A revitalized agreement on the resolution of conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS) 2018¹ was signed in order to bring peace and stability to the country and chapter five of the R-ARCSS on transitional justice attempts to address the conflict related violations through

¹ R-ARCSS 2018

provisions on the establishment of a Commission for Truth, Healing and Reconciliation (CTHR) and the Hybrid Court of South Sudan (HCSS). The implementation of these provisions is yet to commence.

The Government of the Republic of South Sudan promulgated a Transitional Constitution of the Republic of South Sudan (2011), which is the supreme law of the land and has consolidated a number of policies and legal frameworks on the rights of children and protection of adults. The Transitional Constitution of the Republic of South Sudan for instance has espoused a Bill of Rights that provides in Article 17(2) of the TCRSS, 2011 (as amended) that in all actions concerning children undertaken by public and private welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the paramount consideration shall be the best interest of the child². This provision is very important as it demands that the interest of a child supersedes that of adults in matters concerning the welfare of the child. Similarly, the Bill of rights directs all levels of government in Article 16 (4) (b) to enact laws to combat harmful customs and traditions which undermine the dignity and status of women among other measures as safeguard to promote women interests.

South Sudan has further ratified some international conventions that has helped as a reference in the development of some policies and domestic laws. These include

- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), 4 May 2015 and
- The UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in September 2014.³
- In September 2018, the government signed the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child Optional Protocol on the prohibition of the Recruitment and Use of Children in Armed Conflict.
- The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and
- The International Convention of Economic Social and cultural Rights (ICESCR).

3.1.1. National Legal Frameworks safeguarding the rights and welfare of women, children, persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups

Following the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005⁴, the Government of the Republic of South Sudan established the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare and mandated it to promote gender equality, social justice, and safeguard the rights and welfare of women, children, persons with disability and other vulnerable groups, establish women's empowerment initiatives, facilitate development of

² The Transitional Constitution of South Sudan, 2011

³ Refer to the United Nations Convention on Elimination of all forms of Violence Against Women (CEDAW)

⁴ The Sudan Comprehensive Peace Agreement <https://peacemaker.un.org/node/1369>

national programmes and sectoral policies for implementation by line ministries across the country.

The Ministry has since developed a number of policies and National Action Plans (NAPs) aimed at meeting its mandate. These include the National Gender Policy, 2013,⁵ which aims at promoting gender equality and women's empowerment and addresses gender-based violence and the South Sudan National Action Plan (NAP) on the implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 which addresses among others; issues of protection of women and girls from all forms of structural and physical violence, including SGBV; and provide women and girls with access to justice mechanisms; increase women's participation and inclusion of their interests in decision-making processes related to the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts; enhance women and girls' safety and physical and mental health; and respect and observe human rights.

The Government has also developed a number of other legislations that safeguards and protect the rights of children and adult such as;

- The Local Government Act (2009)⁶
- The Child Act (2008)⁷
- The Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) Act 2013
- The Labour Law 2017
- The Code of Criminal Procedure Act (2008)⁸,
- The Penal Code Act (2008).

3.1.2. Legal Instruments and Protection from Sexual harassment at work place

The government of South Sudan has enacted legal instruments that criminalize sexual harassment at work. For example, section 395 of the Penal code Act (2008) defined sexual harassment to be:

(1) whoever uses his or her position of authority or advantage to:

(a) offer a benefit in exchange for sexual favors;

(b) intimidate another person or threaten retaliation if such person refuses to engage in any type of sexual relations;

(c) engage in any unwanted physical contact of a sexual nature with respect to another person, including but not limited to inappropriate touching, commits the offence of sexual harassment.

⁵ Refer to the South Sudan National Gender Policy 2013

⁶ South Sudan Local Government Act (2009)

⁸ South Sudan Code of Criminal Procedure Act (2008)

Section 396 of Penal Code States that whoever intentionally engages in sexual harassment commits an offence, and upon conviction, shall be sentenced to imprisonment for a term not exceeding three years, liable to a fine or both.

The Labour Act, 2017 has also provided protection against sexual harassment at work. Section 7(1) provides that no person shall sexually harass an employee or an employer. This shall be an offense against an employee and which by its nature has a detrimental effect on that employee's job performance or satisfaction. (2) An employer shall ensure that no person shall sexually harass an employee in the course of such employee's work for the employer. (3) An employer who employs twenty or more employees shall, after consulting with the employees' representatives, issue a policy statement on sexual harassment. (4) The policy statement shall contain, at a minimum: (a) the definition of sexual harassment as specified in section 5 of the Labour Act; and (b) a statement: (i) that every employee is entitled to work that is free of sexual harassment; (ii) that the employer shall take steps to ensure that no employee is subjected to sexual harassment; (iii) that the employer shall take such disciplinary measures as the employer deems appropriate against any person under the employer's direction who subjects any employee to sexual harassment; (iv) that provides the process for bringing complaints of sexual harassment to the attention of the employer; (v) that the employer will not disclose the name of a complainant or the circumstances related to the complaint to any person except where disclosure is necessary for the purpose of investigating the complaint or taking disciplinary measures in relation thereto; and - 18 - (vi) that an employee who brings a complaint of sexual harassment in good faith shall not be disciplined, demoted, dismissed or otherwise prejudiced in such employee's employment with the employer as a consequence.

These provisions are meant to be the safeguards against sexual harassment at work across the Republic of South Sudan.

3.1.3. Adultery, sex work and homosexuality

Adultery is a crime under both the statutory and customary laws of the Republic of South Sudan. Section 51 of the Criminal Procedure Act, 2008 provides for prosecution for adultery and enticing a married woman. However, the act states that no public prosecution Attorney, Magistrate or Court shall take cognizance of an offence under section 255,267 or 396 of the Penal Code, except upon a complaint made by the spouse or the aggrieved person. This is the same with customary laws of the Republic of South Sudan whereby a complainant has to file a case against a defendant alleging adultery.

With regards to prostitution (sex work), this is an offence under Section 252 of the Penal Code Act, 2008 which states that whoever publicly solicits another person for the purposes of prostitution commits the offence of soliciting, and upon conviction shall be sentenced to imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months with a fine or with both.

The Penal Code under Section 253, goes further to criminalized living off or facilitating prostitution as an offence and whoever keeps a brothel; or demands from a prostitute any

payment or reward in consideration of a person keeping, managing or assisting in the keeping of a brothel in which the prostitute is, or has been, living for immoral purposes; having solicited other persons for immoral purposes on behalf of the prostitute; or having effected the prostitutes' entry into brothel for purpose of prostitution; or having brought or assisted in bringing the prostitute into South Sudan for immoral purposes; or demands from prostitute payment or reward in consideration for any present or past immoral connection with the prostitute, commit the offence of facilitating prostitution.

The government has not issued official or written policy on enforcement of sex work law, but it appears that there is no official policy in place to tolerate sex work and to limit the number of law enforcement to where there are serious complaints, disturbances or abuse of minors or sexual exploitation.

Rape is prohibited by law. This means that a person should not have sexual intercourse with another without his or her consent. Persons under the age of 18 years are presumed not to be capable of giving consent to sex. This means that having sexual intercourse with a person under the age of 18 years amounts to an offence, since the person is not capable in law of giving consent.

Offences such as rape, adultery and sex work are criminalized in South Sudan, therefore, when such cases are perpetrated within organizations and are reported to authorities, they will be treated as criminal cases. This necessitates that aid and development organizations promote understanding of local laws and ensure that safeguarding policies are aligned to the local context. The RSH can play a complimentary role in creating a space for dialogue in relation to localization of global safeguarding policies and support CSOs to strengthen their leadership, governance and accountability for safeguarding.

LGBTQI is considered a taboo under the customary practices in South Sudan. It will be important to support organizations on how to safeguard diverse groups of staff and communities and how to safely report and refer cases where e.g. the subject of concern and the survivor are of the same sex to ensure the report and referral can be done safely and protect those involved.

3.2. Implementation of government policy

3.2.1. Application to aid and development sector

South Sudan legal system is built on the combination of statutory and customary laws. The government has enacted dozens of laws since 2005, but their use in legal disputes and courts is limited. This is due to poor dissemination of laws; little experience with the new statutory provisions; and lack of access to statutory courts limit the relevance of the new laws and above all, the issue of poor infrastructure of the rule of law.

It is worth mentioning that South Sudan's pluralist legal system grants customary courts concurrent jurisdiction, and they often operate alongside statutory courts. The Local Government Act, of 2009 codifies the recognition of customary law courts in South Sudan. These courts are to decide cases within their jurisdiction based on "the customs, traditions, norms and ethics of the communities." Consequently, customary courts are the preferred option, and an estimated 90% of disputes in South Sudan are handled by them⁹

Given that many cases in South Sudan involve familial disputes and sexual transgressions, some suggest that the "customary interface" requirement is often met. In practice, it is often unclear whether the dispute qualifies as customary, and chiefs often adjudicate matters that are clearly outside their jurisdiction, such as homicide or theft.

Procedures among customary courts vary. In urban areas, an adaptation to formalistic proceedings of statutory courts is discernible. The educational level of the chief and, if available, court clerk also determines formalization of procedure.

The laws used for adjudication in customary courts are a mix of traditional practice, the discretion of the chief, statutory provisions known to the chief and negotiation between the parties.

With regard to application of laws to the aid and development sector, the government of South Sudan has been keen to monitor and possibly control the activities of NGOs and Civil Societies in general, particularly where they are receiving significant funding from foreign donors (be they international aid agencies or other donors) and the fears of foreign interference in the affairs of the country through these NGOs or Civil Society. The NGOs Act, 2016 determined that only organisations registered by the South Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (SSRRC) shall be allowed to operate in the country within the scope of what has been registered.

The Act requires NGOs to register and submit to constant monitoring by the government. This includes information regarding all known or probable sources of its funding among others. In order to keep its registration, the NGO will also have to submit to government monitoring, evaluation, and auditing of all its activities. This monitoring and evaluation appear to focus on sources of funds and activities and little on whether organizations have adequate safeguards in place to protect staff and communities where the organizations operate in. This could be an opportunity to explore and advocate government to strengthen the registration requirements to include safeguarding.

There is also no definitive evidence of government investigations and prosecution of cases of violations in the aid sector. A recent case that got public attention was the allegation of transactional sex with local women living in the protection of civilian sites by the Ghanaian peacekeepers in Wau. The Government of South Sudan through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs condemned the UN Mission for not living up to its objectives and mandate and called for an independent or joint investigation¹⁰. It is not clear however how the case was finally resolved.

Another case in one of the states involved a national staff of UNICEF who was alleged to have married a minor. This was investigated internally by UNICEF and the staff's contract was terminated after facts were established. While marrying a minor is an offense, it is

⁹ https://www.nyulawglobal.org/globalex/South_Sudan.html

¹⁰ <https://www.devex.com/news/despite-the-un-s-zero-tolerance-policy-sexual-exploitation-continues-in-south-sudan-92270>

commonly being practiced in the rural areas of South Sudan and perpetrators get away with it. As such this case was never criminalized by the authorities. Although there are no clear reports and evidence of violations and sexual exploitation in the aid sector, this does not necessarily rationalize that Sexual exploitation, harassment and abuse do not happen, but rather inadequate reporting mechanisms and institutional capacity, inadequate expertise and information /awareness to the victims on the existence of laws that protect them and largely lack of law enforcement .

3.2.2. Scope, coverage and effectiveness of services which support safeguarding

Community Based Complaints Mechanisms (CBCM) are reporting mechanisms that integrate the role of formal and informal community-based structures in revealing SEAH concerns faced by community members in an all-inclusive and culturally appropriate manner. CBCMs primarily serve beneficiaries and are common to all agencies in a given location, simple/consistent, and co-designed with community inputs and there are various formal and informal avenues for collecting feedback from community. The CBCM takes note of these and strengthens those that will be adopted by the community as channels of SEA cases.

The national PSEA taskforce in 2017 identified 10 locations to establish CBCMs in South Sudan. The national PSEA TF has made agreements over which agencies will lead and support the process in the 10 locations, but all UN agencies and particularly humanitarian protection actors should be engaged actively at the field level together with the community members. The process has been on going and is at different levels in different locations with leadership from individual UN agencies as agreed upon. Steps to guide the process were identified in November 2017 after a one-day CBCM workshop with the taskforce.

In some parts of the country ,there are partners who are trained on clinical management of rape and are able to provide quality medical services for SGBV survivors including other injuries. This opportunity for the training was an initiation between the National Ministry of Gender and its partner organizations, National Ministry of Health and UNFPA as the lead to ensure that medical personnel in remote area are all equipped with skills and knowledge to support survivors of SGBV who cannot access medical facility. However there are taboos that mean women and girls stay silent because of fear of retaliation and stigma that may further harm them and that has made many women and girls uncomfortable to speak about any cases of sexual and gender based violence or SEAH.

Psychosocial support is also a basic skills that provides recovery support for survivors of both PSEAH/SGBV and there is a pool of trained social workers from the National and state ministry of gender who provides Psychosocial support, community sensitization and make referrals of SGBV survivors for available service and anyone who reports cases of sexual exploitation and abuse will be provided with necessary support and effective

referral will be made because they are already trained on that and mapping of who does what and where have been done in most locations.

Most organizations have trained staff who provide case management to the survivors or SGBV and also SEAH. The case managers are trained by different international organizations including CARE and also UNFPA in order for them to provide effective case management to support the survivors

As for the government, the South Sudan National Police Service have formed a unit that deals with cases related to violence against women. Special Protection units liaise with the legal and justice systems to ensure that the perpetrators are held accountable. The South Sudan Police Service works together with the different organizations to ensure that most activities are coordinated and follow up is made until the safety of the survivor is reassured and the perpetrator is held accountable for the practice committed. The justice system provides free services and representation at the court.

Concerning the referral systems, there are many GBV actors through the GBV sub cluster and the National ministry of gender who have support the development of the system that is supporting the community and the survivors to access quality and timely services.

The GBV sub cluster developed a referral pathway which contains contact persons and the various organizations that provides services to survivors of GBV including PSEA which includes medical services, psychosocial support and case management which is provided by the different aid workers (INGO's and NNGO's) in specific locations, and as a shared responsibility and the partnership mandate, the protection part of the service is being handled by the South Sudan National Police (protection units) with the personnel trained by the aid workers on how to work with survivor while following the basic guiding principles (confidentiality, respect, safety and security and non-discrimination and above all the different aid sectors (UNFPA) and the Ministry of health also provided clinical management of rape trainings to the medical personnel at the government owned medical facilities to provide services to all and as part of giving information, massive awareness is being conducted in the communities on the availability on such services which is free of charge.

Crown the Women (#623#) and UNICEF have set up a hotline (toll free call) for reporting any forms of SEAH by aid workers and for provision of free Psychosocial support, reporting and referrals for both survivors of SEAH and SGBV.

The South Sudan PSEAH taskforce and UNICEF established a hotline and radio jingles to enable community members report all forms of exploitation and abuse by aid workers.

3.2.3. Resources available

Many international and national NGOs have made several efforts to develop policies on PSEAH, PSEA and or child safeguarding depending on the focus of the organization. UN

agencies for instance, have PSEAH policy that staff have to sign at the job entry point together with the code of conduct. As such, the UN agencies participate in a joint project to maintain a system-wide database called "Clear Check" to ensure that former personnel involved in substantiated cases of sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse with one entity in the UN system cannot be employed by another entity. The UN further requires all personnel to take inter-agency on-line training courses on preventing sexual exploitation and abuse, and sexual harassment in the workplace. The courses, available at UNICEF's learning site [Agora](#), stress the standards of conduct expected of all personnel, the consequences of breaching them, and the impact of sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse on those affected and their families.

Plan international, International Rescue Committee, Save the Children, Oxfam, CARE international, World vision and other CSO's like Crown the women, Eve Organization for Women's Development and Health link are among the organisations that already have existing policies either on PSEAH, PSEA, or child safeguarding. These organizations have developed/adopted training materials to support their staff on the prevention of sexual abuse, exploitation and harassment.

Other stakeholders such as the GBV sub cluster and protection cluster and the National Ministry of Gender, Child and Social welfare have been very instrumental in supporting and developing PSEAH, child safeguarding policies to the different partners to ensure they have contextualized policy in place that support and protect staff from doing harm and that the reporting mechanism is made clear and easily accessible by all.

WFP, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNMISS have a designated person in place who support the organization on safeguarding /PSEAH issues. Local organizations attached the safeguarding responsibilities to the existing staff such as in human resources, Ethics or SGBV focal persons within the organization.

UNDP have developed IEC materials for PSEAH and disseminated to their staff and the community to raise aware and share information on reporting mechanism. The agency is also committed not to partner with entities that fail to appropriately address sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment.

3.3. Protection risks and issues which persist or are prevalent and impact on SEAH/safeguarding

Negative attitudes of the community towards women and persons with disabilities are one of the major barriers against the inclusion and equal participation of persons with disabilities in all spheres of life because there is limited awareness on disability issues among policy makers, planners, community leaders and the population in general.

Women and girls and particularly those with disabilities are constrained by traditional gender roles and barriers where they are less likely to get an education, receive vocational training or find employment. Despite various interventions, lack of public awareness, negative community attitudes, cultural beliefs and lack of programmes on specific concerns of women and girls with disabilities remains a challenge.

Given the challenges exacerbated by the negative beliefs and societal norms, women and girls with disabilities become more prone to suffer abuses such as physical and sexual abuses and harassment compared to others.

Lack of school structures and no access to school in some parts of the country continue to present major barriers in access to education for the majority of South Sudanese children. In addition, parents keep their children at home to take care of the cattle and perform domestic chores. Girls are kept at home to protect their values as economic assets while sexual violence against women and girls is widespread and underreported. Practices such as child marriage and girl compensation are socially and culturally accepted in South Sudan. Such marriages are not reported including incidents of sexual violence and rape which are culturally discussed and sorted out sometimes resulting in perpetrators marrying their victims.

For survivors, barriers to reporting can include: lack of information on clear reporting lines, lack of faith in the system and fear of retaliation from perpetrators due to lack of proper protection of survivors. Survivors are also reluctant as there is no substantial result or incentive for reporting. Organizations need to make a commitment to establish clear and safe reporting channels and to engage in awareness raising in context specific forums that are created jointly with communities.

The Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) Task Force of South Sudan has translated the awareness principles into various languages to accompany the community-based complaints mechanisms.

Awareness-raising efforts and reporting channels should have clear, measurable indicators of their effectiveness and ways of measuring quality. Lack of faith in the system and accountability are a major concern. The perception that nothing happens when a report is filed must be addressed, which requires creating trust that reporting will result in measures to address the incident – as well as address existing inequalities which support its perpetuation.

4. PSEAH/safeguarding in national/local aid and development sector

4.1. Key stakeholders for SEAH/safeguarding

The constitution of the Republic of South Sudan has mandated the National Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare the responsibility to promote gender equality, social justice, and safeguard the rights and welfare of women, children, persons with disability and other vulnerable groups and foresee the formulation and implementation of policies and legislations that promotes gender equality, women's empowerment, child protection

and welfare as well as social protection in South Sudan, The ministry takes lead on issues related to SEAH, GBV, Child protection and disability concerns by addressing barriers and creating an enabling environment for women's participation and equal participation with men and they lead in several levels of sub cluster and coordination meetings together with other partner organizations including the UN Agencies.

The South Sudan PSEA taskforce leads in coordination and collaboration with partners and also work closely with the ministry of gender in providing inputs on contextualized policies relating to PSEAH and gender-based violence. The PSEA task force co -chair the different level of meeting with its UN partner members including UNICEF, IOM, WFP, UNDP, UNFPA, UNMISS who work within the UN mandate. These UN bodies have developed different policies on PSEA /safeguarding and have trained their staff and developed a reporting mechanism within their systems and developed IEC materials for awareness raising. The PSEA taskforce also developed a checklist to monitor complains and publicising reports and advocacy on rising issues related to the PSEAH and gender-based violence.

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) is one of the International organizations in South Sudan who have developed their radio network policy and approaches to communicating safeguarding to the people and also have their IEC materials /Using pictures as part of their effort to end all forms of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse ,there are other international organization who have also moved well in ensuring there is no SEA amongst staff and the community we serve for example CARE, OXFAM, Save the Children, Plan International, World Vision.

CSO's like Eve organization for Women Development, Crown the women and Health Link developed their training PSEA training module for staff and conducted community awareness raising on safeguarding and PSEAH through popular radio stations in Juba such as Miraya FM, Capital FM and Eye radio. There are also established toll free numbers as a reporting mechanism which is free for the community and schools to call when they face any inconvenience regarding SEAH by aid workers during service delivery.

All Governmental institutions are involved in SEAH work in one way or the other; apart from the National ministry of gender, child and social welfare, there are the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and the RRC.

4.2. Key successes and challenges in safeguarding in sector

In some State and National hospitals, "one-stop" centres have been established to facilitate access to essential services for survivors of gender-based violence. These centres offer medical, psychosocial and legal assistance in a single facility, and employ staff who have received targeted training in the clinical management of rape (CMR),

psychosocial support, case management and ethical guidelines for working with survivors of SGBV including physicians, nurses, midwives, social workers and counsellors. As of January 2020, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) has supported nine “one-stop” centres in Juba, Bor, Kapoeta, Malakal, Malualkon (Aweil), Rumbek, Torit, Wau and Yambio which are actively supporting the community.

The PSEA taskforce together with the GBV sub cluster developed a referral system in all the 10 states that facilitate timely access for survivors to services and they monitor and report on all grave violations committed against any forms of violence and abuse. By establishing referral pathways for children and adult survivors of SGBV, this has improved on the coordination systems with the government organs, UNICEF and UN agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other child protection actors.

The PSEA were able to set up a reporting mechanism which has been adopted by organizations to apply principles of good complaints and response systems to cases of sexual exploitation and abuse by staff ,they have done several trainings for the INNGO’s and NGO staff through the Investigations Learning Programme (LP) on conducting fair, thorough and confidential investigations into complaints of sexual exploitation and abuse of survivors. The PSEA Taskforce promoted the implementation of common standards on preventing and responding to sexual exploitation and abuse through working with national and regional networks;

The UNDP and the UNFPA do publish Guidelines on complaints mechanisms and investigation procedures and a training Handbook containing the Investigations Learning Programme and the Secretary Generals Bulletins which says any acts of sexual exploitation or sexual abuse committed by UN staff members or persons under contract with the UN “constitute acts of serious misconduct and are therefore grounds for disciplinary measures, including summary dismissal.”

The regular meetings that are being chaired by the PSEAH Taskforce has made it simple and have given access to many to share information and learn from the other partners, and of course during the coordination meetings, different documents and agenda are presented and partners provides inputs hence workload is reduce and the level of participation shows a different level of commitments in the PSEA/Safeguarding move.

Challenges include but not limited to:

- (a) Lack of data, majority of the stakeholders do not have data or information to share when they are asked to produce them and most of them will refer you to the UN to give information which at times makes it a little challenging in the follow up
- (b) Funding gaps have always been an issue as most organizations and institutions tend to focus only on the project related work only because they do not have fund to support the introduction and implementation of the safeguarding/PSEAH or even integrating it into their existing programs.
- (c) Lack of reporting mechanism in some parts of the country, some remote areas do not know where and how to report despite the awareness raising efforts through the different platforms including radio stations that have a wider coverage.

- (d) lack of information about what PSEA/Safeguarding entails and yet there are aid workers providing humanitarian services in the community. some of the aid workers and community members do not understand that certain things that happen to them amounts to abuse or harassment highlighting the need for massive awareness and dissemination to staff on safeguarding and PSEAH components.
- (e) Some organization do not have a policy and trained staff designated for the role to ensure staff are guided by safeguarding/PSEAH policy or guideline in their efforts in providing aid services.

4.3. Sector wide PSEAH/safeguarding initiatives

There are many organizations who have benefitted from the UN agencies in South Sudan through capacity building on SEAH. UNDP, UNMISS, UNFPA have offered several trainings to different members of the GBV sub-cluster and other partners who comes from different organization including CARE international, IRC, Plan International, IMC, OXFAM, and Save the Children. It is worth noting that, some of the INGOs already had that component in their organization and as a safeguarding partner, PSEA task force engaged themselves in providing trainings for the CSO's and support in developing policies and improving on the content that other organizations already have in place.

Coordination of the partners who are members of the Taskforce and new partners who are interested to work on policies related to safeguarding have gone ahead to extend the trainings to their staff and developed policies that governs their organization. Much as most organization depends on different donors who have different requirements, some organization are still relaxed to make sure PSEA is taken as a priority in the aid sector. The PSEA did a nationwide risk assessment on reporting mechanism and awareness methods on safeguarding and PSEA in the different locations.

The PSEA Taskforce further plans to continue with an assessment on the functionality of the planforms in the different locations where there seems high level of vulnerability and also offer trainings for government staff and other organisations. For increased awareness in the community, the taskforce plans to translate the existing materials in the local languages so that community can also benefit from and have free access to the resources the power of control and decisions that they have over the vulnerable community. Advocacy has been ongoing to ensure that all aid workers adhere to its own safeguarding policy and provided basic safeguarding training to many partners.

5.PSEAH/safeguarding capacity of national and local users

5.1. Score of research of safeguarding capacity of national and local users

During the course of the assessment, the South Sudan RSH team conducted an online survey between October - November 2020 with an objective of assessing the capacity of organizations and situation of safeguarding in South Sudan. Due to COVID-19

restrictions, the survey was conducted using online survey monkey and targeted respondents countrywide who have access to some level of stable internet. The focus was on the type of organizations, areas of operation, size of the organizations, responses to prevent and respond to SEAH, challenges and capacity gaps.

A total of 58 respondents took part in the survey. Whereas the respondents included some donors, government, UN agencies, majority of the respondents to the survey were from the NGO sector (Humanitarian) and the Civil Society Organizations. These include, Women's rights, including gender based violence 87.93%; child protection 68.97 %; economic recovery (livelihood) 67.24; intervention in humanitarian crises 67.24 %; Health 60.34%; Education 56.90% ; water and sanitation 56.90%; Social protection 48.28%; Maintenance of peace, security and Justice 48.28%; Community development 48.28%; Rights of persons with disabilities 41.38 % ; Human rights (including litigation) 27.59% and governance 22.41%.

The data collected from the survey was analysed and summarized in graphs and a narrative that contains rich information about safeguarding capacity of national and local organizations. The data is not representative of the whole country and the general experiences of the national and local actors given the limitations caused by the COVID 19 pandemic. From the data collected, it is evident that many organizations experienced internet access challenges and were not able to take the survey at all or in time whereas others had closed their operations due to funding challenges posed by the pandemic. Of those who responded to the survey, 36.73% respondents have slow internet connections and can only access emails and simple sites, 48.98 % can surf and access websites but the videos don't always work well while only 14.29% can easily watch movies online. However, despite the limitations the result, the survey provides a valid enough context analysis and serves as a basis for future comprehensive and exploratory study.

Key findings from the data analysed on how organizations respond and prevent SEAH primarily showed that (70.83%) work with partners to address SEAH and (62%) has some basic reporting mechanisms involving senior management and program staff while (48%) respond to reports of SEAH. In terms of awareness, access to information and building trust in the community, (30%) of the organizations reportedly have inadequate expertise and skills to investigate SEAH. (13%) of the organizations have inadequate human resources and lack funds to prevent and respond to SEAH, while (11%) have limited knowledge on SEAH.

Overall the following three key points stood out in respect of capacity to prevent and respond to SEAH in South Sudan. These are areas that the RSH can largely explore and fill in the gaps identified

Working with partners

From the data analysis, it is evident that slightly over (70%) of the surveyed organizations worked closely with partners. This is due to the fact that over the past three years, many donors such as DFID, USAID and UN agencies have set some new standards of compliance and safeguarding policy has since become a mandatory requirement for partnership in South Sudan. In most cases the emphasis is on policies, this has led to many national NGOs developing safeguarding policies that are a copy and paste for the purpose of ticking off some boxes; however putting the policies into practice remains a challenge. A few NGOs have gone a step further in ensuring that staff and their beneficiaries know their rights. To further examine the high percentage of working with partners, one has to take into consideration the context of South Sudan since the descent to conflict in 2013. While sexual violence was already prevalent, the return to conflict has exacerbated the situation, hence the upscale in the response to sexual and gender-based violence in general. However, it must be noted that most of the focus of such projects are on addressing sexual violence within communities and less on the sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment perpetrated by the aid sector. The CSOs in South Sudan would benefit from the RSH theme on safeguarding in partnership in terms of increased knowledge through webinars and providing guidance and tools for CSOs.

Access to information and building trust

The data reinforces the notion that there is inadequate awareness on policies and complaint mechanisms that address SEAH in relation to aid workers. Most beneficiaries /communities have scarce knowledge about organizations' safeguarding policies and on how to report violations perpetrated by aid workers. Others do not have confidence in the existing mechanisms for fear of retribution, loss of their jobs or livelihood. Furthermore, access to information regarding donors and lead agencies regulations on SEAH in most partnerships are not translated into capacity building and limited coaching process for implementing partners.

According to a key informant, there are a number of initiatives being implemented to address the issue of access to information and trust. One good example is the capacity development for all focal points within members of the South Sudan NGO forum which in the last two years has trained 120 individuals on PSEA and made it mandatory for all organizations to have a policy as they register to become a member. Other initiatives include the establishment of toll-free lines for reporting and the establishment of five – “one stop” referral centres supported by UNFPA, located across the country (Wau, Torit, Malakal, Yambio and Juba). Survivors of GBV /PSEAH could access support in terms of medical services, psychosocial support, protection and legal services. Furthermore, in an effort to raise public awareness, there are also regular radio talk shows that reach out to the public, radio jingles that keep running to inform communities of where to report and refer. These messages are often run in English, Arabic and translated in most local languages.

Funds limitations

Many national NGOs have reported limited resources to implement PSEAH policies and other safeguarding standards. This problem has been difficult for many lead agencies to address. No funds to recruited safeguarding officers and no deliberate plans and budgets to implement safe guarding initiatives within many organizations. The RSH can provide an alternative to CSOs to address the challenge of funding by providing readily available practical resources and tool which support safer programming, raise awareness around existing tools and resources and e-learning on applying safeguards.

5.2. Existing strengths and gaps identified by users

According to key informants and the feedback from the survey monkey, the introduction of safeguarding is broadly seen as a positive development that has assisted staff and managers in recognizing and responding to abuses and neglected concerns. For instance, the South Sudan PSEA Taskforce, which has membership from all UN agencies, NGOs and ICRC, has enabled some level of standardized practices and processes as it supports members and partners in developing policy, strategy and workplan, providing trainings, developing IEC materials, conducting assessment and referring allegations. It has since the early 2020 recruited a Senior Victims Right Officer to enhance its practices.

The introduction of safeguarding policy as a donor requirement, is also broadly seen as positive development as it has increased awareness on safeguarding which is a positive outcome to the vulnerable groups. This has set the room for top management such as country directors and managers to get involved – hence the level of seriousness in compliance.

Furthermore, the GBV Sub clusters and the use of the one stop centers have strengthened the capacity of local government to have some procedures in place such as the establishment of the gender desks at the police stations. Finally, the Use of toll free and the use of local FM radios as a means of communication and for awareness has certainly increased the level of awareness and confidence in some communities.

The assessment also highlighted key deficits and in particular, the operationalization and procedural elements of safeguarding. These deficits and weaknesses cover inconsistent practice in the services provided for survivors of sexual exploitation and abuse, lack of clarity and delay on feedback on proceedings of reported cases, inadequate community awareness to recognize abuses, lack of information among community on compliance and accountability of aid workers, and the lack of clarity of roles in the protection of survivors and others who report incidences as well as capacity and resources concerns.

6. PSEAH/safeguarding tools and resources available to national and local users

6.1. Overview/mapping of the resources and tools available to national and local users

Based on the discussion with the key informants which included government officials and representatives of UN agencies and NGOs, it is evident that safeguarding is spearheaded by the aid sector in South Sudan. Most organizations have their own internal policies and procedures on safeguarding and use their own tools and resources to build capacity in their organisation and with their partners.

The PSEA taskforce in South Sudan covers all UN agencies, INGOs and National NGOs and it has laid the foundation for systemwide planning, implementation, monitoring and reporting including coordination of interventions on PSEA in South Sudan. The taskforce further ensures compliance and provide victims assistance services and referrals. The strategic plan for the PSEA taskforce can be assessed through the below link

<https://psea.interagencystandingcommittee.org/sites/default/files/7%20SOUTH%20SUDAN%20-%20System-wide%20Implementation%20Strategy%20on%20PSEA%20-%20Endorsed.pdf>

The NGO Forum also provides PSEA capacity building for its member organizations, develop policies on safeguarding, disseminate and provide necessary support to organizations and produce IEC materials for public awareness.

Under the food security cluster, the accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) and Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse offers a people-centered and rights-based framework that is concerned with respecting the rights, dignity and safety of people affected by disaster and conflict. A body of documents covering a range of issues are compiled and this includes checklist for incorporating protection, AAP tools and guidelines, Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC) task team AAP/PSEA helpdesk among others <https://fscluster.org/south-sudan-rep/accountability-affected-populations-and>

6.2. Analysis of availability and access of tools and resources which are context specific and relevant

The body of tools and resources available are of good quality but they are global. Agencies have attempted to tailor global resources to suit the local context. There remains, however, a distinct lack of tools and resources that can be used to build organisational capacity on safeguarding that work in the South Sudan context.

To enhance effective and responsive communities to these resources and tools, it is crucial that Information on policies, reporting mechanisms, guidance on referrals, IEC materials, animated documentaries and information on helpdesk be translated into some local languages which can easily be understood by the general public. The referral

pathway, in particular, should be clearly defined and communities informed and sensitized through locally appropriate IEC materials.

7. SEAH/safeguarding service providers

7.1. Overview/mapping of service providers

Spreadsheet (following template) detailing all service providers that are working in SEAH or broader safeguarding sphere. **(To be finalized once we have the spreadsheet finalized)**

7.2. Type, scope and range of services

Do the services on offer cover the type and scope that is needed for the sector? Where are there significant gaps and why (if known)

Are there key service providers which are commonly used by users? Are these local, regional or global?

Is there a range of service providers available at national level or a limited few? (4 pages)

8. Research and evidence on SEAH/safeguarding

This section of the assessment will remain live and shall be updated as we continue mapping studies on SEAH more broadly in South Sudan. Apparently, there is a significant body of studies and information on SEAH in South Sudan. Below are a few that has been mapped

The Inter-Agency Standing Committee Dashboard – South Sudan: The dashboard tracks progress on accelerating PSEA within humanitarian response, based on IASC commitments and priority areas. It presents data collected I Q2 2019, which established a baseline for country -level progress on accelerating PSEA. The website provides technical support and resources to practitioners and to tracking inter-agency collective progress across countries with a humanitarian with humanitarian response. The website also provide information on the members of the PSEA in South Sudan, the PSEA coordinator contact and a number of documents related to South Sudan <https://psea.interagencystandingcommittee.org/location/southern-and-eastern-africa/south-sudan>

System wide implementation strategy on protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in South Sudan July 2018: The strategy has been developed to guide the design and delivery of interventions directed at preventing, responding, and mitigating the impact of SEA in South Sudan. The strategy embraces the guiding principles of system wide actions, victim centred approach and zero tolerance to SEA aimed at eliminating SEA in South Sudan

<https://psea.interagencystandingcommittee.org/sites/default/files/7%20SOUTH%20SUDAN%20-%20System-wide%20Implementation%20Strategy%20on%20PSEA%20-%20Endorsed.pdf>

Guidance and Resources South Sudan: Under the food security cluster, the accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) and Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse offers a people-centered and rights-based framework that is concerned with respecting the rights, dignity and safety of people affected by disaster and conflict. A body of documents covering a range of issues are compiled and this includes checklist for incorporating protection, AAP tools and guidelines, Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC) task team AAP/PSEA helpdesk among others <https://fscluster.org/south-sudan-rep/accountability-affected-populations-and>

Country Examples of Practice: IOM's observations from PSEA implementation in-country – South Sudan: This collection of practices provides best practices on interagency community-based complaint mechanisms. It is rich in examples from several countries including South Sudan <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/IOM%27s%20Country%20Examples%20of%20PSEA%20Practice%20%282019%29.pdf>

Protection and Gender Based Violence Report – IOM: The report covers project activities in response to mainstreaming protection, PSEA, gender equality, and GBV considerations. IOM also continue to provide targeted protection assistance, undertake activities for GBV response and prevention, and the inclusion of persons with disabilities. <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Protection%20%20GBV%20Q2%20Report.pdf>

USAID/South Sudan Gender Based Violence Prevention and Response Roadmap 2019: This roadmap aims to equip USAID/South Sudan staff with succinct guidance to design and implement effective strategies and interventions that integrate GBV prevention and response within the current USAID/South Sudan Operational Framework (2016-present) and Interim Performance Management Plan (I-PMP) (valid until 2021). the Roadmap also includes key resources and tools that are particularly applicable in the South Sudan context. <https://banyanglobal.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/USAID-South-Sudan-Gender-based-Violence-Prevention-and-Response-Roadmap.pdf>

9. Conclusions and Recommendations

The findings of the assessment confirm that safeguarding is integral to the humanitarian and development interventions in South Sudan. Indeed, majority of respondents agree that there is demand for technical guidance and support to organizations and particularly the national organizations that are mostly working with the grassroots.

Despite informants to this assessment recognizing that safeguarding is a cross-cutting issue and should be systematically mainstreamed the focus of efforts to date have been on having a policy, with training and then mechanisms in place to report and respond to

concerns. Institutionalizing safeguarding procedures was discussed by informants as staff being taken through safeguarding sessions by the focal person in the organization. There would seem, therefore, to be a lack of understanding or implementation of an organization development approach which identifies how to strengthen organizational capacity across the different teams or departments that play a significant role on safeguarding. Informants to this assessment also identified safeguarding within partnership arrangements as proving particularly challenging with the larger partner often working to a safeguarding policy, but the smaller partners lacking policy, procedures and knowledge on how to effectively develop and implement these.

The assessment identifies a significant amount of activity on reporting and case handling by organizations as well as networks operating in the country. However, case reporting remains fairly low, the legal context for reporting cases may be preventing individuals from raising concerns whilst also hampering organizations' efforts to handle cases effectively.

Existing tools and resources, whilst of good quality, have been developed globally by larger organizations and are not easily used or adapted by smaller organizations. There is demand to provide technical guidance and support and through resources that are better suited to CSOs and small organizations that have limited capacity and knowledge on safeguarding.

There remains little evidence available in South Sudan on the scale and prevalence of the issue and the impact of existing measures to prevent and respond to SEAH. RSH South Sudan can make global or other country evidence available to CSOs but can also explore opportunities for supporting or conducting research into SEAH.

Stakeholder engagement efforts need to build upon the coordination and engagement that is already being done by the PSEA Network but extend that reach to encompass CSOs who are not currently benefitting from the PSEA network activities. In addition, the RSH can play a valuable role in working with government on setting safeguarding standards for the aid and development sector working within the country and on strengthening effective and safe mechanisms for reporting and referral to formal authorities.

Recommendations

1. Build capacity of organisations to increase knowledge on specific risks and issues that organisations face in South Sudan and strengthen approaches to risk management

It is clear that whilst there has been a lot of activity on PSEA, many organisations would benefit from a better understanding on specific risks for SEAH in South Sudan and how to effectively manage risks. We can do this by providing:

- Information notes on risks and issues
- Translating global resources e.g. tip sheets on addressing risks in specific organisational activities e.g. safe programming

- Develop locally adapted tools and resources for risk assessment
 - Create a community of practice for organisations to exchange experiences and learning on safeguarding in South Sudan
 - Promoting the RSH E-learning which builds the capacity of less resourced CSOs on identifying and addressing safeguarding risks
 - Explore opportunities for supporting/conducting research on safeguarding in South Sudan e.g. risks, issues and effectiveness and impact of practices to address these.
2. Strengthen organisations to develop and maintain a safeguarding culture and adopt effective leadership, governance and accountability approaches for safeguarding

We can increase understanding across the sector on the importance of culture and leadership, governance and accountability for safeguarding. We will explore opportunities for organisations to gain knowledge on how to change organisational cultures, where necessary, and strengthen governance and accountability processes. We will adapt key global resources, or those that have been developed by other national Hubs, to help organisations better embed systems and processes for safeguarding which work for the size and scope of organisation as well as the context. These will include:

- Introducing the mentorship scheme to help build organisational capacity
- Promoting the e-learning to CSOs, and identifying areas where more in depth support might be useful to complement the learning package
- Piloting or adapting leadership/culture tools that have been introduced in the sector e.g. BOND
- Delivering webinars/podcasts or face to face activities on effective leadership in the South Sudan aid and development sector
- Exploring guidance and support for CSOs to better budget for safeguarding
- Exploring guidance and support for managers to manage safeguarding with teams of staff and volunteers

We will also advocate with the relevant government bodies to include safeguarding standards as a requirement for NGO registration in South Sudan.

3. Support organisations to adopt disability inclusive safeguarding practices

Given that persons with disabilities are particularly at risk in South Sudan and safeguarding efforts have not been disability inclusive, we will showcase and develop tools and resources that can be used by OPDs and other organisations working with persons with disabilities. We will also ensure our approaches are disability inclusive. We will:

- Identify and collaborate with organisations working with persons with disabilities and OPDs, through networks and membership organisations at national and regional level
- Identify gaps and priorities in supporting organisations working with persons with disabilities and OPDs that RSH can usefully address
- Develop practical resources and tools that are disability inclusive or supportive of disability mainstreaming

4. Strengthen organisations capacity to establish effective reporting mechanisms and adopt survivor centred responses

We intend to build on the work that has already been coordinated by the PSEA Network on reporting, case handling and investigations. Our role in strengthening organisations capacity on reporting and response would most usefully be:

- Engaging with the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare through advocacy efforts to improve on existing approaches and build knowledge and skills on reporting, case management and investigation.
- Exploring opportunities to support/conduct research on effective reporting mechanisms and what would encourage people to report more.
- Translate information on reporting mechanisms, guidance on referrals, IEC materials into local languages, where necessary, that organisations can use to raise awareness with staff and communities.
- Consider how best to build capacity on survivor centred responses and investigations.

5. Facilitate opportunities to discuss and agree on how to more effectively integrate safeguarding in partnerships

We will support organisations to increase knowledge and skills in integrating safeguarding within partnership arrangements, including providing context appropriate tools and resources for partner assessment, partner contracting and monitoring, and partner capacity building. We will use this as an opportunity to increase learning on how international standards are being applied within partnerships, challenges that smaller CSOs have with implementing these and how challenges of safeguarding within partnerships can be addressed. We envisage we will do this through:

- Delivering webinar/podcast or face to face activity which explores good practices for safeguarding in partnership
- Providing guidance and tools for CSOs to integrate safeguarding in partnership arrangements
- Build the capacity of RSH South Sudan mentors to support organisations on safeguarding in partnerships

6. Coordinate and collaborate with stakeholders across different sectors in South Sudan to increase knowledge and implementation of good practices on safeguarding

We recommend revisiting the initial stakeholder mapping in order to categorize organizations based on their status and geographical location in South Sudan. This will help inform us on how to target these different organisations. We intend to engage as a priority:

The **South Sudan PSEA taskforce** – is a fundamental ally to the RSH. it covers all UN agencies, INGOs and National NGOs and it has laid the foundation for systemwide planning, implementation, monitoring and reporting including coordination of interventions on PSEA in South Sudan. The taskforce ensures compliance and provide

victims assistance services and referrals. RSH would need to collaborate with taskforce and develop a community of practice

The **NGO Forum** also provides PSEA capacity building for its member organizations, develop policies on safeguarding, disseminate and provide necessary support to organizations and produce IEC materials for public awareness. It has a huge membership from National Organizations.

The **GBV Sub Cluster** – is composed of NGOs and some government institutions. It builds the capacity of staff on safeguarding, dissemination of relevant tools on safe guarding and sharing information on reporting of incidents once it happens

The **South Sudan Civil Society Forum** - Is a body with more than 200 national organization working on different fields at both national and states/grassroots level. Although the forum does not specifically run safeguarding programs, it is a space to engage most of the national NGOs who are the key targets for the RSH.

The Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare: This government institution has a huge role to play in terms of safeguarding. In our discussion with the director of child welfare as a key respondent, it is evident that the ministry is critical to the success of efforts to prevent sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment.

The **South Sudan Women's Coalition** - has a membership of more than 50 women organizations in South Sudan. This group is a key ally to the RSH as it has members all over the country.

The University of Juba – National Transformational Leadership Institute: this is an important body to consider. The Institute is a service delivery body and has offered trainings to different organizations, UN agencies and government institutions on leadership, gender and has conducted a number of researches on variety of topics. Being an active institute with many clients, it could be able to adapt safeguarding as one of its modules in the different trainings that they conduct. The RSH to establish contact and discuss with the institute the feasibility of such endeavour.

The **National Women Parliamentary Caucus** - A group of women from different political parties working together as advocates for women issues at the national parliament. The caucus also connects to the state parliamentary caucuses. This group is influential in tabling motions on issues of women and works closely with women's groups and networks such as the women's coalition.

7. Build the capacity of CSOs through a blended learning approach

It was clear from informants to this assessment that there is a preference for in-person trainings, and a significant number of people still lack internet connections. It is recommended that RSH South Sudan does conduct in-person activities. However, we will also deliver capacity building on the priority themes and engage with stakeholders

and users through online interventions. These will include the RSH e-learning, other online learning activities (quizzes, short courses etc.), webinars and videos/animations.