Approach to partner PSEA capacity strengthening

TIPS AND RECOMMENDATION FOR ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORTING LOCAL PARTNERS TO ENHANCE PSEA

The Strengthening Partners in Protection Against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse through Protection Mainstreaming (SPSEA) project is a three-year pilot project led by CRS and funded by USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance. The project aims to provide capacity-building support to 38 national organizations in Haiti, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Indonesia and the Philippines, to strengthen systems and practices to prevent, mitigate and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) within the organizations and the communities they serve. This document presents pilot approaches for accompanying partner organizations on PSEA.

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Overview

SPSEA PROJECT

The Strengthening Partners in Protection Against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse through Protection Mainstreaming (SPSEA) project is a three-year pilot project led by CRS and funded by USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance. The project aims to provide capacity-building support to 38 national organizations in Haiti, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Indonesia and the Philippines, to strengthen systems and practices to prevent, mitigate and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) within the organizations and the communities they serve. Specifically, partners receive support to:

- Develop policy and procedures to mitigate, identify and respond to allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse from staff and affected community members.
- Implement protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) in their recruitment and orientation practices for staff and volunteers.
- Establish feedback mechanisms in disaster-prone communities.
- Establish referral pathways related to sexual exploitation and abuse for all affected groups.

Project activities include training and accompaniment aimed at raising awareness and increasing knowledge of protection against SEA and developing PSEA-sensitive policies and procedures.

WHAT DOES THIS DOCUMENT INCLUDE?

CRS has developed and tested multiple approaches to Protection Against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) capacity strengthening. Building on previous and current institutional strengthening efforts as well as longstanding, positive and trusting partnerships with these organizations, CRS provided tailored support to each organization, capitalizing on their existing strengths and progress related to PSEA. Critical to the project's impact was ongoing accompaniment and mentoring for partners by CRS teams in country.

This document presents pilot approaches for accompanying partner organizations on PSEA. It is intended to capture key modalities of support, most impactful sequencing for rolling out PSEA, internal and external barriers, pre-requisite for successes, emerging good practices, and key recommendations for PSEA capacity strengthening.

WHO IS THIS DOCUMENT FOR?

This document is primarily designated for use by international and national NGOs interested in providing support to partner organizations on PSEA.

PSEA capacity strengthening modalities of support

CRS has used multiple approaches with partners to strengthen capacity, including a comprehensive capacity assessment, workshops to gain leadership buy-in, learning events on key project areas, and a PSEA simulation to test partners' outputs and project deliverables. Critical to the project's impact is ongoing accompaniment and mentoring for partners by CRS teams in country.

These **modalities of support** can be used to roll out PSEA with partner organizations depending on the:

- requests and identified needs of partner organizations
- availability and technical capacity of the staff involved
- status of preexisting systems, policies and mechanisms
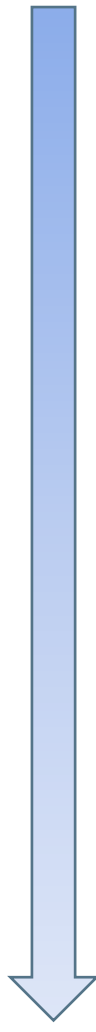- ongoing capacity strengthening initiatives

Therefore, to the extent possible and appropriate, all modalities listed below should be used to roll out PSEA. See the section below on the ideal sequencing of activities.

Modality of support	What
Preliminary step: Initial discussions to setup and tailor PSEA support	Initial discussions between NGO providing support and partner on what the PSEA support might look like, the best model for support, the partner's priorities on PSEA, and who will be taking the lead.
Initial assessment of PSEA capacity	Identification of partner organizational PSEA capacity, e.g., assessing what previous training/support was provided, what mechanism/systems related to PSEA are in place, etc.
Contextual analysis of legal framework and landscape related to PSEA and other related issues (i.e. gender-based violence, harassment, child protection, etc.)	Detailed analysis of the legal environment of the country regarding PSEA and related issues and mapping of actors, government and non-government, working on PSEA and related issues.
Introduction to PSEA workshop (senior management)	2-day workshop designed to sensitize partner's senior managers on PSEA and secure their commitment to the process.
HR writeshop ↓On-the-job support, accompaniment and mentoring on developing PSEA HR policies and measures	2-day workshop designed to assist partner organizations in developing PSEA/ protection policies and procedures Accompaniment on developing PSEA HR processes on training, hiring and vetting, such as PSEA onboarding and training plan, safe recruitment policy, reference check process, updated job descriptions for staff and PSEA/safeguarding focal points, etc.

Introduction to feedback, complaints and response mechanism (FCRM) ↓On the job support, accompaniment and mentoring to implement FCRM	3-day training designed to outline the basic steps for setting up or adjusting an FCRM and making it PSEA relevant. Accompaniment to carry out community consultation on FCRM, and develop FCRM procedures such as standard operating procedures (SOPs) and protocols, feedback and complaints categories, FCRM flowchart, feedback and complaints registry/log process, staffing roles and responsibilities on FCRM, etc.
Introduction to Internal Reporting & Investigation Systems (IRIS) ↓On the job support, accompaniment and mentoring on IRIS	5-day training designed to outline how to conduct fair, thorough and confidential investigations into complaints of staff misconduct, with a focus on SEA allegations. Accompaniment to develop internal regulations, policies and procedures on Internal Reporting and Investigation System (IRIS), such as report-handling and escalation procedures, checklist and tools for managing investigations, IRIS roles and responsibilities.
PSEA training of trainers	5-day training designed as a refresher/advanced training for PSEA/safeguarding/protection focal points based on the IASC Minimum Operating Standards
Engaging communities on PSEA	Accompaniment to develop information, education and communication materials and implement PSEA awareness-raising activities with communities based on the guidance, *Communicating with communities on PSEA*
Refresher or additional training	Supplementary/remedial trainings as needed based on the outcomes of previous support provided. E.g., refresher workshop for senior management to assist them to ensure PSEA measures are implemented within their organizations, and to address ongoing challenges.
Joint field/monitoring visits	Joint field/monitoring visits to enable better understanding of context and operationalize PSEA strategies at the program level.
Mapping of services and referral pathways for SEA survivors ↓On the job support, accompaniment and mentoring on mapping/referral	2-day workshop designed for partner organizations, government and key protection actors to network, become aware of each other's work, and update and develop the mapping of services and referral pathways for SEA survivors. Support for developing mapping and referral of protection services for SEA survivors.
Emergency simulation event	1-day emergency simulation event to test key PSEA elements (FCRM, report-handling and basic investigation elements and referral) and make necessary adjustments.

Ideal sequencing for supporting partner organizations in rolling out PSEA

Based on the pilot project, CRS proposes the following indicative sequencing for rolling out PSEA. These phases should be adjusted to the needs of the recipient organizations and the context, recognizing that a one-size-fits-all approach is not always appropriate. Please note that the sequencing is presented as a trajectory, but in practice was more iterative or circular in nature:

Steps	Timing
⓪ Initial discussions to set up and tailor PSEA support	Month 0
① Assessment of PSEA capacity	Month 1
② Contextual analysis of legal framework related to PSEA and other related issues	Month 2
③ Initial training sessions • Introduction to PSEA (senior management) • HR writeshop • Feedback, Complaints and Response Mechanism (FCRM) • Internal Reporting and Investigation System (IRIS) • PSEA training of trainers • Etc.	Month 2-12
③+ Accompaniment and on the job support and mentoring • HR • FCRM • IRIS • Any areas requested by partners	Month 1-18
④ Engaging communities on PSEA	Month 15-18
⑤ Refresher or additional trainings	Month 12-18
⑥ Joint field/monitoring visits	Month 15
⑦ Mapping of services and referral pathways for SEA survivors	Month 15
⑧ Emergency simulation event	Month 18
⑨ Periodic ongoing support as required	Month 2-23

POSSIBLE STEPS FOR ROLLING OUT PSEA - DETAILED DESCRIPTION

⓪ INITIAL DISCUSSIONS TO SET UP AND TAILOR **PSEA** SUPPORT	
What?	- Planning, scheduling, and tailoring the PSEA support - Establish goals & expectations: introduction to PSEA/safeguarding and initial discussions between the NGO providing support and the partner organization receiving support on what the PSEA support might look like, on best model for support (e.g., training and/or accompaniment), on partners' priorities regarding PSEA, on who will be taking the lead (from both sides) - initial assessment of internal capacity of agencies to support partners with PSEA (NGO)
Who?	Senior management (Partner), Country Management (NGO)
Indicative timing	Month 0
Expected Outputs / Outcomes	Agreement/MoU: documents expectations around NGO support and clarifies roles and responsibilities of NGO team and partner organization
Pre-requisites of Success	- Clear understanding of all parties the intended outcomes of the collaboration, and the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders (Partner and NGO) - Senior management buy-in and ownership (Partner) - Flexibility, allocating appropriate time and resources for PSEA (Partner) - Understanding of other capacity strengthening initiatives and linkage with NGOs providing support to avoid duplication - Identification of PSEA/ safeguarding/protection Focal Point(s) (Partner and NGO) that will lead the process - Commitment from NGO to provide medium/long term PSEA capacity strengthening with realistic timeframe especially when PSEA/safeguarding expertise do not already exist within the partner organization - Building on momentum and requirements from donor, NGOs
Tools/Resources available	• Document *PSEA capacity strengthening – overall commitments from NGO and Partner* detailing NGO/partners deliverables *(eg. MoU and/or General Service Agreement (GSA))* • *UNICEF. 2020. PSEA Assessment & PSEA Toolkit for CSO Partners*

① ASSESSMENT OF **PSEA** CAPACITY	
What?	• Identification of partner organizational PSEA capacity, e.g., assessing what previous training/support was provided, what mechanism/systems related to PSEA are in place, etc. • Evaluation of existing strengths and weaknesses of partner PSEA/safeguarding approach and go beyond compliance by covering, for example, organizational culture, good governance, and risk management
Who?	Senior management (Partner) Country Management (NGO)
Indicative timing	Month 1

Expected Outputs / Outcomes	- Sexual and Exploitation Abuse Capacity Strengthening Tools (SEA-CAT) or other Capacity Assessment and Action Plan completed - Baseline collected
Pre-requisites of Success	- Willingness to engage in assessment (Partner) - Capacity of self-reflection on resources needed to be deployed (NGO) - Knowledge of other organizational self-assessments conducted at partner level in past year (NGO) - Introduction of the SEA-CAT tool and how it will be used throughout the capacity strengthening initiative
Tools/Resources available	SEA-CAT (Capacity Assessment) form and methodology

② CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF LEGAL FRAMEWORK RELATED TO PSEA AND OTHER RELATED ISSUES

What?	Detailed analysis of the legal environment of the country regarding PSEA and related issues and mapping of actors, government and non-government, working on PSEA and related issues: - Review of the national/sub-national legal and policy landscape, regarding laws, policies, regulations, and practices related to PSEA and related issues - Review of labor law and jurisprudence/practice regarding vetting of staff and termination of employment - Conduct a comprehensive mapping of actors and services being provided by both government and non-governmental actors related to PSEA and related issues
Who?	External consultant
Indicative timing	Month 2
Expected Outputs / Outcomes	- Detailed analysis of the legal environment of the country regarding PSEA and related issues. - Mapping of actors, government and non-government, working on PSEA and related issues.
Pre-requisites of Success	Overview of SPSEA project to the consultant to ensure understanding of partner's operating environments
Tools/Resources available	Terms of Reference (ToRs) Protection from Sexual Abuse & Exploitation (PSEA) Consultancy

③ INITIAL TRAINING SESSION - INTRODUCTION TO PSEA (SENIOR MANAGEMENT)

What?	2-day workshop designed to sensitize partner's senior managers on PSEA and secure their commitment to the process. It is also an opportunity to present the findings of the legal framework analysis (see above).
Who?	Senior management (Partner and ideally NGO)

Indicative timing	Month 2
Expected Outputs / Outcomes	Understanding of senior management's roles and responsibilities with regard to PSEA (Partner)
Pre-requisites of Success	- Senior management buy-in (Partner and CRS) - Contextualized training materials, tools and practical resources (CRS)
Tools/Resources available	- SPSEA toolkit, Part I Training tools (ToT) - SPSEA toolkit, Part I, Handout module: Introduction to PSEA

③ INITIAL TRAINING SESSION – INTRODUCTION TO FEEDBACK, COMPLAINTS AND RESPONSE MECHANISM (FCRM)

What?	3-day training designed to outline the basic steps for setting up or adjusting an FCRM and making it PSEA relevant.
Who?	- PSEA/safeguarding/protection Focal Points (FPs) - MEAL staff - Senior managers - Program staff - Staff with FCRM responsibilities
Indicative timing	Month 5
Expected Outputs / Outcomes	Final and board-approved feedback and complaints mechanisms informed by discussions with staff and [add #] target communities. This can include: - FCRM Standard Operating Procedures and Protocols (SoPs) - Feedback and Complaints Categories - FCRM Flowchart - Feedback and Complaints Registry/Log process - Staffing roles and responsibilities on FCRM (updated JDs, updated organigram, etc.)
Pre-requisites of Success	- Attendance and active participation of PSEA/safeguarding/protection Focal Point(s) and staff with FCRM responsibilities (Partner) - Existing or draft of any feedback mechanism document (Partner) - Contextualized training materials, tools and practical resources (NGO) - Ensure that training session is followed up properly through accompaniment (NGO) - Basic community consultations on FCRM conducted by partners
Tools/Resources available	- SPSEA toolkit, Part I, Feedback, complaints and response mechanisms (FCRM) and PSEA including example of SoPs, FCRM Flowchart etc. - Upcoming Feedback, Complaints and Response Mechanisms Guidance - FCRM training material

③+ ACCOMPANIMENT ON FEEDBACK, COMPLAINTS AND RESPONSE MECHANISM (FCRM)

What?	Accompaniment to carry out community consultation on FCRM, and develop FCRM procedures such as standard operating procedures (SOPs) and protocols, feedback and complaints categories, FCRM flowchart, feedback and complaints registry/log process, staffing roles and responsibilities on FCRM, etc.

	- Provided remotely and/or face to face, either individually, or in clustered groups. - Accompaniment activities may include: reviewing FCRM fundamentals, review of specific areas of FCRM, mentoring of staff on managing and monitoring the FCRM and adapting key FRM tools, carry out community consultation on FCRM, organize community sensitization events on FCRM.
Who?	- PSEA/safeguarding/protection Focal Points (FPs) - MEAL staff - Senior managers - Program staff - Staff with FCRM responsibilities
Indicative timing	Month 6-9
Expected Outputs / Outcomes	Final and board-approved feedback and complaints procedures informed by discussions with staff and [add #] target communities (see details above)
Pre-requisites of Success	- Pre-determined core messages during accompaniment to ensure all partners are receiving consistent technical support (NGO) - Inclusion of FCRM tasks in staff job description/performance management (Partner)
Tools/Resources available	FCRM accompaniment plan and methodology

③ INITIAL TRAINING SESSION — HR WRITESHOP	
What?	2-day workshop designed to assist partner organizations in developing PSEA/protection policies and procedures
Who?	- PSEA/safeguarding/protection Focal Points (FPs) (partner) - HR staff (partner) and ideally HR staff (NGO) - Senior manager (partner)
Indicative timing	Month 7
Expected Outputs / Outcomes	Detailed plan to set up board approved PSEA HR processes on training, hiring and vetting, i.e. (for both staff and volunteers): - PSEA onboarding and training plan - Safe recruitment policy - References check process - Updated job descriptions for staff and PSEA/safeguarding FPs - Updated Code of Conduct - Updated HR Manual
Pre-requisites of Success	- Active involvement of HR staff (Partner and NGO) - Contextualized training materials, tools and practical resources (NGO) - Accompaniment needs to be followed-up (NGO)
Tools/Resources available	SPSEA toolkit, Part II, Developing PSEA human resources policies and measures

③ + ACCOMPANIMENT ON HR (IF NEEDED)	
What?	Accompaniment on developing PSEA HR processes on training, hiring and vetting, such as PSEA onboarding and training plan, safe recruitment policy, reference check process, updated job descriptions for staff and PSEA/safeguarding focal points, etc. - Review of key HR PSEA related documents, such as Code of Conduct, Protection/Safeguarding policy. - Support 2-3 days step-down training on Code of Conduct and PSEA reporting requirement designed for staff of partner organizations. Accompaniment can include reviewing training agendas and materials.
Who?	- PSEA/safeguarding/protection Focal Points (FPs) (partner) - HR staff (partner) and ideally HR staff (NGO) - Senior manager (partner)
Indicative timing	Month 8-10
Expected Outputs / Outcomes	- Final and board-approved PSEA HR processes on training, hiring and vetting, i.e. (for both staff and volunteers) (see detail above) - [add #] orientation / refresher trainings on Code of Conduct and PSEA/safeguarding reporting requirements for staff done
Pre-requisites of Success	- Pre-determined core messages during accompaniment to ensure all partners are receiving consistent technical support (NGO) - Senior leadership ownership and clarity of internal PSEA HR approval processes (Partner)
Tools/Resources available	HR accompaniment methodology and tools

③ + INITIAL TRAINING SESSION - INTRODUCTION TO INTERNAL REPORTING AND INVESTIGATION SYSTEMS (IRIS)	
What?	5-day training designed to outline how to conduct fair, thorough and confidential investigations into complaints of staff misconduct, with a focus on SEA allegations.
Who?	- PSEA/safeguarding/protection Focal Points (FPs) - Administration staff - Senior manager
Indicative timing	Month 9
Expected Outputs / Outcomes	Final and board-approved of at least 3 internal regulations, policies and procedures on internal reporting and investigation systems (IRIS), for instance: - Report handling and escalation procedures - Checklist and tools for managing investigations (investigation management worksheet, investigation plan, investigation report template, etc.) - IRIS roles and responsibilities clarified, including for the investigation team and JDs updated
Pre-requisites of Success	- Attendance and active participation of nominated investigator (with appropriate skills, and aptitudes) and PSEA/safeguarding/protection

	Focal Point(s) and ideally senior leadership for part of the training (Partner) - Contextualized training materials, tools and practical resources (NGO) - Ensure that training session is followed up properly through accompaniment (NGO)
Tools/Resources available	- SPSEA toolkit, Part I, Module 7: Responding to SEA reports (IRIS) - SPSEA toolkit, Part II, Responding to SEA reports (IRIS)

③ ACCOMPANIMENT ON INTERNAL REPORTING & INVESTIGATION SYSTEMS (IRIS)	
What?	- Accompaniment to develop internal regulations, policies and procedures on Internal Reporting and Investigation System (IRIS), such as report-handling and escalation procedures, checklist and tools for managing investigations, IRIS roles and responsibilities. - Accompaniment activities could include reviewing IRIS fundamentals, reviewing specific areas of IRIS, mentoring staff and reviewing / adapting key IRIS tools
Who?	- PSEA/safeguarding/protection Focal Points (FPs) (partner) - Administration staff (partner) - Senior manager (partner)
Indicative timing	Month 10-13
Expected Outputs / Outcomes	Final and board-approved of at least 3 internal regulations, policies and procedures on internal reporting and investigation systems (IRIS). See examples above.
Pre-requisites of Success	- Pre-determined core messages during accompaniment to ensure all partners are receiving consistent technical support (NGO) -
Tools/Resources available	IRIS accompaniment methodology and tools

③ + INITIAL TRAINING SESSION PSEA TRAINING OF TRAINERS	
What?	5-day training designed as a refresher/advanced training for PSEA/safeguarding/ protection focal points based on the IASC Minimum Operating Standards
Who?	- For the 5 days training: PSEA/safeguarding/protection Focal Points (FPs) (Partner) - For some of the training modules: administration staff, senior managers (Partner)
Indicative timing	Month 14
Expected Outputs / Outcomes	ToT training rolled out by Focal Point(s) to partner staff as a minimum the handout module

Pre-requisites of Success	- Attendance and active participation of PSEA/safeguarding/protection Focal Point(s) (Partner) - Contextualized training materials, tools and practical resources (NGO) - Inclusion of PSEA/safeguarding/protection FP' job description/performance management (Partner)
Tools/Resources available	- SPSEA toolkit, Part I Training tools (ToT) - SPSEA toolkit, Part I, Handout module: Introduction to PSEA

④ ENGAGING COMMUNITIES ON **PSEA**	
What?	Accompaniment to develop information, education and communication materials and implement PSEA awareness-raising activities with communities based on the guidance *Communicating with communities on PSEA*
Who?	- PSEA/safeguarding/protection Focal Points (FPs) (Partner) - Program staff (Partner) - Program teams working with community members through provincial and municipal leaders and community groups and platforms, such as community health workers, care groups and other community committees
Indicative timing	Month 15-18
Expected Outputs / Outcomes	- Community engagement/communication strategies and plans developed - IEC materials for community and community engagement tools developed - PSEA raising awareness activities with communities organized
Pre-requisites of Success	- NGO and Donor Branding and Marketing Guidelines - Contextualized IEC material (Partner) - Consultation with communities and whenever possible field testing of the IEC to ensure comprehension (Partners)
Tools/Resources available	- SPSEA toolkit, Part II, Communicating with communities on PSEA

⑤ REFRESHER OR ADDITIONAL TRAINING SESSIONS (AS REQUIRED)	
What?	Supplementary/remedial trainings as needed based on the outcomes of previous support provided - 1-day refresher workshop for senior management to assist them to ensure PSEA measures are implemented within their organizations and address ongoing challenges - Additional/refresher on data management and investigation, gender, interview techniques for investigation, etc.
Who?	- PSEA/safeguarding/protection Focal Points (FPs) (Partner) - Program staff (Partner) - Administration staff (Partner) - Senior manager (Partner) - MEAL staff (Partner) - Procurement staff (Partner)

Indicative timing	Month 12-18
Expected Outputs / Outcomes	For senior manager workshop: organizational and senior management commitments on PSEA reviewed and addressed
Pre-requisites of Success	- SEACAT action plans updated and followed up (Partner and NGO) - Priorities identified by on-site accompaniments and retention tests (NGO)
Tools/Resources available	See above

⑥ JOINT FIELD / MONITORING VISITS[1]

What?	Joint field/monitoring visits to enable better understanding of context and operationalize PSEA strategies at the program level.
Who?	- Program staff (Partner and NGO) - MEAL staff (Partner and NGO)
Indicative timing	Month 15
Expected Outputs / Outcomes	Provision of on the spot, timely and context specific guidance to assess, mitigate PSEA risks and adapt the program to SEA risks
Pre-requisites of Success	- If partner/NGO joint visit, joint development of field visit TORs
Tools/Resources available	N/A

⑦ Mapping of services and referral pathways for SEA survivors

What?	- 2-day workshop designed for partner organizations, government and key protection actors to network, become aware of each other's work, and update and develop the mapping of services and referral pathways for SEA survivors. - Support for developing mapping and referral of protection services for SEA survivors
Who?	- PSEA/safeguarding/protection Focal Points (FPs) (partner) - MEAL staff (partner) - Program staff (partner)
Indicative timing	Month 15

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[1] Due to COVID-19 pandemic this activity didn't take place

Expected Outputs / Outcomes	Mapping of services and referral pathways for SEA survivors developed and documented
Pre-requisites of Success	- Coordination with in-country protection clusters, PSEA working groups, other protection lead to see whether SEA-specific information has already been gathered and analyzed (initial mapping of service providers, referral pathways, etc.) (Partner and NGO) - Engage with service providers (Partner)
Tools/Resources available	- SPSEA toolkit, Part II, Developing a referral path for essential protection services

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⑧Emergency simulation event	
What?	1-day emergency simulation event to test key PSEA elements (FCRM, report-handling and basic investigation elements and referral) and make necessary adjustments.
Who?	- PSEA/safeguarding/protection Focal Points (FPs) (partner) - Senior managers (partner) - Administration or MEAL staff, if available (partner) - MEAL staff (NGO)
Indicative timing	Month 18
Expected Outputs / Outcomes	Key PSEA elements tested in Emergency Simulation Event: FCRM, report handling and basic investigation elements and referral and tailored guidance provided on how to strengthen/address any gaps
Pre-requisites of Success	- Final FCRM and IRIS mechanisms - Mapping of services and referral pathways for SEA survivors developed and documented - Joint discussion on process to facilitate better understanding of the simulation exercise and ensure participation of appropriate staff (NGO and Partner) - Familiarize the scoring and partner's policy and procedure documents (NGO) - Availability of shared folder containing organization's policies and key references documents that will be tested during the event (Partner)
Tools/Resources available	- Simulation tools and resources

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⑨PERIODIC ONGOING SUPPORT AS REQUIRED	
What?	- Follow-up on outputs - Periodic ongoing remote support as required - Focused technical support provided remotely and face to face to partner organizations either individually, or in clustered groups. - Regular calls and/or review of key documents (e.g. FCRM designs) - Facilitate staff reflection on PSEA Implementation (incl. Action Plan Review) and additional needs

Who?	- PSEA/safeguarding/protection Focal Points (FPs) (partner) - Senior managers (partner) - Administration staff (partner) - MEAL staff (NGO)
Indicative timing	Month 2-23
Pre-requisites of Success	- Regular update on SEA-CAT action plans (NGO and partner) - Consistent engagement from NGO and partner senior manager and FPs – space to engage and prioritizing the support. Monthly check-ins with different staff involved on progress against deliverables (Partner and NGO) - Organizational culture change and senior leadership buy in (Partner) - Uniformed messaging during accompaniments (NGO) - Complementary to initiatives from Partnership Capacity Strengthening Unit (when available) (NGO)
Tools/Resources available	- Accompaniment methodology and tools

Factors to Consider for supporting partners on PSEA

There are many challenges, barriers and opportunities NGOs may encounter when supporting partners on PSEA. Based on the experience of the SPSEA project, a selection of recommended actions, to mitigate potential barriers and enhance opportunities across three key areas, are outlined below. All challenges and enabling factors apply at both the partner level and the supporting NGO level, unless otherwise specified.

STAFFING

Staffing of the supporting NGO and the local actor is of paramount importance in this work (see Lessons Learned section below). Investing in the capacity of staff in the supporting NGO and within the partner organization can improve results and make progress more sustainable.

Challenges and barriers
- Aspects of PSEA can be quite technical, and capacities of staff can vary from organization to organization.
- Limited dedicated budget and staff time for capacity strengthening activities can be a barrier, both within the local organization, and the NGO wishing to support it.
- Staff turnover and transition can hinder progress made through partnership and capacity strengthening initiatives.

Enabling factors
- Staff do not need to have specific PSEA experience or expertise to add significant value to the process. Staff with any of the following skills and aptitudes can contribute to PSEA at different levels
  - A range of useful skills/experience: gender sensitivity, investigations, social mobilization, communication with communities, project management, facilitation, policy development, working in partnership.
  - A range of useful aptitudes: interpersonal skills, good listening skills, empathy, ability to raise sensitive issues, integrity, critical thinking.

Recommendations
- Spend time onboarding and coaching staff involved in the project. Use a variety of methods, including e-learning, face-to-face learning, exchange visits, etc.
- Employ an iterative approach to build staff capability. Be realistic about what can be achieved in a short timeframe.
- Ensure multi-level accompaniment for PSEA roles and responsibilities, including from senior management of NGO to senior management of partner.
- Jointly develop and share clear terms of reference for staff involved, including an anticipated level of effort (LOE) for each staff member/focal point.

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND LEADERSHIP

Corporate culture and leadership present opportunities and barriers to strengthening PSEA in any organization. The organizational culture toward issues of gender, human rights for diverse groups, child protection and accountability to communities affected by crisis can enhance or impede PSEA goals. Power dynamics within an organization will also play a role. Active leadership is a huge factor - modeling behaviors, linking PSEA to organizational values, and making time to engage in PSEA efforts can demonstrate organizational and leadership commitment.

Challenges and barriers

- Partners faced multiple competing priorities during project implementation. As is common in the humanitarian sector, partner staff were managing large portfolios of work and often struggled to find time to move forward on PSEA commitments. Ongoing emergency responses, including COVID-19 responses, had to take precedence during the timeframe of the project, and interrupted some planned activities.

- As above, availability of senior leadership was also a challenge, as they juggled multiple priorities that did not always allow for active engagement.

Enabling factors

- Support and buy-in from senior management allowed partner staff to prioritize PSEA commitments and deliverables.

- Donor requirements for safeguarding/PSEA can assist partners to allocate time and resources.

- Religious statements on safeguarding/PSEA assisted partners to focus efforts on capacity-building objectives. For example, Vatican Statements and Caritas Internationalis enhanced safeguarding requirements added an additional incentive for Caritas partners to engage in the project.

Recommendations

- Invest time and resources to support a PSEA/safeguarding agenda.

- Identify champions within the partner organization to act as internal advocates and resources for other colleagues.

- Hold regular meetings between partner and NGO leadership for peer-to-peer communication on PSEA.

- Understand how much time is needed for accompaniment and plan work accordingly, jointly where possible.

- Be sensitive to partner availability and workloads; take a long-term approach to PSEA capacity building, where needed, to ensure local ownership and buy-in.

TOOLS AND RESOURCES

Using tools and resources tailored toward local actors can help prevent or overcome misunderstandings around the process, goal and objectives.

Challenges and barriers

- Development of training material and guidance (NGO): Although many resources exist in the sector, at the start of the SPSEA project, it was not possible to find a full composite of resources targeted toward local and national humanitarian actors. As noted below, language and terminology can be exclusive and too technical to be accessible to actors beginning their PSEA work.

- Familiarity with PSEA terminology can be a challenge for any organization that is beginning work on PSEA. Without significant background knowledge, terminology can be complex, overly reliant on acronyms and inaccessible. Compounding the issue, terms may not have clear translations in local languages.

Enabling factors

- The availability of tools and materials in different languages, for example, the IASC Six Core Principles Relating to SEA, can help to prevent confusion on key terms and goals.
- Pre-determined core messages during accompaniment ensure all partners receive consistent technical support (NGO).

Recommendations

- Contextualize training materials, tools and practical resources.
- Invest in hiring a professional translator, with a background in gender, protection and PSEA, to translate from English into the local language.

Lessons learned and best practices for PSEA capacity strengthening

* Please see Lessons Learned in Partner PSEA Capacity Strengthening (CRS 2021) in PSEA section of the Emergency Field Operations Manual (EFOM) to access this resource..

While further learning will be documented on project completion, the following is a summary of key learnings and promising practices for PSEA capacity strengthening. Further detail on each of these areas and other key learnings can be found in the following document: Lessons Learned in Partner PSEA Capacity Strengthening* (CRS 2021):

INTRODUCE PSEA TO ALL LEVELS OF THE ORGANIZATIONS. Introduce the PSEA capacity strengthening approach and maintain communication at all levels of the participating organizations to ensure awareness, buy-in and ownership. The engagement of relevant departments—such as human resources (HR) and monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning (MEAL)—across NGO and partners in PSEA-related training and accompaniment activities throughout the project ensures high-quality integration of PSEA in the organizations' policies and procedures.

In Indonesia partner PSEA focal points came from diverse departments: senior management (secretary of directors, board of ethics, etc.), operational team (HR and legal, finance, etc.), and programmatic (program managers, MEAL, gender and/or protection point person). The intention was not only mitigating staff turnover but also engaging all levels of their organization in promoting and reinforcing PSEA principles.

INVEST GREATER EFFORT TO INFORM LEADERSHIP ATTITUDES ON PSEA. Although Attitudes changed, partner staff expressed concern that the change was superficial, and that further work was needed to engage leaders by focusing on moral reasons for PSEA as well as in order to secure funding. It is also recommended that activities are targeted and tailored to partner leadership and staff separately considering the sensitivity of the topics and different needs in terms of learning and applying PSEA policies and procedures. Findings also showed that staff were uncomfortable discussing SEA in front of leadership.

Experience in the DRC and Haiti shows that a context-specific and culturally sensitive approach is required to get partner leadership on board. Initial introductions of the project to senior partner leadership by senior staff, such as the country representative, were well-received in all countries and helped to raise awareness of the importance of PSEA. This increases the awareness of PSEA at the senior level of the partner organization and also shows the wider partner staff that PSEA is taken seriously by their leadership.

When asked about what led to a change in leadership attitude, one partner staff member in Indonesia said: it was a combination of a carrot and a stick "We encourage leadership by repeating how important PSEA is. We have to repeat it all the time and give examples of why it is serious and what can happen if we are not serious. But [leadership] also now sees [PSEA] is important because the donors ask about it and there is money connected to it. We have to do it because it is right, but also because we need funding."2

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[2] Final evaluation of the Strengthening Partners in Protection against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse project (CRS 2021). Due to the phasing within countries, this report focused only on Haiti, Indonesia and the Philippines.

AT LEAST THREE TO FIVE YEARS OF SUPPORT IS NEEDED FOR PROJECT LEARNING, AND FOR OUTCOMES TO BE APPLIED AND SUSTAINABLE. Additional time allows for more in-depth learning and implementation of project objectives.

Partners consistently expressed in interviews[3] that they did not have enough time to fully roll out the project, or that they needed more time to absorb the content of what they were learning.

In the Philippines, there was a desire for more time focused on applying the concepts. One respondent said: "It took us a long time to [become] proficient in what we were doing so that the board would ratify [the policies]." Others were concerned about putting the work into practice once the project had ended and, despite feeling that they had developed good products, knew there was a lot to learn in implementation.

In interviews with staff from Haiti, the focus was more on the need to go deeper and more slowly to fully grasp the new concepts and apply the new knowledge and skills, rather than to go broader and focus on dissemination of knowledge and skills to more staff.

In the quantitative survey, most people focused on using the extra time to build out staff capacity, but a large portion also talked about going more slowly, either to have time to apply new skills or to allow change based on new skills.

PLAN FOR DEDICATED STAFF TIME OF BOTH PARTNER FOCAL POINTS AND NGO STAFF. One full level of effort (LOE) NGO staff member is recommended to support three to five partners, depending on their size, structure and existing capacity. Factor in costs for partners to apply the learning, as most do not have flexible funding sources.

Many of the focal points interviewed expressed concerns about the level of effort required from them in relation to their expectations earlier in the project. One respondent in the Philippines said of their role that "it's a lot of work … it's more than you think[4]

CONSISTENT AND TARGETED ACCOMPANIMENT. Accompaniment sessions can focus on a specific topic for which partners receive support to develop their outputs. Document the progress, challenges and required follow-up in a report for the partner. Outputs can also be linked to a small disbursal of funds upon completion of project deliverables.

CRS' accompaniment activities in the Philippines were structured around the project's intermediate results (IR) and tailored to partners based on the outcomes of their individual SEA capacity assessment. Each accompaniment activity had a clear purpose, linked to the project's IRs, that was documented and shared with the partners ahead of the session.

CLUSTER PARTNER ACCOMPANIMENT SESSIONS TO ENCOURAGE CROSS-ORGANIZATIONAL LEARNING AND MOTIVATION.

CRS' accompaniment activities in the Philippines were structured around the project's intermediate results (IR) and tailored to partners based on the outcomes of their individual SEA capacity assessment. Each accompaniment activity had a clear purpose, linked to the project's IRs, that was documented and shared with the partners ahead of the session.

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[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid.

APPROACH TO PARTNER PSEA CAPACITY STRENGTHENING

Clustered accompaniment sessions encourage the exchange of successes, challenges and progress, while creating healthy competition between peer organizations. Clustering was done geographically in the Philippines, which wa s efficient for the CRS team considering the resource limitations of this project. Three clusters were formed, which significantly reduced the time and costs for travel to partners. It was also appreciated by partners as they were clustered with organizations that work in the same context, speak the same language and have similar cultures. In Indonesia, clustering was based on the type and level of experience of the organization.
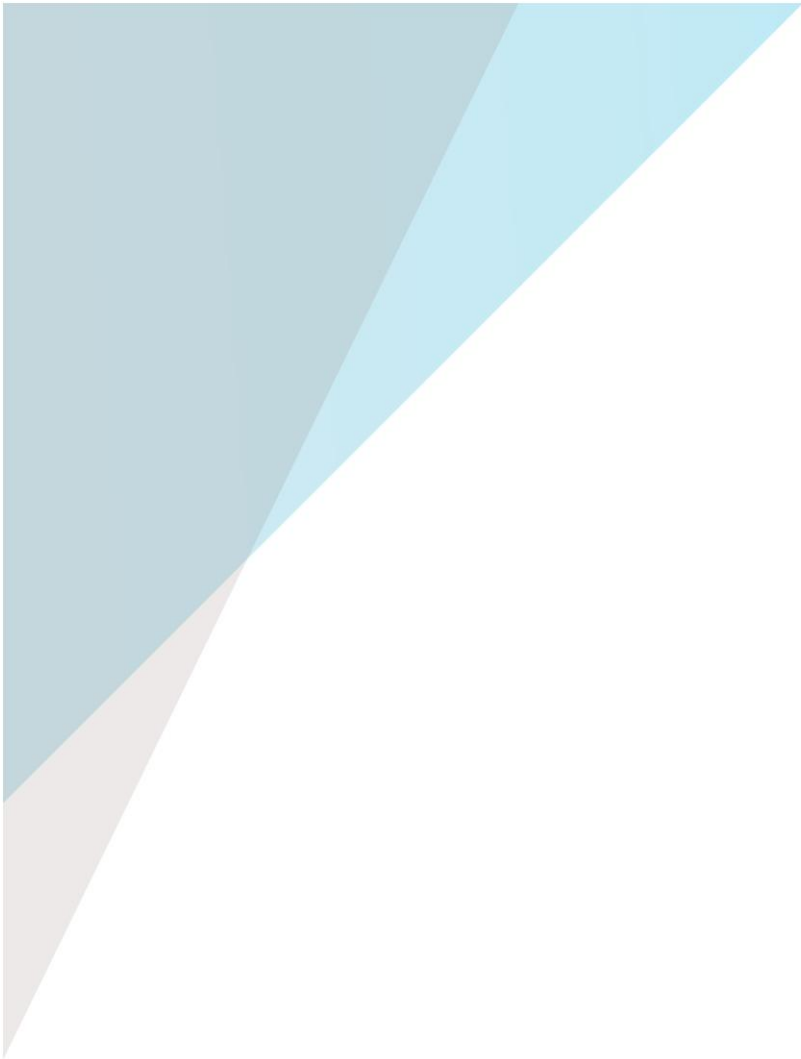
NGO participatory approach and equitable partner relationships facilitated learning and efficiency in application.

Partners expressed appreciation for the team's technical skills, communication style and flexibility, and reported that the approach to capacity building was key to the project's success

Annexes:

PSEA CAPACITY STRENGTHENING ACCOMPANIMENT TOOL.

CRS project teams have developed these accompaniment tools structured around the key elements of the project. Please see the PSEA section of the CRS Emergency Field Operations Manual (EFOM) to access this resource