

Prevention of SEAH during the COVID-19 pandemic

A webinar by the Resource and Support Hub



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The Impact of COVID-19 on Community Organizations and Local NGO's Work

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Founder of Children's Rights and Violence Prevention Fund (CRVPF)



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Children's Rights and Violence Prevention Fund (CRVPF)

- CRVPF is a **child rights and social justice** regional organization founded in 2015. The mission is to prevent violence, including sexual abuse and exploitation of children and adolescent girls where they live, play, learn and work.
- CRVPF partners are community organizations and local NGO's working closely with **children, adolescent girls, families, communities and schools**. CRVPF has 74 partners in **Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia and Kenya**. CRVPF provides grants and capacity development support to these partners.
- CRVPF develop a **cluster partnership model** encouraging 2-5 Community Organizations and Local NGO's to work in one geographic area using one grant.
- CRVPF provides a **six month planning and learning grants** to cluster partners to give them time and space 1) to know each other strategies, 2) to identify one project area, 3) to conduct situational analysis and finally 4) to develop long term proposal for CRVPF funding.



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The Survey

- CRVPF conducted a rapid assessment among partners to know the **Impact of COVID-19 on Community Organizations and Local NGO's Work**, their work with children, adolescents and communities.
- The survey used a **qualitative approach** – a semi-structured questionnaire with open-ended questions was shared online using Google Docs
- **68 partners participated in the survey** (35 in Uganda, 17 in Tanzania, 9 in Ethiopia & 7 in Kenya)
- **Children, adolescent girls, parents and community leaders were interviewed** by partners



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Findings on Sexual Abuse and Exploitation

- Out of 195 children interviewed, 89% of children and adolescent girls stated they know child or adolescent girl exposed to harassment, rape and sexual abuse.
- **Ethiopia** – increased child marriage and trafficking for domestic labour and sexual exploitation from Northern Ethiopia to central part
- **Kenya** – increased harassment and rape of children and adolescent girls in the slum communities
- **Uganda and Tanzania** – closure of small open markets has resulted in increased sexual exploitation to support livelihoods



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Child safeguarding during COVID-19

Immediate strategies

Build the resilience of partners to continue safeguarding work in collaboration with other actors

Raise awareness on reporting mechanisms amongst child and adolescent girls using - media, child friendly leaflets and posters

Respond to reported abuse cases and support the apprehending of perpetrators

Ongoing monitoring of the status of children and adolescent girls safeguarding situations



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Intermediate plan

Schools	Community formal structures
Support children and adolescent girls to return to schools	Effective collaboration with community formal leaders, social workers, community police to encourage and prioritize child safeguarding
Support partners to establish child rights clubs to safeguard children and adolescent girls in schools	Support child safeguarding reporting and referral pathways
Support adolescent girls and boys to access placements, vocational trainings and loan to start small businesses	Encourage partners to establish “safe spaces” to build children and adolescent girls’ resilience and agency



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Long term plan

- To support research undertaking to understand the new realities of children adolescents, families in the four countries
- CRVPF and partners to review Child Safeguarding Policy to respond to the new realities of children and adolescent girls after COVID-19
- CRVPF plan review its four years strategic plan to address child safeguarding and strengthen the prevention of violence, sexual abuse and exploitation of children and adolescent girls
- Develop link with child safeguarding regional and global networks to share experience and learning on the new realities of children, adolescent girls and their families and discuss how to respond to the new child safeguarding challenges.



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Thank you

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How COVID-19 impacts on safeguarding/PSEA measures in our organisations

Lucy Heaven Taylor

Independent safeguarding consultant



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Programming

Example risk

Closure or suspension of essential programmes means reduction in assistance and risker coping strategies from the affected populations, increasing the risk of exploitation by our staff

Example mitigation

Strengthen safeguards, with focus on communicating PSEA message with affected populations (for example through posters, radio programmes), and oversight of staff interaction with them



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Operations

Example risk

A reduction in face-to-face contact means a move to more online activities, where there is a different risk profile we may not be familiar with

Example mitigation

Develop safeguards specific to online interaction, for example online Codes of Conduct, and the same vetting and oversight you would have for staff with face-to-face contact with children and at risk people

Who's delivering

Example risk

The change in operating environment means working more through partners, or with new partners and stakeholders

Example mitigation

Ensure that safeguarding commitments are clear and are included in contacts and ToRs, and provide capacity support if necessary

Referral pathways

Example risk

Some services that we refer safeguarding cases to (judicial, child protection agencies, psychosocial support) may be suspended or not operating at full capacity

Example mitigation

Map the current situation to gain a full picture – some services are still operational for the most serious cases (such as those involving children)



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Enabling reports

Example risk

There is a reduction in people reporting through our existing mechanisms

Example mitigation

Assess what the barriers to reporting might be in the current situation. In consultation with affected populations where possible, try new routes that don't need face-to-face interaction, such as WhatsApp (if secure)



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Responding to reports

Example risk

Staff cannot visit a site to follow up on or investigate a safeguarding report

Example mitigation

Consider remote investigations, for example interviewing witnesses over Skype. This will need to be risk assessed, for example to ensure the witness can be interviewed in a safe, confidential location



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Inter-Agency PSEA in Ethiopia: PSEA Prevention of / Protection from / Response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

Sylvie Robert
PSEA Coordinator in Ethiopia



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Our collective approach and activities

- Ultimate accountability with the UN RC/HC
- An EHCT PSEA Strategy
- A PSEA Coordinator
- A PSEA Network
 - 2 co-chairs
 - 25 members: UN Agencies and NGOs
 - 6 PSEA Working Groups
 - 1 UN Women led project

Inter-Agency / Collective Attitude => A People Centered Approach
throughout the HPC/PCM

- A National CBCM, including referral pathways
- Awareness raising and capacity building
- Communication with Communities



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An example of collective action

An assessment to launch a joint CFM in quarantine centers hosting migrant returnees in Ethiopia



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Process

ASSESSMENT REPORT ON AAP AND PSEA IN THE QUARANTINE CENTERS HOSTING MIGRANT RETURNEES TO ESTABLISH JOINT COMPLAINTS AND FEEDBACK MECHANISMS

This assessment was carried out by
The International Organization for Migration (IOM)

on behalf of
IOM, MSF Spain/Holland, OCHA, PSEA Coordinator,
PSEA Network, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women, WFP, and WHO

with support from
The PSEA Network and the PSEA Coordinator

- Collective
- PSEA/AAP
- GBV/SEA risks
- Joint CFMs



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Findings

- Quick actions required
- One-way: information and communication
- Two-way: Complaints and Feedback Mechanism (CFM)



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