

Country Safeguarding Assessment: Ethiopia



RESOURCE
& SUPPORT
HUB

The Resource and Support Hub

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Acronyms

ADCS	Adigrat Diocese Catholic Secretariat
C-19	COVID 19
CBCM	Community Based Complaint Mechanism
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination and violence against Women
CHADET	Organisation for Child Development and Transformation
CRC	Child Rights Committee (UN)
CSO	Civil Society Organisations
CSSP	Civil Societies Support Program 2
DFID	Department for International Development
EDHS	Ethiopia Demography and Health Survey
ESAP 3	Ethiopian Social Accountability Program 3
FGM/C	Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting
GBV	Gender Based Violence
HR	Human Resource
IAAWG	Inter – Agency Accountability Working Group
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IDP	Internally Displaced People
INGO	International No-Governmental Organisations
PSEAH	Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment
QA	Quality Assurance/Assured
RSH	Safeguarding Resource and Support Hub
SEAH	Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment
SNNPR	Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region
SPs	Service Providers
TDA	Tigray Development Association
UNDP	The United Nations Development Programme

Executive Summary

The Ethiopia country assessment is designed to provide an evidence base that can inform the design of the national hub. Whilst some core elements concerning the design of the national Hubs are already in place – for example, the focus on supporting civil society organisations, and combining virtual and face to face interactions – the assessment is intended to provide more detail about the existing landscape, providing an initial steer on the priority areas to focus on in our capacity development and research workstreams. That initial steer will be supplemented and refreshed throughout the programme based on continuing user engagement and feedback.

A second objective is to gather some useful material concerning SEAH in Ethiopia for sharing with Ethiopian Hub users. The scoping work aims to find out what work has been done on SEAH in Ethiopia, what resources are available (whether tools, advice or other) and (where permitted, useful and of adequate quality) to upload and share this information. This is a core part of the Hub's function in terms of consolidating, curating and disseminating.

With these two objectives in mind, the Ethiopia country assessment – which constitutes a pilot exercise that will inform future national Hubs – set out to answer the following questions:

- a) What is the national context – legal, policy, practice and culture – within which the Ethiopia Hub will be operating?
- b) What SEAH/ safeguarding resources exist in Ethiopia that can be more widely shared – support services, tools and guidance, evidence, expertise and capacity development opportunities?
- c) What SEAH/ safeguarding related activities, actors and networks or opportunities are there in Ethiopia on which the Hub should build?
- d) What are the priority gaps and needs with regards to SEAH and safeguarding in Ethiopia, in particular amongst CSOs?
- e) How do people/ organisations in the aid sector access information, and what does the digital landscape look like? What are the opportunities and constraints in Ethiopia that need to be factored into the design of the national Hub?

Different methods were used to gather this information, primarily a desk review supplemented with a small number of Key Informant Interviews. COVID-19 disrupted our efforts to gather primary user engagement data through focus group discussions around the country, and had to be replaced by secondary data from civil society organisations funded by the Civil Society Support Programme 2. This means we have limited knowledge to inform d), the priority gaps and needs of CSOs. We intend to supplement this with further data collection when the situation becomes more conducive to so doing.

The national safeguarding / SEAH context

Although Ethiopia has ratified and domesticated many of the international and regional conventions on child rights and protection of adults, there is no single consolidated law on gender based violence or violence against women and girls. The various institutions established by the Ethiopian government to protect children and women are often under-funded, partially implemented and not yet widely effective. Despite provisions within the criminal law, early marriage and other harmful traditional practices such as FGM are widespread. The criminalisation of adultery and homosexuality creates significant risk on organisations' ability to safeguard staff.

With regards to labour law, until recently sexual harassment was not recognised in local legal instruments, and there remain a number of significant loopholes to date. The CEDAW committee has drawn attention to pervasive prejudice, discrimination and sexual harassment

against women in the workforce. There is no requirement in Ethiopia for any employer or institution to report on sexual exploitation, abuse and sexual harassment in the workplace, making it extremely difficult to assess the extent of such misconduct or indeed the current state of response. Given the lack of information more widely, it is impossible to find any evidence on SEAH against particular vulnerable groups, such as people with disabilities.

In addition to inadequacies in the legal framework, social norms and attitudes are also critical drivers of violence, including SEAH. Patriarchal norms, gender inequality and discrimination against vulnerable groups underpin sexual violence, corporal punishment and the trivialisation or normalisation of such practices. This creates an environment where SEAH is widely tolerated at a societal level, amongst community members and even within some aid organisations.

SEAH resources

There are no multi-agency national reporting, referral systems or support on GBV, including SEAH. During the scoping exercise, we were unable to identify any published information about referral pathways such as sometimes exist in other country contexts. The availability and quality of medical, psychosocial and legal services for survivors of violence varies across the country. Legal aid services are fragmented, mental health and psychosocial support are rarely available from specialist providers, and shelters are extremely limited.

This lack of resources is compounded by a lack of research or documentation concerning the availability, capacity and the different types of safeguarding initiatives in different organisations. For example, there is no evidence concerning the effectiveness of the various hotline initiatives established by organisations that exist, and other community complaints mechanisms. Nor are there documented studies on the scale of SEAH, who the perpetrators are, who the victims are, and the factors that mitigate or facilitate SEAH in the aid sector in Ethiopia.

The weakening and fragmentation of the civil society sector as a result of the restrictive legislation (recently repealed) has affected the way in which the aid sector engages with such issues. Most organisations have their own separate policies, guidelines and reporting/referral procedures. These are rarely available to use outside of the organisation. The government agency responsible for overseeing civil society organisations does not appear to have a specific mandate with regards to monitoring SEAH. However, there is significant interest across the civil society sector in the development of a broad code of conduct, a possible entry-point for integrating SEAH standards.

In terms of tools and resources available to national and local users, these are extremely limited. UN agencies and International NGOs may share templates and approaches with partners, but these are rarely in local languages. There do not appear to be any tailored and readily available resources and tools for national users in local languages; similarly, it is extremely difficult to get hold of publicly-accessible research and evidence that can be of value to CSOs looking to improve their policies and approaches.

SEAH stakeholders, initiatives, networks and service providers

The SEAH/ safeguarding discussion is led by a relatively small number of key stakeholders in Ethiopia. Within the international community, the PSEA network is leading the way on joined up approaches to combating SEA, and is actively pursuing a range of projects and initiatives. Various government agencies have a role to play but are less visible at civil society level. Amongst civil society, it is perhaps the Civil Society Support Programme (CSSP2) that has done most in this regard, training over 120 CSOS in basic safeguarding approaches over the last two years. Nevertheless, data suggests that even amongst these organisations, monitoring and learning around safeguarding remains low.

Previous examples of training initiatives appear to have left little trace and certainly no national cohort of established SEA investigators or trainers. One or two individual CSOs are playing a key role in providing training to others on a call-down basis, but such initiatives are relatively

rare. Most interventions appear to be donor driven and are organisation specific, although there is some collaboration between donors/ lead NGOs and grantees. However, overall our scoping noted a lack of institutional memory and a tendency towards non-transparency.

Efforts to identify safeguarding service providers offering expert advice to aid organisations in Ethiopia found only a small number of individuals and organisations who are able to offer such a service. These are currently undergoing assessment and will be signposted on the Hub in due course. The lack of a major cohort of individuals or organisations clearly illustrates a significant gap in the safeguarding architecture within Ethiopia. It is a legacy of the fragmented approach to capacity development in this area for the last 10 years.

CSO capacity gaps and needs

Although we were unable to collect primary data concerning CSO safeguarding capacity levels, CSSP2 self-assessment data gave us a snapshot of potential priorities (albeit not necessarily representative of Ethiopian CSOs in general). Amongst this cohort, just over half have basic safeguarding policies in place. When it comes to awareness and knowledge on safeguarding, 41% of the CSOs reported having a training/induction process in place. The biggest gap is in terms of monitoring and learning on safeguarding: the vast majority of these CSOs rated their capacity as low or basic. None of the CSOs felt that they had a high level of capacity on monitoring.

This fairly mixed set of profiles suggests there is an opportunity for RSH to develop and share materials from the basic level up to more comprehensive level, in an attempt to ensure those who are very low capacity are not left behind. We will continue to seek more evidence to help inform our development of the Ethiopian Hub.

Digital landscape

A scan of the digital and technology landscape in Ethiopia was also included in order to inform our hub profile. The challenge of accessing internet in many parts of Ethiopia, the low bandwidth and widespread use of phones to access information all point to a need for a mixed approach to capacity building in Ethiopia in order to expand reach and ensure as wide a user group as possible with reasonable access. Content needs to be simple, readily accessible, and easily downloadable. Social networking sites may be important to enhance the Hub site, especially for discussion groups.

Recommendations

This section will further be refined during Q3 of the inception period. However, some initial broader recommendations are listed here.

Suggested key target groups:

The Hub has already identified **Ethiopian CSOs to be the Ethiopia Hub's target audience.** These would be national organisations, ranging from those with a country-level or regional level remit to those with a more local target area. Those organisations in the developing regions and those working with hard to reach groups (e.g. socially marginalised groups) are likely to have least access to resources. **Networks** will be an important way of reaching them, and should thus also form a key target group for RSH given their ability to cascade materials to members. It is unlikely that very grassroots / community based organisations would access Hub materials directly.

This assessment demonstrates that there would also be value in making available standardised and locally translated tools for **larger organisations**, including INGOs. Moreover, in order to reach smaller organisations, it may be tactical to engage their larger (I)NGO partners or even government agencies. Harmonised approaches to safeguarding standards and templates amongst the donors and INGOs would also reduce demands on downstream partners.

The lack of **private service providers** offering support to aid organisations to improve their safeguarding policies and practices is also striking. RSH will want to consider a strategy for building up a **local cohort of specialist service providers**, so that the Ethiopian aid sector is not dependent on international consultants to provide remote, expensive and often generic support in an area that would be better managed through local expertise.

Active engagement with the **Civil Society Organisations Agency (ACSO)** is also recommended. ACSO is facilitating the establishment of the NGO council and also has regulatory oversight of the civil society sector. Building capacity within the Agency to provide and exercise regulatory oversight with regards to SEAH/ safeguarding would have a huge effect on sustainability. However, the agency has limited responsiveness towards initiatives not initiated from a government sector, so RSH will need to explore the feasibility of this ambition before investing resources in providing this support (which will build on/ complement anything CSSP2 is able to do in this regard).

With regards to other government sectors/ agencies, it makes sense for RSH to explore the **value of advocacy with the CSOs that join the Community of Practice**. For example, where there are CSOs working in education who see a benefit for the education sector of the Ethiopian education ministry adopting different practices or changing policy, RSH can play a role in catalysing such advocacy attempts. RSH itself does not have the legitimacy to actually lead an advocacy campaign as it is not a CSO.

We do not anticipate that RSH will engage with trade unions in order to access the private sector more widely, such as textiles industry and others in industrial parks etc, which are indirectly linked to the aid sector. We do not believe RSH has the legitimacy and traction to influence these businesses, even though there are likely to be very high levels of SEAH taking place within these settings. We will nevertheless remain open to discussions about this going forward.

Key national priorities for the hub

Given the fragmented approach to SEAH/ safeguarding in Ethiopia, RSH needs to **identify effective capacity building activities that enhance/ complement** what each organisation has been doing and what is planned by other stakeholders. **Constant communication, coordination and collaboration** is critical in this regard. This means RSH National Associate must continue to play an active role in the PSEA network, as well as identifying other fora where related planning takes place – for example, within civil society networks, donor discussions etc.

The capacity development work will include a series of **webinars and podcasts** on gaps identified by the sector actors. We will consider e-learning opportunities too. We are committed to combining online offers with **face to face activities** once the situation permits free movement without causing harm. **Mentoring and advice** will also be available to selected CSOs through the Ask an expert service, which will be piloted from May 2020.

RSH should also contribute to **better coordination** within the aid sector around this agenda – supporting the PSEA network, and identifying ways to **build a community of practice that reach a much wider range of organisations** (local, primarily). One part of this role should also be to serve as a **convener for a common understanding on SEAH** – definition, elements, and common tools in local language. We will explore working with Translators Without Borders on this agenda.

These communities of practice will enable us to establish dialogue on how **safeguarding/SEAH standards and approaches should be contextualised** for most effective and relevant use in Ethiopia (and this will feed into the capacity development workstream). Specific and critical gaps identified in this report are **common referral pathways and mechanisms for gathering data**. Additional areas to further explore with the CoP during the next quarter include the possibility of peer-to-peer mentorship network for CSOs.

There is a huge evidence gap on the scale of SEAH incidence within aid organisations and how organisations are responding. Our inability to identify virtually any research in publicly accessible formats points to a **major need to collect data and build evidence**. However, the scope of this assessment means that we have not been able to identify *a way to prioritise these gaps*. The RSH team will need to consult with the NEB and with other key stakeholders (see below) to help us define the focus, given the many ways in which this work could go (eg whether and how international standards are being applied locally, and relevance/ value). Equally, it will be critical to *explore how we might do this* – in collaboration with research institutions in Ethiopia and internationally; with other thought leaders in the sector; or with DFID implementing partners in country.

Key networks/stakeholders to engage

The **Ethiopia PSEA network** will be fundamental as an ally with whom to share resources, and as the (only) existing network in Ethiopia dedicated to the issue of SEA. Within this network are all the relevant humanitarian stakeholders with whom RSH would want to develop a Community of Practice (though we would want to expand the RSH CoP to go well beyond the profile of the current members, mainly INGOs and UN).

CSSP2 – a critical cohort of CSOs already engaged in and familiar with safeguarding issues. There are existing materials that can be shared to avoid re-inventing the wheel. In addition, like the **ESAP** programme, the CSOs in this group are able to draw down on Ask An Expert, the RSH helpdesk service in Ethiopia. These two cohorts will be very valuable for our **outreach efforts, user engagement, and helping us understand the needs within the sector**.

The **INGOs Human Resource network** which is convened by Ethiojobs (private human resourcing company) has some engagement amongst heads of human resources of INGOs. In recent years the network is paying more attention to issues of SEAH and other misconduct. Despite being an informal group, it meets online or face-to-face for experience sharing. It is a platform for peer to peer support. Smaller CSOs can benefit from this type of unstructured but relevant learning platform.

There are other umbrella network organisations whose role and collaboration with the RSH will be further refined. **Consortium of Reproductive Health Association (CoRHA)** has significant number of members from the international and national organisations. The **Civil Society Forum** is also another important umbrella organisation. However, the capacity of the umbrella organisations and their actual relation with members needs careful assessment, due to the impact of the previous charities and societies legislation and the Agency pressure for consortia not to implement activities but rather to serve as support for members only.

The **National Expert Board** also constitutes an excellent networking resource, offering RSH access to different organisations, structures and groups, and information about relevant opportunities where RSH could make an impact. We will want to carefully maintain this important advisory group.

We will work closely with **DFID Ethiopia** in order to ensure that we can access and influence not only DFID programme partners, but also the **donor working groups** and their partners, for maximum outreach.

Communication channels

Based on the evidence and analysis generated from secondary data on digital landscape in Ethiopia, as well as other parts of this assessment, the RSH plans to use a **mixed- approach to sharing information and learning** through the Hub in order to engage harder to reach organisations eg in remote areas.

RSH will share information and encourage dialogue on key issues raised by RSH directly on **social media sites** (by creating RSH pages on Facebook or Telegram or Instagram accounts – requires further investigation) or using these platforms to link to the RSH website.

As the internet speed is low, making downloading certain content extremely difficult, RSH will keep its online content simple. We will also use Q3 to further explore the option of developing an **easy to use and off-line basic training app** in local language(s).

We will include a limited amount of **face to face activities** to particularly target those that may struggle with online based activities.

Newsletters, networks and allies (including many of those stakeholders named above) will be key in supporting our outreach and helping us develop our COP membership/ user network.

We assessed but have **rejected the idea of using radio as a broadcasting option**. The main reason for this is that our target audience are CSOs, rather than community members, and we do not consider this approach would be impactful without accompanying direct engagement with any organisation listening in. This option would also be extremely expensive and require a lot of media expertise within the consortium. The COVID-19 situation is in any case un conducive to developing this workstream, given the importance of embedding this type of activity into a wider support programme.

1. Introduction

The country assessments are designed to provide an evidence base that can inform the design of the national hubs. Whilst some core elements concerning the design of the national Hubs are already in place – for example, the focus on supporting civil society organisations, and combining virtual and face to face interactions – a more detailed exercise is required to ensure that our resources are targeted to maximum effect. The country assessment should give us an initial steer on the priority areas to focus on in our capacity development and research workstreams as we embark on implementation. That initial steer will be supplemented and refreshed throughout the programme based on on-going user engagement and feedback.

A second objective is to gather some useful material concerning SEAH in Ethiopia for sharing with Ethiopian Hub users. The scoping work aims to find out what work has been done on SEAH in Ethiopia, what resources are available (whether tools, advice or other) and (where permitted, useful and of adequate quality) to upload and share this information. This is a core part of the Hub's function in terms of consolidating, curating and disseminating.

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- a) What is the national context – legal, policy, practice and culture – within which the Ethiopia Hub will be operating?
- b) What SEAH/ safeguarding related initiatives, communities of practice / networks or opportunities are there in Ethiopia on which the Hub should build?
- c) What SEAH/ safeguarding resources exist in Ethiopia that can be more widely shared – support services, tools and guidance, evidence, expertise and capacity development opportunities?
- d) What are the priority gaps and needs with regards to SEAH and safeguarding in Ethiopia, in particular amongst CSOs?
- e) How do people/ organisations in the aid sector access information, and what does the digital landscape look like? What are the opportunities and constraints in Ethiopia that need to be factored into the design of the national Hub?

Different methods were used to gather this information (see Chapter 2 below), and the material has been organised to make up the different components of the country assessment. Some segments will be published (with some amendments to format) on the Hub – for example, tools and resources, evidence, service provider database etc. As a guiding principle, we will make the assessment, or components thereof, available on demand, including material which is not destined to be published on the online platform, to maximise the investment of this exercise, and as a reflection of the open collaboration we wish to see within this sector. The main content of the country assessment has been designed and organised as follows:

- Chapter 1- is this introduction section.
- Chapter 2 – methodology. This section briefly outlines the principal methods used to gather the data, as well as flagging key limitations.
- Chapter 3 - Country context for safeguarding – systems mapping. This section describes the legislation and rights instruments which support SEAH/safeguarding, and analyses how robust this legislation is, how it applies to the aid sector and some of the informal institutions and drivers of SEAH. This section is for internal use, to ensure that the team is fully aware of the broader (formal and informal) institutional context within which we will be operating. It may also be used to help identify gaps and issues that

form the focus of future capacity development activities. A summary of some key findings will be published on the Ethiopia Hub platform.

- Chapter 4 - Safeguarding in the Ethiopian aid and development sector. This chapter begins with a summary of the key stakeholders for SEAH/safeguarding, as set out in an excel spreadsheet of the various stakeholders identified during the scoping as playing an important actual or potential role in the SEAH/ safeguarding agenda in Ethiopia. This stakeholder assessment is not for publishing, but rather will help inform our internal operations – compiling a membership list or community of practice; identifying key people to present at webinars or speak on podcasts, etc.

This chapter also summarises the (few) sector wide safeguarding initiatives in the country e.g. multi-organisation capacity building initiatives; existing capacity levels and gaps within CSOs¹; and the availability of locally developed or utilised tools, resources and research. Tools, resources and research are individually listed and categorised in excel spreadsheets annexed. Most of this chapter is for internal purposes, but any tools, resources and evidence that passes that QA process and that can be useful to users will be summarised and published on the Hub.

- Chapter 5 - Safeguarding service providers. This part of the assessment provides an overview /mapping of service providers, accompanied by a spreadsheet detailing all service providers that are working in SEAH or broader safeguarding sphere. These are currently being collected (an excel spreadsheet documents those already undergoing due diligence), but have not been quality assured at the time of submitting this deliverable. SPs that pass the required due diligence will be listed on the marketplace of the RSH in due course.
- Chapter 6 – the digital landscape of Ethiopia. This final chapter provides a brief overview of the opportunities and challenges faced by Ethiopian people / organisations in accessing internet, as well as some broader findings concerning communications and how people access information and training. It is very specifically designed to help the programme team understand and adapt the design of the implementation phase to ensure we have the widest possible outreach.
- Chapter 7 – recommendations. This final chapter pulls together the analysis from the preceding chapters and makes a set of core recommendations for the programme design with regards to: suggested key target groups; key national priorities for the hub; any regional focus of the hub; identification of key capacity building activities (at a high level); key networks and stakeholders to engage.

¹ Due to the impossibility of conducting primary research during C-19 lockdown, we have based this on a specific set of data from the Civil Society Support Programme (2), which is valuable but not tailored around the questions that primary research would have permitted us to ask. We do not plan to publish this data on the Hub, since it belongs to CSSP2.

2. Methodology

This assessment was conducted March – April 2020, based on a desk review of secondary data. Some key informants were interviewed using a snowball method to locate key resources and tools and to assess the different organisation based initiatives on safeguarding, draw lessons and identify priority areas. The assessment was constrained by multiple challenges. The lack of research and data on SEAH specifically in the aid sector, and more broadly the lack of data on sexual harassment in institutions, were significant drawbacks.

Efforts to access information about the experience of aid organisations and scoping of resources and tools was also met with tacit resistance. Most organisations were non-responsive to queries made through email to share resources and tools they have on SEAH/safeguarding. Those who were approached through face to face meetings were more receptive to the queries, albeit rarely able or confident to share resources. Those who did share resources generally made this conditional on being for the Hub’s internal learning only and not for publishing on the Hub. A few rare instances of open and transparent collaboration were the exception.

During the assessment, COVID-19 pandemic entering Ethiopia led to many organisation staff working from home, further curtailing the effort to reach as many organisations as possible. This has particularly affected local CSOs whose staff appear to have less internet access or connectivity. Arranging a focus group discussion with selected organisations would have been an alternative had it not been for the national restriction on meetings due to the pandemic.

In 2019, the World Bank sponsored a secondary data study on GBV broadly, including SEAH. However, the study is an internal document and is not publicly accessible. The Bank was willing to provide highlights of the findings through key informant interviews, which confirmed that they were not able to find any quantitative data to ascertain the extent or magnitude of SEAH in the aid sector. Anecdotal evidence was raised in discussions, but the researchers were not able to access concrete evidence or reports. Nevertheless, the Bank also shared the reference materials used in their assessment which have been helpful in informing this Country Assessment.

3. Country context for SEAH/safeguarding – systems mapping

3.1. Legislation and rights instruments which support SEAH/safeguarding

Ethiopia has ratified most of the international and regional conventions on child rights and protection of adults and these ratified conventions are adopted into domestic laws or are an integral part of the laws of the country². Some of these are

- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW),

² FDRE Constitution Art 9

- Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Optional Protocol to the convention
- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)
- International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (CMW)
- African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child

There is no single or consolidated law on gender based violence or violence against women and girls³. The different international instruments ratified by Ethiopia and the legal and policy documents that promote the rights of women and girls under the constitution, the revision of the family laws and criminal code all contain provisions relating to different forms of violence.

The Ethiopian government has also established institutions at federal and in lower structures such as the Ministry of Women, Children, Youth Affairs Offices (MOWCYA), special police units aimed at protecting children and women, and a special bench within the federal criminal court specifically to hear cases of violence against women and girls in a sensitive manner. These various structures testify to the many initiatives and efforts made by government (often with support from civil society) over the decades. However, the data on violence indicates that those efforts are not yielding fruit might have been hoped⁴.

3.1.1 The Criminal Code and sexual exploitation of women and girls

Ethiopia revised its criminal code in 2005, which has criminalised certain acts which are relevant for safeguarding and SEAH. The criminal code (Article 625) prohibits sexual exploitation of women: “Whoever procures from a woman sexual intercourse or any other indecent act by taking advantage of her material or mental distress or of the authority he exercises over her by virtue of his position, function or capacity as protector, teacher, master or employer or by virtue of any other like relationship”. It does not, however, include, and therefore prohibit, sex work as a form of exploitation although associated activities of brothel keeping⁵, trafficking (even with consent of the trafficked person)⁶ and public soliciting are punishable offences.

Under the Criminal Law, any sexual act with a minor (under 18 years of age) is criminalised⁷. However, whilst early marriage prevalence has declined over the years, rates remain unacceptably high. For example, amongst young women aged 20-24, the 2016 Ethiopian Demographic Household Survey (EDHS) found the following proportion had been married under 18 years (43% in Tigray and Amhara; 47% Gambella; Afar 67%; SNNP 31%; Benishangul Gumuz 50%; Oromia 48%; Dire Dawa 32%; Somali 50%; Harar 41% and Addis Ababa 8%)⁸. It is worth noting here that Afar had a very insignificant decline (1%) while Somali and Harari had some percentage increase in the prevalence over the last 10 years. Ethiopia needs to make progress 6 times faster than the last 10 years to eliminate child marriage by 2030. The same is true for Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C) which has a national average of 65% prevalence, whilst regions such as Afar and Somali have 100% prevalence⁹.

The government has not issued official or written policy on enforcement of sex work law, but it appears that an unofficial policy is in place throughout the country to tolerate sex work and to limit the law enforcement to where there are serious complaints, disturbances or abuse of

³ Marisa Cordon, and Et.al. (2018). Systematic Literature Review of Gender Based Violence in Ethiopia: Magnitude, policies and interventions. Social Impact INC.

⁴ Ibid. page 16

⁵ Art 635 (b)

⁶ Art 635 (a)

⁷ Art 626

⁸ FDRE Ministry of Women, Children and Youth (2019). National Costed Roadmap to End Child Marriage and FGM/C 2020 -2024. Page 71

⁹ Ministry of Finance and UNICEF (no year). National Situation Analysis of Children and Women in Ethiopia.

minors¹⁰. The study by the Paulo Longo research initiative indicated that police usually ignore sex workers and in fact police visit bars and other places of sex work as customers and sometimes wearing uniforms openly. Sometimes there are crackdowns against street sex workers and usually associated with key events in the city such as during meetings of the African Union or election times. Despite penalties being higher where children are involved¹¹ in sex work, it is widely acknowledged that underage girls constitute a sizable number of sex workers¹². A qualitative study (mentioned above) conducted in Bahir Dar, Addis Ababa and Shashemene with sex workers shows that although all knew that sex with minors is against the law, nobody knew of anyone charged for sexual exploitation of minors¹³.

3.1.2 Sexual misconduct in the workplace

Until recently sexual harassment was not recognised in local legal instruments. The revised labour law (proclamation No.1156/2019) governing private sector, government run enterprises and non-government employee-employer relations has recently included prohibition of sexual harassment. Under the labour law, sexual harassment is defined broadly. The law does not provide examples of specific acts and has included consent as a determining factor: “to persuade or convince another through utterances, signs or any other manner to submit for sexual favour without his/her consent)¹⁴. The notion of consent is extremely problematic within employment settings where power and status differences come into play. This is further compounded when elements such as quid-pro-quo (making sexual favour a condition for certain action or inaction), the creation of a hostile environment and coercive conditions may all play a part. Another addition to the definition is ‘sexual violence to include any act accompanied by force’, which has made the provisions vague.

At face value, acts of people deemed to be in the category of employer (managers) and by colleagues/other employees are included in the provision¹⁵. However, it is worth mentioning here that the labour law is not applicable to managerial employees¹⁶. Article 10 defines who managerial staff are, namely employees delegated by the employer with some power to design and implement management policies, or, even if not delegated by the employer, those exercising power to hire, transfer, suspend, layoff, dismiss or assign employees are included. In addition, legal service providers or heads of the legal department/unit also constitute managerial staff, even if not delegated to exercise the above duties.

It is therefore unclear how the labour law applies to managerial staff who are governed by the civil code (contracts). The civil code of 1960 has no provision on sexual harassment. Organisations who have clear internal policies on harassment and have code of conducts signed by all staff have clear advantage to eliminate/manage the confusion/gap. Any employee who is subjected to harassment has a right to terminate the contract without notice and claim severance payment¹⁷.

Unlike the labour law, the civil servants proclamation 1016/2017 under Article 2(13) provides extensive definition of sexual harassment as an “act of unwelcome sexual advance or request or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature and includes unwelcome kisses, patting, pinching or making other similar bodily contact; following the victim or blocking the path of the victim in a manner of sexual nature; put sexual favour as prerequisite for employment,

¹⁰ Olvers C., Alemayehu B., Hawkins K., and Moosy N. (2011) *Sex Work in Ethiopia: Mapping the Impact of Law, Policy and Enforcement Practices*. Paulo Longo Research Initiative. Michael Kirby Center for Public Health and Human Rights, Monash University. Page 20

¹¹ Art 636

¹² ECPAT (2018). *Sexual Exploitation of Children in Ethiopia*. Submission for the Universal Periodic Review of the Human Rights Situation in Ethiopia. Bangkok: ECPAT International.

¹³ *Ibid.* Note 5

¹⁴ Proclamation no 1156/2019 (art 2 (11))

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, Art 14 (1h) and 2(h) respectively

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, Art 3 (2C)

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, Art 39 (1d)

promotion, transfer, redeployment, training, education, benefits or for executing or authorising any human resource management act”.

The CEDAW committee¹⁸ has expressed concern over the pervasive prejudice and discrimination and sexual harassment against women in the work force. The Committee was not convinced that the provision in the labour law was enough and argued that additional measures to effectively implement the provision were necessary. The committee expressed concern that not much attention has been given to the issue, as reflected in the lack of data on the extent of sexual harassment, pattern of reporting and measures taken in any sector.

The criminal code has also criminalised adultery and homosexuality. This may impact on organisations’ ability to safeguard staff e.g. where a report /complaint concerns adultery – not a safeguarding issue – but which is a criminal offence. For many international organisations, ‘localisation’ of global safeguarding standards means editing the document to quietly pass around the issue of sexual orientation and avoid discussion about the impact of the policy on the ability of organisations to safeguard staff, children and adults at risk who might identify as LGBTQI.

3.1.3 Mandatory reporting

Under Ethiopian Criminal Code, mandatory reporting is mostly related to safety and security of the military, the security of the nation and public safety and the provisions are expected to be interpreted narrowly. The only exception is Art 443 where mandatory reporting is imposed for crimes that carry the death sentence or rigorous imprisonment for life. There are few crimes that carry a sentence of rigorous imprisonment for life for crimes of a sexual nature. These include sexual abuse of minors in institutional care (health, education, correction facility)¹⁹ or under the supervision or control of the person (such as school), or of a woman (even if adult) who is not able to understand the nature of the act or is not able to resist due to old age, physical or mental illness, depression or any other reason²⁰ and when the sexual act is committed by a person who is expected to protect, support, educate, or has some power over the victim is punishable with life imprisonment ONLY where the rape has resulted in grave physical or mental injury or death. The same applies even if the crime is committed by a person of the same sex²¹.

There is a vacuum where the crime is not upon complaint (meaning it is not only the victim who can report it, such as rape), where there is no mandatory reporting. This applies to both misconduct (civil case) and criminal (sexual relation with a minor) cases.

Mandatory reporting of any violation of an organisation’s code of conduct does not often raise any issue. Organisations who have strong safeguarding standards, often ask their staffs to report any violation of they have seen or heard or have reason to suspect. The challenge is when the victim specifically asks for the staff not to report the case within the organisation and / or to law enforcement agency (police). This often raises issues of respecting wishes of victims while also ensuring that the organisational policy is not being circumvented by duress on the victim. What if the issue is a criminal case, can the organisation report to police? This is an area often feared especially if the victim shows hesitance and highlights the need for organisations to strengthen safeguarding procedures to support decision-making of this kind .

Data sharing amongst organisations is also an area that challenges organisations. Under Article 399 of the criminal law, professionals including managers have the responsibility to keep secret information they received due to their role. This can be waived if they are authorised to disclose by a supervisory body or court of law.

¹⁸ CEDAW (2019). CEDAW/C/ETH/CO/8 Committee on the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Violence against Women [accessed on 13 April 2020] <https://uhri.ohchr.org/>

¹⁹ Art 620 (2)

²⁰ Art 627 (5)

²¹ Art 631 (5)

There is no entity that requires any employer or any institution to report on incidence of SEAH in Ethiopia. The vacuum created by lack of such initiative is dealt with differently by organisations. The INGO Human Resource Network convened by a private human resource management company, EthioJobs gave the network a platform to share relevant information between peer institutions to seek and share information regarding personnel who are terminated due to gross mis-conduct (financial dishonesty and conduct). There is inadequate information to generalise about reasonable standard of practice on how organisations are promoting reporting of incidences on SEAH when the victim requests that she/he is not willing to put forward formal allegation. There is limited information on whether the organisational processes are geared towards survivor centred approaches or focused on accountability of the perpetrator.

There is a significant gap in data and understanding concerning the situation of women and girls with disabilities despite the acknowledgement that due to the multiple forms of discrimination they are at increased risk of violence and abuse²².

3.2. Implementation of government policy

3.2.1. Application to aid and development sector

During the scoping study, the team were unable to identify any published research or documented data concerning allegations of misconduct or SEAH in the aid sector in Ethiopia, nor about the manner in which allegations are managed. There is one fairly high-profile case - that was under national and international media spotlight – concerning the sexual abuse of orphans at the Jari Children Village in Wollo in 2001, a facility run by Terre des Hommes.

The serving country director was sentenced to life imprisonment and is still serving time in a jail in Ethiopia. The incident - and a protracted defamation case that took till 2009 between Terre des Hommes and a couple who were researching the incidents at Jari Village as ‘lesson’ for organisational culpability - is well known within the aid and development sector²³. It is not clear whether this case had some impact on the drastic shift taken by the Ministry of Women, Child and Youth to engage institutional care as a last resort, or if this was the result of the stricter governance and rules applied to NGOs after 2009.

There are various action plans, policies and committees at the highest levels of government to oversee the implementation of laws and policies that reduce vulnerability of children and adults to sexual exploitation and abuse. However, these have not borne fruit due to a lack of funding of these initiatives/plans, lack of expertise, lack of coordination between the different sectors and overlapping mandates²⁴.

With regard to the aid and development sector, the government of Ethiopia has been keen to control the activities of NGOs in general, particularly where they are receiving significant funding from foreign donors (be they international aid agencies or other donors). The law governing civil society issued in 2009 determined that only organisations registered by Ethiopian nationals and who do not receive more than 10% of their funding from foreign institutions were allowed to work on rights issues and conflict. This strict measure has affected the involvement of international organisations who were actively working to combat child sexual abuse and exploitation, elimination of harmful traditional practices such as Female Genital

²² CPRD (2016) Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities CPRD/C/ETH/CO/1 [accessed on 13 April 2020] <https://uhri.ohchr.org/>

²³ <https://www.voanews.com/archive/whistleblower-ethiopian-pedophilia-case-spared-jail-sentenc>

²⁴ ECPAT (2018). Sexual Exploitation of Children in Ethiopia. Submission for the Universal Periodic Review of the Human Rights Situation in Ethiopia. Bangkok: ECPAT International.

Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C) and early marriage, rights of children with disabilities and rights of children in conflict with the law²⁵.

Since mid 2018, Ethiopia has been going through significant political transformation. Laws that were considered as contributing to stifling internal democratic growth have been repealed and replaced by more liberal laws. The societies and charities law was one of the first among those submitted by the government to the independent Justice Reform Advisory Council for review and repeal²⁶. The new Proclamation 1113/2019 has lessened most of the restrictions on who can engage in promotion of rights and lifted any restriction on funding (except unlawful gain or funding from ill-sources such as terrorist organisations). Since the proclamation came into effect, no implementation directives were issued.

Key informants in the area indicated that in principle the former Charities and Societies Agency (recently renamed Civil Society Organisations Agency²⁷) is expected to monitor and supervise CSOs/NGOs - but none of the former directives have any tangible wording or process in place with regards to SEAH. It appears that the Charities and Societies Agency was more interested in ensuring financial integrity. There is no complaint system and hence no data or study or compilation of nature of allegations presented to the Agency. Based on the wording of the powers given to the Agency in the revised law of 2019, safeguarding of beneficiaries is not explicitly included within its mandate.

During the initial consultative discussions in 2019 before the revision of the law, both government and civil society organisations stressed that the sector needs stronger self regulation mechanisms that solidify the piece by piece engagements on broader issues such as code of conduct development. A new body - the Council of Civil Society Organisations - is expected to be formed²⁸ and this body is anticipated to have considerable innovative and transformational engagement with civil society members. Although it is not yet clear as to what the initial agenda of the Council will be, this body could be an entry point for the promotion of safeguarding principles. However, the Council is yet to be formed, and no organisation is taking a coordination role to facilitate the formation of the council.

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

There are no multi-agency national reporting, referral systems and services on SEAH. For managing cases of gender based violence, violence against children and SEAH, the available health and legal support services are mainly in urban areas. Psychosocial support services are rarely available from specialist service providers; rather, health and legal service providers play a double role. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs has recently begun trying to bring social workers on board, but these are only available in some regions, mostly in woreda offices. Due to the absence of any comprehensive service for survivors, case management is difficult and victims face the risk of re-traumatisation. The available woreda-level service providers have informal referrals amongst themselves and no feedback mechanism. At minimum, CSOs working on women and girls (particularly on GBV programmes) engage with the Women, Children and Youth affairs bureaus and the Special Unit on violence on children and women (police) in woredas. Some organisations have woreda specific referral linkage contact points because they need such information for their project activity with beneficiaries. These same services, and constraints, apply to survivors/ victims of SEAH.

²⁵ CRC (2015). Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC/C/ETH/CO/4-5 [accessed on 13 April 2020] <https://uhri.ohchr.org/>

²⁶ More on the Council's work is available on https://addisstandard.com/profile-the-silent-fighters-the-volunteers-behind-ethiopia-s-democratic-reforms/?fbclid=IwAR28gmdEqtlidOyxGJ1jq_asMJYZalwfkzB5Hh2Yf-3qseDDzkhxptGDswk

²⁷ Proclamation No. 113/2019

²⁸ Proclamation 1113/2019, Art 85

The availability and quality of medical, psychosocial and legal services for survivors of violence varies across the country, and as mentioned above, there are no readily available referral pathways. There are 9 one-stop centres for sexual violence survivors that provide multi-sectoral services to victims²⁹. All are found in major towns. There are around 11 shelters largely run by civil society; however, these services fall far short of the need.

The free legal aid service (mostly for children victims of violence or children in conflict with the law) is a fluid sector. The National Legal Aid Service Providers network established in 2013 by the Federal Supreme Court Child Justice Project Office in collaboration with other NGOs and universities had served as a good platform. However, recently the service is available only in Addis Ababa and the former Network has been dismantled due to funding shortages. Key informant interviews showed that the list of network members is not updated and some of the organisations have ceased providing the service. Currently, the Centre for Human Rights based in Addis Ababa University is providing a legal aid service in collaboration with other regional universities. The Centre is undergoing a strategic review which will take a critical look at the service gap and the future direction of this service.

The Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association provides legal aid in 6 regions and in collaboration with volunteer committees in some woredas. The Association is known for its fierce fight with the government including the case that awarding government compensation to a victim of violence³⁰. Due to the 2009 strict law governing rights based NGOs, the Association shrunk significantly and was forced to reduce its legal aid service in most areas. There is no compiled referral online link to the regional offices or to volunteer committees readily available.

3.2.3. Organisational resources and approaches

There are efforts by bigger organisations to promote SEA awareness at community level and with staff and partner organisation staff. Most international organisations often have Community Based Complaints Mechanism (CBCM) for broader programme delivery related complaints (SEA would be one of those). International NGOs such as Plan, Save the Children, CRS, IRC and others have their own separate global hotlines which serve both their humanitarian and development projects. Local hotlines are not common. Each organisation tends to try to develop

Violence against women and girls: data and barriers to reporting

Recent data from the Ethiopian Demographic Household Survey (EDHS 2016)¹ shows that out of the 23% of women and girls aged 15-49 who reported experiencing physical or sexual violence, 66% have never told anyone about the abuse. Only 8% (mostly victims who experienced both physical and sexual violence) reported to police. Help seeking from other service providers such as lawyers, doctors/health personnel or social work organisations amounts to only 2-3%.

A study by the Ministry of Finance and Unicef (2019) shows that barriers to reporting, particularly sexual abuse, include stigma and discrimination, fear for family reputation, requirement by police and courts to produce a witness, lack of information on how, when and to whom to report, lack of follow up when cases are reported and allegations of bribery within formal and informal institutions¹.

The data is not further analysed or presented taking disability as a risk factor, and there is little elsewhere on the additional challenges to reporting facing people with disabilities in Ethiopia. This is a gap that is also reflected in the global literature.

²⁹ Marisa Cordon, and Et.al. (2018). Systematic Literature Review of Gender Based Violence in Ethiopia: Magnitude, policies and interventions. Social Impact INC.

³⁰ <https://www.escri-net.org/caselaw/2016/equality-now-and-ethiopian-women-lawyers-association-ewla-v-federal-republic-ethiopia>

referral pathways for each of their implementation woredas; however, these are often not updated and available for users outside of the organisation.

Most CSOs are dependent on specific projects supported by different donors. The CSSP 2 programme is now availing funding for organisations in the programme that can be used to strengthen their safeguarding capacity. There is no study or document to fully understand the availability, capacity and the different type of safeguarding initiatives in different organisations. However, discussion with key informants in the sector indicates that smaller organisations (almost all local NGOs) may not have the staffing nor budget to have safeguarding intervention beyond the project that funded particular initiative. Initiatives to provide training for all staff (including those that are not working for the particular project or field offices which are part of the project) are dependent on the particular donor's flexibility to budget for safeguarding work.

Some of the INGOs have a staff member who takes on safeguarding responsibilities in addition to some other work they do, or full time safeguarding person. Among INGOs who have long years of working on safeguarding such as Save the Children, CRS and Plan International there are efforts to assess whether the community level reporting and complaints feedback system is working. These processes may not be documented in report form.

Key informants indicated that there is recognition that the reporting rate is very small and that multiple levels of reporting avenues are important to give confidence to beneficiaries. Hotlines are advertised in English and they may not be relevant to majority of the rural area beneficiaries where adult literacy rate is lower (particularly for women). Hence, most have avenues such as suggestion/ complaints boxes, community focal points and/or complaints committees. There is no evidence to learn from how far community based complaint mechanisms take into consideration the accessibility of these to persons with different types of disabilities. Key informants noted that the closer the complaints system is for the communities, the more accessible it is to all.

As discussed above there are no documented studies on scale, who the perpetrators and victims are and factors that mitigate or facilitate occurrence of SEAH in the aid sector in Ethiopia. Key informants indicated that in organisations that have a safeguarding expert, the latter often try to draw lessons from the very few incidences/allegations reported and investigated.

3.3. Protection risks and issues which impact on SEAH/safeguarding

As well as the formal institutions, the informal institutions – social norms, attitudes, beliefs for example – are also critical in determining how and why violence takes place, including SEAH. Across Ethiopia, non-sexual violence is often trivialised or normalised by community members and aid agency staff (both men and women). Sexual harassment is also normalised; until recently, the Ethiopian legal regime did not include sexual harassment. This lack of recognition is reflected in under-developed policies and procedures to manage corresponding behaviours. For example, the key informants interviewed for this assessment indicated that smaller organisations may have a policy that clearly states which behaviours are prohibited, but that the processes for reporting and managing allegations of misconduct (eg what action to take at what level) are rarely stated.

Most organisations work with volunteers at community level and implement activities through government staff. There is no coherent argument nor articulation of how SEAH can be prevented or managed in such environments. The work culture, the availability of resources and the culture of accountability is different in NGOs and government sector. At the community level most of development and emergency interventions are implemented in collaboration by government staffs who may have limited to no training on SEAH and case management. If they have training, it is provided by NGOs. There is no reporting system within the government

structure that is easily accessible by victims. There is also no clear system on reporting of SEAH by peer organisation staffs or government staffs.

Research on GBV in Ethiopia has identified some factors that enable the violence to persist. Poverty is considered a major factor associated with SEAH vulnerability coupled with perpetuating and 'normalising' exploitative relations³¹ which also contribute to under reporting. Lack of information and data collection means that there is no mechanism to identify the most vulnerable to violence in general, and the nature/experience of violence. This gap has been repeatedly raised as 'concerning' by the different UN committees³². Lack of sex and age disaggregated data on violence and abuse is also highly problematic³³. The following are listed as drivers of violence in some of the studies:

- The inferior status women and girls are given is the underlying cause of their vulnerability to abuse and exploitation³⁴;
- Some regions in Ethiopia such as Somali and Afar where FGM/C is most prevalent and where early marriage also widespread, have not revised their family law. They are governed by the civil code of 1960 which states marriageable age at 15 for girls³⁵.
- Lack of effective mechanism to assess and monitor sexual violence, lack of prosecution and conviction and the lack of adequate rehabilitation and reintegration services for victims is daunting – even more in rural areas³⁶.
- Testimony of persons with intellectual disability who are subject to violence is not considered reliable and therefore not admissible in court³⁷ further increasing their vulnerability.
- There is a high level of acceptance and practice regarding corporal punishment of children³⁸
- Sexual relations with under-age girls is tolerated in society³⁹
- Children who do not live with parents but live with others have limited social support
- Fear of stigma is deep⁴⁰

This maintains an environment where sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment at a societal level is widely tolerated. Putting the mechanisms in place to effectively address SEAH is either not a priority or difficult to do for individual organisations without broader systems, structures, institutions and support.

³¹ ECPAT (2018). *Sexual Exploitation of Children in Ethiopia*. Submission for the Universal Periodic Review of the Human Rights Situation in Ethiopia. Bangkok: ECPAT International.

³² Ibid note 31, 33, 25, 22

³³ Ibid note 22, 25

³⁴ Ibid note 33

³⁵ Ibid note 33

³⁶ Ibid note 22, 33

³⁷ CRC (2015). Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC/C/ETH/CO/4-5 –Note 35[accessed on 13 April 2020] <https://uhri.ohchr.org/>

³⁸ Ibid note 33

³⁹ Ibid note 33

⁴⁰ Haile et al. (2013) Prevalence of sexual abuse of male high school students in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. BMC International Health and Human Rights 2013, page 5 <http://www.biomedcentral.com/1472-698X/13/24> [accessed on 31/3/2020]

4. Safeguarding within the Ethiopian aid sector

4.1. Key stakeholders for SEAH/safeguarding

Within the international community, members of the PSEA Network are leading the way on joined up approaches to combatting SEAH. The Network is co-Chaired by UNWomen and WFP jointly with the Inter-Agency Accountability Working Group (IAAWG), and has set up a project to coordinate different UN agencies and partners in the humanitarian sphere. They have a plan for 2020 to create and host some kind of HelpDesk. They also plan to develop a platform to share resources. The PSEA network has primarily a humanitarian emphasis, and as such does not engage with broader CSO, NGO and donor organisations working in the aid sector in Ethiopia.

Individually, UNFPA, UNWomen, UNICEF, WFP and UNHCR are particularly active alongside international NGOs such as IMC, IRC, and Save the Children.

Various governmental agencies are involved in SEAH work in one way or the other. The Ministry of Women, Children and Youth has the primary responsibility for prevention and response alongside the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs for abuse involving children and persons with disability. The Ministry of Health is involved in building the capacity of the health sector to respond to GBV and the Ministry of Education has been actively developing policies and codes of conduct to tackle GBV in schools including higher academic institutions. The justice sector actors such as special units for women and children in police stations and prosecutors office (under the Attorney general's office) and the Prosecutors and Judges Training Centres in different regions have also tried to develop and roll out a curriculum on GBV.

CSSP2 and other INGOs have provided basic safeguarding training to local CSOs. As a result, some local CSOs have safeguarding policies, and have assigned focal persons and established reporting mechanisms. Prior to CSSP2 engagement, a few CSSP2 partners had also received technical support from other funding agencies mainly INGOs / donors like Oak Foundation, the joint office of CAFOD, Trócaire and SCIAF, CRS, Save the Children and others. Some capacity development initiatives identified in this assessment are:

- **Training and induction to staff as well as key stakeholders:** Hiwot Ethiopia, Organisation for Child Development and Transformation (CHADET), Tigray Development Association (TDA) and Adigrat Diocese Catholic Secretariat (ADCS) provided training to all their staff (including field staffs), board members, representatives, visitors, volunteers and some of them even for government stakeholders.
- **Case Management:** CHADET has trained Government stakeholders in safeguarding and in case management. In the Girls Education Challenge project, which CHADET has implemented in partnership with ChildHope UK, safeguarding has been one of the core activities. They have developed guides and tools/ various formats/ for case management. They have also developed a case reporting framework designed to bring transparency and lucidity to the reporting system. The framework clarifies the responsibilities of staff and stakeholders when a case is reported through school letter link box or other means.
- **Working with community structure** to ensure the safeguarding of children and adults to a wider level, Hiwot has been Working with regional, zonal and woreda level existing systems in government administration – women, children and youth affairs office, CRCs (child right committees), woreda Councils, law enforcements (police) to protect children from any forms of

abuses and exploitation. They are also working with community structures – such as SAGs (Social accountability groups), Model Father groups, Child led Initiatives (CLIs).

- **Hotline Services:** Enhancing Child Focused Activities (ECFA) and Hiwot Ethiopia have hotline service on child abuse and sexual exploitation. Both projects were supported by Oak Foundation. ECFA Child Helpline programme (919) will continue until June 2020. The programme covers only Adama, Methara, Shashemene, Bishiftu and Assela since 2007. Even though the line is accessible from anywhere in the country, capacity constraints mean the service is limited only in these 5 towns. Furthermore, they have only two helpline counsellors who are working 7am to 6 pm. Hiwot Ethiopia's Hotline service (936) is nationwide since 2008. The Oak Foundation programme will end in June 2020 but they secure another fund to continue the service. Both create linkages with the respective women, children and youth affairs office and engaging the established referral systems with child protection unit under federal supreme court.
- **Advocacy and awareness creation work:** Since 2008 Hiwot Ethiopia (supported by Oak foundation) has engaged in advocacy works to reduce child sexual abuse, exploitation and GBV through radio programme (Sheger 102.1 FM and Fana 98.1 - *Yenegat Weg Radio show*), social and print media. The main aim of the Radio show is to increase public engagement and advocate the role of men and boys to reduce sexual abuse, exploitation, gender-based violence (GBV) and to ensure gender equality. Likewise, Pro Pride has been engaged the community since 2005. Their programme was funded by CIDA, UNICEF and Oak Foundation at different times. The programmes covered Amhara region. Esemashalehu (*I listen to woman*) and Alegnta (*Solace*). In order to create awareness among community members the later organises listeners' groups in Amhara region. Currently, with CSSP2 the start another program covers Dire Dawa, Addis Ababa and Afar. The programme is called Biku-Set. The programme is in Afariga and Amharic.

Currently Hiwot Ethiopia and CHADET have secured grants from CSSP2 to provide a capacity development service to CSSP2 partners.

4.2. Sector wide SEAH/safeguarding initiatives

Our scoping found very little evidence of national level or even multi-organisational initiatives in Ethiopia (except programme approaches such as CSSP2 – see below). However, some of the INGOs such as Plan International, CRS, IRC and others have at some point or another provided PSEA training to their staff, partners and indeed government staff. The training types are varied and there is very limited record of what was done due to poor institutional memory and staff turn-over at all levels. Nor were we able to identify any studies or information on what works (and doesn't work) in SEAH interventions within the Ethiopian context.

Our scoping did suggest that most interventions are donor driven and are organisation specific. The lack of institutional memory is also compounded by a tendency towards non-transparency. For example, in June- July 2019, the Ethiopian Inter-Agency PSEA Network conducted two risk assessments in Oromia, SNNPR and Somali regions. The first assessment was an analysis of risks, policy gaps, and capacities in prevention and response structures within members agencies as well as international/cooperative partners (including the government and humanitarian clusters in the regions). The second assessment examines available SEA complaint mechanisms in their regions. From both assessments, the PSEA network has identified the urgent need to develop and disseminate IEC (information, education and communication) materials. The reports are not published.

In response to this lack of coordination and resource-sharing, the PSEA Network currently hosted by UNWomen is working to create a collaborative framework amongst UN agencies and INGOs, at this stage. Local CSOs are invited for participation but are not attending meetings or engaged with the Network.

The PSEA project has provided basic PSEA training to implementing partners (including government staff and other organisations). It has a plan to further assess the resources available and map services in 3 regions. It is in the process of developing context specific communication materials to be translated into local languages, and also plans to use multiple channels for complaints and feedback mechanism (face-to-face and technology based). In humanitarian response context, beneficiaries have a challenge in identifying which person is which organisation's staff. To eliminate this obstacle, currently the network is trying to set up a single hotline that can be used for SEA irrespective of who is employing or assigning that person. In addition, other avenues such as local help desk (for technical assistance and reporting) or other easily accessible or reachable avenues are being explored. UNICEF has deployed a project focal person to ensure the sustainability of the initiative and to explore potential for expanding it nationally.

The 3 year Civil Society Support Program 2 (CSSP 2) (August 2018 –August 2021) works with 120 civil society organisations. It works to support the effective relationships that foster collaboration between civil society actors, citizens and the government in order to support the needs of women, men, youth, boys and girls, including hard to reach groups. In addition to setting up its own safeguarding focal person, code of conduct, reporting system and information in English and Amharic, all CSSP2 partners are required to have a safeguarding policy, clear reporting mechanism and a focal point. In order to achieve these standards, CSSP2 has provided basic safeguarding training to 120 partner CSOs- mainly to heads of the organisation and safeguarding focal persons. Some of the CSOs have cascaded the training to their staff. It has also provided safeguarding monitoring checklists and capacity development grants to CSOs. The programme identified the need for investigation training and is in the process of securing 'training of trainers' service provider. This appears to be the most recent and expansive of safeguarding initiatives in Ethiopia at present, and has created a cohort of CSOs who are familiar with the 'essentials' of safeguarding.

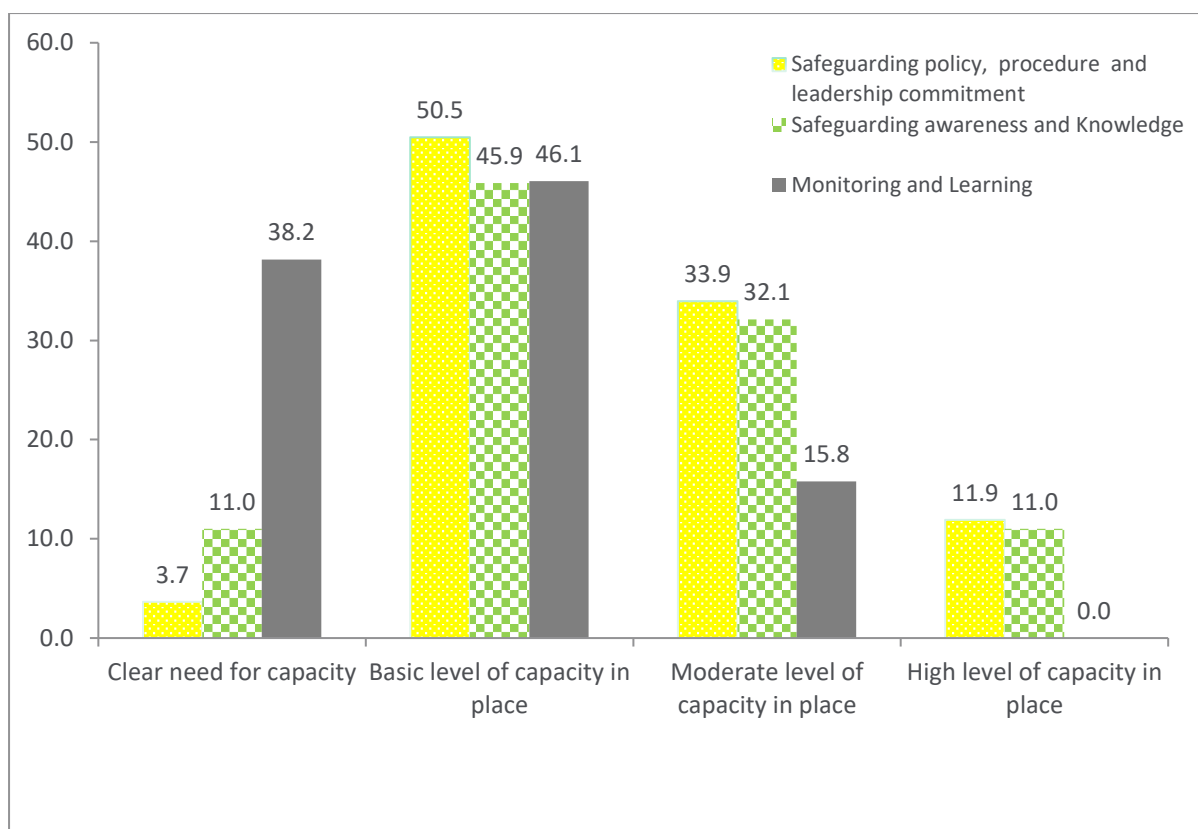
4.3. Safeguarding capacity of national and local users

A user engagement study was originally designed to be conducted in early April 2020 but had to be cancelled due to COVID-19 pandemic. Instead, we have been able to obtain secondary data on safeguarding capacity from CSSP 2's Organisational Capacity Assessment, which sheds some light on the situation of safeguarding among local CSOs. Whilst appreciating the generosity of CSSP2 in sharing this information, we nevertheless recognise the significant constraints that COVID-19 has created on our ability to collect user data, and will need to ensure we have a robust approach to continuous user engagement as we progress to ensure we nuance the information that we have.

The data was collected by the organisations themselves using a self-assessment methodology, which may be subjective and thus should be read with caution. Moreover, CSOs that are receiving grants from CSSP2 are not necessarily representative of the wider sector: for example, they are likely to have generally higher capacity (many of them benefitted from capacity development under the preceding CSSP1 programme), and already be familiar with safeguarding principles. The data collected from 109 CSOs is summarised in the graph and narrative presented below.

From the data, it appears the majority (53%) of the CSOs in the sample have basic safeguarding policies in place; some form of complaints reporting mechanism is available; and at least the top leadership has accountability on safeguarding embedded in their job description. The rest (44%) have moderate to high level of capacity in place. When it comes to awareness and knowledge on safeguarding, 41% of the CSOs have a training/induction process and practice in place and about 46% have rated their induction as basic- mainly signing of code of conduct and sometimes using other platforms to raise staff awareness on safeguarding but not strictly conducting staff induction. About 11% of the CSOs do not have staff induction. The biggest gap is in terms of monitoring and learning on safeguarding. Around 38% of the CSOs

rated their capacity low and 46% basic level. None of the CSOs felt that they had a high level of capacity on monitoring.



The definitions underpinning the ratings for each indicator are listed in the table below for further reference.

	1=Clear need for capacity	2=Basic level of capacity in place	3=Moderate level of capacity in place	4=High level of capacity in place
Safeguarding policy, procedure and leadership commitment	No safeguarding policy as well as complaint mechanism	There is clear safeguarding policy and practice which ensure clear linkage of zero tolerance of abuse, exploitation and harassment of children and adults; all staff, volunteers, interns, board members, consultants, visitors and contractors are covered in the policy and it is approved by the board. There are complaints mechanism but these are not complete or not fully implemented.	The safeguarding Policies and procedure publicised to staff, beneficiaries and wider communities. The consequences of breaching the code of conduct clear and linked to organisational disciplinary procedures. There are response procedures with known named persons and response and investigation procedures and fully implemented.	Safeguarding policy and procedure exists separately or integrated into other policies. There are complaints and response procedures and the system is being used and is working. Safeguarding is part of the JD of top management
Safeguarding awareness and Knowledge	No Inductions and awareness of staff on safeguarding	There are safer recruitment procedures when recruiting all staff including volunteers and the successful candidates provide a police check certificate. Key staffs are aware of required competencies and awareness. less than 25% staff trained	New staff sign various safeguarding codes of conducts for staff behavior. The policy/ summary translated in to local language. More than 25% (but less than 75%) staff trained. But there are no follow up mechanisms.	More than 75% staff trained. Staff exhibit appropriate attitudes and behaviours or training offered.

Monitoring and Learning	There is no clear monitoring, evaluation and learning for safeguarding	The organisation rolling out safeguarding implementation plan and addressing and reporting potential allegation of in appropriate behavior towards children and adults, have various tools for safeguarding such as incidence reporting, referral of survivors etc	There is safeguarding related internal and external risk assessment; analysis provided regularly to projects/programs. risk mitigation indicated for each risk.	Learning captured from issues and inform future policy and procedure reviews. The safeguarding policies and procedures reviewed at least every three years.
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4.4. Overview/mapping of the resources and tools available to national and local users

The availability of resources in local languages is limited, and external or public access to these materials is incredibly challenging. From discussion with key informants in the sector, each organisation tends to follow their own protocols and have their own resources. Many of the organisations contacted, both local and international, were not willing to share their tools.

International NGOs often share their templates and approaches with their partners. Most CSOs have multiple partnerships from which they draw lessons. Most of the resources and tools are in English. There are no tailored and readily available resources and tools for national users. Some organisations such as Save the Children have easy to read fliers with information on SEAH available in multiple Ethiopian languages.

Despite lack of information on actual use of the global tools, some of the global tools such as training materials availed by Inter-Action have been shared by the Ethiopia PSEA Network with its members (these are also open access tools). However, local CSOs are not members of the PSEA Network. The link is available at <https://www.interaction.org/training/>

Again, with support from the PSEA Network, the IASC SEAH principles are currently being re-translated and updated, and will be shared widely. The current (older translations) are available on <https://translatorswithoutborders.org/psea-translated/> in Amharic, Afari, Somali and Afan Oromo.

CSSP2 has developed short guidance for CSOs to help them develop policy and a programme safeguarding strategy available only in English. The strategy is extends its scope of content into bullying in addition to SEAH. to

4.5. Research and evidence on safeguarding in Ethiopia

There is limited published evidence that mentions SEAH in the aid sector in Ethiopia. The Oxfam study (2019) mentions Ethiopia as one of the sites for the study but no country specific information is available in the document. All data/information is presented in summarised form. We were informed that there is a UNDP situational study (2019) on SGBV against IDPs in SNNPR- Gedeo but we were not able to find it. According to one interviewee, the study identified reports of SEAH perpetrated by aid sector staff (although the study did not further identify whether the people implicated in the report were direct employees of aid agencies or volunteers or government staff).

The lack of evidence is notable in relation to documentation of extent/magnitude, factors influencing occurrence, reporting mechanisms and their efficiency, outcome of the reports, who the victims and perpetrators are and factors that may contribute to victimisation in the aid sector. There may be organisation specific studies, but we were not able to access any except the Oxfam study above.

There is published evidence about sexual abuse and exploitation or broader gender based violence in the community. However, most of the resources available are secondary/desk reviews which meant that similar studies being analysed and presented repeatedly. This is the case with the shadow reports presented to the UN committees (on CEDAW, CRC, CRPD), for example.

5. Safeguarding service providers

There are very few safeguarding specialists offering expert advice to aid organisations in Ethiopia – either companies, or individuals. Our scoping work managed to identify some 14 individual and 1 organisation. Some of the individuals identified are working within other aid organisations and unwilling to be publicly listed as a private provider (even though they may offer their services when privately approached).

To date we have 7 applicants – 4 Ethiopians, 1 foreign national and 2 companies from Uganda. These are documented and categorised in the attached spreadsheet – which will remain live and updated as we receive any further applications. We are currently following up with reference checks and QA of sample work, with a view to integrating SPs onto the RSH marketplace as soon as they are complete and by the KPI deadline of 17 August 2020.

The lack of a cohort of skilled service providers is a legacy of the fragmented approach to capacity building across the sector in this regard. It is also a major gap in terms of building capacity within the sector. Contextualisation of safeguarding approaches is key, so the role played by international or regional service providers is necessary - but inadequate. Ethiopia needs a body of skilled specialists who can support the wider aid sector to ensure uplift in standards across the whole sector – rather than a handful of organisations who are resourced to improve their own standards, but in isolation. This creates a very real challenge for RSH in terms of how we use our resources, and where maximum impact may lie.

6. The digital and technology landscape in Ethiopia

Internet coverage across Ethiopia is extremely low⁴¹, although access is increasing year on year⁴². The biggest challenges remain with reaching rural areas where more than 5 million Ethiopians do not have any ICT access. Most people accessing the internet do so through their mobile phones (approximately 15% are mobile internet users) and only 1% access the internet through other means. However, 40 million Ethiopians live in areas that are unserved by mobile broadband coverage (3G and above), and effectively unable to access the internet (World Bank, 2019). In rural areas and small towns, cybercafés are reportedly the most common means of accessing the internet (Freedom House, 2012). As a handful of signal stations serve the entire country, there is often network congestion and frequent disconnections.

⁴¹ 16% of the population, approximately 17.87 million had an internet connection in 2019

⁴² 9.2% between 2017 and 2019

Whilst the country has improved its internet speeds it still fares poorly in global rankings⁴³ and access to ICT services is extremely expensive largely due to the government's monopoly over the telecoms sector which has compromised competition. This monopoly has prevented the public from receiving quality connections and services, discouraged innovation and impacted the digitisation efforts of various organisations and the media (Desta, 2019; World Bank, 2019). The average advertised package for unlimited mobile internet service in Ethiopia costs 4,900 birr (\$170) per month and around \$100 for a more limited mobile or fixed line internet access; both options are prohibitively expensive for most Ethiopians (Freedom House, 2019).

The main motivation for internet use remains social networking. The number of social networking users has been increasing in recent years, although very slow internet speeds make it impossible to access video content or to upload graphics (Adam, 2012). Telegram⁴⁴ is very popular, in large part due to its claim that its multi-data centre infrastructure and encryption makes it more secure than WhatsApp making it a preferred choice in countries where there is high surveillance (see below). Telegram, which currently supports eight languages, is also expanding the number of languages developers can build into the apps. Facebook is another popular channel, although Instagram is gaining popularity. 6.10 million people actively use Facebook on a monthly basis (30% female 70% male), 360 thousand use Instagram (36% female, 64% male), and 67.2 thousand use Twitter (25% female, 75% male) (GSMA, 2019). The number of users, however, seem to be increasingly more rapidly for Instagram⁴⁵. Data also shows variation of social media use by age and gender. Most social media users are aged between 25 and 34 years; and a higher percentage of these are male (GSMA, 2019).

There are high levels of self-censorship when using mobile phones and the internet due to government surveillance (Freedom House, 2019). Anonymous communication is compromised by strict SIM card registration requirements which require individuals to provide their full name, address, government-issued identification number, and a passport-sized photograph. There are also examples of the internet being used to distort the information landscape e.g. the former government employed online trolls to discredit the opposition and harass bloggers, online journalists and ordinary users (Freedom House 2019). (Freedom House, 2019). The spread of unconfirmed information, the phenomenon of false news, and the growing problem of hate speech in the context of ethnic clashes have had a major negative effect on the credibility of legitimate online information.

There are other channels of communication which are popular such as radio and television which have been used to good effect by (I)NGOs as part of the communication initiatives. BBC Media Action research shows that radio is the main source of information in Ethiopia (Carney et al., 2017). BBC Media Action uses radio effectively to run radio shows and storytelling to tackle a variety of key issues. They have recognised the need to encompass dialogue and include the voices of rural people as well as local music, proverbs and poetry. They have a variety of programmes that use real life stories from listeners, including members of listening groups and mixed peer groups that come together regularly to discuss a particular topic or a radio show, in order to extend the reach and impact of the project's programmes to communities with low levels of radio access.

With regard to the future for digital development, there have been positive changes under the new administration. New legislation is being passed to support the growth of the digital economy. This includes the Communication Services Proclamation (2019). The Ministry of

⁴³ Ethiopia was ranked 100 and 123 in Ookla's SpeedTest global index for mobile data and fixed-line broadband, respectively

⁴⁴ Telegram is a cloud-based instant messaging service, that allows users to send multimedia messages and make voice and video calls.

⁴⁵ GSMA report shows a 20% quarterly increase in 2019, as supposed to only 3.4% for Facebook

Innovation & Technology (created through a merger of the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology and the Ministry of Science and Technology in 2018) is charged with developing policy instruments, designing various programmes, mobilising resources, guiding and monitoring implementation of the country's telecom sector. The Ethiopian government intends to open Ethiopia's economy up to both Ethiopian and foreign investors, allowing for partial or full privatisation of state-owned enterprises; selling a stake in Ethio Telecom to the private sector; and passing a new proclamation establishing a new federal authority to regulate telecommunication services. In March this year, the Internet Society (ISOC) announced the launch of the Ethiopian Internet Society chapter and hosted the first ever Ethiopia Internet Development conference in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

These are welcome changes but they will need to stand the test of time. Onerous government regulations remain difficult to shift. Experience still shows that the internet is restricted during times of civil unrest⁴⁶ (Freedom House, 2020). The 2016 Computer Crime Proclamation strengthened the government's surveillance powers, enabling real-time monitoring or interception of communications when authorised by the justice minister. Imported ICT items are tariffed at the same high rate as luxury items (Freedom House, 2019). Ethiopians are required to register their laptops and tablet computers with the Ethiopian customs authority before they travel out of the country, ostensibly to prevent individuals from illegally importing electronic devices, though observers believe the requirement enables officials to monitor citizens' ICT activities by accessing the devices without consent (Freedom House, 2019). Weak infrastructure remains at the mercy of power outages and recurring technical faults.

The digital landscape in Ethiopia will impact, of course, on the accessibility and use of the RSH. Whilst the RSH is targeting organisations rather than the general population, there will be staff working in remote areas with limited or little access to internet who may well find it difficult to download certain resources and join online forums or events such as webinars. This suggests that it would be useful for the RSH to consider a mixed-approach to capacity building in Ethiopia in order to expand reach and ensure that as wide a user group as possible has reasonable access. And ensure content is kept simple so it can be more readily accessed or downloaded. Suggestions include use of radio (where that makes sense) but particularly linking to social networking platforms. And finally, content should be scrutinised (in line with the RSH quality assurance processes) to ensure that it does not contain material or messages which are likely to be subject to government restrictions.

7. Emerging recommendations

This section will further be refined during Q3 of the inception period. However, some initial broader recommendations are included below.

Suggested key target groups:

This section will further be refined during Q3 of the inception period. However, some initial broader recommendations are listed here.

⁴⁶ This was also the case with the previous government. For example, a state of emergency directive approved in October 2016 placed heavy restrictions on the use of social media and other online communication. Phone communication was also blocked at this time (Callum, 2017).

Suggested key target groups:

The Hub has already identified **Ethiopian CSOs to be the Ethiopia Hub's target audience**. These would be national organisations, ranging from those with a country-level or regional level remit to those with a more local target area. Those organisations in the developing regions and those working with hard to reach groups (e.g. socially marginalised groups) are likely to have least access to resources. **Networks** will be an important way of reaching them, and should thus also form a key target group for RSH given their ability to cascade materials to members. It is unlikely that very grassroots / community based organisations would access Hub materials directly.

This assessment demonstrates that there would also be value in making available standardised and locally translated tools for **larger organisations**, including INGOs. Moreover, in order to reach smaller organisations, it may be tactical to engage their larger (I)NGO partners or even government agencies. Harmonised approaches to safeguarding standards and templates amongst the donors and INGOs would also reduce demands on downstream partners.

The lack of **private service providers** offering support to aid organisations to improve their safeguarding policies and practices is also striking. RSH will want to consider a strategy for building up a **local cohort of specialist service providers**, so that the Ethiopian aid sector is not dependent on international consultants to provide remote, expensive and often generic support in an area that would be better managed through local expertise.

Active engagement with the **Civil Society Organisations Agency (ACSO)** is also recommended. ACSO is facilitating the establishment of the NGO council and also has regulatory oversight of the civil society sector. Building capacity within the Agency to provide and exercise regulatory oversight with regards to SEAH/ safeguarding would have a huge effect on sustainability. However, the agency has limited responsiveness towards initiatives not initiated from a government sector, so RSH will need to explore the feasibility of this ambition before investing resources in providing this support (which will build on/ complement anything CSSP2 is able to do in this regard).

With regards to other government sectors/ agencies, it makes sense for RSH to explore the **value of advocacy with the CSOs that join the Community of Practice**. For example, where there are CSOs working in education who see a benefit for the education sector of the Ethiopian education ministry adopting different practices or changing policy, RSH can play a role in catalysing such advocacy attempts. RSH itself does not have the legitimacy to actually lead an advocacy campaign as it is not a CSO.

We do not anticipate that RSH will engage with trade unions in order to access the private sector more widely, such as textiles industry and others in industrial parks etc, which are indirectly linked to the aid sector. We do not believe RSH has the legitimacy and traction to influence these businesses, even though there are likely to be very high levels of SEAH taking place within these settings. We will nevertheless remain open to discussions about this going forward.

Key national priorities for the hub

Given the fragmented approach to SEAH/ safeguarding in Ethiopia, RSH needs to **identify effective capacity building activities that enhance/ complement** what each organisation has been doing and what is planned by other stakeholders. **Constant communication, coordination and collaboration** is critical in this regard. This means RSH National Associate must continue to play an active role in the PSEA network, as well as identifying other fora where related planning takes place – for example, within civil society networks, donor discussions etc.

The capacity development work will include a series of **webinars and podcasts** on gaps identified by the sector actors. We will consider e-learning opportunities too. We are committed to combining online offers with **face-to-face activities** once the situation permits free movement

without causing harm. **Mentoring and advice** will also be available to selected CSOs through the Ask an expert service, which will be piloted from May 2020.

RSH should also contribute to **better coordination** within the aid sector around this agenda – supporting the PSEA network, and identifying ways to **build a community of practice that reaches a much wider range of organisations** (local, primarily). One part of this role should also be to serve as a **convener for a common understanding on SEAH** – definition, elements, and common tools in local language. We will explore working with Translators Without Borders on this agenda.

These communities of practice will enable us to establish dialogue on how **safeguarding/SEAH standards and approaches should be contextualised** for most effective and relevant use in Ethiopia (and this will feed into the capacity development workstream). Specific and critical gaps identified in this report are **common referral pathways and mechanisms for gathering data**. Additional areas to further explore with the CoP during the next quarter include the possibility of peer-to-peer mentorship network for CSOs.

There is a huge evidence gap on the scale of SEAH incidence within aid organisations and how organisations are responding. Our inability to identify virtually any research in publicly accessible formats points to a **major need to collect data and build evidence**. However, the scope of this assessment means that we have not been able to identify *a way to prioritise these gaps*. The RSH team will need to consult with the NEB and with other key stakeholders (see below) to help us define the focus, given the many ways in which this work could go (eg whether and how international standards are being applied locally, and relevance/ value). Equally, it will be critical to *explore how we might do this* – in collaboration with research institutions in Ethiopia and internationally; with other thought leaders in the sector; or with DFID implementing partners in country.

Key networks/stakeholders to engage

The **Ethiopia PSEA network** will be fundamental as an ally with whom to share resources, and as the (only) existing network in Ethiopia dedicated to the issue of SEA. Within this network are all the relevant humanitarian stakeholders with whom RSH would want to develop a Community of Practice (though we would want to expand the RSH CoP go well beyond the profile of the current members, mainly INGOs and UN).

CSSP2 – a critical cohort of CSOs already engaged in and familiar with safeguarding issues. There are existing materials that can be shared to avoid re-inventing the wheel. In addition, like the **ESAP** programme, the CSOs in this group are able to draw down on Ask An Expert, the RSH helpdesk service in Ethiopia. These two cohorts will be very valuable for our **outreach efforts, user engagement, and helping us understand the needs within the sector**.

The **INGOs Human Resource network** which is convened by Ethiojobs (private human resourcing company) has some engagement amongst heads of human resources of INGOs. In recent years the network is paying more attention to issues of SEAH and other misconduct. Despite being an informal group, it meets online or face-to-face for experience sharing. It is a platform for peer to peer support. Smaller CSOs can benefit from this type of unstructured but relevant learning platform.

There are other umbrella network organisations whose role and collaboration with the RSH will be further refined. **Consortium of Reproductive Health Association (CoRHA)** has significant number of members from the international and national organisations. The **Civil Society Forum** is also another important umbrella organisation. However, the capacity of the umbrella organisations and their actual relation with members needs careful assessment, due to the impact of the previous charities and societies legislation and the Agency pressure for consortia not to implement activities but rather to serve as support for members only.

The **National Expert Board** also constitutes an excellent networking resource, offering RSH access to different organisations, structures and groups, and information about relevant opportunities where RSH could make an impact. We will want to carefully maintain this important advisory group.

We will work closely with **DFID Ethiopia** in order to ensure that we can access and influence not only DFID programme partners, but also the **donor working groups** and their partners, for maximum outreach.

Communication channels

Based on the evidence and analysis generated from secondary data on digital landscape in Ethiopia, as well as other parts of this assessment, the RSH plans to use a **mixed- approach to sharing information and learning** through the Hub in order to engage harder to reach organisations eg in remote areas.

RSH will share information and encourage dialogue on key issues raised by RSH directly on **social media sites** (by creating RSH pages on Facebook or Telegram or Instagram accounts – requires further investigation) or using these platforms to link to the RSH website.

As the internet speed is low, making downloading certain content extremely difficult, RSH will keep its online content simple. We will also use Q3 to further explore the option of developing an **easy to use and off-line basic training app** in local language(s).

We will include a limited amount of **face to face activities** to particularly target those that may struggle with online based activities.

Newsletters, networks and allies (including many of those stakeholders named above) will be key in supporting our outreach and helping us develop our COP membership/ user network.

We assessed but have **rejected the idea of using radio as a broadcasting option**. The main reason for this is that our target audience are CSOs, rather than community members, and we do not consider this approach would be impactful without accompanying direct engagement with any organisation listening in. This option would also be extremely expensive and require a lot of media expertise within the consortium. The COVID-19 situation is in any case uncondusive to developing this workstream, given the importance of embedding this type of activity into a wider support programme.

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