Guidance for Developing conscious culture of safeguarding

This document sets out the process for developing a conscious culture of safeguarding and provides the steps for safeguarding implementation. This guidance is for management of the organisation and the focal points who may have responsibility for creating and maintaining a safe environment. The focus should be on developing a conscious culture and practice, so it becomes part of the DNA of the way individuals and teams are being with each other, the communities they serve and other stakeholders.

Drive forward safeguarding though proactive action for cultural change through staff discussion about values of the organization and expected attitudes and standards of behavior through meetings, workshops, exploring good practice, regular team culture meetings, setting team standards of behavior and being.

- The first and foremost lever to shift individual or organizational mindsets is vocabulary. To shift the mindset, we must speak new vocabulary. The reasoning being, what we keep repeating to ourselves becomes our reality.

- Regular conversations around safeguarding and values eventually make this into a component of the team and organizational DNA.
• Creating a distinct symbol that reminds people of safeguarding and their responsibility for this, is another way to reinforce the message.

• An event to mark the new way of working and culture would also send a strong signal of change from old to new.

• Develop clear milestones and measurable criteria with the stakeholders to assess the success of initiatives in mindsets and attitude.

**Steps for safeguarding implementation**

1. **PSEA POLICY**
   - The drafting and/or updating of the commitment statement and policy is announced to staff and a process is designed to ensure active participation from staff;
   - The content of the policy is based on good practices and clearly states prohibited behaviour;
   - The policy adopts a zero-tolerance approach to sexual exploitation and abuse;
   - Ensure the policy includes strong child protection, survivor centred approach and gender dimensions.
   - The protection of whistle-blowers is outlined, as well as all disciplinary measures that apply in case of retaliation;
   - Partners, suppliers and contractors have similar commitments that meet minimum standards. If not, the contract ensures that PSEA takes place and PSEA communication and training is extended to them.

2. **COMMUNICATION WITH STAFF AND BENEFICIARIES**

   **With staff:**
   - Staff is involved in the creation of key messages summarising PSEA;
   - The key messages and reporting mechanisms are communicated at the signing of the contract and during induction and refresher training;
   - PSEA focal points know how to tailor and when to send reminder messages to staff

   **With beneficiaries:**
   - The key messages of the PSEA policy are communicated in the relevant language(s) and in a culturally appropriate way to beneficiaries;
   - Communication means are accessible and use appropriate and inclusive illustrations, images and messaging;
   - Personnel in community-facing activities have access to sensitive and inclusive material
to spread key messages.

3. REPORTING MECHANISMS

- Reporting mechanisms are created in consultation with communities and local stakeholders;
- There are many reporting channels and clearly identifiable contact points adapted to the needs of different groups of beneficiaries;
- The reporting channels are accessible and safe;
- The PSEA focal points are clearly identified and gender balanced, and properly trained

4. SURVIVOR-CENTRED RESPONSE

Well being and the wishes of the survivor of an incident are put at the center of all actions taken. This includes ensuring:

- The safety and security of the survivor, any dependents, witnesses, or whistleblowers.
- Assurance that issues will be handled in confidence.
- The survivor’s wishes (self-determination) and best interests are taken into account.
- The survivor is treated with dignity and respect, demonstrating belief and trust.
- Empowerment of the individual, their family, friends, and community.
- A timely response at each stage.
- No limitations on who reports or when they report. An individual can report a concern or incident at any time after it happens. Everyone is able and encouraged to report.

5. INVESTIGATION PROCESS

- All rumours, concerns or complaints are taken seriously;
- Confidentiality is a key principle in all investigations and information is shared on a need-to-know basis only;
- There is a safety and needs assessment of the victim of alleged SEA and all other parties involved in the investigation;
- The case is referred to authorities when appropriate, and only when it is safe for all parties;
- The investigation team meets with the survivor of alleged SEA, witnesses, and the subject of complaint;
- A decision is made by the gender-balanced investigation team;
- Confidential records of all meetings are kept; the final report is confidential.

6. PREVENTION MEASURES

- Ensure that the identity of the Focal Point is known throughout the organisation and that contact or ways to reach the Focal Point are made widely available
• Request that staff sign the organisation’s Policy or Code of Conduct which clearly prohibits acts of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse and obligates them to report suspicion or evidence of such acts
• Provide awareness-raising sessions on SEA for all staff on a regular basis, including for newcomers;
• Make appropriate recommendations to management on enhancing prevention strategies;
• With Human Resources and Management, ensure that procedures to guard against hiring of persons who have a record of SEA offences are put in place and applied;
• Work with Human Resources personnel to include PSEA content in staff induction sessions
• Whenever possible, meetings with beneficiaries are conducted in rooms with the doors left open;
• Performance evaluation and other appraisals include sensitivity and commitment to PSEA.

7. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

• All cases are confidentially and anonymously reported in a central data management system;

• The information is compiled annually to monitor the implementation of the policy and inform future changes;

• There are regular audits and evaluations on, or including, PSEA.