



PSEA Taskforce - response and prevention Tip Sheet

The rapid escalation of conflict and the deterioration of the security and the Covid-19 situation in Afghanistan present challenges for all actors operating in the Afghanistan humanitarian response, causing a severe decline for women's rights, posing significant limitations for women and girls to access life-saving services. For example, reports received are that women and girls cannot access health and education services as the Non-State Armed Groups (NSAGs) have imposed restrictions on their movement, requiring them strictly to adhere to the "Sharia Law in the field. In this environment, the risk of sexual exploitation and abuse may increase, and regular reporting channels may be lacking or absent. Therefore, **it is paramount that organizations continue spreading the message that aid is free.**

This document is intended to guide all humanitarian aid providers and the PSEA task force members to ensure that prevention and response mechanisms are in place throughout this challenging period.

1. Critical staff

- Include PSEA focal points, alternates, and staff that may have responsibilities according to internal reporting policies (human resources or senior management staff). If these staff members have been placed on hold or other arrangements, ensure that relevant responsibilities have been assigned to a designated delegate.

2. Internal reporting procedures

- Organizational internal complaints handling procedures should be reviewed to ensure that **complaints received from affected community members** can be channeled to appropriate staff members efficiently. For example:
 - If complaints are received in the complaints box, they still should be dispatched to responsible staff.
- Hotlines are attended to/responded to by responsible staff, and staff operating the CFMs desks or other complaint desks can be reached by phone or other avenues.
- Complaints handling procedures should be reviewed to ensure that, once received, **complaints are channeled to appropriate staff as quickly as possible**, nevertheless remote working arrangements, including the use of mobile phones for reporting and follow-up.
- Organizations may use alternate working modalities, including working from home, to ensure that the complaint referral systems within organizations and outside organizations are confidential and survivor-centered; for example, the IT infrastructure, office communication software, and record-keeping are secure.

3. Referral services

Check that local life-saving services and other essential and critical services related to child protection and gender-based violence services are available during this time. Update service referral contact lists as necessary.

4. Reporting

- All staff is mandated to **continue reporting SEA allegations** to the PSEA Focal Points and PSEA Coordinator through the designated channels to strengthen collective accountability for PSEA - please refer to the PSEA SOPs for recording and processing SEA complaints in Afghanistan.

5. Ensuring all staff are trained

- While in-person training will be restricted, staff are encouraged to access online training opportunities. Examples of online courses and materials are:
 - <https://ifrc.csod.com/client/ifrc/default.aspx>
 - <https://agora.unicef.org/course/info.php?id=7380>
 - <https://www.interaction.org/blog/no-excuse-for-abuse/>

Other challenges include: "women are requested to wear burqa and conditioning public appearances to the presence of a Maharam (male escort), movement restrictions, network systems, restricted access to the IDPs sites, and remote supervision of staff