

Localising safeguarding in Middle East and North Africa (MENA)

What does it mean, how can it best be
done?

Table of contents

Introduction	3
Structure of the toolkit.....	3
External environment	4
What is important for localising safeguarding?	4
Key actions for external environment	5
Map the external environment.....	5
Build relationships with government and authorities.....	7
Strengthen community participation in programmes and services being designed and delivered.....	8
Internal environment	8
What is important for localising safeguarding?	8
Key actions for internal environment.....	9
Build on organisational values and good practice to strengthen a culture for safeguarding	9
Adapt existing systems and processes to integrate safeguards	12
Work with available resources and mobilise more.....	15
Build awareness and practice amongst leaders, staff and volunteers that works for the local context.....	16
External stakeholders	19
What is important for localising safeguarding?	19
Key actions for external stakeholders	20
Use context appropriate messaging on safeguarding for external stakeholders	20
Establish community reporting mechanisms that work for individual communities ...	22
Work with partners on their own safeguarding journey.....	23
Collaborate with communities on designing and delivering safe programmes	24
Resources	25

Introduction

Safeguarding in the aid and development sector means preventing harm and abuse that arises from an organisation’s people, programmes and communications work. That harm and abuse might be experienced within the organisation (staff and volunteers) as well as outside the organisation (the communities as well as other stakeholders) with whom the organisation works. Organisations safeguard from all forms of harm but with a particular priority on preventing, reporting and responding to Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Sexual Harassment (SEAH) that is perpetrated by staff and associates towards other staff, adults and children in communities where they work.

Safeguarding is guided by a set of international standards which describe what organisations should do to prevent, report and respond to harm caused by the organisation.

The **Safeguarding Resource and Support Hub (RSH)** has focussed on how to localise these standards with an approach that would work for lesser-resourced civil society organisations (CSOs), in particular in the countries where the RSH delivered services and support. This toolkit provides practical actions for localising safeguarding in MENA. It draws on the existing resources of RSH and the input of a few organisations which were mentored through RSH in Yemen and Jordan.

Structure of the toolkit

The toolkit has been structured around the model below:



The model demonstrates the overall approach to localising safeguarding:

- The external environment in which an organisation works both supports and hinders an organisation in developing and implementing safeguarding policies and procedures.
- The internal environment within an organisation is likely to present both opportunities to build a safeguarding environment and challenges which will need to be addressed to implement safeguarding fully.
- Working with external stakeholders on safeguarding – whether these are partners or communities – is where it is crucial to implement safeguarding measures in a manner that speaks to and works for those stakeholders.

Overall, all organisations are on their own safeguarding journey as they build their capacity to implement safeguarding measures. The RSH has helpfully introduced **The Safeguarding Journey** map in recognition of this and that each organisation is on its own safeguarding journey and will require different information, materials and services at each stage of that journey.

External environment

What is important for localising safeguarding?

The external environment in which organisations work determines:

- **Key risks** which are likely to arise for an organisation: Environments where there is a significant level of Gender-Based Violence (GBV), contexts which are experiencing conflict or other humanitarian issues mean that it is more likely that organisations will cause harm through the behaviour of their staff and associates or because programmes or services exacerbate existing patterns of harm. Different contexts present different risks and these are important to understand for localising safeguarding.
- **Drivers for introducing safeguarding:** Environments where there is robust legislation on protection from forms of violence, employment law which supports organisations taking action on misconduct and services which can be used for referrals when cases arise better support organisations to implement safeguarding measures. Organisations need these drivers; they differ between contexts.
- **Networking opportunities for safeguarding:** Environments where there are a number of organisations already implementing safeguarding, where there are safeguarding “networks”, for example, United Nations (UN) initiated PSEA (Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse) networks, provide organisations with more opportunities to share experiences and resources and mobilise efforts.

Key actions for external environment

- Map the external environment.
- Build relationships with government and authorities.
- Strengthen community participation in programmes and services being designed and delivered.

Map the external environment

Legal frameworks often fail to recognise or criminalise incidents that breaches of organisational codes of conduct for safeguarding. This hampers prevention in terms of ensuring staff etc. understand that the conduct is inappropriate, and response both in reporting serious harm and accessing survivor support. (MENA research)

You need to understand national legislation and local practices which will impact – positively and negatively – on the organisation’s ability to put in place safeguarding measures. This includes any legislation that relates to protection, GBV, Sexual Harassment etc. It also includes national employment legislation, which will impact on how you are able to deal with a staff member who perpetrates harm.

Example mapping for Yemen

- Yemen has a legal pluralist system, which includes codified and customary law.
- Inadequate legal framework to address GBV or other forms of violence.
- Constitution’s equality clause needs to be read with Article 31, which defines women as “the sisters of men.”
- Men are granted guardianship rights over female relatives.
- No minimum age for marriage.
- Women cannot testify in cases related to zina (illicit or non-contractual sex).
- Survivors of sexual harm can be criminalised where these types of cases are categorised as extramarital relations.
- National legal framework functions alongside religious, customary and tribal rules.
- Rise in using tribal systems because the formal legal system is inaccessible.
- Tribal arbitration has systems to manage and respond to GBV or other forms of violence.
- Sociocultural norms tend to act as barriers to reporting harm and abuse, and there are few support services available to survivors.

Find out if a PSEA **network** already exists or safeguarding is on the agenda of another coordination group or network. These bodies should already have a “mapping” of national legislation and local practices, as well as services that can support survivors.

Study the local context, how the sector is working, and who is doing what. (Key Informant to the toolkit)

Make sure you also understand what national or local authorities are comfortable with. In contexts where authorities need to approve messaging and communications the organisation has with communities, you will need to understand what is permitted or otherwise in how you position your work on safeguarding.

We needed to understand what the authorities would block in how we communicated on safeguarding. The authorities scrutinised the materials we presented to communities, so we considered carefully how to present the concept. (Key Informant to the toolkit)

You also need to understand existing patterns of behaviour that relate to GBV, protection and other issues which will impact on what your organisation can include in your safeguarding policy and how you raise awareness on it.

If you need to develop your own “mapping”, use this **[tool](#)**.

Consider the **international standards** for safeguarding and what these mean for the commitments you need to make in your safeguarding policy and code of conduct. You can position your organisation as one which works within the international aid and development sector which has standards for safeguarding. A useful exercise is mapping the international standards, the national legislation that contributes to safeguarding and any other international instruments you want to reference in the policy, for example, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) if you work with children. Look at what you can commit to where you work, and what you can use that supports the organisation to implement safeguarding measures.

We considered the international standards and the national legislation we have for protection and GBV. We took the best from each to include in our policy. (Key Informant to the toolkit)

We thought about international standards that we could apply, even where these are different to national legislation and local practices, for example, marriage under 18 years. There were also some commitments that international organisations make which we felt, at this point, pushed too far for our context, for example, explicit reference to safeguarding people who identify as LGBTQI (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or intersex). (Key Informant to the toolkit)

And finally, reflect on what else will influence how your organisation will keep people safe. In many countries and communities in MENA, faith is an important aspect of people's lives and a key principle of how authorities govern a particular area. Ask yourselves how you can use, for example, faith to support your safeguarding. Look at [this](#) or [this](#) resource to think that through.

Build relationships with government and authorities

If you are already working in an area, you will hopefully have the opportunity to build relationships with government and authorities so that the support you need to implement safeguarding measures is easier to come by.

We had to have a lot of discussions with the local authorities to get agreement to go ahead with our safeguarding measures in communities. (Key Informant to the toolkit)

If you are newly established in each context or arriving to support an emergency response, consider carefully how you approach discussions with government and authorities on your plans for implementing safeguarding measures and working with communities on the issue.

Be clear with authorities what you are going to do but approach this as a dialogue. Authorities do not like being tutored on an issue as if they have no knowledge on it. Authorities need to feel that they are partnering with you to create safe environments. (Key Informant to the toolkit)

Discuss internally what the limits/boundaries will be for the relationship your organisation has with the government/authorities and what implications this has for safeguarding, for example, if governments/authorities ask for information about survivors, details about cases etc. it is important to have an internal position to be able to negotiate on providing this. It is also important to speak to other CSOs/non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to find out how other organisations work with the authorities on these issues.

Strengthen community participation in programmes and services being designed and delivered

Strengthening community participation in programmes and services is good practice for delivering quality programmes that work for the communities involved. It also enables you to introduce your work more easily on safeguarding, in a manner which communities understand and support. The “External stakeholders” section describes how to discuss safeguarding with communities (as well as others). Make sure before you start these discussions that you have already been working with communities on the design and delivery of the work you are doing so you have begun building trust and you have a good grasp of the language you can use to introduce concepts which are often sensitive and the approach you can take to mobilise communities to be part of your safeguarding efforts.

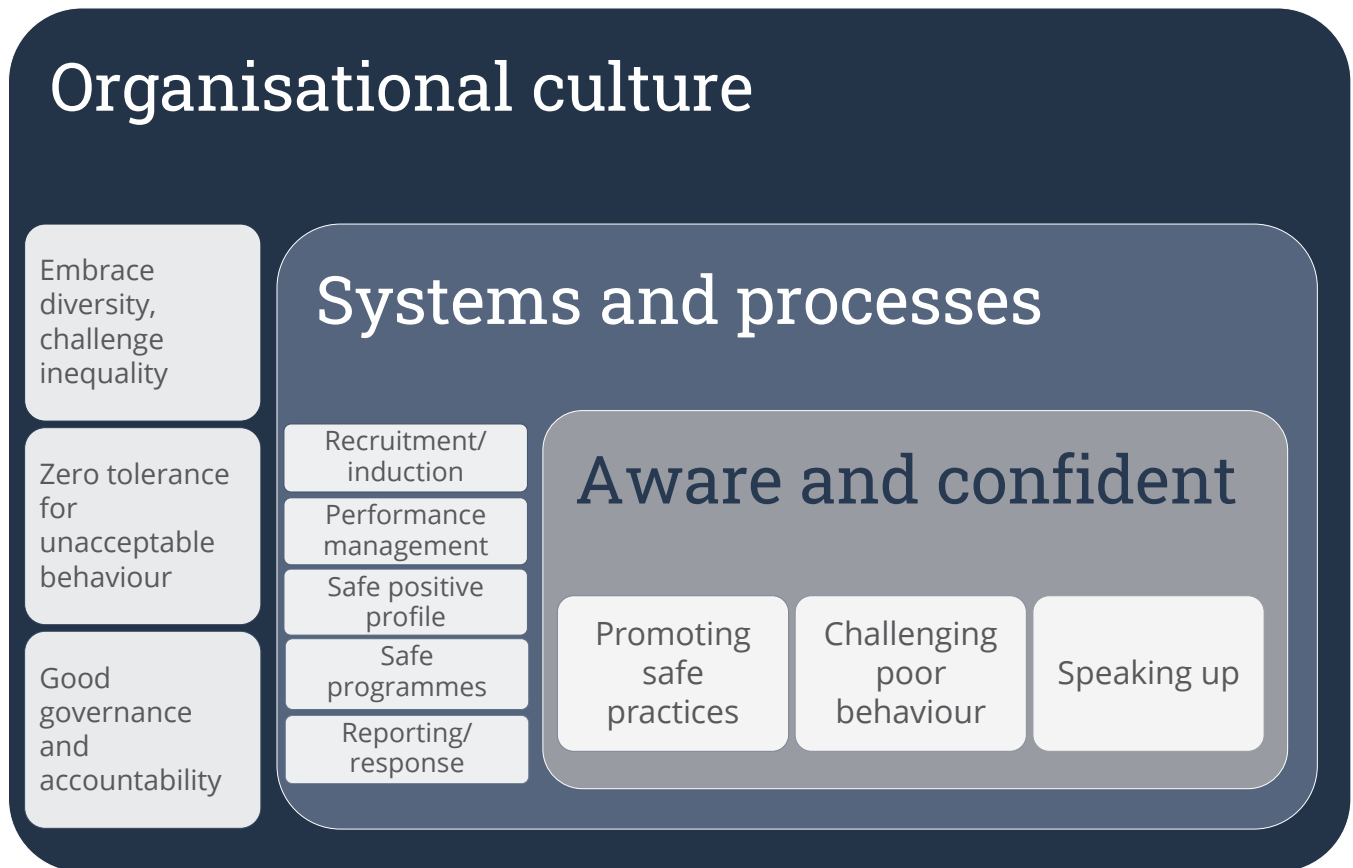
Internal environment

What is important for localising safeguarding?

The internal environment of an organisation determines:

- **Resources available** to design and implement safeguarding measures: Initially these may be few (both financial and human), particularly in lesser-resourced organisations, which can feel like a challenge for implementing safeguarding. It is important to work with what you have already and think about how you can mobilise more. Having a clear action plan for safeguarding which spans months and years and is appropriate to the resources you have, or will have, will help your organisation stay on its journey.
- **Existing good practices** which an organisation can build on for safeguarding: All organisations are doing something “right” prior to formally introducing safeguarding. This might be working to values that include creating safe workplaces or treating communities with respect. This might also be commitments to non-discrimination, respect etc. in contracts or employee handbooks. Starting with where the organisation is in “keeping people safe” creates opportunities to build on good practice.
- **Ways in which the organisation can mobilise leaders and staff** to create a safeguarding environment: Strengthening an organisational culture for safeguarding does not arise from one-off training or asking staff etc. to read and sign a policy. Leadership is key to organisational culture for safeguarding. Supporting staff to understand why safeguarding is important and giving them the space to discuss tricky and challenging issues in your context is vital.

This model demonstrates the key components within an organisation that support the implementation of safeguarding:



Key actions for internal environment

- Build on organisational values and good practice to strengthen a culture for safeguarding.
- Adapt existing systems and processes to integrate safeguards.
- Work with available resources and mobilise more.
- Build awareness and practice amongst leaders, staff and volunteers that works for the local context.

Build on organisational values and good practice to strengthen a culture for safeguarding

Most organisations have explicit values or commitments that have been made in an organisation’s vision or mission that can be used as a basis for strengthening a culture for safeguarding. The following is an example from an organisation that worked with the RSH. You will see their organisational values on the left in the table, and on the right how these values can be used as a basis for strengthening a culture for safeguarding.

Organisational values	Using as a basis to strengthen a culture for safeguarding
<p>Volunteerism</p> <p>Because we work in hard-to-reach areas, we dedicate our time and skills beyond hopes to benefit the life of the most vulnerable.</p>	<p>Consider what volunteerism means for the organisation and for the people involved. What does a spirit of volunteerism mean for keeping people safe?</p>
<p>Learning</p> <p>We consider feedback as a learning opportunity to enhance our decision-making for greater impact.</p>	<p>Learning about what works to keep people safe is core to strengthening a culture for safeguarding. Leaders can learn from staff on what makes a safe work environment, and then make sure that is put in place.</p>
<p>Accountability</p> <p>We take responsibility for our actions and aim to promote quality, transparency, integrity, creativity and equal opportunities at all levels of our work.</p>	<p>Being accountable to “do no harm” and ensure that everyone involved with or impacted by the organisation is safeguarded creates a culture for safeguarding.</p>
<p>Diversity</p> <p>We aim to work effectively with people from all walks of life, treat all people with dignity and respect.</p>	<p>Diverse and inclusive work environments are safer environments where risks and issues for different groups of staff and communities are recognised.</p>
<p>Neutrality</p> <p>We are an independent organisation designing and implementing our intervention without any political, racial, religious or ideological pressure.</p>	<p>Neutrality can extend to ensuring equal opportunity for all, which in turn promotes inclusivity in the workplace and the work with communities.</p>
<p>Ambition</p> <p>We set high, results-based goals and ensure all our staff have the capacities and remain inspired to make these goals a reality for positive change in peoples’ lives.</p>	<p>Be ambitious on safeguarding. What goals does the organisation want to achieve on safeguarding, how will staff be supported to develop the capacities to achieve this?</p>

Use the organisational values as part of the safeguarding training you do or conduct workshops which focus specifically on the values and ask participants to describe how the values can be used to contribute to a safeguarding culture.

We already understood many of the risks for beneficiaries and we were dealing with complaints but without a formal process for doing so. Going on our safeguarding journey helped us connect what we were already doing to a formal process and also strengthen our measures. (Key Informant to the toolkit)

If you want to conduct a more in-depth organisational culture review and put a strategy together for strengthening the culture for safeguarding, you can use the **culture framework** that RSH developed. A simple way to do this is through a workshop where participants have an opportunity to think about all 4 areas of the framework, what the organisation is already doing well (or has in place) and where the gaps are. Often, organisations will already have measures in place for resources, formal rules and policies but will not have focussed on consciousness/capabilities or informal norms and practices. Participants could suggest what might work in these 2 areas to strengthen the culture for safeguarding.

Consulting on a safeguarding policy – Key questions:

- What are we already doing to keep people safe?
- What more can we do, what new things can we do to keep people safe?
- What behaviours should we encourage in our staff and partners?
- What behaviours should we prohibit in our staff and partners? Are there likely to be issues or challenges with this that we need to be prepared for, for example, prohibitions on marriage under 18 years, relationships within communities, use of corporal punishment with children?

If you are at the stage of developing your safeguarding policy, try and consult representative staff members – and partners if you can – to explore what should be included in the policy and the accompanying code of conduct. This consultation will also enable you to find out where there may be challenges in applying the policy and/or including certain behaviour requirements in the code of conduct. **This resource** identifies what should be in a typical policy. Use the key questions in the text box to guide the consultation. Once complete, use the answers to develop the sections of the policy and include in “do’s” and “don’ts” in the **code of conduct**.

We linked our code of conduct to our commitment to integrity. Our code of conduct covers all issues, for example, fraud, as well as safeguarding. Linking it to integrity helped staff get behind it. (Key Informant to the toolkit)

Management is vital. We did a lot of coordination with management in the development and implementation of the policy. (Key Informant to the toolkit)

Adapt existing systems and processes to integrate safeguards

Adapting existing systems and processes to integrate safeguards will achieve 3 things:

- It will mean that safeguarding becomes integral to the organisation and not an add on.
- Doing this will be less resource heavy than if new systems and processes are introduced.
- It will mean that your approach to safeguarding reflects local realities – existing resources, how the organisation works, what is available to support safeguarding where the organisation works.

To do this effectively:

- Identify what the global standards are trying to achieve on recruitment, training, programming, procurement and reporting/response (you can extend this to communications/information and communications technology as well if you wish).
- Review what the organisation is already doing in these areas (you may have done this when developing the policy).
- Decide how existing systems and processes can be strengthened and what the priority is for doing so within the resources available.

The table below is an example of this using a made-up organisation for existing organisational practice.

International standard	What it is trying to achieve	Existing organisational practice	Key changes that can be made within existing resources
<p>Recruitment – e.g., commitment to improving reference checking and vetting for former misconduct (<u>Inter-Agency Standing Committee: Minimum Operating Standards for PSEA</u> [IASC MOS-PSEA])</p>	<p>Prevent individuals from joining the organisation who have perpetrated abuse elsewhere; ensure (as far as possible) that individuals joining the organisation have the same values, including keeping people safe.</p>	<p>We ask for candidates to provide references; we do not check with the last employer.</p>	<p>Strengthen background checks and include last employer reference. Use this <u>tip sheet</u> to decide what you need to do to strengthen your recruitment.</p>
<p>Training – e.g., staff receive induction and refresher training on the standards of conduct and obligation to report (IASC MOS PSEA)</p>	<p>Build knowledge, skills and practice of staff to behave appropriately within the workplace and with communities with whom they work; build confidence to report misconduct.</p>	<p>We ask staff to read and sign the policy and code of conduct for their induction.</p>	<p>Deliver short interactive induction for new candidates on safeguarding, what it means, why it is important, how it is done in your organisation. Extend this for refresher training. Use existing <u>materials</u> available to adapt for your organisation.</p>
<p>Programming and procurement – e.g., programmes need to consider organisational and contextual constraints so that the proposed action is safe in relation to Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Sexual Harrassment (PSEAH) for communities (<u>CHS Alliance: PSEAH Handbook</u>)</p>	<p>Programmes that identify and mitigate risks of SEAH and other harm so that communities can participate safely. Partners, suppliers and contractors are assessed and supported to be able to deliver work safely.</p>	<p>We do a risk assessment for programmes, but this does not include safeguarding. We have added a clause for safeguarding to partner contracts, but we do not assess them for their safeguarding capacity.</p>	<p>Extend existing risk assessment to identify and mitigate safeguarding risks. Use <u>guidance</u> to determine how to carry out a risk assessment for safeguarding and adapt your own tools to do this. Develop a short partner assessment for safeguarding.</p>

<p>Reporting/response – e.g., written procedures on complaints/reports handling from staff members or beneficiaries are in place (IASC PSEA MOS)</p>	<p>A range of avenues for reporting harm that are confidential and which staff and communities are willing and confident to use.</p> <p>A process for responding to reports, which includes skilled people to investigate and a fair and formal approach to dealing with subjects of complaint where the complaint is upheld.</p> <p>A range of services which can be used to support survivors and their best interests.</p>	<p>We have a hotline for reporting harm. This is available to all staff and communities.</p> <p>We commit to investigating.</p> <p>We have stated we are survivor focussed.</p>	<p>Consult staff and communities on how they would like to report and try and make those avenues available to them.</p> <p>This guidance helps establishing community reporting mechanisms. Make sure that the reporting avenues – and the consultation that you do – are appropriate to the local context.</p> <p>Decide what resources you need to investigate and who can support you, e.g., the PSEA network that operates in your context.</p> <p>Refer to the “External environment” section. If you have done a mapping, you should have information on services that can be used to support survivors.</p>
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Work with available resources and mobilise more

Safeguarding does require resources but start with what you have and build from there. It is important that your organisation has a safeguarding focal point as this person (or persons) will help the organisation move forward. When organisations begin their journey on safeguarding, this focal point is often an existing member of staff who has skills and experience either in protection/GBV or human resources. The focal point must be able to influence management and have a certain level of autonomy to plan and take action to strengthen the organisation’s approach to safeguarding. A term of reference for the role can be found [here](#).

If you have already mapped out what the organisation is doing that is keeping people safe and what more is needed, you can think about where some of the biggest risks are and identify those as a priority. [Click here](#) for a risk assessment template. An example is below:

High risk	Medium risk	Low risk
We recruit based on word of mouth, we do not take references.	We ask for candidates to provide references; we do not check with the last employer.	We use CVs and conduct interviews. We ask candidates to provide two references and a police check.
We do not induct new recruits.	The line manager does an induction to the work.	Each candidate has a formal induction where we can include safeguarding.
We do not have a mechanism for reporting misconduct.	We have a hotline for reporting harm. This is available to all staff and communities.	We have several avenues through which staff and others can report misconduct.

You may have a combination of high, medium, and low risk measures in place. Develop an action plan to address these and prioritise the high-risk measures as those to address first.

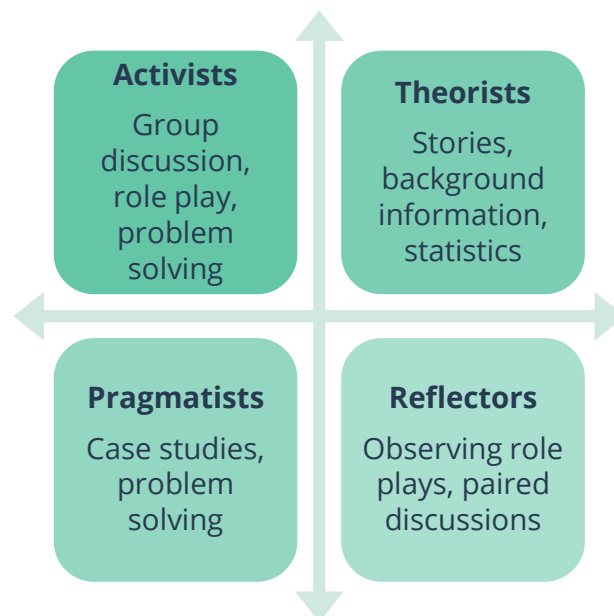
Your organisation will need to think about how to raise additional funds for the medium- and longer-term actions you want to take.

We tackled the high-risk areas first. We looked at what we could release in the existing organisation and projects budgets. We then started including safeguarding in all our new funding proposals, being clear about what we wanted to use the money for and how it would benefit the project. (Key Informant to the toolkit)

Build awareness and practice amongst leaders, staff and volunteers that works for the local context

There are a number of effective approaches and a lot of available **resources** on building awareness and practice amongst leaders, staff and volunteers. You will need to think about what will work for your organisation, that will influence leaders, staff etc. to make changes to practices and fits with the local context in the sense that there will be context specifics that you can draw on to support safeguarding and there will also be challenges that will need to be addressed. You can use RSH **e-learning modules** for training or develop your own materials.

Staff and volunteers



Any individual participating in awareness building/learning event will have a different learning style and awareness building activities for safeguarding need to build on this.

It is useful to include in awareness building activities information on the context you are working in, the standards that the organisation is working to and legislation or international instruments that support safeguarding, for example, if you work with children and you can identify the UNCRC, or if you have national legislation on protection, you can identify this. This information is particularly useful for theorists, but it also gives your organisation a firm basis for introducing safeguarding.

One of the challenges we had is that there is no legal framework for safeguarding in this country, so there is no criminal penalty for misconduct that is criminal in other countries. (Key Informant to the toolkit)

Another useful approach is to include in the awareness building information on cases that the organisation has already been faced with (identifying details removed), which can demonstrate that this is an issue for the organisation and therefore your organisation needs to tackle it.

We presented issues we had, cases we had dealt with, to demonstrate why safeguarding is important. (Key Informant to the toolkit)

Consider how to message the concept of safeguarding. This will differ to how you might message it for external audiences. Safeguarding is about keeping people safe and preventing harm. Use case studies to demonstrate what you mean by keeping people safe (where you do not have information on actual cases to use) so you can help staff reflect on what this means.

We did a lot of training through videos where we kept reminding people why it is important and who the focal point is for support and reporting to. (Key Informant to the toolkit)

You will need to consider how to tackle issues that will arise because of the context in which you are working. Common challenges that arise are:

“This kind of behaviour is outlawed anyway in this context. It doesn’t happen and shouldn’t be discussed.”

Hopefully you will be able to demonstrate through your organisation’s experience that it does happen. If this statement arises, you could ask the participants to discuss this themselves. Often fellow participants will challenge this statement.

“This is a western concept that is not relevant here.”

This is an opportunity to reinforce that the organisation is a member of the international aid and development sector, where standards are set for all organisations to work safely and effectively. Whether it is a western concept or otherwise, all organisations in the sector are working to the same principles.

“This tries to determine our own personal behaviour and goes against our cultural norms.”

Primarily it is focussed on professional behaviour but if you choose to work for an NGO, your behaviour outside the workplace is as important as inside. Meeting safeguarding principles does sometimes contravene cultural norms in any context but this is the difference between choosing to work for an organisation that upholds high standards of conduct, and organisations that do not.

“Legally I am able to marry someone under that age of 18 years. The organisation cannot tell me I cannot.”

The organisation can say that it will not employ people who marry someone under the age of 18 years. If this is something you want to do, choose to work for an organisation that does not have this as an organisational standard.

A significant challenge that organisations face in implementing safeguarding is supporting staff and others to report concerns they may have. You will need to reinforce the message that reporting is confidential, and reports will be handled by skilled individuals. Listen to staff and others’ views on reporting, what they feel are barriers to them doing so, and what they think will help build their confidence.

Key messages on safeguarding

- Safeguarding our staff and programme participants, communities is part of our “do no harm” commitments.
- Safeguarding brings our values to life in a real and meaningful way.
- Implementing safeguarding measures means our work is better quality and makes more impact.
- Implementing safeguarding measures means we create more productive work environments.

Leadership

Leadership needs to understand safeguarding and why it is important, as they have a very specific and vital role to play in leading the organisation on safeguarding in the context in which the organisation is working. Leaders can be very skilled in linking context, organisational values and ambitions to the need for safeguarding. Leaders of organisations working in religious contexts – or those whose values are faith based – can be inspirational in identifying how faith and religion support safeguarding.

Key messages for different groups

Leadership	All staff	Staff working with communities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model safeguarding behaviours • Create an environment for safeguarding • Allocate resources for safeguarding • Ensure staff and others are trained on safeguarding policies and their responsibilities for implementing these • Monitor how well teams are implementing safeguarding • Support focal points/champions to do their work well 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand what organisation commitments to and policies on safeguarding mean for you and how you work with and relate to others • Be aware and mindful of what is happening around you – are safeguarding risks arising, are you observing behavior that might be a concern? • Commit to raising concerns and making reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct risk assessments for safeguarding • Brief partners on organisation safeguarding approach • Find out what capacity partners have on safeguarding and what needs to be built • Organise focus group discussions with communities, or use existing community meetings to discuss safeguarding

External stakeholders

What is important for localising safeguarding?

Working with external stakeholders on safeguarding determines:

- Creating safer environments for the work of the organisation to take place. In many respects organisations are reliant on external stakeholders to create safer environments: governments and authorities may need to authorise how the organisation communicates with communities, they also have responsibility for legislating on issues of harm an abuse and providing support services for survivors; communities are key “partners” for organisations on safeguarding, informing

organisations on how programmes can be delivered safely and reporting when things go wrong.

- Increasing reports of harm to the organisation. Whilst increasing confidence amongst communities to report harm remains a challenge, working with communities – and other external stakeholders – to build confidence to report will hopefully begin to provide organisations with a much better picture of how its safeguarding measures are working and what more can be done to prevent harm and abuse.
- Reducing safeguarding risks arising in the work of the organisation. Organisations on their own cannot identify and mitigate all risks that might arise from the work of the organisation. Communities play a vital role in this.

Key actions for external stakeholders

- Use context appropriate messaging on safeguarding for external stakeholders.
- Establish community reporting mechanisms that work for individual communities.
- Work with partners on their own safeguarding journey.
- Collaborate with communities on designing and delivering safe programmes.

Use context appropriate messaging on safeguarding for external stakeholders

Context appropriate messaging with external stakeholders, particularly communities, needs to be thought through carefully. Context appropriate messaging, when done well, increases awareness on sensitive issues and in a manner which means external stakeholders, including communities, are on board with your organisation commitments to keep people safe. Context appropriate messaging needs to:

- Communicate on the organisation’s commitments – remember that primarily you are communicating about the conduct that is expected of your staff etc. with communities, you are not trying to change community behaviour.

Make sure you are clear if you talk about the organisation’s code of conduct that this is an internal document and not about the conduct in the community. (Key Informant to the toolkit)

- Use language and images which provide clarity on the types of behaviour that is prohibited whilst respecting the sensitivity of discussing this behaviour with external stakeholders.

There is a problem with using the term sexual in this context. We communicated instead on non-ethical abuse and then we monitored the complaints that came in to make sure people understood what we meant by this. (Key Informant to the toolkit)

- Build confidence, particularly in communities, to report safeguarding issues, often in contexts where experiencing these types of abuse is accompanied by stigma and sometimes where reporting it presents significant risks for the person reporting, the survivor and the subject of complaint.

Use simple language with groups. You can describe safeguarding and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in terms which convey the essence of what you are talking about without using NGO language, for example, “**our colleagues shouldn’t lay a hand on you**”. (Key Informant to the toolkit)

Discuss with staff who work with external stakeholders, including communities, how to communicate on these issues and how to approach it, for example: Do you need to agree communications with authorities or community leaders first? Do you need to communicate first with groups of men before communicating with groups of women? Do you need to communicate with groups of children where the messaging will need to be **child friendly**? Do you need to use communications which are visual in communities with low literacy rates?

Ideally you will already have built relationships with government and local authorities and strengthened community participation in programmes which provides a good foundation for discussing safeguarding issues. If your organisation has not had the opportunity to do that, it would be useful to discuss with other organisations how they have communicated on safeguarding with government/local authorities and communities in that, or similar, contexts.

Establish community reporting mechanisms that work for individual communities

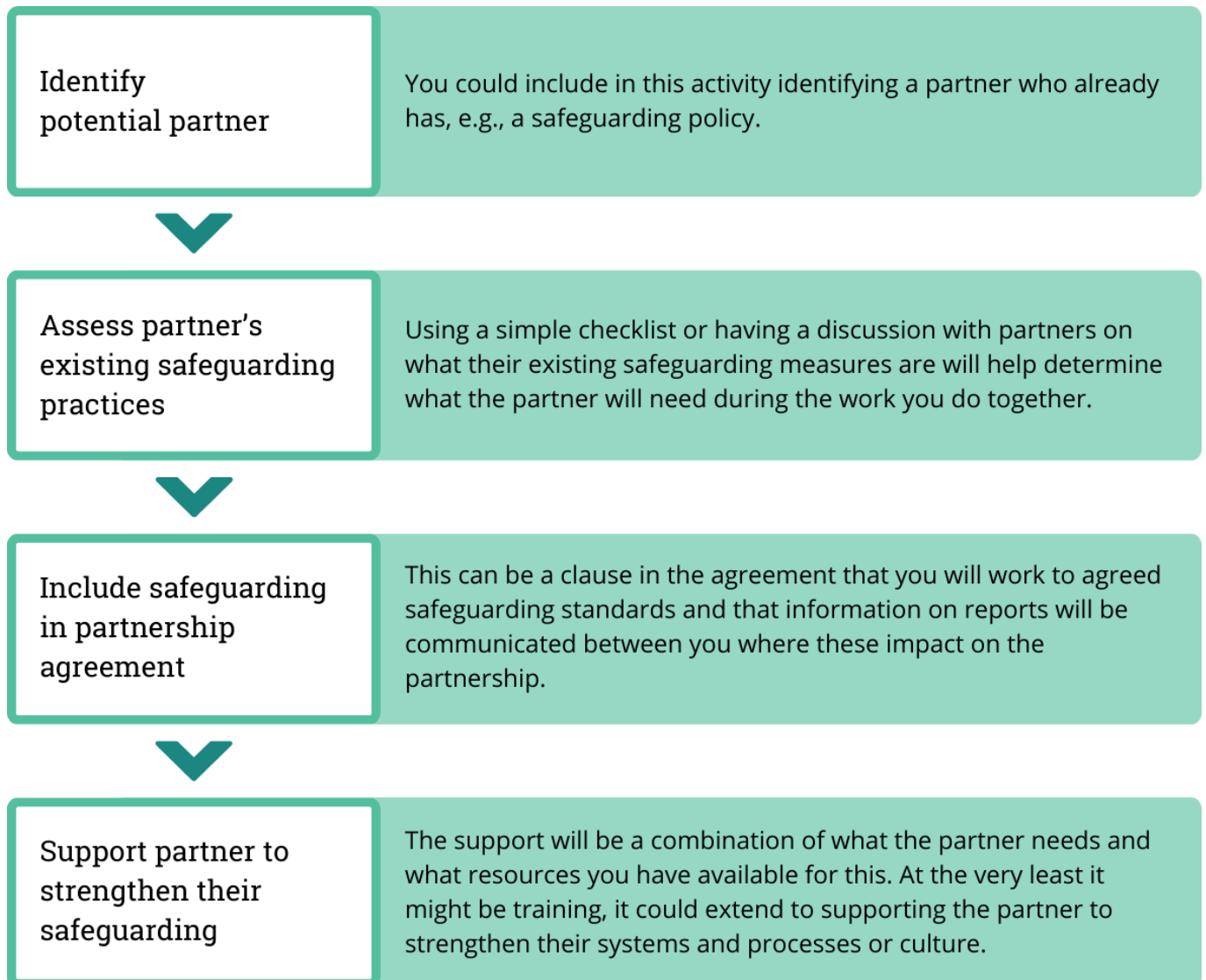
In contexts where engagement with communities is limited, for example, communities on the move or aid distribution, there may be limitations on consulting with communities when establishing community reporting mechanisms.

We established complaints “helpers” who discussed safeguarding with communities during aid distributions. This meant there was more regular and consistent communication which got the message across much better. (Key Informant to the toolkit)

Otherwise, community reporting mechanisms are most successful when they are designed with communities and are therefore more likely to be used. Use **resources** to work out your approach on this, how you will introduce the discussion and what you will need to include so that communities can think through how they would like to report if a safeguarding issue arose. You may need to **train** staff to do this well.

Work with partners on their own safeguarding journey

If you have incorporated safeguarding into your work with partners (internal environment), you will be following a process like this:



Working with partners on their own safeguarding journey will help build a stronger foundation in the partner organisation. Simply asking the partner to sign an agreement that includes a safeguarding clause meets some compliance requirements but on its own it will not help create a safer environment for the work to be delivered.

Partners will have their own safeguarding context which needs to be considered. They might be working in the same external environment, but their internal environment may differ from your organisations. Work with partners on what they can realistically do with the resources they have and the structure they work to.

Collaborate with communities on designing and delivering safe programmes

If you collaborate with communities on designing and delivering safe programmes, communities themselves will identify the risks that are relevant for their own contexts, and they will also have suggestions for how to mitigate these, which are locally appropriate. Communities themselves can agree to provide safeguarding mechanisms, for example, peer support for individuals involved in programmes. Train programmes staff to design and deliver safe programmes which will include participatory approaches with communities to identify and mitigate risk.

Resources

Beware the wolf in sheep's clothing: Child-friendly awareness materials. Can be used in awareness raising session for children with facilitator guidance.

How to carry out a safeguarding risk assessment. A summary version of the safeguarding risk assessment and management tool developed by the RSH Nigeria Hub.

How to design and manage community-based complaints mechanisms (CBCMs).

Outlines what a community-based complaints mechanism is, and how CSOs in general humanitarian and developing settings can set up and manage a CBCM.

How to develop or update your code of conduct. Based on the CHS Alliance guidance note "How to create an effective code of conduct," it aims to assist organisations to develop, implement, and review an effective and integrated code of conduct that is aligned with their organisational goals, and human resources and people management systems.

How to develop your organisational safeguarding policy. Outlines what a safeguarding policy is, why it is important for CSOs and how CSOs can develop or update their safeguarding policy.

How-to note: Culture framework. Adapted from the Gender at Work Analytical Framework, views organisational change as being multifaceted and holistic. It is based on an analysis of the role of social institutions or rules – both formal and informal – in fostering and maintaining organisational cultures which promote safeguarding.

Keeping people safe in faith communities – Good practices for safeguarding in MENA.

A recorded webinar exploring the use of faith principles in the promotion of safeguarding and keeping people safe and what can be drawn from these as good safeguarding practices.

Mapping local services for safeguarding. Outlines how CSOs can identify, map and quality assure the different local services available in case they need to refer survivors for specific support or services. Developed by the RSH Ethiopia Hub.

Minimum operating standards for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by own personnel. Sets out the minimum operating standards for PSEA developed by the IASC.

Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse mapping of country level networks and global initiatives – 2017. Information on PSEA Networks at a country level. It targets mostly African and MENA countries.

PSEA awareness raising materials. A poster package in Arabic.

PSEA training of trainers: Training skills. Intended to coach new trainers that are less experienced with the topic of PSEA.

PSEAH focal point role and responsibilities. A sample terms of reference defining roles and key responsibilities of PSEAH focal points.

PSEAH quick reference handbook. Provides a complete quick reference guide to implementing measures for PSEAH in an organisation or project. Published by CHS Alliance.

RSH e-learning (offline): Safeguarding Matters. A series of 5 online training modules which use scenario-based learning to tell the story of a fictitious CSO called Family Health Frontiers (FHF). Over the 5 modules, learners join the FHF team as they seek to become a safer organisation and navigate safeguarding challenges.

RSH safe programmes training package. Provides a step-by-step process to support a facilitator to deliver training on safe programmes.

Saying “no” to sexual misconduct – training materials. An Interagency training on PSEAH for partners providing humanitarian assistance and protection.

Summary brief: International standards on Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Sexual Harassment. Provides CSOs with an overview of the international standards and recommendations on SEAH.

Tip sheet: Safe recruitment. Covers general safe recruitment practices for CSOs in development and humanitarian settings.

Tip sheet: Safeguarding and faith. Designed to offer recommendations for organisations navigating the confluence of faith and safeguarding.

Training materials on community reporting mechanisms and case handling.

Presentation slides, handouts and the agenda of training the RSH MENA Hub delivered for local CSOs from Jordan, Syria and Yemen.