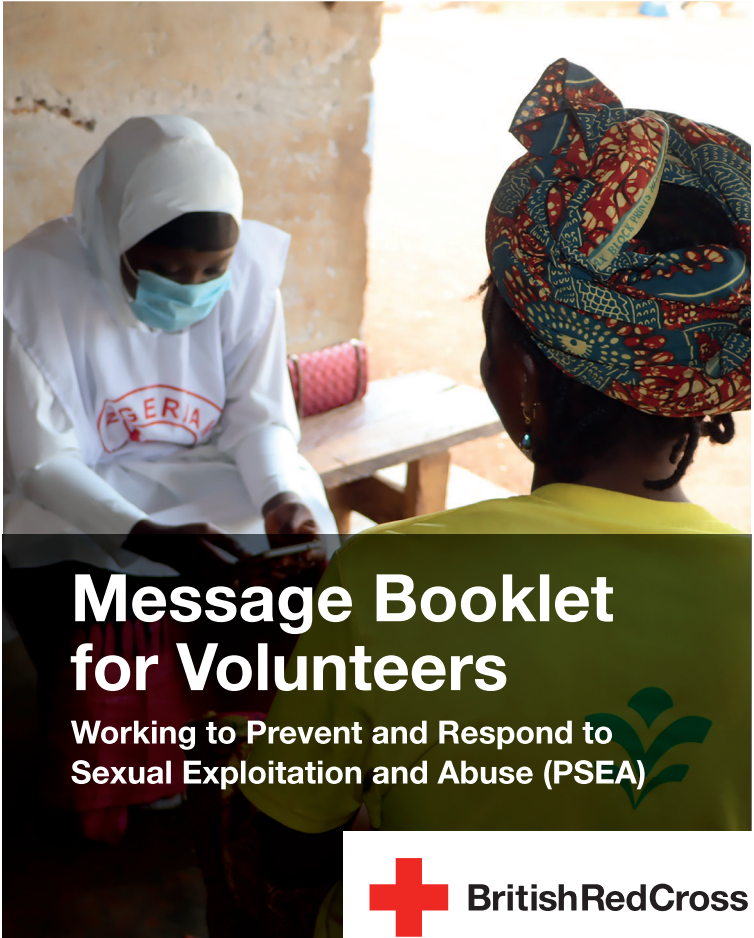




Nigerian Red Cross Society



Message Booklet for Volunteers

Working to Prevent and Respond to
Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)



You are vital to our work in the prevention and response to sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA)

Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) can happen in any community. It happens when people with power, whether it is jobs, money or resources, misuse this power to make people do things against their will. This booklet is for everyone who works and volunteers for the Nigerian Red Cross Society (NRCS). Although it cannot cover all aspects of our work on PSEA, you can use it as a quick reference guide for how you can help to **Prevent** SEA and how to **Recognise, Respond** and **Report** concerns.

Our mission

We are part of the worldwide Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. Our mission is to prevent and alleviate human suffering by providing humanitarian assistance to people in our communities who are vulnerable in situations of crisis, disaster and/or conflict. We must also protect the dignity, well-being and rights of all involved in our work.

Our Code of Conduct

Our Code of Conduct applies to everyone who works with us. Please ask to see the NRCS Code of Conduct if you do not have a copy. What does the Code of Conduct say about SEA?

- ✓ The **purchase of sexual services** and the practice of sexual exploitation are prohibited.
- ✓ Entering into a **sexual relationship with a direct beneficiary of NRCS programmes or with his or her immediate family** is prohibited.
- ✓ You must not enter into a **sexual relationship or take part in any sexual activity with a child** – this means a girl or boy under 18 years of age. Not knowing the age of a minor is not a defence.
- ✓ You must not take **photographs, films, videos and DVDs of children** unless there is a specific need to do so, parents or guardians have given their consent, and you strictly adhere to the safeguarding guidelines in the Code of Conduct.

Our PSEA Policy

To ensure that the NRCS takes every necessary step to prevent and respond to SEA by NRCS personnel, our PSEA Policy outlines and strengthens our:

- Systems for survivors, NRCS personnel or anyone who becomes aware of SEA to feel confident to report and be protected from retaliation;

- Investigation and response to reported concerns; and
- Accountability and integrity of our engagement with members of local communities through safe and inclusive programming

Our PSEA Manual

The IFRC PSEA Manual sets out practical actions to guide leadership, headquarters and field teams, in line with good practice and minimum standards for PSEA¹. It also includes useful training material, tools and resources. More information can be found on the IFRC website at: <https://pgi.ifrc.org/safeguarding>

Prevent

We all have a part to play. For example:

- Engage with community members to understand risks in relation to programme activities and put measures in place to prevent SEA e.g. gender balance among field teams, ensure volunteers work in pairs and never alone with a child;
- Encourage inclusion of community members who are vulnerable to SEA;
- Raise awareness about SEA, local organisations providing assistance for survivors, and how to report concerns.

¹ Inter-agency Standing Committee Minimum Operating Standards for PSEA (IASC MOS-PSEA)

Recognise

What is sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA)?

- Sexual exploitation is understood as abuse of authority, trust or a situation of vulnerability for sexual gain in exchange for money, work, goods or services.
- Sexual abuse is actual or threatened physical or psychological intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.
- Sexual harassment is a form of sexual abuse which refers to unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

What might SEA by humanitarian workers look like?



Sexual activity with a community member they are supporting through the project.



Sexual activity with a child (under 18).



A woman gives her consent to sex with a humanitarian worker who is providing her with aid.

What does the PSEA Manual say about recognising SEA?

It can be very hard to identify SEA and all too often there are multiple elements of power abuse which can make an individual feel too afraid to speak out.

For example, the perpetrator holds a senior position or has the ability to use their power over the people they should be protecting.

This is why staff and volunteers who recognise and report concerns can have a positive impact and make a real difference.

It may be that you can notice things that potential victims or survivors cannot or will not speak out about for themselves.

What indicators can help us Recognise SEA?

“He is a powerful man with many friends and a good reputation for his work with children. But I heard rumours that he requests that young girls from the community are brought to him at his residence.”

“I didn’t know for sure if anything bad was happening to these girls but I felt that something was not right. I saw that they were nervous and withdrawn around him.”

“I felt uncomfortable in the company of this man. He says really inappropriate things to women at work but he is just one of those guys who is from another generation.”



Respond

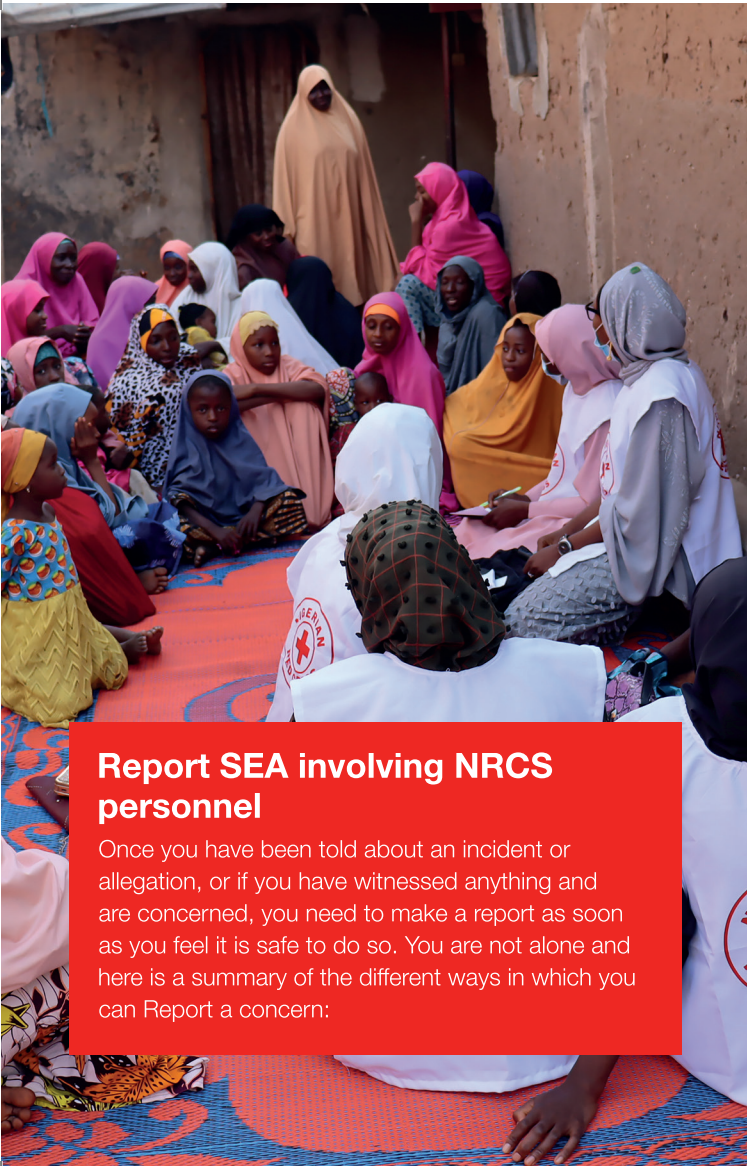
Sexual exploitation and abuse can be difficult to talk about and people who have experienced it often feel scared. They often do not know how to report what has happened. If someone shares a concern with you, it is a sign of trust, so, it is good to know how you should respond.

What should I do?

- ✓ Find a safe place to talk and reassure them they have done the right thing by speaking out.
- ✓ Listen to and acknowledge what is being said, repeating your understanding.
- ✓ Ask for their consent and what they would like to happen next. If an adult does not consent to reporting a concern, the report should remain anonymous.
- ✓ Be aware that all concerns involving a child (any person under 18 years old) **MUST** be reported in full to enable risk assessment and appropriate referrals for their protection and recovery.

What should I not do?

- ✗ Don't promise to keep it a secret or make any promises you cannot keep.
- ✗ Don't be dismissive, defensive or blame others.
- ✗ Don't ask probing questions, push for more information or investigate the incident any further yourself.
- ✗ It is crucial that to preserve evidence and, most importantly, protect the victim's and your well-being, that you **DO NOT** confront the subject of a complaint. Only report it.



Report SEA involving NRCS personnel

Once you have been told about an incident or allegation, or if you have witnessed anything and are concerned, you need to make a report as soon as you feel it is safe to do so. You are not alone and here is a summary of the different ways in which you can Report a concern:

Your local confidential reporting system

Any member of NRCS staff, volunteer or member of the community can report a concern or complaint about sexual exploitation and abuse by RCRC personnel in the following ways:

- Report in person to the PSEA Focal Point at your Branch or HQ
- Email speakup@redcrossnigeria.org
- Call our confidential reporting line on:
+234 803 123 0430 / 708 060 1149 / 809 993 7357 /
705 699 0020

Your report will be handled in confidence by one of our trained NRCS PSEA Focal Points who have specialist expertise in law and/or protection.

IFRC confidential reporting

The IFRC provides a confidential service for use by anyone wishing to report any misconduct or integrity incident involving Red Cross or Red Crescent operations or personnel. You may report concerns anonymously:

- Email speakup@ifrc.integrityline.org
- Report online at <https://ifrc.integrityline.org>

What happens next – investigation and response

Reports will be handled by the NRCS PSEA Committee in collaboration with relevant local authorities and organisations providing assistance for survivors. The NRCS applies a survivor-oriented approach to PSEA and this entails the following principles:

- **Safety:** The safety and security of all girls, boys, women and men survivors, witnesses, those who report a concern and alleged perpetrators throughout the process of reporting, investigation and response to SEA concerns in relation to NRCS personnel.
- **Do no harm:** No action should be taken that would worsen the situation of a survivor of SEA.
- **Respect:** All actions taken are guided by respect for the choices, wishes, rights and dignity of the survivor.
- **Confidentiality:** There must be strict adherence to confidentiality regarding the survivor's identity and other identifying information in every aspect of case handling and all actions taken.
- **Non-discrimination:** NRCS provides equal and fair treatment to anyone in need of help due to an SEA incident involving NRCS personnel.
- **Child protection:** Child survivors are to benefit from particular attention and their specific needs addressed by consulting with child protection specialists.

What happens next – referral

pathways for survivors

NRCS is responsible for providing assistance and support to anyone who has reported SEA by Red Cross and Red Crescent personnel (RCRC). **Referrals for support should only be made by people who have professional experience in protection and have received training. Please contact your PSEA focal point for support.**

Details of the following organisations may be shared with community members at the discretion of volunteers. For all other enquiries and support and protection needs please contact your PSEA or CEA focal point.

Organisation	Remit	Contact Details	Website	Date checked



Report concerns involving persons outside the NRCS

Complaints received against third-party personnel or external organisation employees shall be referred to the employer of the person concerned by the PSEA Committee. Volunteers may also signpost survivors to support services.

For more information

We hope you find this booklet useful and we appreciate all the efforts you are making to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse. Together, we can help make a difference. This is our commitment, but it is nothing without your commitment.

**RECOGNISE,
RESPOND,
REPORT**



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