

5 October 2019



Poster made by school children during World Refugee Day in Mantapala 2019.

## CONTEXT

At the end of 2018, the international community in Zambia received reports of allegations of sexual exploitation in the Mantapala Refugee Settlement. There were allegedly two types of SEA during the emergency phase of the operation; sexual favors for work, CRIs, and shelter materials and sexual relationships between different stakeholders working in the settlement and refugees. There were allegations against a multitude of stakeholders simultaneously - Government, UN, NGO, contractors/suppliers, refugee incentive workers.

## UNHCR's STRATEGY TO PREVENT SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE IN THE REFUGEE LOCATIONS IN ZAMBIA

Following the allegations of SEA in Mantapala Refugee settlement in Zambia, UNHCR adopted a three-prong approach; first, conducting an assessment of the quality and existence of overall protection services provided to refugees, secondly, facilitating a joint investigation of the allegations against a multitude of partners in order to ensure a victim-centered approach and, finally, conducting a comprehensive risk assessment of the operation to identify and prevent future risks of SEA.

## STRENGTHENING PROTECTION DELIVERY

- **Enhance protection staffing:** a UNHCR Senior Protection Coordinator, SGBV Surge Deployees, and national Community-Based Protection assistants (NUNVs) were deployed.
- **Strengthen protection outreach:** UNHCR Protection Help Desks were established in all settlements, protection partners selected/enhanced, and referral procedures for protection/assistance drafted/strengthened.
- **Strengthen SGBV procedures:** additional UNHCR/partner staff deployed, identification, referral, response and follow up, reporting of SGBV incidents

strengthened, analysis of trends, more SGBV community workers recruited and trained in all locations, a community-mobilization program (ZTVA) was rolled out.

- A database for **refugee incentive workers** coordinated by COR/UNHCR was established, SOPs drafted, model undertaking document drafted, attendance sheets harmonized.
- Physical verification/validation of **persons with specific needs** in all locations, one common list for all partners, common SOPs for assistance drafted, establishment of Protection Panel assessing protection/assistance needs, community participation enhanced.

### SENSITIZATION OF ALL STAKEHOLDERS IN ALL REFUGEE SETTINGS IN ZAMBIA

- All **PPAs** have a Code of Conduct attached to them, new PPAs require a mechanism to deal with SEA and other forms of misconduct, as past history can affect the signing of new PPAs. All partners have been trained and appointed a PSEA focal point.
- All **contractors/suppliers/refugee incentive workers** sign a model undertaking document and undergo training/briefing on behavior change inside the settlement. All new operational partners are sensitized.
- Training of Trainers (ToT) activities were organized, Ethics Committees were created in all settlements.
- A model inter-agency **training package** was created—CoC, PPT, leaflet, videos, and case studies.

### INTEGRATED COMMUNITY-BASED COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

Integrated (all forms of misconduct) complaint mechanisms were drafted and adopted for the three refugee settlements with participation of refugees. The intake can take place through **PSEA focal points in each agency, complaint boxes, counselling** services by UNHCR or partners, or **helplines/e-mail**. Joint Secretariats consisting of the Commissioner for Refugees/UNHCR and Inter-Agency Ethics Committee have been set up in each refugee settlement. UNHCR maintains a **database of reports** and refers to each organization/institution for investigation, trainings on investigation or refer to IGO. Key principles are **safety, confidentiality, accessibility, community participation, and innocence until proven guilty**.

### JOINT AWARENESS-RAISING CAMPAIGN – “We Stand Together Against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse”

In order to reach as wide an audience as possible, UNHCR Zambia decided to include PSEA awareness raising activities in the World Refugee Day celebrations during 2019. Based on focus group discussions in the refugee settlements, a number of key messages were selected and UNHCR organized photo sessions throughout the country with staff, partners, Government counterparts and refugees holding signs with the messages to be used for posters, leaflets etc. to show that we all work together to combat SEA. Some 500 blue t-shirts with the message “We Stand Together Against Sexual Abuse and Violence” were worn by staff, partners and refugees during the celebrations and billboards and posters were put up in the settlements on the zero-tolerance policy and how to report. School-going children were mobilized in the two schools in Mantapala and nine schools in Meheba to do drawings on the theme and the best ones were selected for posters. During the PSEA Awareness Fair in Meheba on World Refugee Day, which included more than 1,500 refugees, the winning groups for poetry and drama presented to the audience of refugees and guests and received prizes. Youth groups and women’s groups performed songs and poems on the theme and, in Mantapala, school children made a parade with a sign that “Sexual Exploitation is Not Allowed at Mantapala (School) B” while singing a specially composed song and a stall was prepared exhibiting the drawings.

### OUTSTANDING GAPS

- To address the structural causes of sexual exploitation and abuse, such as the prevalence of SGBV among the host and refugee communities, including harmful traditional practices and survival sex, gender inequality and lack of programmes for empowerment of women, programmes for out of school girls, and self-reliance programmes for women and girls at risk.

- Improve the physical infrastructure in the settlement, street lights, police posts/accommodation for the police, safehouses.