

The South Sudan Hub Journey



Setting up the Hub

The South Sudan Hub was launched in **September 2020**. Key activities conducted during set up were undertaking the Country Assessment, which included a user engagement survey which identify gaps and priorities in safeguarding practice in South Sudan that fed into the overall strategy. Other activities included mapping of safeguarding experts in the country and meeting with key stakeholders in South Sudan including the **FCDO** and the **PSEA** network.



Launching the Online Hub

The Online Hub developed a page specific to South Sudan in **February 2021** which was available to users in English and Arabic, and was informed by findings from the **Country Assessment**. The Online Hub looked to maximise outreach on tools and resources that are relevant to the South Sudan context, promote the Safeguarding Matters online e-learning course developed by RSH, and provide users with information on ways to access direct support, such as the **Ask an Expert** service. Since its launch, the South Sudan Hub has published around **28** contextualised tools and resources, such as on barriers to reporting and disability-inclusive safeguarding practices in South Sudan.



Providing direct support and primary products

Ask an Expert service was launched to provide direct technical safeguarding support to organisations. This is a service where an eligible organisation can ask a safeguarding query, and they get assigned a national expert to provide tailored support over a number of days. Three organisations were provided with safeguarding policy development support through this service. The Hub also hosted its first of many webinars, starting with an **"Introduction to Safeguarding"**.



Developing and delivering the safeguarding mentorship programme

The **safeguarding mentorship programme** was launched which provided long-term safeguarding support to **less-resourced civil society organisations (CSOs)** while at the same time building a network of national safeguarding experts. A total of **40** CSO participated in both mentorship rounds which were completed in **April 2022** and **December 2022** respectively. The mentorship programme was highly successful with **100%** of participating organisations recording improved capacity in their safeguarding practices and the most notable improvements seen in their ability to understand risks and develop safeguarding policies and procedures. **13** mentors participated in the mentorship programme and became national safeguarding experts and RSH Champions. The gaps observed from the first two rounds of mentorship informed formed the basis for research that was later conducted.



Conducting Research

The **mentorship programme** revealed that one of the biggest gaps in safeguarding was poor safeguarding culture within organisations due to low levels of involvement from leadership. To respond to this, the South Sudan team conducted research aimed at exploring the beliefs, perceptions, and expectations of organisational leaders and examine how these influence an organisation's approach to safeguarding in South Sudan. This comprehensive research collected insights from **10 non-governmental organisation (NGO) leaders** through key informant interviews and **Focus Group Discussions**. Findings will contribute to the evidence gap on how leadership impacts the uptake of safeguarding and will provide insights on what works to improve safeguarding practices in South Sudan.



Stakeholder engagement

The South Sudan team explored alternative channels to increase the reach to stakeholders outside Juba due to low internet connectivity. These channels include hosting a programme on the UN-led Mariya radio station, the biggest network in South Sudan. The Hub used the radio to explore the concept of safeguarding and take questions from listeners. The Hub also delivered face-to-face workshops in Torit, Wau and other harder-to-reach areas. These workshops focused on the application of safeguarding standards in specific contexts, disability-inclusive safeguarding and instilling good organisation culture to prevent sexual exploitation, abuse and sexual harassment (SEAH).



Looking to a future Hub



As the current phase of funding for the South Sudan Hub comes to an end, the need for safeguarding support has never been greater. Any future phase of the South Sudan Hub will draw on the lessons learned while embedding itself further into the systems at country level, looking to become a long-term and sustainable feature of the sector.

