

WEST DARFUR (GENEINA) INTERAGENCY SEA RISK ASSESSMENT JULY 2021

ZERO TOLERANCE
FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE



Honouring our values

The SEA Risk Assessment was conducted at the request of OCHA Sudan, in collaboration with the Sudan PSEA Network. A total of 269 **(172F; 97M) respondents** and another **22 IDP (male) leaders** were reached in focus group discussions. Data collection was conducted in 5 gathering points/areas/camps in and around Geneina as below:

- Dorti IDP camp
- Al Mashardeen gathering point
- Aleman Al Kazim gathering point
- Open University of Sudan gathering point
- Al Jabal returnees area

Additionally, 5 staff responded to a self-administered survey on integrating PSEA in the West Darfur response, while another 15 staff members participated in key informant interviews with frontline responders.

Appreciation and acknowledgement goes towards the assessment team that was constituted by:

- Ivy Ndung'u - RCO
- Nuwar Abdelmahmoud - RCO
- Ali Abdulrahman - OCHA
- Alfayha Ismail - UNHCR
- Mohamed Alamadin Elsinnari - UNICEF
- Tarekegn Sakato - UNICEF
- Tayseer Mustafa - Save the Children International
- Zahra Khamis - Child Development Foundation
- Balgeese Hamza Adam - Child Development Foundation
- Elsanousi Abdelrahim - WFP

We also wish to sincerely thank colleagues who provided technical/administrative/logistical inputs to the assessment including but not limited to: (a) Victoria Nwogu - RCO, (b) Jane Mbakaya - OCHA, (b) Ali Abdulrahman - OCHA, (c) Madhav Raj Belbase - UNHCR, (d) Mastura Hamid - UNFPA and (e) Faith Atieno (WFP).

This SEA Risk Assessment focused on 6 Key Components of the PSEA Joint Framework of Action as below:

1. **The likelihood of SEA and other forms of misconduct occurring**
2. **Reporting—preferred channels of reporting, barriers to reporting and how to facilitate reporting**
3. **Communicating rights to communities as part of AAP**
4. **Complaints and Feedback Mechanisms**
5. **Procedures to identify and respond to incidents of GBV:**
6. **Knowledge and awareness on PSEA amongst frontline responders.**

[ToRs - SEA Risk Assessment in West Darfur.docx - Google Docs](#)

KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- **The likelihood of SEA occurring in West Darfur is high, with equally high ramifications if it occurs making it a high risk operating environment.** This is due to a combination of factors that confront affected communities such as active conflict, displacement, economic instability, structural inequalities, poverty and dependence on assistance. To respond to these realities, the humanitarian response is characterized by mass and sometimes fast tracked recruitment, close interactions between humanitarian workers and affected communities who are now living in gathering points within the town, and an influx of valuable goods such as food and non-food items. Even then, humanitarian assistance and protection is not sufficient to meet the needs of affected communities, and in some instances, not always accessible.
- **It is urgent that specific actions are taken to integrate PSEA within the response to mitigate against such risks.** In the case of West Darfur and based on detailed findings of this assessment, the following immediate actions are proposed:

Proposed Action	Responsible Persons/Entity	Oct	Nov	Dec
1. Stock taking - Compile the number of staff working with UN/INGOs/NGOs in West Darfur that have not received any PSEA Training in the last 12 months in West Darfur.	AHCT / OCHA / PSEA Network	✓	✓	
2. Training plan - based on number of humanitarian actors requiring training, develop a training plan.	PSEA Network			
3. Roll out IASC Learning Package on 'Saying No to Sexual Misconduct' training for all staff implementing SHF projects as per training plan	PSEA Network Capacity Building Task Team	✓	✓	✓
4. Implementation of IASC Joint PSEA Capacity Assessment for implementing partners	All UN Agencies	✓	✓	✓
5. PSEA awareness raising campaign targeting affected communities—planning ongoing	PSEA Network, Save the Children, UNICEF, OCHA	✓		
6. Put up signboards/posters/murals in the most populated gathering sites and service points on key beneficiary rights.	All agencies	✓	✓	✓
7. Invite all UN/INGOs/NGOs in West Darfur to appoint PSEA focal points and submit their names (Terms of reference will be shared by PSEA Network)	OCHA PSEA Network	✓		
8. Establish a PSEA forum that meets monthly made up of the PSEA focal points - ToRs of the Forum will be shared	OCHA / AHCT PSEA Network	✓	✓	✓
9. Engage Locality Commissioners, MoSD social workers, Police-FCPU and HAC to develop simplified CoC for community leaders, and establish a network of SEA community based focal points	OCHA / WD PSEA Forum / PSEA Network		✓	✓

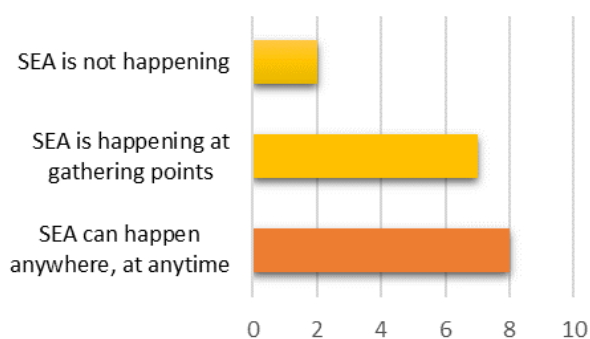


COMMUNITY DISCUSSIONS

Each discussion began with sensitizing the participants/respondents on the definitions of SEA in a sensitive, culturally appropriate manner. It also involved highlighting examples of prohibited behavior by humanitarian workers and the responsibility of the humanitarian community to uphold the highest standards of conduct. Participants were encouraged to be open and forthcoming with information, as their responses would support with putting these standards into practice.

1. Occurrence of SEA and other forms of misconduct

SEA Occurrences in the Community:

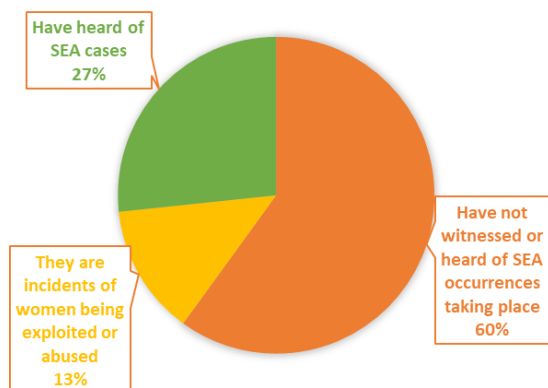


Highlights:

47% of the groups interviewed were of the consensus that SEA can happen anywhere and at anytime, 41% of groups interviewed mentioned that SEA is indeed happening at gathering sites, while 12% of the respondents were of the opinion that SEA is not happening.

40% of the groups mentioned that they had heard of SEA cases within their localities/gathering points/camps with examples the below examples:

- A group of female respondents from Al Mashardeen gathering point said they suspect that young girls may be involved in sexual relations with humanitarian staff.
- Male IDP leaders from Dorti camp said that they had witnessed one rape case perpetrated by a contractor against a girl in their gathering point.
- Another group of female respondents indicated that they had heard of 2 incidents involving an MSF staff member and it was reported to MSF. There was proof that a 15-year-old girl had been raped. The case was brought to the attention of the social worker, who referred the victim to the police station and the hospital.
- On the other end of the spectrum, female respondents from Al Jabal area said that this was their first time to hear about SEA.

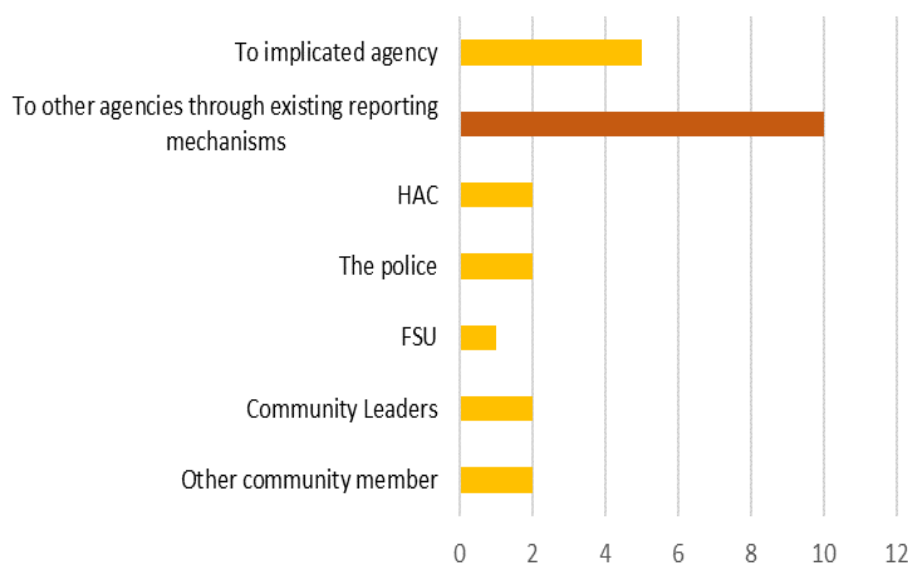


Other forms of misconduct perpetrated by humanitarian workers against persons of concerns were highlighted as:

- a. Disrespecting and insulting IDPs—mentioned by leaders both in Al Mashardeen gathering point and Dorti camp
- b. Staff members displaying arrogance when interacting with persons of concern - Aleman Al Kazim gathering point
- c. Soliciting bribes: Female respondents from Al Jabal gathering site said that they had heard reports of community leaders requesting for money to register the names of IDPs

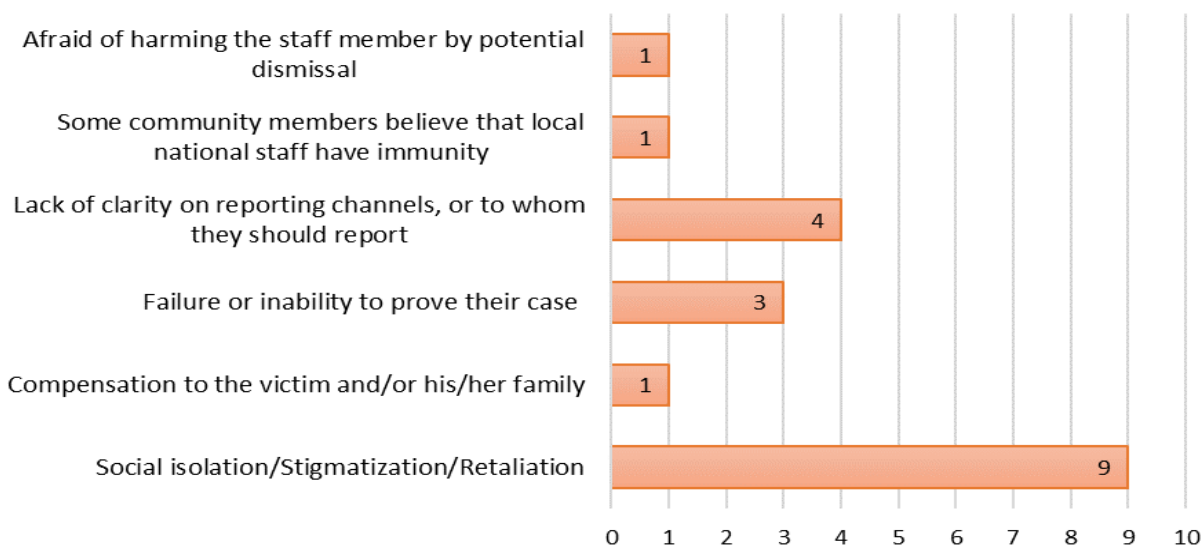
2. Reporting SEA allegations/occurrences and barriers to reporting:

Preferred Reporting Channels:



- 18% of the groups interviewed said that community members were open and willing to report SEA allegations or incidents if they experienced or witnessed them, while all groups interviewed expressed that community members are afraid to report.
- Preferred channels of reporting were primarily to agencies through existing reporting mechanisms or phone contacts (59% of respondents). Agencies mentioned were: **IOM, UNHCR, OCHA, UNICEF, SCI, UNDP**. All groups were relatively familiar with GBV reporting channels.

Barriers to Reporting:



Highlights on barriers to reporting:

The main barriers to reporting include:

- Social isolation/stigmatization/retaliation which came up amongst 53% of respondents/ groups interviewed. The main concerns were that the victim would be considered as not being marriageable, he/she would be stigmatized and considered an outcast, and that there would be retaliation from the alleged perpetrator or community—including discontinuation of assistance.
- It was interesting that a male group from Dorti camp mentioned that they would not report SEA allegations so as not to contribute to staff dismissal, which indicates empathy for alleged perpetrators.
- A group of female respondents at Open University of Sudan gathering point said that they would not report to the concerned agencies as these agencies would **protect their staff**.
- Another group of female respondents in Al Jabal area mentioned that they have full trust in humanitarian workers and their Block 10 community leaders, and have never had of any abuse by them.
- A female IDP respondent mentioned that she would not report before consulting the victim’s family sometimes, the victim’s family refuses to discuss any violations they or their family member were subjected to if interviewed.
- When reflecting on whether they would report SEA allegations, one group of respondents said that they would not speak up if there are no confidential reporting mechanism or presence of a focal point. See more info below.

The following measures were proposed by community members to facilitate victims or witnesses of SEA and other forms of misconduct to report and receive emergency assistance :



- A group of female respondents was emphatic that during case management, information of an incident should never be disclosed to any community member at all, due to the risk of stigmatization.
- On the question of information about reporting channels, respondents requested for clarity about how to initiate a report, or to whom exactly within an organization they should report.
- One good practice mentioned was that Save the Children International (SCI) displays sign posts with a list of numbers to call during distribution, though this was not observed during the assessment period or in that particular location. However, in a nutrition center in Al Jabal area, the adjacent suggestion box monitored by Save the Children during distribution was seen.



Overall, community respondents highlighted the following actions for the humanitarian community/response to take in order to better protect persons of concern from SEA and other forms of misconduct perpetrated by UN/INGO/NGO and affiliated staff, volunteers and contractors:

- ✓ Raise community awareness about SEA and other forms of misconduct of inappropriate behavior - in one discussion, respondents indicated that without knowledge or information, a victim/witness may think that such incidents or occurrences are normal;
- ✓ Sensitize staff, especially new staff and other service providers involved in the humanitarian response about PSEA;
- ✓ Ensure adequate oversight to agency staff, and monitor all staff during activity implementation;
- ✓ Train community level committees about SEA and other forms of misconduct;
- ✓ Hire staff from the beneficiary community itself as they would not abuse or exploit their own community members;
- ✓ Lift poverty with income generation projects for women to become independent and so that no one can take advantage of them.

SELF-ADMINISTERED PSEA SURVEY

OCHA has been following up on recommendations that came up in the interagency rapid assessments, which were conducted in April 2021 in El Geneina and Al Jabel areas. One of those recommendations was for the response to set up or enhance state level PSEA mechanisms, which would enable affected populations to report all SEA allegations/concerns perpetrated by humanitarian workers against persons of concern. To this end, OCHA has enlisted the support of the national PSEA Network to conduct an in-depth analysis of PSEA capacities available or integrated in the WD response and identify areas to enhance PSEA measures. As frontline responders, we invite you to undertake this online survey based on your understanding of PSEA, and more so, your observations in the West Darfur context. Thank you for your participation.

→ Next

During the risk assessment, the assessment team shared a survey and received 5 responses from various agency staff involved in the West Darfur response as below:

UNFPA	2
Peaceful Coexistence Organization for Development and Reconstruction	1
IOM	1
NRC	1

Analysis of Responses:

The risk or likelihood of SEA occurring in West Darfur was classified as **low—medium risk** by all respondents, despite the prevailing threats, vulnerabilities and environmental/contextual factors that persons of concern and affected communities in general are exposed to.

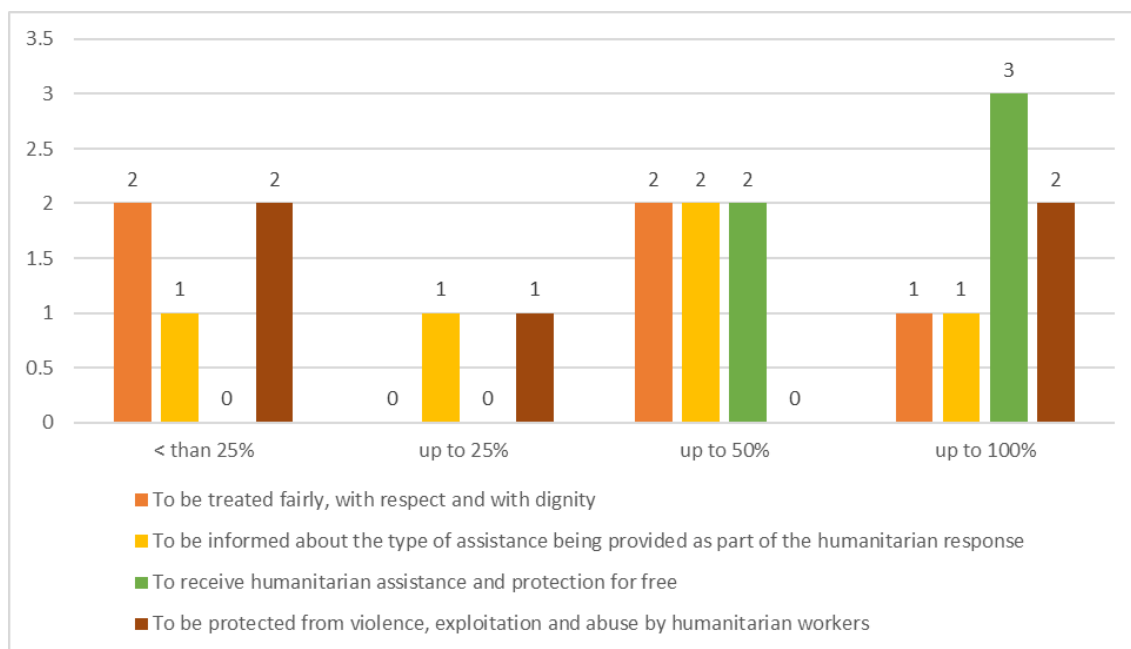
Some factors believed to contribute to SEA (in addition to external/environmental factors) were cited as:

- Lack of awareness about standards of conduct (both amongst humanitarian actors and the people they serve)
- Poor follow-up and/or monitoring of ongoing interventions; there are also no monitoring mechanisms in place
- No reporting mechanisms in place
- Impunity - failure to act on reported cases thus no disciplinary measures, which could mitigate the risk of humanitarian workers engaging in SEA
- Lack of relevant PSEA training.
- One staff indicated that in some cases, it boils down to human nature where some people take advantage of others (predatory behavior)
- In other instances, community leaders actually do **not** discourage such acts and are abusers themselves, lack of awareness amongst staff

- The notable vulnerability and economic hardships of beneficiaries and their lack of education and awareness even through media means that beneficiaries may not know when they are being abused
- Poor vetting during hiring/recruitment, not making reference checks.
- One respondent indicated that beneficiaries sometimes expose themselves to exploitation and abuse especially if it leads to them benefitting from humanitarian assistance

3. Communication with Communities:

- On efforts made to communicate pertinent information to communities as part of accountability to affected populations, there were varying results on the extent to which beneficiaries had been informed of their various rights as demonstrated in the adjacent graph.



A child friendly space at Al Jabal area



IDPs housing at Al Mashardeen gathering point

4. Complaints and Feedback Mechanisms (CFMs):

Out of 5 respondents, 2 indicated that the West Darfur humanitarian response had incorporated formal or informal channels/mechanisms for community members to report operational/protection issues and challenges, 2 indicated that the response had not incorporated any channels/mechanisms while 1 respondent was not sure.

The 2 who responded positively to the question mentioned the 2 channels as:

- GBV referral pathways and CP mechanisms
- A hotline number

However, it was noted that more work is needed to ensure that the mechanisms meet some minimum requirements to be considered gender sensitive, child friendly, safe and confidential as demonstrated in the next chart which suggests only up to 50% compliance.



5. Procedures to identify and respond to incidents of GBV:

4 respondents cited the procedures to identify and respond to incidents of Gender Based Violence in West Darfur as:

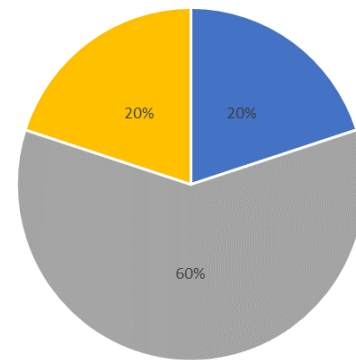
- Existence of a GBV working group (led by UNFPA) where all actors are represented,
- The service providers in the referral pathways, Community Based Protection Networks and a GBV helpline,
- Informing the community about GBV and available services during awareness raising activities and outreach, and
- Reporting directly to UNFPA.

One respondent was not sure about the procedures.

Out of the 4 mechanisms/procedures mentioned, 1 was said to be accessible to less than 25% of affected communities, 3 (60%) were accessible to up to 50% and only 1 is accessible to up to 100% of women/men/girls and boys.



In your view, how clear, safe and accessible are these GBV response procedures to all of or a majority of the affected communities in West Darfur including women/men/boys and girls



Agency staff respondents made the following recommendations to mitigate the risks of SEA, and strengthen integration of PSEA measures within the West Darfur humanitarian response:

- ✓ Increase awareness of the Zero Tolerance Policy against SEA, including awareness that SEA is a crime and a human rights violation. This should include training of NNGO staff on PSEA and ensuring their representation in the Sudan PSEA Network;
- ✓ Ensure that all humanitarian staff, community members, local authorities and community leaders complete PSEA Trainings;
- ✓ Establish simple SEA reporting mechanisms, establish a monitoring framework and ensure accountability and action is taken for all reported cases;
- ✓ Spread awareness amongst affected communities (on how to report SEA allegations/incidents), and establish community-based monitoring and reporting mechanisms;
- ✓ Establish a PSEA task force in West Darfur, ensure PSEA focal points presence in coordination forums and better reflect PSEA in the HNO, HRP and preparedness and response plans. All submitted humanitarian projects should also be reviewed by the PSEA Network Coordinator to ensure that PSEA mainstreaming activities are included.

INTERVIEWS WITH FRONT-LINE RESPONDERS

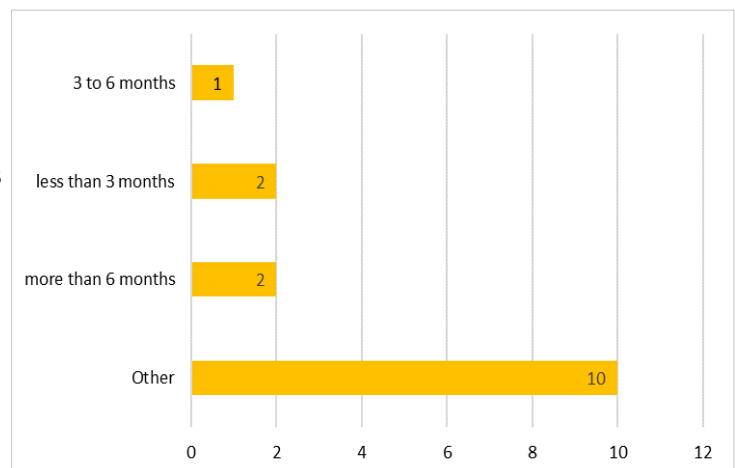


The assessment team spoke to 15 agency staff while administering a questionnaire targeting frontline responders:

World Food Programme - Support Services	5
SRCS - Food Distribution Team	4
State Council for Child Welfare in a Child Friendly Space fund-	3
World Relief	2
SRCS - Human Resources	1

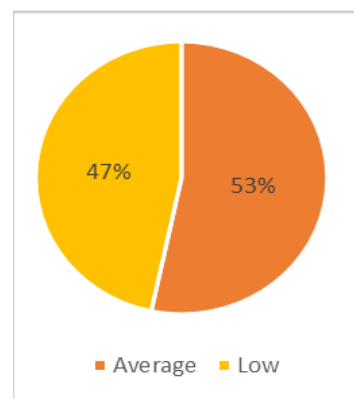
The discussions centered around determining the level or the extent to which frontline responders demonstrated knowledge/awareness/exposure to topics on definitions of SEA, core PSEA principles, concepts such as confidentiality, informed consent, mandatory reporting, harm/retaliation, and emergency assistance, measures in place to identify and respond to SEA allegations/incidents and seeking their recommendations to better integrate PSEA within the response.

- Out of the staff spoken to, 10 had worked for their respective organizations for more than 12 months, some up to 15 years.
- 2 staff had worked for their organizations for less than 3 months, while another 3 staff had worked for 3 - 12 months.
- 8 staff worked in organizations that required them to complete mandatory trainings on PSEA or Safeguarding, while for 7 staff, this was not a requirement in their respective organizations.
- 6 of the staff spoken to had received at least 1 PSEA training, 2 had received more than 1 PSEA training, while 7 had received no PSEA or Safeguarding training at all.

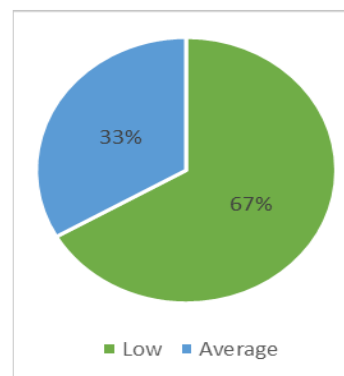


Analysis of Responses:

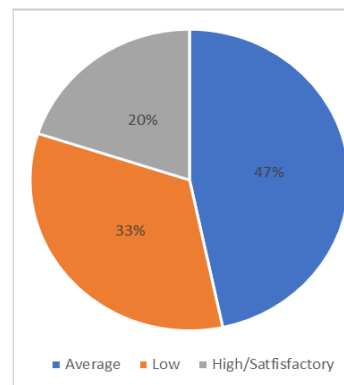
1. **Knowledge and understanding of SEA (definitions of exploitation, abuse, differential power, vulnerability, trust):** 53% (8 staff) demonstrated average knowledge and understanding of definitions of SEA, while 47% (7 staff) demonstrated low knowledge and understanding. Non of the respondents demonstrated a high level of knowledge and understanding on SEA definitions.



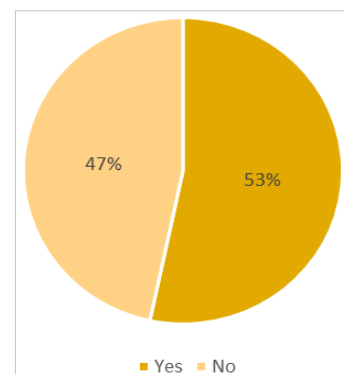
2. **Knowledge and understanding of core PSEA principles as per the Secretary General’s Bulletin:** 67% (10) of staff interviewed demonstrated low understanding of the core PSEA principles, while 33% (5) demonstrated an average knowledge and understanding of the principles. None of the respondents demonstrated a high level of knowledge and understanding on the CORE PSEA principles.



3. **Knowledge and understanding of concepts such as confidentiality, respect, informed consent, mandatory reporting, emergency/basic assistance, safety, harm/retaliation:** admirably, 66% (10) staff demonstrated average to high knowledge of these key concepts, covered either in PSEA, Child Safeguarding or GBV trainings.



4. 53% (8) of the staff interviewed could identify at least **2 measures in place within their organization or in humanitarian responses to prevent and respond to SEA**—these included measures such as reference checks or vetting procedures, staff induction, code of conducts, PSEA trainings, PSEA focal points, SEA Risk Register, PSEA in partner and contract agreements, and internal reporting mechanisms.



Staff spoken to made the following recommendations to mitigate the risks of SEA, and strengthen integration of PSEA measures within the West Darfur humanitarian response:

- ✓ Increase the size of the shelter and space for IDP;
- ✓ Conduct more training for staff and beneficiaries especially community level focal points;
- ✓ Conduct awareness campaigns in which the humanitarian community disseminates IEC materials on SEA using media such as radio, TV or social media . Involve religious and community leaders in awareness raising;
- ✓ Increase the # of hotlines and reporting channels, to provide more options for affected communities to report SEA allegations/incidents;
- ✓ Enforce strict policies, rules, regulations and disciplinary procedures (including legal action against perpetrators), and more importantly, take action when reports are made;
- ✓ Conduct PSEA workshops for staff to increase their knowledge and awareness and include gender focal points for all organizations in these workshops and sensitization activities;
- ✓ Do proper vetting, reference checks, and implement probationary periods, limit interaction between beneficiaries and staff, or maintain only gender appropriate interaction.