CASE STUDY #5
Protection against sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA)
How ICVA mobilised a rapid response to influence debates and policies on PSEA

Overview
In early 2018, there was clear international momentum to move forward with a safeguarding and protection against sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) agenda.

Through its efforts ICVA drew attention to the potential trade-offs of policies (for example, un-foreseen effects on people, on organisations and on other commitments) and to the implications on resourcing and capacity building of smaller organisation. Throughout this process ICVA worked to ensure that the framing of the discussion went beyond technical responses and also consider cultural, root causes, and political factors. ICVA also sought to ensure PSEA measures would be built together with national and local actors and communities, and that the negative impact on survivors would also be mitigated.

Details
ICVA recognised the urgent need for a strategic position on PSEA in order to influence the policy debate. The ICVA Secretariat and Board mobilised a rapid response.

During the ICVA General Assembly in March 2018, a motion was adopted with a set of objectives, including:
1) to document and voice the challenges of all ICVA members in complying to safeguarding standards and engage with their governments when appropriate; and 2) to engage in dialogue with UN Permanent Missions in Geneva.17

The ICVA Secretariat developed its position through engagement with its members, with special attention given to national and local actors since the work on PSEA also links to the localisation commitments following the World Humanitarian Summit and the Grand Bargain. These consultations identified inadequate resources, gender inequalities and power relations as current challenges affecting enhancement of protection against SEA.

During 2018, ICVA published the following papers and positions on PSEA:
• June 2018 - “The Long Run Protection against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse” to contribute to the reflection by sharing on the experiences of the members of ICVA (national and international NGO members, as well as with few NGO fora).
• September 2018 – Discussion paper on “Humanitarian Ombudsperson”.
• From July 2018 to January 2019 - ICVA prepared a publication on “Navigating the Standards” which will be launched in March 2019. This paper, developed with a number of external consultations, will help NGOs and others understand the plethora of standards being developed in relation to good practice, including those relating to PSEA and SHW.

17 The motion also set an objective for ICVA to perform an external review of the ICVA Secretariat safeguarding system which assessed that “despite the level of risk assessed as low, the measures are providing for an excellent example on PSEA to be followed by the entire sector”
During this time, ICVA was actively engaging to explain its position and attempt to influence PSEA policy, notably ICVA:

- attended several meetings in capital and at UN Permanent Missions in Geneva with donors (SIDA, MFA Norway, DFID, UE, USAID, SDC);
- convened several meetings with membership including to share the “Discussion paper on Ombudsperson”, the review on PSEA “The Long Run”, and debrief on Safeguarding Summit;
- participated in the DFID hosted Safeguarding Summit in London;
- held dedicated session on PSEA-SHW during ICVA’s three-day workshop in Geneva for NNGO fora;
- ICVA Secretariat and individual ICVA members worked on the Inter-Agency Misconduct Disclosure Scheme, led by SCHR.

ICVA took a strategic decision to focus on the PSEA policy process and due to its rapid response, ICVA is recognised as having influenced the debate and the consultation process to better represent the voice of national and local organisations (for example, ICVA helped persuade UNICEF to have consultation process which resulted in more appropriate policies for national/local organisations to implement to reduce risk).

Section 6

14 This review did not systematically track ICVA’s progress against all recommendations made by previous impact studies. However, recommendations were reviewed to check if there was anything Sandstone would fundamentally disagree with and all thoughts were considered to be sound and relevant for ICVA’s reflection