Guidance sheet on planning safeguarding into project proposals

Introduction

Safeguarding of children and adults at-risk (vulnerable adults) has become a cornerstone of CBM's work and programmatic approach. CBM believes that all women, men, girls, and boys have the right to be protected and safeguarded as they interact with our (CBM as well as in partner) projects. This is more important because CBM works with people with disabilities, who are statistically more likely to experience abuse, neglect and exploitation – during project delivery. Therefore, safeguarding risks must be studied and appropriate mitigation measures developed at project and activity level[1].

Furthermore, it is important that CBM as an organisation and its partners are protected against unmitigated risks that may arise when safeguarding risks have not been properly identified and mitigated[2]. This also fulfils our duty of care towards our beneficiaries and protects our organisation's reputation and business continuity.

Internal Policy Compliance Basis

The need for inclusion of safeguarding in project design is not new or a recommendation but a policy requirement. CBM's Safeguarding policy 2018, states that:

> *'In order to enhance access to services and reduce the risks of abuse, neglect, violence and exploitation towards the people CBM works with, it is necessary for CBM staff and representatives to understand safeguarding risks that may sometimes be inherent in programme work so that incidents are prevented before they happen. Programme and organisational risk assessments will consider the specific safeguarding risks of girls, boys, women and men with [and without] disabilities. Programme managers will ensure that safeguarding risk assessments are conducted … when **designing** and **implementing** projects … The assessment must identify risks and barriers and document steps being taken to reduce or remove them. For example, fast track mechanisms can enhance access to services by the elderly. Note that the safeguarding risks can differ based on the type of activity, contexts and persons involved among other factors.'*

This means that safeguarding risks must be deliberately and actively assessed from the onset, so as to be mitigated because a safeguarding risk that materialises into an incident can deeply affect the life of a victim/survivor. Therefore, proposal writing and project design teams are required to consider the core elements of safeguarding early on in concept note and proposal design.

Donor Compliance and Fundraising Competitiveness.

More and more, it is a condition by donors that safeguarding risks are properly embedded in development work. A good project proposal where safeguarding measures are designed within it can

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[1] Refer to: 'A guide to children and Adults Safeguarding Risk Assessment' CBM, August 2019.
[2] Safeguarding should be presented in any new project to a donor to avoid incidents, not only in cases where it is obvious that there is a vulnerable population.

help win project proposals in a competitive NGO market. On the contrary, a safeguarding risk that materialises can severely undermine an organisation's attractiveness to receive donor funds.

Budgeting for Safeguarding within Projects

There are a number of safeguarding measures that do not necessitate monetary investment. However, some safeguarding measures require funds. This guidance sheet helps to ensure that where needed, funds for safeguarding are included within project budgets, leading to a greater likelihood that project objectives are achieved and risks for beneficiaries, CBM, and partner staff are reduced.

Responsibilities and Available Technical Support.

As already noted, CBM's Safeguarding policy requires Program Managers at both partner and Country Office (CO) level to include safeguarding from project inception up to project end. Country Directors are meant to enforce this. As a quality control measure/standard procedure, the Global Security and Safeguarding Unit (which includes regional level technical advisors) proposes to provide an additional layer of support to review the safeguards in place for large projects **of or above 500,000 EURO** (as the total budget of the project's lifespan). This will be done through CBM's three-way-collaboration model.

To achieve the above, the unit asks proposal writers to take the following steps:

1. **CONCEPT NOTE:**
   As a 1st step, contact the Global Safeguarding Manager (copy safeguarding@cbm.org) informing of the CO's decision to respond to a call for proposal and when a concept note will be ready for review.
   a. Share the concept note of the planned intervention with the Safeguarding Manager (copy the relevant Regional Security and Safeguarding Advisor) and state a deadline by which feedback is requested.
   b. Embed a short statement in the concept note showing that active management of identified safeguarding risks will contribute to safeguarding beneficiaries and ultimately delivery of project results. If there are cost implications of the safeguarding measures, include these in the budget at this stage too. This will be reviewed by the safeguarding unit and feedback/suggestions may be given.

2. **FULL PROPOSAL**
   As a 2nd step, when full proposals are being developed, share the relevant sections of the proposal documents with the Global Safeguarding unit (Safeguarding Manager and respective Regional Security and Safeguarding Advisor) in a timely manner while stating the deadline for feedback. Note that the CO can and should use the input of the local safeguarding focal person if their time permits.
   a. The Global Safeguarding Unit, supported by Regional Security and Safeguarding Advisors, will support to beef up information or suggest activities to minimise safeguarding risks and review (and recommend) mitigation measures based on the nature of proposed project activities and realities.
   b. CO's should determine the local costs implications since most safeguarding mitigation measures are expected to be local. See paragraph 'budgeting' below for further details.
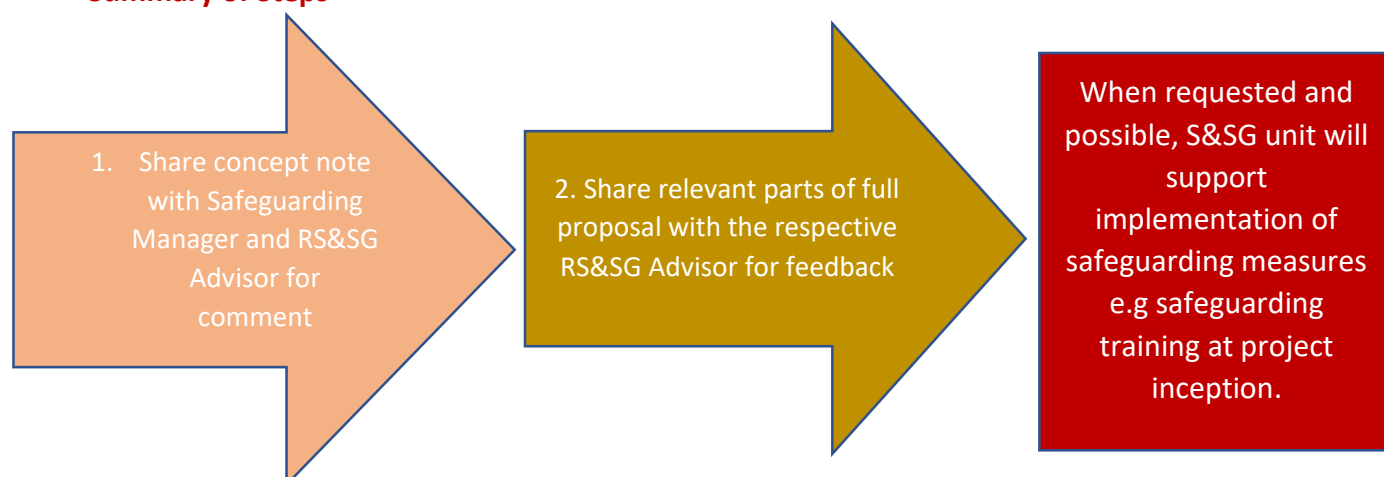
3. **IMPLEMENTATION STAGE**

As a 3rd step, where possible, upon request, the Global Safeguarding Unit will provide support to the CO in implementing approved and funded safeguarding interventions. Possible examples of this would

be (co)facilitating a training/sensitisation on safeguarding during the project inception workshop together with the local Programs Manager or the local safeguarding focal person.

Note on Scope:

Due to the sheer volume of all project proposals that CBM produces, the Global Security and Safeguarding Unit cannot screen all proposals. Therefore, besides projects of euro 500.000 and above, COs are requested to also submit concept notes/project proposals for conflict and emergency zones.

Summary of Steps

1. Share concept note with Safeguarding Manager and RS&SG Advisor for comment

2. Share relevant parts of full proposal with the respective RS&SG Advisor for feedback

When requested and possible, S&SG unit will support implementation of safeguarding measures e.g safeguarding training at project inception.

Budgeting

It is imperative to ensure that investments in safeguarding are projected into the costs of a project early and for the duration of a project.

When planning, it should be considered which safeguarding measures are already in place and what capabilities are available at Partner and CO levels. If there is a big gap, the advisory support from the Regional Security & Safeguarding Advisors can be written into the proposal.

Many donors are now willing to pay for the inclusion of safeguarding in project proposals. However, where donors are unwilling or unable to cover some safeguarding costs, CBM might have to invest (with its own CO or Global Safeguarding Funding) in filling some safeguarding gaps at CBM or partner level especially in large, high-profile proposals or complex operating environments.

It is common knowledge in the NGO sector that preventative investments in safeguarding measures are far more effective and less costly than having to respond when incidents occur. Prevention also saves an organisation from reputation and funding loss costs as well as the risks of halting the project due to serious incidents. Therefore, cutting or omitting safeguarding costs to win funding for a proposal is risky and a possible breach of the safeguarding policy. It is therefore recommended to invest adequate resources in safeguarding systems building at CBM and partner level. As a rule of thumb, we recommend **2.5% of total project budget**. For larger projects with many vulnerable/at-risk beneficiaries or other inherently high risk factors, a higher percentage could be needed. It however always makes sense at concept note / proposal budget writing level to estimate the required amount of safeguarding budget based on (recommended) real activities.

The actual amounts to include in project budgets requires a contextualised discussion to ensure the investment is realistic – in view of what already exists – and helps mitigate, reduce, and sometimes eliminate identified safeguarding risks.

Where (on site) safeguarding risk assessment or staff / partner / beneficiary trainings are planned, it is important to plan these early in the project cycle so that benefits can be achieved in a timely fashion.

Potential items and activities to be included when developing proposals (and budgets)

Investment item	Remark	Consider
Staff / beneficiary training[3]	A safeguarding training is highly recommended as part of the project launch for all project staff including contractors and sub-partners.	
Safeguarding training for managers and board representatives.	A one-day safeguarding training is a minimum requirement for managers (and a board representative) in charge of projects and incident management.	
Incident management[4] training[5]	A one-day incident management training is a minimum for managers with incident management responsibility. These include the senior leadership, HR, and those in charge of projects.	
Safeguarding consultancy/ advisory.	In large/high risk projects, it is a worthwhile investment to incorporate and budget for a safeguarding advisory visit to the location where the project will be implemented.	
Policy development	Some partners need support to develop a Safeguarding Policy, Code of Conduct and/or other key procedures and documents.	
Reporting mechanisms	Some partners need support to develop and maintain a feedback / complaint mechanism / safeguarding reporting system.	
Safeguarding assessment/audit	During a project lifecycle (or after a serious incident) it may be needed to have an in-depth assessment of the quality and functionality of safeguarding systems.	
Safeguarding Focal Person development	In large, long-term projects, it may be worth investing in the training of the safeguarding focal persons especially in a training of trainer's model	
Information, education and communication materials	Consider some funds for communication of important preventative messages e.g posters publicizing the price of services so that financial exploitation is reduced.	
Local priorities	…….	

For more information, please contact CBM's Global Safeguarding Unit at safeguarding@cbm.org

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[3] If a CO or partner has already a culture of safeguarding training and most people have already participated in safeguarding trainings, then this will be less necessary.
[4] Note that incident management may have some cost implications like victim/survivor support e.g medical bills, psychosocial support fees, legal fees…
[5] Often combined with security crisis management training.