



40+

stakeholders in Romania were supported in applying IASC safeguarding standards

120+

professionals in Moldova were trained, gaining knowledge and skills in safeguarding

21,531

visitors on the Safeguarding Resource and Support Hub for Eastern Europe

What is safeguarding?

At Terre des hommes (Tdh), safeguarding is an overarching principle that ensures all necessary steps are taken to prevent harm to aid recipients (children and adults) and staff while establishing appropriate responses if harm occurs. This commitment spans across development and humanitarian assistance contexts.

Strengthening safeguarding capacities

Since 2022, Tdh strengthens safeguarding in Eastern Europe by contextualizing efforts to local needs, focusing on marginalized groups, and promoting inclusive, survivor-centered approaches. Key actions include tailored training, coaching, advocacy for public services, and small grants for under-resourced organizations. By localizing resources and fostering collaboration, Tdh empowers organisations and institutions to sustainably safeguard vulnerable populations.

Key observations in the Eastern Europe humanitarian context: Romania, Moldova, Poland

1. Contextualization:

- Regional safeguarding work requires alignment with local legal and cultural contexts.
- There is a strong interest in safeguarding investigations, but this requires support to adapt processes to national legal frameworks.
- Topics such as LGBTQI issues, older persons, and disability are emerging areas that should be incorporated into safeguarding efforts.

2. Reporting challenges:

- Limited reporting of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) cases creates barriers to prioritizing safeguarding in humanitarian responses.

3. Influencing safeguarding culture:

- Many CSOs view safeguarding as a compliance task, leading to a “check-the-box” approach rather than fostering a comprehensive safeguarding culture.
- Efforts are needed to instill deeper understanding and ownership of safeguarding within CSOs.

4. Inclusive systems approach:

- Collaboration with local authorities and public government institutions is crucial for accountability and effective monitoring of CSOs’ safeguarding practices.

5. Capacity building and support gaps:

- There is insufficient support for CSOs to undertake safeguarding journeys independently.
- Increased coaching, mentoring, and resource adaptation are needed to strengthen CSO safeguarding frameworks.

Lessons learned from Eastern Europe

1. Understanding contextual needs:

- National and specialized needs assessments, such as those focusing on LGBTQI and persons with disabilities, are vital.
- Language preferences and localization must guide the adaptation of safeguarding resources.

2. Expanding accessibility:

- Simplify safeguarding resources with plain language.
- Train interpreters and develop terminology resources to ensure consistent communication.
- Translate and localize materials into Romanian, Polish, Ukrainian, Russian, and Romani.

3. Intersectionality in safeguarding:

- Focus on marginalized groups, including Roma communities, LGBTQI+ persons, older persons, and persons with disabilities.
- Ensure safeguarding approaches address their unique vulnerabilities.

4. Building internal capacity for technical assistance:

- Identify local resource persons who can provide continuous support.
- Offer tailored training and on-the-job coaching for CSOs to implement safeguarding measures effectively.



Good practices: Romania

1. Leadership in PSEA Network:

- Coordinated inter-agency efforts on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA).
- Supported over 40 stakeholders in applying IASC safeguarding standards.
- Delivered Training of Trainers (ToT) for PSEA focal points, focusing on survivor-centered approaches and SEA risk communication with affected communities.
- Delivery of awareness raising activities on the SEA risks affecting minority groups such as the LGBTQI+ refugees from Ukraine.
- Development of inclusive awareness raising materials to address gaps in communication with minority groups.

2. Supporting organisations working with people with disabilities:

Case study: The National Association of the Deaf in Romania used RSH EE coaching to secure funding for inclusive safeguarding materials, benefiting both Romanian and Ukrainian hearing-impaired populations.

- **Inclusive materials:** Developed safeguarding resources (videos, posters, brochures) tailored for people with hearing impairments in Romania and Ukraine, using sign language and subtitles for accessibility.
- **Capacity building for OPDs:** Delivered tailored training and coaching on safeguarding measures, reporting mechanisms, and survivor support, addressing gaps in knowledge and skills.
- **Promoting accessibility:** Localized safeguarding policies and materials in Romanian and Ukrainian, ensuring inclusivity and usability for persons with disabilities.
- **Referral pathways:** Strengthened disability-sensitive referral pathways, collaborating with specialized organizations to ensure access to medical, psychosocial, and legal services.
- **Impact:** Improved safeguarding capacity among OPDs, enhanced inclusive practices, and ensured accessibility for people with disabilities in humanitarian and development settings.



Safeguarding Resource and Support Hub for Eastern Europe (RSH EE)

easterneurope.safeguardingsupporthub.org

- Strengthened safeguarding systems for Organisations of People with Disabilities (OPDs) through tailored assessments, resources, and training.
- Focused on contextualized coaching frameworks and essential tools, including:
 - ✓ Safeguarding Policies, Codes of Conduct, Incident Reporting Forms, Safe Recruitment Guidelines, and Referral Pathway Development.

Good practices: Moldova

1. Collaborations across sectors:

- Partnered with CSOs and public institutions (e.g., Psychopedagogical Assistance Services and Mental Health Centers) to develop or update safeguarding policies.
- Facilitated networking and knowledge-sharing among 14 CSOs and public services.

2. Capacity building:

- Over 120 professionals were trained, gaining knowledge and skills in safeguarding, including SEA reporting and survivor support.
- Enhanced understanding of referral pathways and safeguarding mechanisms within participating organizations.

3. Sustainability efforts:

- Supported the approval of the Safeguarding Policy for the Republican Center of Psychopedagogical Assistance under the Ministry of Education.
- Focused on building local capacity for long-term safeguarding improvements.



4. Specialized support:

- Conducted training sessions for Roma CSOs and supported translation of the PSEA Glossary into Romani.
- Advocated for the provision of small grants to less-resourced organizations to enable them to develop and implement safeguarding policies.

5. Harmonized and localized training:

- Delivered practice-oriented safeguarding training, emphasizing key documents such as Safeguarding Policies, Human Resource Policies, and Codes of Conduct.
- Followed training sessions with tailored coaching to ensure practical application.



Lessons learned in Moldova:

- **Contextualized safeguarding policies:** Safeguarding policies should align with both international standards and the national legal and cultural context.
- **Advocacy for public services:** Increased advocacy is essential to enhance government understanding and integrate safeguarding into public services.
- **Support for smaller organisations:** Small financial grants are critical for less-resourced organizations to develop and implement safeguarding policies effectively.
- **Harmonized and practical trainings:** Safeguarding training must be localized, harmonized in terminology, and focused on practical application.
- **Capacity building for key stakeholders:** Equip teachers and school staff with hands-on knowledge of safeguarding fundamentals.
- **Follow-up coaching:** Coaching sessions should complement training to reinforce safeguarding practices.
- **Key documents for coaching:** Safeguarding policies, Human Resource policies, and Codes of Conduct are essential tools for effective coaching.

Contact

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As the leading Swiss child rights organisation, created in 1960, Terre des hommes stands together with children to uphold their rights, protect their lives and improve their well-being. In 2023, we supported over 5.2 million children and members of their communities in more than 30 countries.



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