



Child Safeguarding Policy

Organization of literacy support for independent Afghanistan

2025

OLSIA CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

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OLSIA CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Board Approval

The board of director of OLSIA, by resolution duly adopted by unanimous vote at a meeting duly called and held and not subsequently rescinded or modified in any way, has duly determined that this policy is workable and fair to and in the best interests of OLSIA, the board, approve this policy, recommended for use and directed that the amendment be submitted for consideration by OLSIA board members and ED at the OLSIA board meeting.

Each member of the board agrees to perform such further acts and execute such further documents as are necessary to effectuate the purposes hereof. This policy manual shall be understood and enforce in accordance with and governed by the laws of the government of Afghanistan.

The OLSIA Board Approval constitutes approval of this policy manual undersigned.

Abdul Qaum Almas

Signature

Fazal Rabani

Signature

Abdul Jabar Ameri

Signature

Farhad Naderi

Signature

Haroon Ahmadi

Signature



OLSIA CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Policy Update

In order to provide flexibility and operate within this policy, the Child Safeguarding policies and procedures in this manual are subject to review and updates on regular basis. This policy was created in March 2024 and reviewed in April 2024. The changes in rules and regulation, and implementation of new Child Safeguarding practices are subject to changes in regulations and the existed processes or policies of OLSIA will need to be modified accordingly.

Added this, it's important that any best practices or 'lessons learned' are regularly incorporated into the policies and procedures for continual improvement in regards to Child Safeguarding. Any changes and updates will be incorporated in this manual on annual basis and will be effective for implementation after the approval of the OLSIA board. The next review of the policy will be performed in March 2027.

Policy Implementation

The Executive Director, supported by the administrative and as well as program management heads are responsible for developing, reviewing and implementing Child Safeguarding policies and procedures, as well as monitoring existing function and policies. OLSIA believes that all relevant staff receive access and regular training on Child Safeguarding policies and procedures of the organization, so the benefits the document creates can be realized.

Also, a regular and consistent enforcement of the policies across all levels of the organization is in place to minimize and mitigate the risks falling out of compliance with the policies. In due course, the OLSIA board has a fiduciary duty to the organization to ensure that its staff understands and takes into consideration the proper use of the document and its implementation in practice.

This includes making sure that there are good documented policies and procedures to protect the rights of children and management of OLSIA is responsible for ensuring these policies and procedures are communicated, followed, monitored, and corrected as needed.

Policy Orientation

The purpose of this policy is to provide safeguard and promote the welfare of children by ensuring safeguarding practice that reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice and donors' requirements to align steps with the overall mission of the organization.

This manual includes policies and rules that govern the Child Safeguarding activities and align with the overall goals of the organization that are written with enough clarity to be understood by individuals throughout the organization.

It is important that all relevant staff understand the policies and procedures adopted in this manual. To effectuate, OLSIA program manager is responsible to conduct an orientation about the policy and all the updates and changes incorporated in this manual.

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Background of the Organization

The Organization of Literacy Support for Independent Afghanistan (OLSIA) was founded in 2024 with the conviction that education is the cornerstone of lasting peace, economic stability, and social inclusion in Afghanistan. Grounded in the belief that every person—regardless of age, gender or circumstance—deserves the opportunity to learn and grow, OLSIA is committed to building a brighter future for Afghan communities.

From its inception, OLSIA has positioned education as “first and for all,” directing its efforts toward increasing access to literacy, computer skills, vocational training and the English language. By mobilizing educated Afghan youth and partnering with local communities, OLSIA strives to overcome barriers that have long limited opportunities, especially among women and underserved populations.

Operating across multiple provinces, OLSIA implements projects that combine classroom learning with practical skill-building: establishing computer learning centers, delivering soft-skills training, and facilitating vocational pathways. These initiatives are designed not only to educate but to empower learners to participate meaningfully in the economy and society.

OLSIA’s vision is of a united and prosperous Afghanistan where development opportunities are accessible to all, thereby fostering social inclusion and stability. Its mission centers on building a collective movement of educated Afghan youth who champion education for all ages and all genders—with no discrimination. The ultimate goal is to enhance livelihoods, create economic opportunities, and contribute to the country’s long-term development.

Through transparent governance, community-centered design and partnerships that link education with employment, OLSIA seeks to ensure that every Afghan has a chance to unlock their potential. We believe that when people lead their own learning and development, the benefits ripple outward—strengthening families, communities and the nation.

Our Vision:

A united and prosperous Afghanistan where education and development opportunities are accessible to all, fostering social inclusion and stability.

Our Mission:

We aim to build a collective movement of educated Afghan youths to support education above all, education for all ages and all genders without any discrimination of any kind.

Goal

To improve access to education, vocational skills, and economic opportunities, enhancing the livelihoods of Afghan communities and contributing to the country’s long-term development.

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Humanitarian Principles:

OLSIA is committed to the principles that are central to establishing and maintaining the provision of humanitarian response to the affected people in natural disasters and complex emergency situations and/or implementation of human development interventions. The main humanitarian principles defined by UN have been adopted by OLSIA. The four core principles are:

- Humanity
- Neutrality
- Impartiality and,
- Independence

CONTEXT

Afghanistan one of the least developed country, and socially suffered because of continuous fighting nearly for the last 40 years, both are the cause of poverty and extremely unemployment rate, and the three are the ground for abusing a child either by close relatives or by outsiders. Within the families' children have be given the least consideration and also in order to make a living for the family they have to work and do beyond their capacity. And outside of the family they are vulnerable to a variety of abusing, including physical, sexual, emotional and all other types.

OLSIA as a humanitarian organization has developed a policy aiming to have its contribution toward protecting children against being abused within the organization and outside the organization. Within the organization all employees will be reminded and briefed how to approach and how to treat them within the daily life and also within their course of duty.

PURPOSE

OLSIA acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and is committed to ensuring safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice and donors' requirements. The policy recognizes that the welfare and interests of children are paramount in all circumstances. It aims to ensure that regardless of age, gender, religion or beliefs, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation or socio-economic background, all children:

- Have a positive and enjoyable experience of sport at the OLSIA in a safe and child centered environment,
- Are protected from abuse whilst participating in all capacity related matters during program implementation or outside of the activity.

OLSIA acknowledges that some children, including disabled ones and young people or those from ethnic minority communities, can be particularly vulnerable to abuse and we accept the responsibility to take reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure their welfare.

OLSIA CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

As part of safeguarding policy, OLSIA will:

- Promote and prioritize safety and wellbeing of children and young people
- Ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and is provided with appropriate learning opportunities to recognize, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children and young people
- Ensure appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents and concerns of abuse and support provided to the individuals who raise or disclose the concern
- Ensure that confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored
- Prevent the employment/deployment of unsuitable individuals
- Ensure robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures are in operation.

The policy and procedures will be widely promoted and are mandatory for everyone involved in OLSIA. Failure to comply with the policy and procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal or exclusion from the organization.

EMERGENCY HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

In an emergency children become more vulnerable to abuse and other types of misconduct that is because the existing safeguarding will be disrupted to address Child Safeguarding in an emergency as part of the emergency humanitarian response. OLSIA is committed to address Child Safeguarding issues where ever it has existence and provide services either humanitarian or development.

OLSIA is committed to share and coordinate the findings of the assessment with the safeguarding cluster and Child Safeguarding Working Group at national and local level. OLSIA doesn't develop Child Safeguarding specific project but considers Child Safeguarding as one of the cross cutting issues while developing humanitarian emergency response projects. The following will be possible intervention for addressing Child Safeguarding in an emergency. The first action is to include Child Safeguarding issues in need assessment to identify problems, opportunities and gaps.

Possible intervention

- Advocacy for releasing children from arm forces
- Preventing children being recruited in arm groups
- Awareness with families
- Involving children in the process of response
- Rejoining the separated children during an emergency with their families and careers
- Referral services to clinics, hospital and orphanages
- Provision of temporary or interim of unaccompanied and separated children
- Psychosocial services for distressed children
- Training to OLSIA staff on addressing Child Safeguarding in an emergency

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MONITORING

The policy will be reviewed every, or in the following circumstances:

- Changes in legislation and/or government guidance
- As required by the local entities work for wellbeing of children and young people
- As a result of any other significant change or event.

CODE OF BEHAVIOR

Good Practices

- DO treat everyone with dignity and respect
- DO set an example you would wish others to follow
- DO treat all children equally – show no favoritism
- DO respect a child's right to personal privacy
- DO avoid unnecessary physical contact with a child –your actions, no matter how well intentioned, might be misinterpreted by them or someone else
- DO avoid unacceptable situations within a relationship of trust; for example, a sexual relationship with a participant, even if they are over the age of consent
- DO have separate sleeping accommodation for children and adults
- DO plan activities that involve more than one other person being present, or at least are within sight and hearing of others – avoid spending time alone with a child in private or out of sight/hearing of others.
- DO allow children to talk about any concerns they may have
- DO encourage others to challenge any attitudes or behaviors they do not like
- DO avoid being drawn into inappropriate attention-seeking behavior from children, such as tantrums and crushes
- DO keep other leaders informed of where you are and what you are doing
- DO take any allegations or concerns of abuse seriously and refer them immediately to the person in charge, i.e. the Program Director or Provincial manager → Poor Practice
- DO NOT trivialize or belittle abuse or concerns
- DO NOT form an intimate relationship with a child or any other relationship that would be an abuse of trust
- DO NOT allow abusive activities between children such as initiation ceremonies or bullying
- DO NOT engage in inappropriate behavior or contact – physical, verbal, sexual
- DO NOT makes sexually suggestive remarks or threats to a child, even in fun
- DO NOT use inappropriate language, whether speaking or writing – in person or by phone, email or through use of social media
- DO NOT allow a child to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- DO NOT let allegations, suspicions, or concerns about abuse go unreported

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The 7th Child Safeguarding policy and procedure, UNICEF recommendations for Child Safeguarding

PERSONNEL RECRUITMENT

While recruiting attention will be paid to do a background check for all the candidates, anybody with history being convicted to any type of criminal act will be given the least chance. OLSIA will be taking in view child vulnerability while employing people.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The policy for Child Safeguarding contains training session aiming to provide awareness about children rights, safeguarding, and vulnerability to being abused to OLSIA full staff, project based staff and to the communities while implementing projects especially humanitarian emergency response.

MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

OLSIA Child Safeguarding policy specifies the position of adopting the policy and in case of any non-compliance or violating the policy the management of the organization will issue disciplinary action for the accused person aiming to bring justices to the victims. OLSIA appoint a Child Safeguarding focal point in every offices and in every project, his/her job will be addressing Child Safeguarding issues including ensuring staff is knowledgeable about Child Safeguarding.

BEHAVIOUR PROTOCOLS

The Child Safeguarding policy contains a declaration form and requires all employees to read, understand and retained the concepts of the policy and will obey-by all rule and regulations provided therein.

COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

In no circumstance child images will be published unless proper approvals from the guardians, career or parent of the child is obtained. OLSIA obliged all staff to pay extra attention when uploading photographs taken in a community or any other targeted OLSIAs only images of children in suitable dress should be used to reduce the risk of inappropriate use.

REPORTING AND REACTION PROTOCOLS

If OLSIA employee will witness alleged child abuse or suspects, s/he will immediately report the management or related authority and will try to remember any other witness of the situation to be used for further investigation and process. The law does not allow the citizens to act personally for punishing accused criminals.

UPDATING CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

It is going to be updated every year; one of the main reasons is the rapid progress and innovations in world of mass media and communications which are typically attractive to a child and the ground for being abused.

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UPDATING THE DECLARATION FORM

And the declaration form of employees also will be updated, which will keep them updated with provisions of the policy.

Literature Review:

Child: anyone under the age of 18 (in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child).

Adult: anyone aged 18+.

Participant: every person who attends OLSIA Program, who is not a “person in a position of Program responsibility”. In some Programs, participants are adults. Though not children, they have the same right to expect a safe environment and appropriate behavior from other participants and persons in positions of Program responsibility.

Person in a position of Program responsibility: Any staff, leader, Junior, community worker or other person who has responsibility for all or aspects of delivering OLSIA Program. Note that in some cases, such persons may be ‘children covered by this Child Safeguarding Policy.

Child Safeguarding: refers to the actions taken in order to prevent or stop all behaviors considered dangerous for the physical and psychological health of children.

Child abuse: is any form of physical, emotional or sexual mistreatment or lack of care that leads to injury or harm. It often occurs within a relationship of trust or responsibility and is an abuse of power or a breach of trust. Abuse can happen to a child regardless of their age, gender, race or ability. Even in situations where it may be felt that the child accepted or somehow invited the abuse, it is still abuse.

Abusers can be adults (male or female) and other children, and are usually known to and trusted by the child and family. The abuser may be a family member, or they may be someone the child encounters in a residential setting or in the community, including during sports and leisure activities. An individual may abuse or neglect a child directly, or may be responsible for abuse because they fail to prevent another person harming that child or neglecting the needs of the child.

There are four main types of child **abuse: physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect.** Children can suffer from one or a combination of these forms of **abuse. Emotional – the emotional mistreatment** of a child which may involve telling a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only to meet the needs of another person.

These may include imposing expectations or interactions that are inappropriate or beyond the child’s developmental capability, as well as over safeguarding and limiting the child’s ability to explore or learn or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction.

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Physical – causing bodily or physical harm e.g. hitting, poisoning, burning, giving children alcohol or drugs.

Sexual – when adults use children to meet their own sexual urges; this may or may not include physical contact with the child (e.g. any sexual activity, intimate touching, and sexually suggestive remarks).

Neglect – when adults fail to meet the child’s basic needs to an extent that is likely to result in serious impact on the child’s health or development (e.g. failing to provide adequate food, shelter, failing to protect from physical harm or danger, failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment)

In addition, bullying is a form of child abuse although often, but not always, the person who is the bully is also a child.

Bullying means deliberate, hurtful behavior towards another person that is usually repeated over a period of time. The outcome will always be painful and distressing for the victim. There are four main types of bullying:

- Physical (e.g. pushing, hitting, kicking, slapping or any use of violence);
- Verbal (e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, name-calling, graffiti, threats, abusive text messages);
- Emotional (e.g. tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating, ignoring, isolating from the group); or, Sexual (e.g. unwanted physical contact or abusive comments)

Child Safeguarding/Safety Policy Declaration

Name (block capitals)

Date of birth:

Telephone number:

Work location:

Position:

I have received a copy of the OLSIA Child Safeguarding Policy in soft PDF. I have read and understand the particulars outlined in Child Safeguarding/Safety policy, the policy and in the Code of Practice, and I agree to follow the guidelines on procedures and practices contained within them.

Signed: _____

Name of Employee or Contracted Service Provider

Date:

This declaration must be signed and returned to:

OLSIA Human Resource Management Department