



# **ASIF Child Safeguarding Policy**

**Last updated on July 2019**

# Child Safeguarding Policy

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Commitment

ASIF is committed to protecting children from abuse and exploitation. We acknowledge that, by the nature of our work, our operations may pose a risk to children. ASIF supports the rights of children as specified in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). We are committed to implementing this policy to ensure that the CRC is upheld. We are also committed to a zero tolerance approach to child harm, abuse, and exploitation and will take all necessary steps to ensure that the children we work with are provided with a safe environment.

### 1.2 Purpose

This policy sets out the ways in which ASIF aims to educate its representatives and actively mitigate any risks of child abuse and exploitation.

### 1.3 Context

In 2017, WHO estimated that up to one billion children had endured violence, of which over 120 million of these children had been sexually abused<sup>1</sup>. Children living in poverty are more at risk of child abuse and exploitation, and these are the people that ASIF serves to support through its programs in Viet Nam. Viet Nam ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1990 and is committed to working to ensure that every child is protected from abuse, and exploitation<sup>2</sup>. Despite efforts to achieve this, more than two in three children between one and fourteen years experience violent discipline, and sixteen per cent of children aged five to seventeen are involved in child labour<sup>3</sup>. ASIF acknowledges this context and is committed to supporting children to be safe from harm.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all ASIF staff, volunteers, governing body members, and contractors (hereafter ASIF representatives).

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.pbc2019.org/protection-of-minors/child-abuse-on-the-global-level>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/vietnam/children-viet-nam>

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*

## 3. Policy

### 3.1 Child Safeguarding focal point

ASIF chairperson shall appoint a member of the governing body to be the Child Safeguarding focal point. This person is responsible for promoting Child Safeguarding throughout the organisation, including coordinating training for ASIF representatives and ensuring the Child Safeguarding policy complies with current good practice. They are also responsible for confidentially filing and Child Safeguarding incident reports and maintaining an incident register.

### 3.2 Risk assessment

ASIF acknowledges that by the nature of its operations, there are a number of child safeguarding risks in the delivery of its projects. ASIF works to proactively minimise these risks by assessing each project and its potential risk on children in an ongoing way throughout the project cycle. This is done in a variety of ways:

- A Child Safeguarding risk assessment is included in every Project Design. Projects that involve direct working with children are considered to be a higher risk and more stringent safeguarding procedures are applied.
- This Child Safeguarding risk assessment is reviewed every six months as documented in the Progress Report.
- Child safeguarding is also reviewed by ASIF representatives during monitoring trips.
- A partner Child Safeguarding risk assessment is conducted during the due diligence stage of partnering. If partners do not have a Child Safeguarding policy aligned to ASIF's policy, then this risk is mitigated by the partner signing onto ASIF's policy until it has developed its own Child Safeguarding policy. Support will be provided as necessary to develop the partner's policy. The minimum requirements for a partner's Child Safeguarding policy are provided at Annex 4.
- The Memorandum of Understanding between ASIF and its partners acknowledges the Partner Child Safeguarding policy requirement.

### 3.3 Education of ASIF Representatives

ASIF is committed to educating its personnel in Child Safeguarding and promoting child safe practices. To this end, all ASIF representatives are required to participate in Child Safeguarding training annually so that they are continually aware of potential risks to children and how to minimise these risks. Furthermore, all new ASIF representatives are provided with Child Safeguarding training during their induction, and are asked read and sign ASIF's Child Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct prior to starting work with ASIF.

Staff with specialised Child Safeguarding responsibilities, such as the Child Safeguarding focal point, will be supported to attend additional Child Safeguarding training to ensure that they stay informed of current practice.

ASIF is committed to minimising Child Safeguarding risks in the projects that it supports. To this end, it commits to supporting Child Safeguarding capacity building for all partners who work with us to implement projects that involve or affect children.

### 3.4 Personnel Recruitment

ASIF understands that working in international development programs may appeal to child sex offenders, and for this reason, commits to using rigorous screening procedures when recruiting staff to minimise this risk. These procedures include:

- Promoting ASIF's commitment to child safeguarding on its website and in job advertisements.
- Including a mandatory police check for all ASIF representatives prior to beginning work for ASIF.
- Including a minimum of three behavioural-based interview questions during interviews for all ASIF representatives to investigate the candidate's suitability for working with children.
- Including a minimum of two verbal referee checks when recruiting ASIF representatives. These referee checks must include questions regarding the suitability of the candidate for working with children.

### 3.5 Policy review

This Child Safeguarding policy is reviewed by the Child Safeguarding focal point every two years or when there are significant changes to current good practice. The Child Safeguarding policy is reviewed and approved by the board when revisions are required.

## 4. Reporting process

ASIF considers the abuse and exploitation of children to be completely unacceptable and is committed to a reporting process, which is truthful, fair, and professional. All cases of child abuse or exploitation, whether alleged or proven, will be handled with the utmost confidentiality. Every effort will be made to protect the rights and safety of the child who was allegedly abused or exploited throughout the investigation.

### 4.1 What to report

It is mandatory for all ASIF representatives to report any witnessed, suspected, or alleged incidents of child abuse or exploitation, or any breach of this Child Safeguarding policy. This includes any disclosure, concern or allegation from a child, community member, staff member, or anyone else associated with ASIF's projects regarding the safety, abuse, or

exploitation of a child. It also includes any observation or concerning behaviour of an ASIF representative that breaches this Child Safeguarding policy.

#### 4.2 When to report

Child abuse and exploitation concerns should be reported immediately.

#### 4.3 Who to report to

**In Australia:** concerns should be reported to the Child Safeguarding focal point or Chairperson of the Board.

**Overseas:** concerns should be reported to the in-country project manager or partner CEO. If this is not possible, reports can be made directly to the ASIF Child Safeguarding focal point or Chairperson of the board.

#### 4.4 How to report

Reports can be made:

- In person
- By phone on +61 2 800 357 99
- Via email to [asif@berryadmin.com.au](mailto:asif@berryadmin.com.au)
- In writing to Suite 2.01 - 3 Carlingford Road, Epping NSW 2121 Australia

Reports should be made by completing the Child Safeguarding Incident Report Form (Annex 1). However, if the informant is unable to complete this document, the ASIF representative receiving the report can complete the document for the informant.

Any children involved in the projects should be made aware of their rights and reporting processes throughout the project implementation.

#### 4.5 What will happen next?

The Child Safeguarding focal point will immediately inform the Chairperson, who will keep the governing body abreast of the matter at all times

The Child Safeguarding focal point, in consultation with the governing body, will then decide upon the next step. This will either be to interview the person who made the report or other witnesses to make a decision. This decision will be to:

- Report to police;
- Handle the concern internally (if it is not a criminal matter); or
- Take no further action.

The family of the child should be informed of the allegation and action proposed. They should be consulted where possible on the process to be followed.

Disciplinary action will be taken against any ASIF representatives who fails to report a Child Safeguarding concern, have made a false allegation, or breached this Child Safeguarding policy. This action may include dismissal, termination of contract, or reporting to the authorities.

ASIF representatives who are accused of child abuse or exploitation will be immediately removed from any work with children until the investigation has concluded. If the investigation considers that the relevant ASIF representative poses an unacceptable risk to children's safety or wellbeing, their work with ASIF will be terminated.

## Annex 1: Code of Conduct

The following Code of Conduct is signed by all ASIF representatives prior to commencing any work for ASIF. This work includes volunteer work or paid work.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ [insert name], acknowledge that I have read and understand ASIF's *Child Safeguarding Policy, June 2019*, and agree that in the course of my association with ASIF, **I will:**

- treat children with respect regardless of race, colour, gender, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status.
- not use language or behaviour towards children that is inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning or culturally inappropriate.
- ban all alcohol and drug use.
- not engage children under the age of 18 in any form of sexual intercourse or sexual activity, including paying for sexual services or acts.
- wherever possible, ensure that another adult is present when working in the proximity of children.
- not invite unaccompanied children into my home, unless they are at immediate risk of injury or in physical danger.
- not sleep close to unsupervised children unless absolutely necessary, in which case I must obtain my supervisor's permission, and ensure that another adult is present if possible.
- use any computers, mobile phones, video cameras, cameras or social media appropriately, and never to exploit or harass children or access child exploitation material through any medium
- not use physical punishment on children.
- not hire children for domestic or other labour which is inappropriate given their age or developmental stage, which interferes with their time available for education and recreational activities, or which places them at significant risk of injury.
- comply with all relevant Australian and local legislation, including labour laws in relation to child labour.
- immediately report concerns or allegations of child exploitation and abuse and policy non-compliance in accordance with appropriate procedures.
- immediately disclose all charges, convictions and other outcomes of an offence, which occurred before or occurs during my association with ASIF Australia that relate to child exploitation and abuse.

When photographing or filming a child or using children's images for work-related purposes, **I will:**

- assess and endeavour to comply with local traditions or restrictions for reproducing personal images before photographing or filming a child.
- obtain informed consent from the child and parent or guardian of the child before photographing or filming a child. As part of this I must explain how the photograph or film will be used.
- ensure photographs, films, videos and DVDs present children in a dignified and respectful manner and not in a vulnerable or submissive manner. Children should be adequately clothed and not in poses that could be seen as sexually suggestive.
- ensure images are honest representations of the context and the facts.
- ensure file labels, meta data or text descriptions do not reveal identifying information about a child when sending images electronically or publishing images in any form.

I understand that the onus is on me, as a person engaged by [organization], to use common sense and avoid actions or behaviours that could be construed as child exploitation and abuse when implementing ASIF Australia funded activities.

Signed:

Date:



## Annex 2: Child Safeguarding Incident Reporting Form

Date of incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Time of incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of alleged victim: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of alleged perpetrator: \_\_\_\_\_

Have the safety needs of the alleged victim been met?                      Yes                      No

Please provide details:

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Has an investigation been initiated?                      Yes                      No

If yes, please provide details:

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Please provide details of the alleged incident, including who was involved and what happened:

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Were the police contacted?    Yes                      No

If so, time of contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Police officer's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Police officer's phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of person reporting: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number of person reporting: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of ASIF representative receiving report: \_\_\_\_\_

## Annex 3: Glossary<sup>4</sup>

**Behaviour-based interview questions** are interview questions that probe the applicant's past behaviour in specific situations relevant to the position. When using these questions to understand an applicant's suitability to work with children.

**Child safeguarding** is the actions, policies, and procedures that create and maintain protective environments for children, including protecting them from abuse of any kind such as physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, child sex tourism, and bullying.

**Child abuse** includes: physical abuse (the use of force against a child that results in harm to the child); neglect (the failure by a parent or caregiver to provide a child with the conditions that are currently accepted as being essential for their physical and emotional development and wellbeing); emotional abuse (inappropriate verbal or symbolic acts towards a child or a pattern of failure over time to provide a child with adequate non-physical nurture and emotional availability); sexual abuse (the use of a child for sexual gratification by an adult or significantly older child); and ill treatment (disciplining or correcting a child in an unreasonable and seriously inappropriate or improper manner).

**Child exploitation** is coercing another person to commit acts of abuse against a child; possessing, producing, or distributing child exploitation material; coercing another person to groom a child; and/or using a child for personal or financial advantage.

**Children** are any person under the age of 18 years.

**Criminal record check** is a check of an individual's criminal history record. In Australia, these are available through state and territory police departments. In Vietnam, these are Judicial Record Certificate Number Two (<https://www.visahelpaustralia.com.au/police-clearance-certificate-vietnam/>).

**Working with children** is being engaged in an activity with a child where the contact would reasonably be expected as normal part of the activity and the contact is not incidental to the activity. It includes both paid and voluntary work.

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<sup>4</sup> Adapted from Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Child Protection Policy 2017 <https://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Pages/child-protection-policy.aspx>.

## Annex 4: Child Safeguarding policy requirements for ASIF partners

ASIF will only enter partnerships with organisations that share their commitment to child safeguarding. In partnering with ASIF, partners agree to develop their own child safeguarding policies with the following inclusions as a minimum:

- Awareness by all staff, governing body members, volunteers, consultants, and visitors are of the Child Safeguarding Policy and their responsibilities
- Child-safe recruitment and screening processes, including: police checks and/or working with children checks or the equivalent in the country where the project is taking place prior to engagement; behavioural-based interview questions; and verbal referee checks.
- Documented child safeguarding reporting procedure, which is publicised to staff, volunteers, and children involved in the projects.
- Ongoing risk assessment and monitoring by the partner.
- Regular provision of child protection training to all staff and volunteers.
- A child safeguarding code of conduct that is signed by all staff, governing body members, consultants, visitors, and volunteers prior to implementing the project activities.
- An outline of the proper use of images and personal information of children.
- A commitment that the organisation will not permit a person to work with children if they pose an unacceptable risk to children's safety or wellbeing.
- A provision in all employment contracts that the organisation has the right to dismiss the employee or transfer the employee to other duties if he/she breaches the child protection code of conduct.
- A commitment to updating the child safeguarding policy at least every three years
- Incorporation of local legislation regarding child abuse and child labour.

## Signing Page

Date 20/07/2019

by 

**Mr. Tien Vi Cao**

Founder & Chairman of Board of Directors

Date \_\_\_\_\_

by \_\_\_\_\_

**Mr. Dang Minh Tri Tran**

Vice - Chair & Chairman of Marketing and  
Fundraising Committee

Date \_\_\_\_\_

by \_\_\_\_\_

**Mr. Dinh Manh Toan Doan**

Director & Chief Executive Officer

Date \_\_\_\_\_

by \_\_\_\_\_

**Ms. Nhue Ha Nguyen**

Director & Chairwoman of Legal  
Admin & HR Committee

Date \_\_\_\_\_

by \_\_\_\_\_

**Ms. Thuy Anh Vo**

Director & Chairwoman of Fund  
Allocation and Control Committee