IAS Beneficiary Protection, PSEA and Complaints Policy

Addendum to the Ilam-o-Adab Society (IAS) HR Policy 2022, sections 6 and 8 to 10. It sets out how IAS protects children, women and all beneficiaries from abuse and sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA), and how anyone can make a complaint.

1. Scope and zero tolerance

This policy applies to all members, staff, teachers, trainers, volunteers, consultants and partners of IAS, in every project and center. IAS has zero tolerance for sexual exploitation, sexual abuse, sexual harassment, physical or emotional abuse, neglect and discrimination against beneficiaries.

2. Code of conduct

All people covered by this policy must:

- treat every learner and community member with respect and dignity, whatever their gender, age, religion, disability or background;
- never have sexual contact or a sexual relationship with a beneficiary, and never exchange money, jobs, grades, certificates, services or favours for sex;
- never use physical punishment, threats, humiliation or verbal abuse;
- never be alone with a child or a learner in a closed room; classes and training stay open to view or have a second adult present;
- teach girls' classes and trainings with female teachers or trainers where possible;
- take or share photos and videos of learners only with written consent from the learner or parent or guardian;
- report any concern or suspicion immediately, as required by HR Policy section 8.

Every staff member, teacher and volunteer signs this code of conduct before starting work and receives an induction on it.

3. Safe recruitment

Before appointment, IAS verifies identity, qualifications and references, in line with HR Policy section 7. No person with a known history of abuse or exploitation is engaged to work with children or women.

4. PSEA focal point

The Executive Body appoints a PSEA focal point. Proposed: Muhammad Kashif, Director of Institutional Relations and Compliance, with Saeed Ullah, Deputy Director, as alternate. The focal point receives complaints, keeps the confidential complaints register, and reports to the Executive Body.

5. How beneficiaries and parents can complain

Any learner, parent, guardian or community member can raise a concern, in any of these ways, in Urdu or Punjabi or English, and without giving a name:

- tell any teacher, trainer or staff member, who must pass it to the focal point on the same day;
- speak to the focal point directly, or in writing;
- drop a written note in the sealed complaints box at the centre;
- email societyilamoadab@gmail.com, or call 03457247380.

At enrolment and in each class, learners and parents are told these options. Girls and women may ask to speak to a woman.

6. Reporting about senior staff (whistleblowing)

A concern about the President, a director or any Executive Body member goes to the Vice President, Nazir Jameel, or to any Executive Body member who is not involved. The person concerned has no part in handling it. Nobody who reports a concern in good faith suffers retaliation. Retaliation is itself misconduct.

7. How a complaint is handled

1. The focal point records the complaint in a confidential register and acknowledges it within 2 working days.
2. The Executive Body decides within 3 working days who investigates. The investigator must be independent of the people involved.
3. The investigation is finished within 30 days. The complainant is told the outcome.
4. The survivor is protected, treated with respect, and referred to medical, counselling or legal help as needed. Their identity stays confidential.
5. Where abuse is confirmed, the person faces disciplinary action up to dismissal under the HR Policy, and the case is reported to the police or other authorities as required by Pakistani law.
6. Serious cases are reported promptly to the funding partner as the agreement requires.
7. Every case is reviewed for lessons, and the Executive Body receives a summary at least every quarter.

8. Review

The Executive Body reviews this policy every year. Changes are approved by the Executive Body and take effect when circulated to all staff.