

POLICY FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE GROUPS OF ADULTS

of

ASSOCIATION "JOURNALISTS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS"



Skopje, 2022

**CONTENT**

**INTRODUCTION .....3**

**PART I .....4**

- Description of the organization, mission, vision, goals, key values and principles of the organization
- "About our policy" and policy statement
- Definitions of violence/abuse used in the text of the Policy
- Defining the scope of the Policy (employees, volunteers, external collaborators...)
- Legal framework (international and national) for the protection of children and vulnerable groups of adults
- Risk assessment and solution method

**PART II – PROCEDURES and MONITORING AND EVALUATION of the POLICY .....15**

- Human resources recruitment policy
- Staff/volunteer training
- Procedure for communication with the media and reporting on the work of the Association and other promotional activities
- Code of conduct and consequences of violating the code
- Protection in the internet space
- Reporting mechanism
- Responsibility, Monitoring and evaluation of the Policy

**PART III - ANNEXES TO THE POLICY .....31**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The association "Journalists for Human Rights" based in Skopje, Republic of North Macedonia (hereinafter, the association, the organization, Journalists for Human Rights, or NČP), takes the protection of its target groups, i.e. children, youth and vulnerable groups of adults, very seriously and decisively intends to regulate in detail the issue of protection and security of children, youth and vulnerable groups of adults with whom the Association makes contact, works and/or includes in activities/events/projects/programs.

For this purpose, the Association creates an atmosphere in which the rights of entire groups are recognized, respected, realized and protected when they are injured, challenged or threatened. Bearing in mind that it is a question of particularly sensitive and vulnerable groups, the Association prepared this Policy for the protection and security of children, youth and vulnerable groups of adults (hereinafter: Policy) in which the rights and obligations towards the target groups are described in more detail.

The Association "Journalists for Human Rights" works for the most part of its mission with children and vulnerable groups of adults. As an organization we believe it is of great importance that our target groups feel safe and protected from injury and harm to themselves, their body, mind and soul. That is why we have developed this Policy for the protection of children and vulnerable groups of adults and we will dedicate ourselves to implementing protective measures in order to ensure the safety of children and vulnerable individuals.

In preparing the policy, we identified several categories of safeguarding standards: policies, people, procedures and accountability. Our team is dedicated and ready to implement and apply the set standards following the local context and needs of the target groups.

Every child can potentially be at risk of abuse and exploitation. Some girls and boys may be potentially at greater risk of abuse and exploitation as a result of their situation, group membership, various forms of discrimination and marginalization related to their socio-economic status, gender, health status, ethnic affiliation, or situation in which they live.

We as an organization condemn all forms of violence, abuse and exploitation of children and always respond to any case of abuse, attempted abuse or reasonable suspicion of abuse, in accordance with the nature of the case. These efforts assume the establishment of a system with functional mechanisms for raising awareness of the importance of protecting all target groups, preparing procedures to assist in prevention, encouraging reporting and processing potential cases. They extend from the procedure related to the development and recruitment of human resources, support through training and counseling, to measures of sanctions for non-compliance and non-application of the established standards for protection and security.

That is why it is crucial for every person who is in any way involved in the implementation of the activities of "Journalists for Human Rights" to become familiar with this Policy, to know what constitutes abuse and how it can be recognized, as well as to be familiar with its role and responsibility in the protection of the target groups and the obligations to act provided by this Policy.

## **PART I**

### **DESCRIPTION OF THE ORGANIZATION, MISSION, VISION, OBJECTIVES, KEY VALUES AND PRINCIPLES OF THE ORGANIZATION**

Journalists for Human Rights (HRJ) exists since 1996 and works on the development of democracy, advocates for a sustainable environment, a health policy tailored to the patient and the practical fulfillment of human rights in full.

Our action is: the public gets to know and practice respect for human rights through the development and implementation of a program for gender equality, environmental protection and human health; integration of the poor and marginalized in the local community; mediating, representing, initiating and performing social actions; education of young people and youth participation in policy making, media literacy and developing a dialogue for the protection of cultural and natural heritage. Our vision is a strong civil society that encourages a participatory attitude of all interested parties.

#### **Mission**

The mission of the JHR implies that the public gets to know and practice respect for human rights through: a) sensitization of the local community for the peaceful resolution of conflicts; b) developing and implementing a program for environmental protection; c) integration of the poor and marginalized in the local community; d) mediation, representation, initiation and performance of continuous social actions; e) educating young people about environmental protection and thereby preparing them for active participation in projects related to the environment; f) education of young journalists with peace journalism, which is a basic tool in communication.

## **Vision**

A strong civil society that nurtures a participatory relationship from all stakeholders of the community, through the link: Informing - Communication - Education!

## **Key values**

Key values of the Association of Journalists for Human Rights are:

- Peace and reconciliation - JHR supports and advocates for the resolution of all types of conflicts in a non-violent manner;
- Respect for human rights – JHR respects the dignity of each individual and supports the threatened persons and the community in its pursuit of justice, realized human rights and a future for everyone;
- Reduction of poverty - JHR believes that poverty implies much more than a lack of material goods. Poverty is the result of a state of mind that lacks a vision of possible solutions and a structure that offers new opportunities or choices.
- Equal opportunities - JHR provides equal opportunities for all people respecting their differences.
- Participation and promotion of socially responsible behavior - JHR believes that the development of a stable and solidary society is the result of inclusive and participatory processes.
- Professionalism and transparency - JHR keeps the level of its services at the highest, realistically feasible level, through correct and rational distribution and use of available resources. With that goes the highest standards for quality, flexibility and transparency in the work of the Organization.

## **ABOUT OUR POLICY FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS**

### **Our policy is based on:**

- The vision, mission and values of "Journalists for Human Rights"
- The Convention on the Rights of the Child and other international instruments that regulate issues related to the rights of children and other vulnerable groups
- National legislation and national practices

- The experience and contribution of the target groups we work with, whose views and opinions are of exceptional importance to us as an organization and we practice taking them into account
- Established standards for the protection of children and vulnerable groups both at the international and national level

## **Objectives of the Policy for the protection and security of children, young people and vulnerable adults**

The objectives of this Policy are:

- Preventing child abuse and reducing the number of incidents (cases of abuse of a child by another child, abuse of a child by an adult) in the organization
- Familiarizing children with their rights and their active role in child protection
- Informing children, associates, members of the Board of Directors, family and community members, volunteers and partners (sponsors, donors, journalists, state authorities, etc.) about the policy for the protection of children and vulnerable adults as well as the procedures related to it (awareness , prevention, reporting, responding)
- Encouraging the collaborators who are directly involved in working with children to apply skills that are needed for the development and protection of every child
- Ensuring that all associates have the working conditions necessary to contribute to the development and protection of each child
- Encouraging an open and honest discussion about child abuse at meetings among all participants
- Establishing fair, reliable and transparent channels for reporting possible abuse of children

## **The importance of protecting children and their security and the importance of having a Child Protection Policy**

The protection of children and vulnerable groups of persons is the duty of every member of society. Child abuse is a global phenomenon and includes different types of abuse, such as: physical, emotional, sexual abuse and neglect of children. Every child is potentially at risk of abuse and exploitation. Professionals who work with children are in a rare position to recognize signs of psychological, emotional and sexual abuse and neglect. They should report any suspected case where a child needs or may need help.

Therefore, it is essential that every person associated in any way with the Association Journalists for Human Rights understands child abuse, as well as his or her own role and responsibility in protecting children.

Protecting children and ensuring their safety is the responsibility of organizations to ensure that their staff, activities and programs that they implement do not harm children, i.e. that they do not expose children to risk and abuse and that any concerns that the organization has for the safety of children within the communities in which they work is reported to the appropriate authorities.

This Policy provides an overview of the procedures that the organization undertakes to ensure safety and protection from abuse of children, young people and vulnerable groups of adults, as well as what measures and actions will be taken if abuse occurs or there is a suspicion of the same.

The overall approach to the protection and safety of children is first of all an understanding of potential risks and ways of dealing with them by taking measures and activities that are safe for children and for the organization.

Determining and recognizing the risks, as well as implementing preventive measures to solve them, is of fundamental importance for the organization. The more risks can be recognized, the easier it is to act to prevent them and take timely measures to protect them.

In order to achieve this, as an organization we have done:

- an overview of what programs, projects and activities we implement and how they affect children, as well as what risks we may face;
- what policies and procedures are needed to prevent harm to children and their rights and how to respond accordingly;
- what kind of trainings are needed for the staff in the area of ensuring protection and safety of children, young people and adults from vulnerable categories;
- a clear code of conduct understandable for all employees, volunteers and persons hired on other grounds, how to recruit new personnel, etc.

However, it is important to emphasize that even with the best policies, procedures and their full compliance, abuse can occur within the organization. That is exactly why the Policy also provides a procedure for reporting and dealing with abuse of children, young people and vulnerable groups of adults.

**The role of the Association "Journalists for Human Rights" in the implementation of the Policy for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Groups of Adults**

In order to preserve the safety of children and fight against potential violence, abuse and exploitation of children, young people and vulnerable groups of adults, the Association "Journalists for Human Rights" adopts a Policy for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Groups of Adults, which clearly states the activities and measures that should be taken to prevent possible injury and abuse of children are listed, as well as if the same happens, procedures are determined on how to act and how to react in those situations, regardless of whether the perpetrators are people from inside the organization or are people from outside.

Keeping children safe includes all actions an organization takes to ensure that:

- the people it hires, the activities and programs it implements do not harm children, that is, to prevent possible abuse and exploitation of children that could possibly happen by implementing activities;
- procedures are established for an effective response when there are concerns about the safety of children;
- to report any suspicions and/or concerns about harm to children to the competent authorities that it would notice in the organization (in relation to its employees and engaged associates and programs) and more broadly in the community in which it works.

The policy for the protection of children and vulnerable groups of adults has several goals, namely: first of all, it aims to protect children, but also to protect the staff in the organization and the reputation of the organization.

- Protection of children – some children are at particular risk of experiencing abuse, exploitation, violence, etc. by adults (parents/guardians, persons hired by the organization, etc.). Many children growing up in risky circumstances have already experienced in some way reduced trust in adults or have already experienced various forms of abuse (physical, psychological or sexual abuse).
- Protection of the organization's staff - All children have the right to be free from all forms of violence, abuse and exploitation under the CRC. Journalists for Human Rights is therefore responsible for ensuring that all activities, projects and programs are "child safe". This means that staff do not pose a risk to children and that programs, policies and practices can be established and developed in such a way as to promote the protection of children.
- Protecting an organization and its reputation: Organizations without safeguarding policies, guidelines and systems are at greater risk of acting ineffectively when child abuse occurs, from reporting to prosecution. They are also at risk of reporting possible child abuse. Without adequate child protection policies and standards in place, allegations of abuse, whether substantiated or not, can destroy an organization's



reputation. This leads to serious consequences for the overall functioning of organizations that deal with the protection of children's rights.

## **LEGAL FRAMEWORK OF CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

The right to protection from all forms of violence is a fundamental right of every child. In the Republic of North Macedonia there are a series of legal documents that regulate the area of protection of children from violence, abuse and neglect, such as national laws, international documents that the state has signed and ratified, as well as by-laws, protocols, strategies and action plans.

### **International framework**

The right to protection of every child from any form of violence is clearly established and determined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child as the highest international legal act that regulates children's rights in the world. Children's rights are determined by other documents of the UN, the Council of Europe, the International Labor Organization and other international and regional organizations. The Republic of North Macedonia (RNM) as a member of these organizations has signed and ratified most of these conventions and declarations that refer to children and their rights. By signing and ratifying these international instruments, RNM undertakes to respect them and take measures to prevent and prevent all types of violence against children regardless of where it happens (whether it happens in the family, by institutions or another social environment).

Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) also contains special provisions for the physical, mental and moral integrity of children, which foresee measures for:

- Protection of the child from all forms of physical and mental violence, injury, abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, abuse or exploitation, including sexual abuse while the child is being cared for by the parents/guardians or any other person entrusted with the care of the child the child (art. 19)
- Protection of the child from physical and mental violence, abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse (art. 34)
- Protection of the child from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse
- Protection of the child from forced pimping, sale or trafficking of children for any purpose and in any form (Art. 35)

- Protection of the child from all forms of exploitation that are harmful to the child (Art. 36)
- Protection of the child from torture or other inhumane, inhuman or degrading actions or punishments (Art. 37)
- Support measures for better physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of the child who is/was a victim of any form of neglect, exploitation, abuse, torture or other form of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, or armed conflicts. (Art. 39)

As stated above, the Republic of North Macedonia has signed and ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child<sup>1</sup> as the highest international legal act that defines the rights of children and sets the basic principles. By signing and ratifying the CRC as a state, we are committed to ensure the realization of all the rights of every child who is in the territory of the RNM, and especially protection from all forms of violence, abuse and neglect. In addition to the CRC, RNM has signed and ratified the two Optional Protocols to the CRC, the Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography<sup>2</sup> and the Optional Protocol on the Participation of Children in Armed Conflict<sup>3</sup>. Here, it is important to mention the Third Optional Protocol on Communication Procedures, which provides the opportunity for children to address the Committee on the Rights of the Child directly. The RNM signed this protocol back in 2012, but at the time of preparing this policy (May 2022) it has not yet been ratified..

Other significant international instruments and regulations are: The Convention for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse<sup>4</sup> - „The Lanzarote Convention“, of the Council of Europe (2007/2010) is a legal instrument for the protection of children from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse; Convention of the International Labor Organization number 182 on the worst forms of child labor<sup>5</sup> (1999) applies to all children under the age of 18 and for the first time defines the most severe forms of child labor.

### **National framework**

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<sup>1</sup> Law on the ratification of the Convention on the First of the Child, Official Gazette of the Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia, no. 150/1990 - Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia, 1993.

<sup>2</sup> Law on the ratification of the Convention on the First of the Child, Official Gazette of the Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia, no. 150/1990 - Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia 2003.

<sup>2</sup> Law on the ratification of the Convention on the First of the Child, Official Gazette of the Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia, no. 150/1990 - Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia 2003.

<sup>3</sup> Law on Ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflicts, Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia, no. 44/2003, July 3 2003.

<sup>4</sup> Council of Europe. (2007/2010). Convention on Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (“the Lanzarote Convention”).

<sup>5</sup> ILO. (1999). Convention No. 182 on the Worst forms of child labour.

The right of children to security and special protection in RNM is determined by the following legal regulation: Law on Protection of Children, Law on Justice for Children, Law on Family, Law on Social Protection, Criminal Code, etc.

RNM has adopted a series of strategies, programs and protocols important for the protection of children from violence, such as "National Strategy (2020-2025) and Action Plan (2020-2022) for prevention and protection of children from violence", "Protocol for handling in the process of prevention and protection of children from abuse and neglect", "Protocol for cooperation between competent institutions in cases of sexual abuse of children and pedophilia" and others.

The Association "Journalists for Human Rights" respects and implements the national legislation in its daily work and cooperates with the competent state institutions in the direction of following the best practices of child protection when acting in cases of violence or suspicion of violence.

## DEFINING THE TERMS AND MOST COMMON FORMS OF VIOLENCE AND ABUSE

### Definition of terms

For the purposes of this Policy, individual terms are terminologically defined as follows:

**Child** - According to Article 1 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child <sup>6</sup> (UN Convention on the Rights of the Child Ratification Act 1997), a child is "any human being who has not attained the age of eighteen years unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier".

According to the RNM's Child Protection Law, "any person up to the age of 18 is considered a child, as well as persons with disabilities up to the age of 26"<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Convention on the Rights of the Child, Art. 1, Available at:

[https://www.unicef.org/northmacedonia/media/1806/file/MK\\_CRC\\_1990\\_MK.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/northmacedonia/media/1806/file/MK_CRC_1990_MK.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Official Gazette of the Republic of Moldova - Child Protection Law, no.23/13, 12/14, 44/14, 10/15, 25/15, 150/15, 192/15, 27/16, 163/17, 21/18, 198/18, 104/19, 146/19, 275/19, 311/20, 294/21

[https://mtsp.gov.mk/content/pdf/zakoni/2021\\_zakoni/2%D0%97%D0%B0%D0%BA%D0%BE%D0%BD%20%D0%B7%D0%B0%D1%88%D1%82%D0%B8%D1%82%D0%B0%20%D0%BD%D0%B0%20%D0%B4%D0%B5%D1%86%D0%B0%D1%82%D0%B0%20%D0%BA%D0%BE%D0%BD%D1%81%D0%BE%D0%BB%D0%B8%D0%B4%D0%B8%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%BD%20%D0%B4%D0%B5%D0%BA%D0%B5%D0%BC%D0%B2%D1%80%D0%B8%202021.pdf](https://mtsp.gov.mk/content/pdf/zakoni/2021_zakoni/2%D0%97%D0%B0%D0%BA%D0%BE%D0%BD%20%D0%B7%D0%B0%D1%88%D1%82%D0%B8%D1%82%D0%B0%20%D0%BD%D0%B0%20%D0%B4%D0%B5%D1%86%D0%B0%D1%82%D0%B0%20%D0%BA%D0%BE%D0%BD%D1%81%D0%BE%D0%BB%D0%B8%D0%B4%D0%B8%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%BD%20%D0%B4%D0%B5%D0%BA%D0%B5%D0%BC%D0%B2%D1%80%D0%B8%202021.pdf)

According to the RNM's Children's Justice Law, "a child is any person under the age of 18".<sup>8</sup> This law provides definitions of several categories, such as child at risk, child at risk up to 14 years old, child at risk from 14 to 18 years old, child victim, etc.

The Criminal Code of the RNM under the term child victim means a minor under 18 years of age (art. 122. paragraph 22)<sup>9</sup>

## **Definitions of the most common forms of violence against children**

**Physical violence** is the actual or potential physical injury resulting from an action or lack of action, which is usually under the control of a parent or a responsible or trusted person (WHO, 1999). Physical violence includes a wide range of activities such as hitting, beating, kicking, hair pulling, biting, choking, pushing, burning, poisoning, choking, forcing the child as a punishment/sanction to be in a position that causes pain or is humiliating, threat with knife or gun and other. Physical violence can manifest itself as an isolated case/incident or occur multiple times.

**Corporal punishment** of a child in order to correct or control his behavior constitutes child abuse. In General Comment no. 8 of the Committee on the Rights of the Child at the UN (paragraph 11), the Committee defines "corporal" or "physical" punishment as any punishment in which physical force is used with the aim of causing/inflicting a certain, even the smallest, degree of pain or discomfort. In most cases, it refers to hitting children ("slaps", "beating the butt"), with a hand or with an object - a stick, a belt, a shoe, etc.

**Emotional violence**, which in art. 19 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child is also called "mental violence", it is often described as psychological harassment, mental abuse, verbal abuse and emotional abuse or neglect/neglect and can include actions that humiliate the child, defame, blame without reason, intimidates, restricts the child's movement, discriminates, ridicules or practices other forms of non-physical and hostile behavior towards the child and acts of rejection.

**Sexual violence** is the involvement of a child in a sexual activity that the child does not fully understand, does not agree with, or for which he/she is not developmentally mature and is unable to consent to that activity, or it is/are activity/ and which violate the laws or social taboos of society (WHO, 1999). The Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse explicitly states that sexual abuse of a child includes

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<sup>8</sup> Official Gazette of the Republic of Moldova - Law on Justice for Children, No. 148/13, 152/19,

<sup>9</sup> Official Gazette of the Republic of Moldova - Criminal Code, no.37/1996, 80/1999, 4/2002, 43/2003, 19/2004, 81/2005, 60/2006, 73/2006, 7/2008, 139/2008, 114/2009, 51/2011, 135/2011, 185/2011, 142/2012, 166/2012, 55/2013, 82/2013, 14/2014, 27/2014, 28/2014, 41 / 2014, 115/2014, 132/2014, 160/2014, 199/2014, 196/2015, 226/2015, 97/2017, 248/2018.

the following types of intentional behavior that should be criminalized: a) involvement in sexual activities of a child who has not reached the legal age on which sexual activities are allowed; b) engaging in sexual activity with a child, while the child is under coercion, force or threat; or, abuse of a position of trust, authority or influence over the child, including family status; or abuse of a particularly sensitive situation in which the child finds himself, taking advantage of his/her vulnerable position, in particular due to mental or physical disabilities or addictions.

Sexual violence also includes **the exploitation of a child in prostitution and pornography** that is described as child exploitation. Sexual exploitation is the actual abuse or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, power differential, or trust for sexual purposes, or to obtain financial, social, or political benefits from the sexual exploitation of another person. Sexual abuse is an actual or attempted physical assault of a sexual nature, whether committed by the use or threat of force. Sexual abuse includes both face-to-face and online sexual exploitation and abuse.

**Neglect and negligence** is the carelessness or omission of a parent, guardian or other person responsible for providing care and protection of the child, to ensure the appropriate development of the child in any or all areas: health, upbringing and education, emotional development, nutrition, housing and safe living conditions, and within the reasonably available resources of the family or persons responsible for providing care and protection of the child, which impairs or is likely to impair the health of the child or his physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development. It also includes failure to exercise proper supervision and protection of the child from possible harm to the extent practicable. (WHO, 1999). Neglect can be physical, emotional, medical and educational neglect or a combination of these forms.

**Exploitation of a child** refers to the use of a child for work or other activities, for the benefit of other persons. These activities disrupt the physical or mental health, prevent the regular education of the child, disrupt his moral, or social and emotional development (WHO, 1999). The following actions fall under child exploitation:

- **Abuse of children in child trafficking, prostitution and pornography;** Child trafficking includes luring, transporting, transferring, harboring or receiving persons under 18 years of age by threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, kidnapping or deception, fraud, abuse of power or a state of danger, giving or receiving money or the privilege of obtaining the consent of a person who has control over the child, for the purpose of her exploitation. Enticing, transporting, transferring, harboring or accepting a child for exploitation is considered "trafficking" even if it does not involve the specified means
- **Exploitation of children for prostitution,** means hiring children to engage in prostitution or leading children to participate in prostitution, forcing the child into prostitution or using the child for such purposes
- **Exploitation of children for pornography** includes producing, offering or making available, distributing or transmitting, obtaining, brokering child pornography or

knowingly creating opportunities to access child pornography using information or communication technologies.

- **Abuse of child labor** – it is considered that work of the child, which is mentally, psychologically, socially and morally dangerous and harmful to the children in such a way that it makes it impossible for the child to attend regular school, obliges the child to leave education early, or forces him to the most difficult forms of child labor defined by Convention No. 128 of the International Labor Organization on the worst forms of child labor.
- **Social exploitation of children**, which includes all forms of child abuse in the media, for advertising purposes, in political party campaigns, etc..

**Gender-based violence** between children is any act of violence against a person because of gender, sex or sexual orientation, and may include gender bias and discrimination, sexual harassment, intimate partner violence, violence due to sexual orientation or other forms of physical, sexual and gender-based psychological violence.

**Digital violence** (also called electronic violence, cyber violence, internet violence, online violence) is the use of digital technology in order to upset, injure, humiliate and harm another person. It is carried out in the form of sending messages via e-mail, text and video calls, via social networks, via a website, reading, etc.

## **PART II – PROCEDURES and MONITORING AND EVALUATION of the POLICY**

This part of the Policy contains the basic policies and procedures that should be followed in the operation of the organization in order to ensure the safety and protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults from all forms of violence, abuse and infliction of possible damage on them..

### **HUMAN RESOURCE RECRUITMENT POLICY**

When hiring persons who have contact with children, the Association will take into account their competence and suitability for working with children. Upon hiring, these persons will be thoroughly familiar with the existence of the Policy and its content. Also, within the conversation about hiring people on any basis by the Association, a mandatory element is the one that refers to the safety and protection of children and the commitment of the Association to ensuring the protection of children.

Persons who engage in any way in the Association are obliged to sign a statement that they will respect and apply the Policy for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Categories of Adults (Annex 1). The basic standards and principles defined in the Policy will be included in the Agreement that regulates the hiring of persons in the Association as a mandatory provision that the contracting parties are obliged to respect.

New employees are admitted according to the following procedure, which is implemented in the association:

- An advertisement for a job published by the Association "Journalists for Human Rights" in which, in addition to the other elements of the advertisement, it is clearly stated that the employee is expected to be committed to the protection of children and adults. The required documents for applying for a job include: personal information about the candidate (CV), motivation letter, certificate of no criminal record and letters of recommendation.
- Selection of candidates. All received job applications are reviewed by the Selection Committee, which is composed of three members. Based on the submitted documents, the Committee makes an initial selection and invites the candidates who meet the criteria to an interview. The interview is conducted as per interview guide/guidelines. The interview includes verification of information from documents, questions about the

candidate's interest in the work environment, questions about the candidate's attitudes, etc. Elements that should be taken into account when hiring a new person in the organization on any basis are given in Annex 2 of this Policy.

- Making a decision. After the Selection Committee makes a decision, the selected candidate is invited to sign the contract for employment/volunteering/work contract/author's contract or other form of cooperation. Before signing the employment contract (for employees) or the work contract or copyright contract (for experts, consultants/advisors and other collaborators), the Protection Policy is delivered to them and the candidates are asked to sign a statement confirming that they will work in compliance with the policies and code of conduct (The statement is available in Annex 1)
- Content of the employment contract or work/author agreement - Every employment contract or work/author contract or service contract contains a provision for dismissal, suspension or reassignment to another job/ other work tasks for any employee who violates it The policy for the protection of children and vulnerable groups of adults
- Storage of documents - Reports, records and all information about employees and other involved persons are confidential, and are kept in the Association, in accordance with the Law on the Protection of Personal Data.

Common questions that the organization is focused on when hiring a new person whether it is employment, volunteering or other type of engagement are:

- Already during the preparation of the job description that that person will have, his role is analyzed and all possible options for the protection of children and the risks that may arise from that job/engagement/task are considered, i.e. it is considered whether that position foresees contact or work with children, whether that person will work independently with children or will be under supervision/supervision, what other types of contact that person can have with children (such as contact via e-mail, telephone, letters, internet, social networks, etc.). The organization develops clear job descriptions and requests recommendations from previous employers for potential employees/volunteers/experts/consultants or other persons who will be hired in any way. The criteria that are set for a specific position clearly show what qualifications and experience the potentially hired person should have
- Consent is also required to be signed by the candidate so that the organization can collect data about that person about his previous work experiences.
- As far as possible and legally allowed, checks are carried out about the past of the person and how important it is for the current job or engagement of that person.
- Also during the interview, questions are asked that refer to gathering information about the experience of working directly with children, the risks that may arise, how to prevent them, etc.



- The organization also has a practice of hiring people for a trial period, during which the person would be seen in more detail and his attitude towards the children, before any longer-term commitment is agreed upon.

### **Training and education – familiarization with the policy and its procedures**

All employees, members, volunteers/interns should undergo training on the Protection Policy and procedures. Training is mandatory and should take place within one month of starting work/engagement. The training will be conducted by the responsible person in charge of implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this policy within "Journalists for Human Rights". The main topic of the training will be Policy, where new employees will be introduced to the content of policies and procedures, obligations and responsibilities for the implementation of policies, familiarization with the person who is responsible for implementing the policy as well as familiarization with the important elements of the policy. The goal is to make all persons aware of the content and obligations they have according to the child protection policy and to prepare them to work in ways that are in accordance with it.

If there are changes or additions to the Policy, the person responsible for implementing the policy is obliged to promptly inform all those who have signed the Policy about all news that are important in their work. The goal of "Journalists for Human Rights" is to protect children and vulnerable groups of adults from all kinds of abuse and harassment. All employees will receive training on how to prevent abuse and maltreatment of children, how to react in such situations, how to deal with it when and if it happens, and how to report it. The child protection policy applies to all employees/volunteers/members of the Association's bodies/persons hired on a private basis/experts/consultants, etc. of "Journalists for human rights“.

Any young person under the age of 18 who wants to participate in the activities of the Association must have the consent of one of the parents/guardians, whereby parents and their children will be familiar with the existence of the Policy and its content. Consent to participate in the Association's activities is given by filling out and signing the Consent to Participation in Activities form, which is available in Annex 3 of this Policy. Acquaintance with the Policy enables a kind of prevention of violation of children's rights and endangering their safety, given that the Policy contains a series of rules for permitted behavior and a list of behaviors that are considered illegal and as such are not tolerated by of "Journalists for human rights “.

### **PROCEDURE FOR COMMUNICATION WITH THE MEDIA AND NOTIFICATION OF THE WORK OF THE ASSOCIATION AND OTHER PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES**

This section refers to the principles according to which "Journalists for Human Rights" are guided in internal and external reporting on the activities of the Association, as well as in the case of conducting promotional activities. "Journalists for Human Rights" provides protection for all children and vulnerable adults in all media and communication activities with

special emphasis on their integrity, dignity and identity protection. That is why the Association has set general principles for ensuring the protection of children at all times, as well as special guidelines, to which all employees and persons who are engaged in the Association on any basis, as well as photographers, film crews and journalists who cover the events and activities of "Journalists for Human Rights" and come into direct contact with children. In order to ensure that all children are protected in these situations, it is necessary to obtain written consent from the parent/guardian, from which the consent for photographing the children to be used in public is clearly visible. For this, the organization has prepared a form for Consent, which is available in Annex 4. Given that as an organization we support and practice children's participation, we practice asking children for this type of situation, and that is why we have also prepared a form Consent for photography to be signed by the children, which is also available in Annex 4.

### **Basic principles in communication with the media and promotional activities of the Association**

In cases of reporting on the work of the Association or promotion of the activities, the rights and dignity and best interests of children and vulnerable adults must be respected at all times. This part of the Policy refers to guidelines regarding communication and cooperation with the media, the use of photographs, video recordings and statements of children and vulnerable adults for media and communication purposes in order to protect the personal data of children and vulnerable adults as well as the protection of children themselves and adults belonging to vulnerable categories.

Basic principles by which Journalists for Human Rights are guided when publicly announcing the work of the Association are:

**Dignity** – the dignity of children and vulnerable adults must be preserved at all times. This means that children and vulnerable adults must always be dressed appropriately and decently in photographs and videos.

**Accuracy** - the portrayal of children and/or adults belonging to vulnerable categories must not be in such a way as to encourage manipulation of people and sensationalism. Photographs, videos and statements of the child should give a balanced view of the child's life, with an emphasis on the progress the children are making. In addition, photographs must not be used outside of the context and for the purposes for which they were taken.

**Privacy** – no information may be used that could make the child identifiable and therefore exposed to additional danger. Therefore, the following rules are set:

- only the child's name is used (to avoid revealing details about the place where he lives, the school he goes to and other information that would lead to knowledge about his place of residence. In certain situations, even the name of the child should not be revealed if it exposes itself to an increased risk to its safety and security.

- Information related to the life of the child and his/her photographs (including data that is in electronic form and stored on a computer/laptop) should be kept in secure files. Access to them should be limited only to those persons who need to use them in the course of their work
- When taking the photos, the focus should be on the activity, and when possible, on a group of children, not on individuals. In case there is any doubt that certain photos are inappropriate, this should be reported to the competent contact person, as well as any other matter related to the protection of children.

### **Informed consent**

Before taking any photos, videos or obtaining personal data about children and/or vulnerable adults, it is necessary to obtain informed consent from the child or the parent/guardian. Informed consent implies that the children and their parents/guardians are informed about the whole for whom the photos/videos are being taken and how they will be used by Journalists for Human Rights. (Annex 4)

### **Interview with children**

Interviewing children requires certain skills. In the case of interviewing children, it is necessary to respect the following principles in order to ensure respect for their dignity and their rights:

- Consent from the children - regarding an interview, it must first be explained to the child and his parents/guardians that everything will be covered by the interview and clarification that the child participates in it voluntarily and that he can withdraw his consent at any moment consent
- Offering support - It is recommended that another person whom the child knows well and trusts be present during the interview. When possible, the child should be given the opportunity to decide who will support him during the interview
- Gender - when it comes to certain topics that may be the subject of the interview, in certain cases it is necessary to pay attention to the different needs of girls and boys, so it should be checked whether they would feel more comfortable talking to a female person or male.
- Respect for the right to information - If records are kept during the interview or the interview is recorded in another way, the child must be aware of it and give permission.

Care should be taken especially when children and vulnerable adults are photographed or recorded by outside photographers, journalists and other persons within the framework of the Association's projects and activities. All these persons (photographers, directors, cameramen,

journalists, etc.) must be familiar with the Policy for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults before they start taking pictures, filming or interviewing. Also, during the taking of the photos or the recording of the video recordings, they should be constantly under the supervision of a representative from the organization who is in charge of taking care of the children. Children, parents/guardians and vulnerable adults should be notified of how the recording, photograph or interview will be used and consent to be photographed/recorded. (Annex 4). "Journalists for human rights" may prohibit photographing/recording of children if they believe that outsiders would not act in accordance with the Policy and its principles.

If consent is not obtained for the use of a record (Annex 4) and it must be forwarded in public, to a donor or forwarded to a certain authority, the persons and personal data that could reveal the identity of children, young people or persons under risk, must be hidden/obfuscated in order not to identify who it is.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **1. Protection of children and oneself as the bearer of activities with children and young people**

In addition to creating a safe environment, it is also very important that the leaders and implementers of activities with children and youth pay special attention to their own behavior, in order to protect the children/youth and themselves. The bearers of the activities, before carrying out the activities, must plan their work in order to analyze the potential risks, and thus to prevent and minimize the possible consequences.

In working with children and adults from vulnerable categories, it is recommended to:

- Ensures the presence of two people during activities with children or vulnerable groups of adults. An ideal situation is the presence of representatives from the organization of both sexes.
- To be aware that the implementer/s of the activities themselves may become subject to suspicion/allegations of abuse
- To take into account that the comments of the implementers of the activities and/or the representatives of the organization, which are addressed to the children and/or vulnerable adults, may be interpreted wrongly, even though those comments are given with the best intentions
- To recognize the need for caution, especially when working with children and/or vulnerable groups of adults on sensitive/sensitive issues and problems, (eg bullying, disclosure of abuse, grief).

- Be aware of the possible implications of physical contact with children/young people and/or vulnerable populations.

You shouldn't in any case:

- Favoring and becoming excessively intimate with individuals;
- To believe that there will never be a situation in which a child who discloses abuse accuses them of his/her abuse
- To rely on a good personal reputation, and therefore do not respect the code of conduct regarding the protection of children and young people.

## 2. One-on-one contact with a child/young person/vulnerable group of adults

A "one-on-one" situation from the perspective of child and youth protection is very sensitive, but due to the nature of the work and the professions/profiles that most often work with this category of target groups (psychologists, pedagogues, psychotherapists, etc.) it is very difficult to avoid. In such situations, attention must be paid to the protection of children/young people/vulnerable adults on the one hand, but also the persons involved, on the other hand.

It is recommended that employed persons (persons who have direct contact with children/youth/vulnerable adults) insure:

- to be available to their colleagues, in the sense of informing them where they are going, with whom, for what purpose, and if there is a need, they can be interrupted in their work
- to be in a visible place where there is a flow of people, but to the extent that provides peace and quiet, which is necessary for individual conversation. The ideal situation is to work in a room where there are large windows, where you would be visible/accessible visually, but still isolated enough to be able to work. If this is not possible, leave the door of the room you are working in open/unlocked.
- avoid unnecessary physical contact with a child
- if you still need to have physical contact with a child, first ask to get his/her approval (eg, is it okay if I hug you?)
- avoid unnecessary continuation of an individual conversation with a child/young person/adult members of vulnerable groups

## 3. How to deal with people who show aggressive behavior?

Defining aggressive behavior can be very subjective and vary from person to person, partly because our very perception and definition of aggressive behavior is influenced by our previous experiences. What is aggressive behavior for someone, someone else can accept as "normal"

behavior. We must keep this fact in mind when we are faced with aggressive behavior. In such situations, it is essential/recommended:

- Always remain calm
- Do not respond to aggressive behavior with aggression
- If it is possible to move the aggressive person from the conflict situation
- Use non-threatening body language
- To speak in a calm voice, without shouting and raising the tone
- Avoid physical contact
- Being honest
- Never expose yourself to unnecessary risk

### **How to deal with a disclosure of abuse?**

Abuse is a violation of the laws and consequently the employees, volunteers, hired persons of "Journalists for Human Rights" must act in accordance with the national laws of the Republic of North Macedonia and in accordance with the Policy for the Protection and Safety of Children and Vulnerable Groups of adults.

The employee/volunteer/holder/performer of the activity/event is obliged to report suspicion of abuse or already committed abuse to the contact person for the protection of children and vulnerable adults appointed by the organization as well as to his supervisor. The person is obliged to fill out the Annex 7 application and submit it to the contact person for the protection of children and vulnerable adults. The contact person further acts according to the specified procedure for reporting an incident, that is, forwards the information to the police and/or social work center. If the employee/volunteer or the person hired on another basis does not report suspected abuse or committed abuse, he may be subject to legal action.

If an employee/volunteer or a person hired on another basis suspects or is informed of child abuse, it is very important that they never investigate further on their own initiative. When a child/young person/vulnerable group of adults reports abuse, the role of an employee/volunteer or a person engaged on another basis is to provide support, to let it be known that he is open to listening, but must pass the information on to the relevant persons/institutions. It is very important, before the start of the individual conversation, to clarify the difference between secrecy and confidentiality to the child/young person/adult from a vulnerable group.

### **Ethical principles when involving children in different types of research**

It is necessary to follow the standards for ethical research and the inclusion of children and vulnerable groups of adults in these researches, surveys, analyses, evaluations, data collection, etc. The guiding principles are: the principle of respect, benevolence and justice.

The methods that will be used for research, data collection, etc. should take into account the age and personal capacities of the respondents. Also the purpose of research/evaluations/analyses etc. it should be explained to all respondents. Consent forms for involvement in this type of activity should be prepared for adults i.e. parents/guardians and consent forms for children should be specially designed for their age and explained in words and language they can easily understand . These forms include information about the scope of the evaluation, the voluntary nature of respondents' participation (without compensation), their right to refuse to participate, withdraw from the study at any time, and refrain from answering certain questions, without having to justify it, without any consequences.

It is especially important to follow a procedure for storing, keeping and protecting the data to ensure confidentiality and protect the identity of the participants.

The team that will implement part of the activities should assess the potential negative risks for children when designing the methodology and decide which category of children should not be directly involved in the process, and which should be. When dealing with particularly sensitive topics, younger children, that is, under 12 years of age, should not be directly involved in the evaluation process. When interviewing children and their families about sensitive topics they should take place in quiet and separate locations to ensure anonymity and to ensure that the children or their families feel comfortable and talk in confidence.

### **Experienced and trained professionals to work with vulnerable populations**

Special attention should be paid to respecting equality during activities/research/evaluations etc., including gender equality (boys/girls) and equality on different grounds (rural/urban, children with/without disabilities, socio-economic status).

Also, during the implementation of certain activities/methodologies/research in which children are involved, care should be taken to ensure cultural appropriateness, that is, to be adapted to the local environment and culture.

Particular care should be taken when dealing with child victims for the risks of secondary victimization which are considered high for child victims and witnesses, taking into account their specific vulnerability. It should always be appreciated whether the participation of this category of children is in their best interest and contradicts the project's goal of strengthening their protection. It is recommended, in such situations, to use intermediate contacts and secondary sources.

## PROTECTION OF THE INTERNET SPACE

### Cyber security

The use of modern technology and the possibilities it offers are great and are largely positive if used correctly and expediently. But as in the real world, there are potential risks in the cyber sphere, and children are particularly vulnerable in the online environment, including through cyber-bullying, grooming and trolling.

Cyber-bullying (cyber-bullying) refers to the use of the internet or mobile phone, including social media, with the intention of harming another person.

Cyberbullying comes in many forms and often involves:

- The use of modern technology and the possibilities it offers are great and are largely positive if used correctly and expediently. But as in the real world, there are potential risks in the cyber sphere, and children are particularly vulnerable in the online environment, including through cyber-bullying, grooming and trolling.
- Cyber-bullying (cyber-bullying) refers to the use of the internet or mobile phone, including social media, with the intention of harming another person.
- Cyberbullying comes in many forms and often involves.

Trolling, on the other hand, is anonymous abuse or bullying of others online for fun. Trolls usually post hot topics or unpleasant statements to see how others in the environment will react.

Communication technologies take different forms and are constantly evolving. Children often follow these trends and accept very quickly new offers in the Internet sphere and are usually one step ahead of their parents/guardians and those who have the duty to take care of children and provide them with adequate and safe living conditions.

Examples of technologies include:

- phone-based text messaging, for example SMS, Facebook Messenger and WhatsApp
- social media platforms, for example Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, Pinterest, Tumblr
- games and applications for smartphones
- video calling applications, for example Skype, FaceTime, Zoom, Google Hangouts and others.



Organizations and institutions that work with children should be focused on prevention and awareness of the consequences of inappropriate use of the Internet and the risks that exist in the cyber world. Prevention in this area is best achieved by educating children, parents, staff and volunteers about online safety. It is vital for an organization to recognize the risk children face in the online world and keep abreast of new developments in this area to ensure their Child Protection Policy keeps pace with cyberspace including cyber harm that may occur, including harm due to cyber bullying and trolling.

### **Online grooming**

Online grooming over the Internet is the illegal act of an adult or adults making online contact with a child under the age of 16 with the intention of establishing and/or facilitating a sexual relationship. Online grooming includes:

- asking inappropriate or personal questions to the child
- sending offensive, confrontational or indecent content to a child
- asking a child to send intimate photos or do things online that make them feel uncomfortable and are of a sexual nature
- singling out a child for a "special" relationship

### **Profile privacy settings**

It is fundamentally important to make sure that children know not to have online profiles set as 'public'. Public profiles can be accessed by anyone. Any individual app or device privacy setting should be set to "private".

## **NOTIFICATION PROCEDURE**

This section of the policy explains how to respond if you suspect or witness child abuse. This means that all employees/volunteers/interns/members of the organization should react if they notice signs of child abuse; if they suspect any child abuse; if the child or an adult from a risk group says that he/she has been abused. It is important to emphasize and should always be kept in mind that "Failure to report child abuse is also a form of abuse."

The reporting process should ensure that everyone is clear about the steps to take in relation to the protection of children, vulnerable groups of adults and other witnesses. All violations of this Policy that we have witnessed, we have suspicions or allegations of violation of it should be reported to the contact person in charge of child protection. Registration should be done by filling in the Notification Form (Annex 7).

## **DEALING WITH SERIOUS INCIDENTS - Issues affecting the welfare of children**

In cases in which a violation of the safety of children and young people is identified, all employees and volunteers and persons engaged on another basis are obliged to fill out an accident notification form (Annex 7). This form is used as a brief note of any significant facts regarding the identified incident/problem that occurred during an activity with children/young/vulnerable adults. The form must be filled in as soon as possible, immediately after the incident. These notes/records can be used as a basis for future case investigation activities.

In order to fully implement the protection of children and young people and vulnerable groups of adults, it is necessary for all participants in the activities of the organization to fill out a certificate of consent for inclusion in the activities/projects/programs, etc. (Annex 3). It is also necessary for all participants in the activities to fill out a health form (Annex 5), and when necessary, consent for photography and approval for using photos, films and/or video recordings with children/youth/adult vulnerable groups (Annex 4). All this is necessary in order to minimize potential risks.

### **How to deal with abuse that has been disclosed/discovered or suspected abuse?**

If during the implementation of an activity a child/youth happens to confide that he is a victim of abuse, employees/volunteers/persons engaged in another way should not investigate the issue of abuse themselves. They are obliged to follow the procedure and fill in the incident/concern notification form (annex 7).

### **How to proceed if there is concern that a child/young person/vulnerable group of adults is in imminent danger?**

If there is concern that a child/young person/vulnerable group of adults is in immediate danger, the employee/volunteer/person engaged on another basis has the obligation to contact the Person for Protection and Security. It must indicate whether the child/young person/vulnerable adult is in immediate danger, based on which appropriate action will be taken. If the contact person is not available, the employee/volunteer has the obligation to contact the line manager, i.e. the responsible person in the organization. If the employee/volunteer is not able to contact someone from the organization, and the situation is urgent, he/she is obliged to contact the relevant state authorities, such as the police, social work center, etc.

**What is the guiding principle in this procedure?** - The guiding principle is that the safety and security of the child is always paramount and must be considered. These records will be

kept securely with limited access, accessible only to the Person for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults, the staff authorized by him/her and the competent institutions for dealing with the specific case.

**What is the deadline for submitting the report?** - Reports must be submitted immediately or no later than 48 hours after the event/incident.

**What are the indications of abuse?** – A list of indications for possible misuse is available in the Annex 6.

### **What the report looks like and what it is made of?**

The protection policy report is always composed of two parts:

1. The first part should be filled in by the person reporting the case and contains:

- Details of the person making the report (name, contact details, nature of your contact with the child)
- Details about the child (name, age)
- Details of the incident/concern (what happened)
- Details of the activities undertaken

2. The second part should be filled in by the person to whom the case was reported, which means the person responsible for the implementation of the Policy, that is, the contact person for child protection. In this section, the rationale for the actions and measures taken should be stated, and with this section, the case will be closed.

**Who is responsible for reporting possible abuse/suspected abuse?** - Persons responsible for reporting are all employees/volunteers/interns/persons engaged on various grounds and are obliged to report any suspected misconduct covered by this policy.

**To whom it is submitted?** - Depending on the incident/abuse (whether internal or external), the report should be submitted to the person in charge of the protection of children and vulnerable adults at the "Journalists for Human Rights" Association. All witnessed, suspected or alleged breaches of this Child Protection Policy will be reported immediately to the Child Protection Focal Person (CPF) – using the Safeguarding Policy Reporting Form (annex 7) if the concern is internal. If the concern is external, the report should be made to the social worker using the Safeguarding Policy Reporting Form. Upon receipt of the report, the responsible persons will take seriously any allegations of violation of the Child Protection Policy.

They should ensure that all allegations are closed and tracked in a central database. They should report completing the second part of the Protection Policy Report.

**How are records of reported cases of possible abuse kept?** - All records relating to possible child abuse will be kept securely with limited access, accessible only to the safeguarding focal person or staff authorized by him/her and the institutions responsible for dealing with such situations.

**What types of incidents are there?** - There are internal and external incidents, ie possible abuses. Types of Concerns - Concerns can be internal and external. The first stage is to decide whether the concerns are internal to the organization or related to an external situation.

- Internal – violation of the Policy by people in the organization
- External – violation of the Policy by other people

**Action in case there is a suspicion of violation of the right of the child/children and endangering his/her safety**

- Existence of suspicion that the child's rights have been violated by third parties

Abuse is illegal behavior that is punishable, and all persons who come into contact with children on behalf of "Journalists for Human Rights" and as such are responsible for the care of children must act in accordance with the legal framework of the Republic of North Macedonia and this Policy. In that sense, all persons in charge of taking care of children are obliged to report the suspicion of abuse or violation of some other right of the child to the competent contact person in "Journalists for Human Rights". In the event that these persons do not report the existence of such a suspicion, that is, a violation of the child's rights, such an omission should be interpreted as an act/act of concealment, and legal proceedings may be initiated against these persons before the competent authorities..

- Existence of suspicion that there has been a violation of the rights of the child on the part of employees of the Association, volunteers or persons responsible for the care/protection of children

In case there is a suspicion that any of the employees, collaborators, volunteers or persons engaged in any way and on any basis, who make contact with children, has endangered the safety of the child, he/she will be suspended from working in the Association until they are the investigation into the case ended. Any suspected case of physical or sexual abuse, as well as exploitation, must be reported to the competent state authorities - police, Center for Social Work, etc. If, after the investigation, it is determined that the accusations of harassment are true, the person will be permanently excluded from the Association and from the activities of the Association.

## **What to do if a child confides in you that some abuse has taken place?**

Some general recommendations for talking to an abused child:

- Safety comes first. If you feel that your safety or the safety of the child will be at risk if you try to intervene, leave it to the professionals. You may be able to provide more support later.
- Do not interrogate or ask probing questions. Allow the child to explain in his own words what happened, but do not question the child further or ask leading questions. This can confuse the child and make it difficult for him to continue his story.
- Avoid denial and stay calm. If you deny the child's statement or show shock or disgust at what they say, the child may become scared, feel insecure and withdraw. That is why it is recommended to stay as calm as you can.
- Reassure the child that he has done nothing wrong. It takes a lot of courage for a child to report being abused. Reassure him/her that you are serious and that he/she is not to blame for what happened to them.

It is recommended that you take the following steps:

- Take seriously what the child or vulnerable adult has said
- Stay calm
- Use language that the target groups understand
- Explain what might happen next; that is, that disclosure of relevant information may need to be made to the designee
- Contact the Contact person in charge of implementing the policy
- Record the Safeguarding Policy Report immediately after speaking, including the time, place and any other observations; sign and date the entry

## **USEFUL CONTACTS**

For any need, the following non-governmental organizations and institutions can be contacted:

- - Center for social work, tel. no +389(2) 3214-301
- - Organization of young lawyers, +389(2) 3220-870
- Police, 192
- Ombudsman, +389 (2) 3129-335

## **RESPONSIBILITY, MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

The Association "Journalists for Human Rights" is committed to the implementation of the policy, in all aspects of its work with children and vulnerable groups of adults, by all employees, volunteers, external experts, consultants or other people involved in the activities. Everyone in the association has a responsibility to ensure the implementation of the protection policy, as stated in the policies and procedures defined in this document. The association has appointed a responsible person, who is dedicated to the full implementation of the policy.

## **CONTACT PERSON FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROCEDURE**

The Association of Journalists for Human Rights appoints the following contact person for the protection of children and vulnerable adults in accordance with the Policy for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Groups of Adults.

Name and surname: Aleksandra Radevska  
Email: [aleksandra@jhrmk.org](mailto:aleksandra@jhrmk.org), [jcwe@detstvo.org.mk](mailto:jcwe@detstvo.org.mk)  
Phone: 071/359939

This person also has an obligation to promote the Policy, to distribute it and to raise awareness of the need to respect it, to supervise the application of the Policy, to acquaint children with their rights and adults with the legal obligations in terms of the protection of the children, for informing the authorities about the violation of the provisions of this Policy, etc.

The disclosure of personal data of children and vulnerable adults will be limited only to persons who must be familiar with them, as well as with the competent state institutions. Ultimately, the person responsible for monitoring and ensuring the implementation of the Policy is the President of the Association.

### **Monitoring and evaluation**

"Journalists for Human Rights" will constantly monitor the implementation of the Policy and, if necessary, will make additions and changes to it. Monitoring and evaluation will be performed by checking how systematically and appropriately the standards defined by this Policy will be applied, as well as checking the effectiveness of protective measures. The inspection will be carried out periodically by conducting a survey of employees of the Association, volunteers and other hired persons who have direct contact with children, and the survey will refer to how they meet the standards of the child protection policy, how effective they are and what should be done to improve. If necessary, an internal review of the Policy will

be carried out by the President of the Management Board of the Association based on the results obtained, possible changes or additions/upgrades to the Policy will be suggested.

External monitoring and evaluation will be done every three years, and the results will be presented to the board members. After the approval of the monitoring and evaluation report, as well as the recommendations before the board, they will be integrated into the existing policy.

### **PART III - ANNEXES TO THE POLICY**

#### **Annex 1**

**STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT AND RESPECT TO  
THE POLICY FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (name and surname), confirm that I have read and understand the standards and procedures set forth in the Journalists for Human Rights Association's Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy.

I also confirm that I agree with the principles contained in this Policy and accept the importance of this Policy and will apply it while working at/for Journalists for Human Rights and/or while collaborating with them.

Name and surname: \_\_\_\_\_

Job

Title/Engagement/Role: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



## Annex 2

### **Elements that should be taken into account when hiring a new person in the organization on any basis**

1. When designing the job description, analyze the role; consider child protection issues and the risks involved:
  - What contact with children will the job involve?
  - Will the employee have unsupervised access to the children or hold a position of trust?
  - What other type of contact can the person have with the children (eg via e-mail, phone, letter and internet)?
2. Develop clear job descriptions, tasks/role briefs for all positions, including where short-term contracts, consultants are being recruited.
3. Ensure that the selection criteria reflect the relevant experience required if the post involves working directly with children.
4. Ensure that a commitment to keeping children safe is included in the details of any job posting sent to potential job candidates.
5. Develop application forms requesting consent to obtain information about a person's past convictions/pending disciplinary proceedings.
6. Request documentation to confirm identity and proof of relevant qualifications.
7. Ensure you have a well-planned interview process and ensure interviewers have appropriate experience and knowledge of child protection and best practice.
8. Include some specific questions in the interview that highlight people's attitudes and values regarding child protection. Can they provide examples of where they have acted to protect a child, what they have learned from this, what impact their practice has had so far?



- 9. Take up to two references, including some from previous employees or others who have knowledge of the candidate's experience and suitability for working with children.
- 10. Conduct as many background checks as possible.
- 11. Consider using trial periods of employment to ensure suitability for the job.

**Annex 3**

**CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN ACTIVITIES**

I \_\_\_\_\_ (parent/guardian) with this document give consent \_\_\_\_\_ (child's name) to participate in activities \_\_\_\_\_ carried out by the Association "Journalists for Human Rights "

Additionally (please tick one of the following statements)

I allow \_\_\_\_\_ to travel only with transport designated as official for the needs of this event (seminar, training, conference...) as a passenger/tourist bus.  
 YES NO

Or

I allow \_\_\_\_\_ to travel by private vehicle or other transport designated as official for the purposes of this event YES/NO

\_\_\_\_\_ has the following health condition and needs to receive the following medications (please specify)

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Annex 4**

##### **CONSENT FOR PHOTOGRAPHING AND RECORDING AND PERMISSION TO USE PHOTOGRAPHS, FILMS OR VIDEOS OF CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS**

The Association "Journalists for Human Rights" is dedicated to the protection and safety of children and adults from vulnerable categories who are involved in the activities and programs of the association. In accordance with our Children and Vulnerable Adults Protection and Safety Policy, wherever possible, we will not allow unauthorized photography, filming or video material containing images of children and vulnerable adults without the consent of their parents, parents/guardians or persons in charge of them,

The Journalists for Human Rights Association will take all reasonable steps to ensure that images are used only for the purposes for which they are intended. If it is noticed that the images have been used inappropriately, the person in charge of protection and security of the target groups in the organization should be notified immediately.

The Association "Journalists for Human Rights" reserves the right, at any time, to prohibit the use of photography, film or video material in any activity with which they are associated.

For this purpose, the Association has prepared two proposal statements for consent for photographing and publication of photographs. Given that as an Association we respect, encourage and practice children's participation, this type of consent is provided for children over 12 years old, as well as for their parents/guardians. So that for any photography, recording and publication of photos, the children will first be asked if they agree to it, and

then if there is a confirmed answer from their side, the consent of their parents/guardians will also be requested.

**Draft Statement of Consent for Photography and Publication of Photographs  
(for kids)**

I ----- (name of child or vulnerable adult) agree to be photographed, recorded in film or video material on ----- (to be added name and details of the event/activity)

Signature -----

Name and surname -----

Date -----

**Draft Statement of Consent for Photography and/or Recording by Parent/Guardian or  
Person in Charge of Care**

I ----- (parent/guardian/ person in charge of care) I agree to the Association "Journalists for Human Rights" taking photos, recording films and/or video materials involving ----- (child's name) at ----- (to give more details about the event/activity/project etc.)

Signature:

Name and surname:

Relationship/kinship with the child: -----

Date: -----

**Annex 5**

**HEALTH FORM**

(confidential)

This document provides data on the health status of the child as a participant in the activities carried out by the "Journalists for Human Rights" Association. The purpose of collecting this type of data is to provide adequate data in order to act appropriately if there is a need for a

specific health intervention. This needs to be done to ensure and ensure the health and well-being of all children participating in the programs/activities of the association. All data shared in this health form is strictly confidential and will be used only if the need arises and by authorized persons in/from our organization. For the benefit of the child, please provide as detailed and accurate information as possible.

**Information about the child:**

Name and surname of the child \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

**Contacts in case of an emergency situation:**

• **First contact**

- Name and surname of parent/guardian \_\_\_\_\_

- Kinship/relationship with the child \_\_\_\_\_

- Address \_\_\_\_\_

- Phone \_\_\_\_\_

• **Second contact**

- Name and surname of parent/guardian \_\_\_\_\_

- Kinship/relationship with the child \_\_\_\_\_

- Address \_\_\_\_\_

- Phone \_\_\_\_\_

**Please answer the following questions as accurately as you can:**

- Can he/she take paracetamol/panadol/analgin/andol?

YES NO

- Does he/she suffer from any diseases?

YES NO

If the answer is "Yes", please specify the

disease/s. \_\_\_\_\_

- Does he/she have hearing impairment, visual impairment or anything else?  
YES NO

- Does he/she suffer from any allergies?  
YES NO

If he is allergic to something, please state what he is allergic to?

\_\_\_\_\_

- Does he/she have adverse reactions to anesthesia?  
YES NO

If there is, please explain in more detail. \_\_\_\_\_

- Are there any specific medical conditions required? For example asthma, epilepsy, etc. \_\_\_\_\_

#### Current therapy

- Is he/she currently using any medication/therapy?  
YES NO

If the answer is yes, please specify in more detail which medicines he uses, how often, etc. \_\_\_\_\_

Please make sure the child has enough medication for the time they participate in this event. In the event of an emergency/emergency, a representative from the organization will make every effort to contact parents/guardians so they can make an appropriate medical decision for their child.

In exceptional circumstances, when urgent medical treatment and treatment is required and when it is impossible to contact the persons listed in this form, I authorize the "Journalists for Human Rights" Association to consent to any treatment required in my/our name.

YES NO

Particular sports or physical activities that I/we do not support are:

\_\_\_\_\_ (please specify) such as swimming, running, soccer, volleyball, hiking

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Kinship/relationship with the child (please state what kind of kinship/relationship you are with the child) \_\_\_\_\_

## Annex 6

### **RECOGNITION OF SIGNS OF ABUSE (indicators)**

Recognizing the signs of potential abuse is a complex process and there is no simple list of indicators/symptoms that would allow for easy recognition. There are potential warning signs to consider, but they should be evaluated carefully. It should not automatically be assumed that abuse has occurred. However, it is equally important not to dismiss possible suspicions and not to ignore certain signs of abuse. If any of the listed indicators are observed, you should contact the person for child protection as soon as possible in order to decide how it is most appropriate to react.

Possible signs of physical abuse:

- Bruises, burns, sprained joints, bites, cuts
- Inconclusive explanations for injuries
- Refusal to talk about injuries
- Withdrawal from physical contact
- Wearing long sleeves, leggings and socks during summer/hot weather
- Reluctance to participate in physical activities that may involve undressing
- Fear of returning home or contacting parents/guardians
- Caution or mistrust of adults or a certain category of persons
- Tendencies towards self-harm
- Aggression towards others
- Passivity and obedience
- Chronic escape

Possible signs of neglect:

- Frequent hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Constant fatigue
- Inappropriate clothing, e.g. summer clothes in winter
- Frequent delays or absences from school
- Untreated/untreated health problems
- Low self-esteem
- Poor social relations
- Compulsive stealing
- Taking/abusing alcohol, drugs or other narcotic substances

Possible signs of emotional abuse:

- Delay in physical, cognitive or emotional development
- High anxiety
- Difficulty speaking or sudden speech disorder
- Fear of new situations
- Low self-esteem
- Inappropriate emotional responses to situations
- Extreme passivity or aggressiveness
- Taking drugs or alcohol
- Chronic escape
- • Compulsive stealing

Possible signs of sexual abuse:

- Age-inappropriate sexual behavior
- Highly sexualized expression
- Nighttime urination or defecation
- Pain in the anal or genital area
- Sleep problems
- Fear of being with adults
- Promiscuity
- Extreme risky behavior in adolescents

Some of the indicators of unwanted behavior of adults, and represent a risk of possible abuse occurring or possible abuse of the child occurring:

- A person in whose presence the child's behavior changes significantly, (e.g. the child becomes withdrawn, fearful, agitated or anxious)
- The child is asked to lie or keep secrets
- The person violates the Organization's Code of Conduct / Conduct Protocols
- The person initiates private contact with the child, in person, by email or phone

## Annex 7

### INCIDENT REPORT FORM

If you learn that a child may be in danger, that violence and/or abuse is suspected, fill out this form to the best of your ability. Please note that child protection issues/problems must be reported directly (orally or in writing) to Journalists for Human Rights' child protection contact (preferably on the same working day). Depending on the urgency, you can complete this form before contacting the child protection contact or complete the report afterwards. You can also report an accident or incident using this form.

Accidents and incidents are also reported using this form:

- An accident is an unplanned event that has led/caused or could have led/caused/resulted in injury, damage to equipment or property, or endangerment of the environment.
- An incident is an unpleasant or unusual event.

The report should be prepared and signed by you to ensure confidentiality. You should only send/deliver it to the child protection contact who will keep it in a safe or secure place as strictly confidential..

1. Data about you

Name \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ surname: \_\_\_\_\_

Work place: \_\_\_\_\_

Nature of your contact with the child \_\_\_\_\_

Contact details: Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_



2. Data about the child

Name and surname of the child:

\_\_\_\_\_

Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Parents/Guardians \_\_\_\_\_

Has the child received any treatment? \_\_\_\_\_

If it received treatment, from whom?

\_\_\_\_\_

Was he taken to the hospital?  YES;  NO;

If it was taken, to which hospital and how?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Problem data, incident details

Did you?

See the incident

Suspect an incident

Someone pointed out to you the existence of an incident

If someone else told you about the problem, please state who that person is and what their relationship is with the child?

What happened? Explain the reason (how and why) if known. If you are citing personal observations, distinguish between facts and opinions or allegations (e.g. the child's emotional state, visible injuries, etc.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Has the child/young person/adult from a vulnerable group or another source told you something relevant to the case and how did you respond? (But follow the rule of not taking the child to a statement. Record the details)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date of the alleged incident:

\_\_\_\_\_

Time of the alleged incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of the alleged incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of the alleged perpetrator (if surnamed): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Were other children or other persons involved in the alleged incident?

Was there a danger to other children? \_\_\_\_\_

Actions you have taken:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

This should be completed by the contact person for the protection of children and vulnerable adults:

Incident/accident investigation conducted: YES  No

A written investigation report is required: YES  No

During the determination of the causes of an incident or accident, it may be necessary to contact the persons who were involved in any way. That is why details, witness statements, etc. can be added here.

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