

The Policy needs to be presented to and signed by every Women's Room employee, volunteer, partner, supplier, sub-contractor, agent and any individual engaged by the Women's Room. The Agreement must be given for signature at the very beginning of engagement and the signature formalizes the consent of signees to respect and implement the Policy. The Policy reflects the best international safeguarding practices.

Pursuant to the Ethical Considerations related to Safeguarding of the Child/ren who appear to be in contact within the Women's Room mandate and activities, on **11 November** 2021 in Zagreb, the Assembly adopted

WOMEN'S ROOM'S CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

1. OUR VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

The Women's Room does not allow any partner, supplier, sub-contractor, agent or any individual engaged by the Women's Room to engage in any form of child abuse, maltreatment or poor safeguarding practice.

A child is anyone under the age of 18, and all children have an equal right to protection regardless of any personal characteristic, including their age, gender, ability, culture, racial origin, religious belief and sexual identity.

This policy applies to all persons working for us or on our behalf in any capacity, including employees at all levels, directors, officers, agency workers, seconded workers, volunteers, interns, agents, contractors, external consultants, third-party representatives, suppliers and business partners. It applies during or outside of working hours, every day of the year.

2. WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

Child abuse consists of anything, which individuals, institutions or processes do or fail to do which directly or indirectly harms children or damages their prospect of a safe and healthy development into adulthood. This policy covers all forms of child abuse.

The Women's Room recognizes five categories of child abuse, which are: sexual abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse, neglect and exploitation. Other sub-categories may be adopted from time to time. The policy also covers any poor safeguarding practice, which results in or creates a risk of child abuse or harm.

Definitions of Child Abuse:

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is the involvement of a child in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the Internet). Adult males do not solely perpetrate sexual abuse. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Physical

Physical abuse is the non-accidental use of physical force that deliberately or inadvertently causes a risk of/or actual injury to a child. This may include hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing non-accidental physical harm to a child. Physical harm can also be caused when a parent or caretaker fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness or temporary, permanent injury or disability of a child.

Emotional

Emotional abuse involves doing harm to a child's emotional, intellectual, mental or psychological development. This may occur as an isolated event or on an ongoing basis. Emotional abuse includes but is not limited to any humiliating or degrading treatment (e.g. bad name calling, threats, yelling/screaming/cursing, teasing, constant criticism, belittling, persistent shaming etc.), failure to meet a child's emotional needs, and rejecting, ignoring, terrorizing, isolating or confining a child.

Neglect

Neglect includes but is not limited to failing to provide adequate food, sufficient or seasonally appropriate clothing and /or shelter. Neglect is also failing to prevent harm; failing to ensure adequate supervision; failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment or providing inappropriate medical treatment (e.g. administering medication when not authorized); or failing to provide a safe physical environment (e.g. exposure to violence, unsafe sleeping practices, releasing a child to an unauthorized adult, access to weapons or harmful objects, failing to childproof a space that children will occupy etc.). It can also be the Women's Room staff, partners, contractors, suppliers and sub-grantees failing to apply minimum requirements as set out in mandatory procedures.

Exploitation

Child exploitation is an umbrella term used to describe the abuse of children who are forced, tricked, coerced or trafficked into exploitative activities. For the Women's Room, the child exploitation includes modern slavery and trafficking of children and children forced or recruited into armed conflict. Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity; (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur with the use of technology. Within the Women's Room child sexual abuse and exploitation also includes child early and forced marriage.

Child Labor

Child Labor is work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development. It is work that:

- is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children
- interferes with their schooling by:
 - a) depriving them of the opportunity to attend school
 - b) obliging them to leave school prematurely
 - c) requiring them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work.

If a young person, under the age of 18 is part of an apprenticeship scheme within the statutory law of the country and does not meet any of the above, this would not be considered by the Women's Room as child labor. However, any partner, supplier, contractor or sub-contractor must inform the Women's Room of the name of any apprentice who will be directly involved with our work. For the Women's Room it is not acceptable for any staff or representatives to engage anyone under the age of 18 to work as domestic help in their place of work or at home.

Child labor may also be a form of child slavery. Child slavery is the transfer of a young person (under 18) to another person so that the young person can be exploited.

Zero Tolerance Culture for all forms of abuse and mistreatment

At the Women's Room, we have a culture of zero tolerance for all forms of abuse and mistreatment, including Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying.

This means that every single concern is fully responded to and where necessary prompt action (including conducting an investigation and taking disciplinary action, if applicable) is taken.

It means that we will hold our people to account against the same standards and subject them to the same processes, as everyone else regardless of their position or reputation within the organization.

Child abuse and exploitation is a violation of fundamental child and human rights. It is also a criminal act. The Women's Room has a zero-tolerance approach when it comes taking action to protecting children from all forms of exploitation and abuse. We are committed to acting ethically and with integrity in all our business dealings and relationships and to implementing and enforcing effective systems and controls to ensure child exploitation and abuse is not taking place anywhere in our own organization or in any of our supply chains or partnerships.

The Women's Room is also committed to ensuring there is transparency in our own organization and in our approach to preventing and responding to any child safeguarding violations throughout our supply chains, and relationships with third parties, consistent with our national and international disclosure obligations, and shall comply with all applicable laws, statutes, regulations and codes from time to time in force, including:

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
- Convention on Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Convention)
- UN Secretary General's Bulletin: Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
- International Labor Standards on Child Labor and Forced Labor
- Legislation of the Republic of Croatia

Where the guidance in this policy conflicts with any applicable laws or regulations, the higher standard must be observed at all times.

3. APPROACH TO PREVENTING THE ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN

The Women's Room is committed to preventing child abuse and exploitation, including through the following means:

Awareness: Ensuring that all staff, representatives and third parties connected to the Women's Room are aware of the high standards of behavior and conduct expected of them to protect children from any form of abuse and exploitation in their private and working lives.

Prevention: Ensuring, through awareness and good practice, that staff and those who work with the Women's Room minimize the risks of any form of child abuse and exploitation, including but by no means limited to conducting relevant vetting and background checks of staff as part of

their recruitment process. Employing new persons by the Women's Room must always integrate submission of Certificate of no criminal conviction as a requirement.

Reporting: Ensuring that all staff and those who work with the Women's Room are clear on what steps to take where suspicions or concerns arise regarding allegations of child abuse or exploitation.

Responding: Ensuring that immediate action is taken to identify and address reports of child abuse and exploitation, and to ensure the safety and well-being of the child/ren involved.

To help identifying incidents of child abuse, exploitation and poor safeguarding practice the following are only some examples of prohibited behavior and practice, which are not tolerated by the Women's Room:

- a. Spending too long time alone with child/ren, far from others/group.
- b. Taking child/ren to your home, especially if it means being alone with them.
- c. Physically, sexually, or emotionally harming or threatening to harm a child. This includes beating them or any other form of physical or humiliating discipline.
- d. Engaging in any form of sexual activity with anyone under the age of 18, regardless of age of consent or custom locally.
- e. Exchanging money, employment, goods or services for sex, including sexual favors or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviors. This includes exchange for assistance that is due to beneficiaries and their families.
- f. Sending private messages to children you have met through the Women's Room, for example private messaging on social media or by mobile phone.
- g. Engage anyone under the age of 18 in exploitative and harmful labor.
- h. Employees engaging in commercial exploitation of children, for example a hotel employee facilitating sexual abuse by hotel guests or indirectly.
- i. Causing the death of or seriously injuring a child due to reckless or careless driving.
- j. Failing to ensure the required health and safety at sites where services are being provided and work implemented on behalf of the Women's Room.
- k. Failing to follow the law or required procedures and regulations which result in the death or harm of a child.

Training Staff and Safer Recruitment lead to Safer Organization

The Women's Room pays special attention to those who have a lead/strategic responsibility for safeguarding children and young people – those who are responsible for the development, review or oversight of child safeguarding in our organization.

These are in particular also practitioners/managers who are responsible for recruiting/interviewing staff for work with children.

Therefore, the Women's Room:

- Recognizes the utmost importance of planning for safer recruitment and developing skills and approaches for interviewing candidates/new persons.
- Identifies the factors that can create vulnerabilities for children, the Women's Room and for all third parties engaged in the Women's Room mandate and activities, particularly in relation to sexual abuse.
- Plans and organizes the working process and job positions aiming to reduce the risk.
- Improves regularly a set of key standards essential for the development of a safeguarding organizational culture.
- Builds confidence in using the standards for the purposes of self-assessment and action planning in order to create the Women's Room as safer organization.
- Emphasizes transparency of their work with children in order to develop the responsibility feeling at the Women's Room staff so that bad practice of potentially abusive behavior would not pass unnoticed.
- Speaks with children on their contact with staff and other persons engaged in the Women's Room mandate and activities so that children feel strongly supported in raising up certain topics and disclosing potential misconduct.
- Identifies relevant tools and resources which can support the Women's Room in the development of a safer organizational culture
- Trains its staff on prevention, risk reduction, implementation of Complaint Mechanism and, in connection where the cases of mistreatment confirmed, advances their knowledge and skills related to provision of psychological and legal counseling to children and their supportive persons.

4. THE COMMITMENT WE EXPECT FROM YOU

The Women's Room expects the same high standards from all of our partners, contractors, suppliers and all third parties working with or for the Women's Room, including taking measures to prohibit their staff and representatives from engaging in any child sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or any other form of abuse or exploitation in their working and personal lives.

a) You must have a zero-tolerance policy on child abuse and exploitation and take all measures available to you to prevent and respond to actual, attempted or threatened forms of child abuse and exploitation involving the Women's Room staff or representatives, or your organization's employees or representatives that arises during performance of the terms of this Agreement.

b) You must ensure that your staff members and those working with the Women's Room under your control are fully aware of this policy and encourage them to report incidents of suspected or actual child abuse involving the Women's Room staff or representatives, or your organization's employees or representatives that arises during performance of the terms of this Agreement.

c) You must immediately report any suspicion of child abuse or exploitation occurring in the Women's Room, your organization or the organizations you work with, that arises during the performance of the terms of this Agreement with the Women's Room. Failure to report will be treated as serious and may result in termination of any Agreement with the Women's Room.

d) When you or any staff working for the Women's Room under your control suspect or become aware of a child safeguarding concern in relation to work for the Women's Room, you are **obliged to follow the Complaint Mechanism:**

- Act quickly and immediately report suspicions or knowledge of a safeguarding concern or incident to a relevant contact at the Women's Room: Women's Room Coordinator, members of the Women's Room Co-ordination Team and Commissioners for the Protection of the Dignity of Workers or report to (majam@zamir.net, adrozdian@gmail.com, jelena.causevic@gmail.com). If there is a suspicion that any of the above persons is involved in such actions, report suspicion or knowledge to the President of the Governing Board of Women's Room (zjelavic@inet.hr), which is obliged to act in accordance with the provisions of this document.

- Keep any information confidential between you and the person you report this to.

e) You will co-operate with the Women's Room in any investigations of concerns reported under this Agreement, and keep the Women's Room promptly updated on any concerns reported under this Agreement, including but not limited to actions taken by you in response.

The Women's Room is obliged to:

- ✓ Seriously examine every reported case;
- ✓ Take decisive steps to ensure safeguarding of the child/ren who are subject of any concern, including criminal prosecution of offender(s);
- ✓ Support children in child-friendly environment, staff and other adults who report or have been the subject of concern;
- ✓ Act dedicated to the principle of the best interest of the child as a lead principle in safeguarding of children;
- ✓ Careful monitoring and serious consideration and true respect to children's perspective and wishes;
- ✓ Work together with child's caretakers/guardians and experts in order to ensure the child's safety. In cases where the mistreatment confirmed, the intervention includes also provision of adequate psychological and legal counseling for the child and supportive caretaker.

ženska soba - centar za seksualna prava

Maksimirska 51 a/II, 10 000 Zagreb, Croatia, tel: 01 6119 174, fax: 01 6119 175,

zenska.soba@zenskasoba.hr, www.zenskasoba.hr

Please contact your Women's Room representative if you have further questions.

Date _____

For the Women's Room

Signature

Maja Mamula, PhD, Co-ordinator

Employee/Associate

(title to adapt to position)