

CHILD

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

SECTION I

1. Introduction

MARTA Resource Centre for Women is an NGO established in year 2000. MARTA was registered as an Association on 24th August 2001 with a registration number 40008061978.

Today MARTA is an umbrella organization for 19 member organizations and 40 individual members from around Latvia. MARTA's mission is to advocate for women's rights, to improve social and economic situation of women and children and to grant them secure and safe environment by promoting mutual support, understanding, and solidarity between women, regardless of age, ethnicity and social status.

MARTA believes that every child has a right to be protected regardless of his or her gender, ethnicity, religious beliefs, sexual orientation or disabilities. MARTA is committed to safeguard children in its daily operations by applying the child protection principles stated in this policy. MARTA's Child Safeguarding Policy is based on Convention on the Rights of the Child adopted by United Nations in 1989, its protocols, Council of Europe Convention on Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse, national child protection laws of Latvia and best international procedures.

2. Principles

MARTA applies the following principles to child protection:

- All children have equal rights to protection from harm.
- Everybody has a responsibility to support the protection of children.
- Organisations have a duty of care to children with whom they work, are in contact with, or who are affected by their work and operations.

- If organisations work with partners they have a responsibility to help partners meet the minimum requirements on protection.
- All actions on child protection are taken in the best interests of the child, which are paramount.

3. Definitions and Terms

Within this Policy a child is any individual under the age of 18.

What is child protection?

Child protection is the responsibility that organisations have to make sure their staff, operations, and programmes *do no harm* to children, that is that they do not expose children to the risk of harm and abuse, and that any concerns the organisation has about children's safety within the communities in which they work, are reported to the appropriate authorities.

Definitions of harm

Physical abuse: actual or potential physical harm perpetrated by another person, adult or child. it may involve hitting, shaking, poisoning, drowning and burning. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of or deliberately induces illness in a child.

Sexual abuse: forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities that he or she does not fully understand and has little choice in consenting to. This may include, but is not limited to, rape, oral sex, penetration, or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching. It may also include involving children in looking at, or producing sexual images, watching sexual activities and encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Child sexual exploitation: a form of sexual abuse that involves children being engaged in any sexual activity in exchange for money, gifts, food, accommodation, affection, status, or anything else that they or their family needs. It usually involves a child being manipulated or coerced, which may involve befriending children, gaining their trust, and subjecting them to drugs and alcohol. The abusive relationship between victim and perpetrator involves an imbalance of power where the victim's options are limited. It is a form of abuse that can be misunderstood by children and adults as consensual.

Child sexual exploitation manifests in different ways. It can involve an older perpetrator exercising financial, emotional or physical control over a young person. It can involve peers manipulating or forcing victims into sexual activity, sometimes within gangs and in gang-affected neighbourhoods. It may also involve opportunistic or organised networks of perpetrators who profit

financially from trafficking young victims between different locations to engage in sexual activity with multiple men.

Neglect and negligent treatment: allowing for context, resources and circumstances, neglect and negligent treatment refers to a persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and /or psychological needs, which is likely to result in serious impairment of a child's healthy physical, spiritual, moral and mental development. It includes the failure to properly supervise and protect children from harm and provide for nutrition, shelter and safe living/working conditions. It may also involve maternal neglect during pregnancy as a result of drug or alcohol misuse and the neglect and ill treatment of a disabled child.

Emotional abuse: persistent emotional maltreatment that impacts on a child's emotional development. Emotionally abusive acts include restriction of movement, degrading, humiliating, bullying (including cyber bullying), and threatening, scaring, discriminating, ridiculing or other non-physical forms of hostile or rejecting treatment.

Commercial exploitation: exploiting a child in work or other activities for the benefit of others and to the detriment of the child's physical or mental health, education, moral or social-emotional development. It includes, but is not limited to, child labour.

4. Scope

This policy applies to all staff and associates.

Staff includes:

- all staff, national and international
- all volunteers and interns

Associates includes:

- all contractors, e.g., consultants
- all Board Members
- all partners including local community based partners
- Guests and Visitors

SECTION II

5.Prevention

A) Recruitment of staff

MARTA will ensure that it applies the highest standards in its recruitment and vetting policies across the organization. Candidates are checked for their suitability for working with children and their understanding of child protection.

Protection checks, such as disclosure of previous convictions or police checks (if disclosure is unavailable), forms an important part of our recruitment policy and covers all those representatives that we have an employment relationship with. Checking evidence of identity and the authenticity of qualifications, requesting self-declarations about previous convictions, and a minimum requirement of at least two references are carried out in all cases.

Checklist for recruitment and selection is available in Annex 4 and should be used when designing the job description, analysing the duties and considering child safeguarding risks held in the position.

Child safeguarding principles will be included in the induction of all new staff members including volunteers and Board Members. The training of Children Safeguarding Principles will be held annually for every staff member. MARTA's job advertisements will include a statement that child Safeguarding Policy is in place.

B) Code of Conduct

All MARTA's associates, staff and volunteers must obey by the Code of Conduct which is designed to protect child rights and to protect associates from false accusations and to protect the name and reputation of MARTA. The Code of Conduct is mandatory for all MARTA's staff including volunteers and associates. Any violation of the Code of Conduct will result in disciplinary procedure which may include dismissal and/or criminal action depending on the severity of the case. The Code of Conduct is available in Annex 1.

C) Risk Analysis

Risk analysis will be undertaken prior any activity involving children or visits when children are present or research with children and measures will be taken to mitigate any risk. Risk mitigation strategies will be developed, which minimise the risk to children, and incorporated into the design, delivery and evaluation of programmes, operations and activities which involve or impact upon children.

D) Communications

In MARTA's use of visual images, both photographic stills and video, the overriding principle is to maintain respect and dignity in the portrayal of children. MARTA strongly supports the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which makes the best interests of the child a primary

consideration (Art. 3), and states that every child has the right to privacy (Art. 16) and protection from all forms of exploitation (Art. 36). Whilst we acknowledge that images are an essential element in portraying our work to the general public and other constituencies, and for raising funds, we strive to maintain the dignity of everyone with whom we work and will not use images that are disrespectful or demeaning.

In MARTA's use of visual images we adhere to the principles and guidelines set out in Annex 3. The stated principles are employed to regulate our use of images of children. The guidelines that follow will be of particular use to staff in the field in contact with children.

E) Social media

Policy statement:

MARTA's social media policy covers organization's Facebook, Twitter, Draugiem.lv, YouTube, Flickr, Instagram and IR.LV accounts including Facebook Groups and is binding for all staff and volunteers who have access to the accounts – social media administrators, editors and managers.

How to behave on social media:

- 1) The accounts should be used for MARTA's purposes only and not as a workers personal account.
- 2) Any communication using social media should be kept public and logged. Incoming and outgoing messages should be saved and kept.
- 3) All contact with young people using social media should be kept appropriate, as it would be when face-to-face and should only relate to work responsibilities.
- 4) No personal details should be provided about children on any social media accounts.
- 5) A parental permission is required before using any photographs or video clips of children. The photographs and videos should be appropriate.
- 6) Before posting any material depicting children the fact that it can be shared by anyone for purposes that may differ from what was intended needs to be considered.

F) Working with partners

When establishing partnerships MARTA will negotiate with each partner the measures they can implement to protect children. Risk assessments will be carried out before entering into a partnership. MARTA will not partner with organizations or individuals that exploit or harm children in any way or refuse

to adopt basic child safeguarding measures. MARTA will request to be informed within 24 hours if serious incidents regarding children rights happen in partner organizations. MARTA will assess the incidents and decide whether to terminate the partnership.

6.Response

Any suspected or actual breach of the present Child Protection Policy must be reported without delay to the designated focal person in MARTA identified to all staff and partners as responsible for receiving such reports. The focal person is trained to deal with child safeguarding issues and will activate MARTA's child protection procedures.

In normal circumstances, any concerns about the safety of a child would trigger a report under MARTA's Child Protection Policy, however, if it is known in advance that the children involved in a project or children receiving consultations by MARTA's specialists are at risk and may have been or are currently experiencing abuse – it is not practical to report. In these circumstances, the normal threshold for reporting is suspended.

A) Managing disclosure

MARTA is acting upon and reacting to disclosures responding within 24 hours. During all investigation procedures in MARTA children must be respected and listened to without criticism.

B) Focal Person

Ms Irina Frolova has been assigned as a child safeguarding person or **Focal Person** and is responsible for listening to staff complaints and for filling in reports.

Mr Lauris Bokišs has been assigned as a **Deputy Focal Person** and his role is to cover in cases of absence of a Focal Person.

All children that come to MARTA's office or participate in MARTA's activities should be informed about the identity and role of the Focal Person. MARTA's child friendly Child Safeguarding Policy should be presented to the children.

B) Confidentiality

Strict confidentiality should be maintained throughout the process. Information must not be sent by fax, but by e-mail.

For serious cases (any maltreatment with criminal nature, e.g. rape, beating etc.) a commission will be established with participation of the Director, Focal Person and Therapist. The Commission has to ensure all involved parties have access to counselling and will decide:

- whether to report the incident to the police or other authorities;
- what kind of support the child needs;
- if the accused person needs support (as they might be innocent)
- if someone (e.g. Focal Person) needs to be appointed to carry out internal investigation or monitor the investigation process.
- in case the person is fired and his/her new employer contacts MARTA the Commission has to decide what information to reveal.

If the case is public a press release should be prepared before media arrive.

The complaint should be logged with confidentiality. All the reports have to be kept in a secure place.

If a Focal Person receives a report about an incident that did not happen in MARTA and is not connected to MARTA's activities in any way it should not be ignored and must be reported to the appropriate authorities.

7. Implementation

Child Safeguarding is a responsibility of every employee and is stated in every job description. Every employee must sign the code of conduct and the policy. All staff undergoes training on child rights and safeguarding principles. A poster displaying incident reporting procedure should be displayed in MARTA's office. A child friendly version of the Policy has been developed and should be displayed in MARTA's office.

MARTA should continue its work on building capacity of its partners regarding Children Safeguarding and should continue to advocate the principles among other organizations. The incidents (what happened, how often and what action was taken) should be included in the report to the Board. **Mr. Inge Engeland Johansen** has been assigned as the Board member responsible for children safeguarding.

8. Monitoring and evaluation

A two year action plan has been created for implementation of the policy and should be monitored by the Focal Person every two years.

Annex 1

CODE OF CONDUCT

CODE OF CONDUCT

This is a Code of Conduct by Association Resource Centre for Women MARTA (MARTA) for working with children. All MARTA's associates, staff and volunteers must obey by the Code of Conduct which is designed to protect child rights and to protect associates from false accusations and to protect the name and reputation of MARTA. The Code of Conduct is mandatory for all MARTA's staff including volunteers and associates. Any violation of the Code of Conduct will result in disciplinary procedure which may include dismissal and/or criminal action depending on the severity of the case.

I, [insert name], acknowledge that I have read and understand Association Resource Centre for Women MARTA Child Protection Policy, and agree that in the course of my association with MARTA, I must:

- treat children with respect regardless of race, colour, gender, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status
- not use language or behaviour towards children that is inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning, culturally inappropriate or act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children or engage in any form of emotional abuse
- not engage children under the age of 18 in any form of sexual intercourse or sexual activity, including paying for sexual services or acts
- not condone or participate in behaviour with children that is illegal, unsafe or abusive
- wherever possible, not spend time alone with children and ensure that another adult is present when working in the proximity of children or transporting children in a vehicle
- not invite unaccompanied children into my home, unless they are at immediate risk of injury or in physical danger
- not sleep close to unsupervised children unless absolutely necessary, in which case I must obtain my supervisor's permission, and ensure that another adult is present if possible
- not show favour to particular children

- use any computers, mobile phones, video cameras, cameras or social media appropriately, and never to exploit or harass children or access child exploitation material through any medium
- not use physical punishment on children
- not develop relationships with children that could in any way be deemed exploitative or abusive
- comply with all relevant European Union (EU) and Latvian legislation, including labour laws in relation to child labour
- immediately report concerns or allegations of child exploitation and abuse and policy non-compliance in accordance with appropriate procedures
- immediately disclose all charges, convictions and other outcomes of an offence, which occurred before or occurs during my association with MARTA that relate to child exploitation and abuse.

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

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

Signature_____

Date_____

place_____

Annex 3

COMMUNICATION PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1. We will respect the dignity of the subject

We will always seek permission when taking photographs or video footage of individuals.

Consent for taking and using photographs and case studies will be sought from parents and those with parental responsibility, or from the children directly when they are of sufficient age and understanding.

Special consideration will be given to photographs depicting children with disabilities, refugees and those in situations of conflict and disasters, to accurately portray context and maintain dignity.

Wherever possible, we will explain to the subject the likely use of the images.

We will never take pictures of people who say they don't want to be photographed.

2. We will not exploit the subject.

We will not manipulate the subject in a way which distorts the reality of the situation (eg. we will not ask them to cry for the camera).

If necessary to protect confidentiality, the names of children and families will be changed.

Never will a child's full name or contact details be published.

3. We aim to provide a balanced portrayal of reality in the developing world.

We will avoid stereotypes (eg. Western aid worker tends helpless victim).

We aim to show people helping and working for themselves, not as victims.

4. We will use images truthfully.

Case histories/descriptions will not be fabricated, although they may be adapted or edited to preserve the dignity and confidentiality of the subject.

We will not use an image of one thing and describe it as, or imply it is, an image of another (eg. We do not use an image of one project to illustrate the work of another).

Where possible, we will use a balance of images (eg. positive and negative) to reflect the reality of a situation.

If we use an image in a general way (eg. illustrating a project similar to the one being described), we will make this clear in the caption.

We will not use an image in a way which deliberately misinterprets the true situation.

If an image represents an exceptional situation, we will not use it in a way which suggests it is generally true.

We aim to be confident that, to the best of our knowledge, the subject would regard the image and its use as truthful if s/he saw it.

5. We will maintain standards of taste and decency consistent with our values and those of our supporters.

We will not use images which are erotic, pornographic or obscene.

Images of dead or naked bodies will only be used in exceptional circumstances.

We will not make gratuitous use of images of extreme suffering.

6. We will respect the views of our partner organisations.

We will be sensitive to the concerns and advice of our partner organisations in our gathering and use of visual material.

7. We will maintain high technical standards.

We aim to use only high-quality images.

We may use digital manipulation of images for creative or iconic effect, but not in a way which deliberately and misleadingly distorts the reality of the situation depicted.

We will not crop an image in a way which misleadingly distorts the reality of the situation.

In video editing, we will not misleadingly distort the reality of the situation.

8. We will maintain a suitable photo library.

We will acquire a written permission from parents or carers before taking any still picture or video with children (available in Annex 5).

Images will be current and appropriate.

All images will be kept centrally and fully documented.

Old images will be archived according to the organization's policy in place.

FURTHER GUIDELINES FOR OBTAINING COMMUNICATION MATERIALS

- Discuss the use of communication materials at the beginning of a programme or project with children and communities – do not wait until the material is needed.
- Obtain general consent for the gathering of communication materials at the beginning of a programme or project, and agree with children and communities the general messages and types of images that would be appropriate.
- Obtain images and any other private information for publication purposes in a safe and confidential manner.
- Children should be prepared for specific interviews prior to being interviewed.
- Pictures of children should always be decent and respectful.
- All children must be appropriately dressed.
- Recorded images should focus on an activity, and where possible feature groups of children rather than individuals.
- Make sure that photographers and film-makers are not allowed to spend time with or have access to children without supervision.
- Permission for the taking of photographs should be sought prior to events. Children that do not have permission for photographs to be taken should not be included in individual or group photographs. Where possible, event photographs should be taken in group settings at prearranged times.
- Any complaints or concerns about inappropriate or intrusive images should be reported and recorded, as with any other child protection concern.

FURTHER GUIDELINES FOR PUBLISHING INFORMATION

- Only use the first names of children. Be careful not to reveal too many details about where they live, their school, hobbies etc.
- Ask for children's permission to use their photographs.
- Get their parent/guardian's consent, and ensure everyone understands how and where the images will be used. (See Annex 5: Parent Consent Form.)
- Where the risk of harm and stigma is high, take mitigating steps; for example, by concealing faces, using pseudonyms and vague geographical locations, and by non-disclosure of personal information.
- Try to take images that represent a broad range of children – boys and girls of various ages, abilities and ethnic groups.
- On websites and social media, make sure any images you use are not tagged with the location of the child.
- Individuals or organisations requesting the use of resources depicting children, such as personal information, videos or photographs, should sign an agreement concerning the proper use of such materials. Failure to adhere to the terms could result in the termination of permission and the return of information.
- Pictures, materials and personal information regarding children should be held in a secure area where practicable, and every caution should be exercised to ensure its security. Access to these must be by way of permission only.

Annex 4

RECRUITMENT CHECKLIST

<p>1. When you are designing the job description, analyse the role and think about the issues of child protection and risk in that job:</p> <p>What contact with children will the job involve?</p> <p>Will the employee have unsupervised access to children, or hold a position of trust?</p> <p>What other sort of contact may the person have with children (eg, via email, telephone, letter, internet)?</p>
<p>2. Develop clear job descriptions, terms of reference/role briefs for all posts including where short-term contracts, consultants are being recruited.</p>
<p>3. Make sure that the selection-criteria outlines the relevant experience needed if the post involves direct work with children.</p>
<p>4. Make sure that the commitment to keeping children safe is included in details of any post sent to prospective job candidates.</p>
<p>5. Develop application forms that ask for consent to gain information on a person's past convictions/pending disciplinary proceedings.</p>
<p>6. Ask for documentation to confirm identity and proof of relevant qualifications.</p>
<p>7. Make sure you have a well-planned interview process and ensure the interviewers have the relevant experience of and knowledge about child protection and best practice.</p>
<p>8. Include some specific questions in the interview that draw out people's attitudes and values in relation to the protection of children. Can they give examples of where they have acted to protect a child, what they learnt from this, what impact it has had their current practice?</p>
<p>9. Take up to three references including some from previous employees or others who have knowledge of the candidate's experience and suitability to work with children</p> <p>Adapted from Nolan, P (2004) <i>The role of HR in Child Protection, People in Aid</i></p>
<p>10. Verify the identity of referees.</p>

11. Conduct as many background checks as possible.

12. Consider the use of probationary periods of employment to ensure suitability once in post.

Annex 5

PARENT CONSENT FORM



BIEDRĪBA RESURSU CENTRS SIEVIETĒM MARTA

Vecāku piekrišanas forma par bērnu fotogrāfiju izmantošanu

Es,.....,bērna:

(bērna

pilnais

vārds).....vecāks/aizbildnis

ar šo atļauju Biedrībai Resursu centrs sievietēm MARTA izmantot jebkuru fotogrāfiju, kurā attēlots mans bērns un kas uzņemta [ieraksta vietu, piemēram Rīgas Teikas vidusskolas telpās] 2015.gada [ieraksta datumu un mēnesi] projekta [ieraksta pilnu projekta nosaukumu] [ieraksta aktivitātes nosaukumu], mārketinga, mācību vai publicitātes nolūkos.

Piekrišana ir spēkā visā pasaulē uz nenoteiktu laiku.

Paraksts.....Datums.....

Adrese

.....

Pasta kods

Annex 6

SELF-DECLARATION FORM



PAŠDEKLARĀCIJA

Es apliecinu, ka nekad neesmu bijis notiesāts pārkāpumos, kas saistīti ar jebkāda veida kaitējumu bērnam vai bērniem, un man nekad nav izteikts šāda veida brīdinājums. Tāpat apliecinu, ka šīs deklarācijas parakstīšanas brīdī pret mani nav izvirzīts nekāda veida civilprocess vai kriminālprocess, kas saistīts ar jebkāda veida liecībām par jebkāda veida kaitējumu bērnam vai bērniem vai jebkāda veida vardarbību, kas saistīta ar dzimumu, piemēram, cilvēku tirdzniecību, izvarošanu u.c.

Es pilnvaruju MARTu meklēt informāciju vai griezties pie maniem bijušajiem darba devējiem, lai pārbaudītu ziņas par disciplinārpārkāpumiem, kas saistīti ar bērniem vai ar dzimumu saistītu vardarbību.

Es pilnvaruju MARTu nepieciešamības gadījumā pieprasīt informāciju par manu sodāmību, kas saistīta ar jebkādām liecībām par jebkāda veida kaitējumu bērnam vai bērniem citās valstīs. Es pilnvaruju MARTu nodot personīga rakstura informāciju atbilstošajām iestādēm tajās valstīs, kur esmu dzīvojis vai strādājis, ar mērķi iegūt informāciju par manu sodāmību.

Es atļauju MARTAi periodiski pārbaudīt iepriekš minēto informāciju par sodāmību.

Es apzinos, kas būtiskas informācijas noklusēšanas vai nepatiesu vai neprecīzu ziņu sniegšanas gadījumā mani var diskvalificēt no kandidēšanas amatam vai, ja tieku pieņemts/a darbā, varu saņemt disciplinārsodu, tajā skaitā tikt atlaists/a no darba.

Es stingri ievērošu MARTAs Bērnu aizsardzības protokolu un Bērnu aizsardzības uzvedības kodeksu. Es apstiprinu, ka šīs deklarācijas parakstīšanas brīdī esmu šos dokumentus saņēmis/usi.

Saskaņā ar Fizisko personu datu aizsardzības likumu un citiem likumiem saistībā ar personas privātuma aizsardzību, kas ir saistoši Latvijai, šī deklarācija ir konfidenciāla un tiek pagarināta tikai, lai izvērtētu manu

piemērotību darbam ar bērniem MARTā. Šī deklarācija vai tās daļa nevar tikt izmantota citiem mērķiem, izņemot to, kam tā tieši domāta.

Vārds	
Paraksts	
Datums	
AIZPILDA MARTA	
Vadītāja/s vārds	
Datums, kad noskaidrota informācija par sodāmību	
Paraksts	