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CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

1. Introduction

Terraforming strongly condemns all forms of child abuse and exploitation. **We are committed to providing and maintaining a safe and caring environment for all children we come into contact with through our programmes, projects, and operations.**

This Child Protection Policy (CPP) is binding for all Terraforming's board members, employees, trainees, volunteers, contractors, representatives, and partner organisations.

Every child is potentially at risk of harm. Some children may be more vulnerable due to socio-economic status, gender, disability, ethnicity, religion, migration or refugee status, or other forms of marginalisation.

Definition of a child: A child is every human being below the age of 18 years, unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier (UNCRC).

2. Purpose of the Policy

- To ensure that safeguarding measures are in place so that no activity, staff member, or representative of Terraforming causes harm to children.
- To set clear rules and standards for behaviour when working with children.
- To describe reporting and response procedures.
- To provide transparent information for children, families, communities, and partners about what they can expect from Terraforming.
- To protect staff and volunteers from false or malicious allegations by ensuring clear rules and accountability.

3. Legal and Normative Framework

- [Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child](#) (2016-2021), including:
 - Equal opportunities
 - Participation of children
 - A life free from violence
 - Child-friendly justice
 - Children's Rights in the digital environment
- [The European Convention on Human Rights](#)
- [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) (UNCRC)
- [The National Strategy for Protection of Children and Prevention from Violence of the Republic of Serbia](#)
- [General and Special Protocol](#) for Protection of Children and Students from Violence, Neglect, and Abuse in Educational Institutions, developed by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Serbia
- [The Law on Ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child by the Republic of Serbia](#), including the protection of the child against:
 - physical and mental violence, abuse and neglect (Article 19);
 - all forms of sexual abuse and exploitation (Article 34);
 - kidnapping and trafficking in children (Article 35);
 - all other forms of exploitation (exploitation) detrimental to any kind of child's welfare (Article 36);
 - inhuman and degrading treatment and punishment (Article 37).
- [Other relevant laws and treaties](#) ratified by the Republic of Serbia

Terraforming's Child Protection Policy is created following the UNCRC principle:

The best interest of the child is our primary consideration. Every child has the right to develop to his or her full potential, to quality education, participation, and non-discrimination. Everybody is responsible for protecting children from all forms of abuse, abandonment, exploitation, violence, and discrimination.

In this policy, particular attention is focused on specific mechanisms to prevent and respond to child abuse.

4. Definitions and Risks

Child abuse includes physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, negligent treatment, and emotional abuse.

Child safeguarding is the responsibility to ensure that all operations and staff do not harm children, prevent the risk of abuse, and report concerns to competent authorities.

Specific risks in Terraforming's work include:

- Engagement of minors in educational programmes and workshops.
- Public communication, including use of photos, videos, and testimonies.
- Online and digital risks related to sharing sensitive information.

5. Behavioural Rules

The following behaviours are strictly prohibited:

- Any form of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse of children.
- Discrimination, humiliation, bullying, or degrading treatment.
- Asking children to share sensitive personal stories for fundraising or publicity.
- Taking photographs, audio, or video of children without informed consent from both the child and their legal guardian.
- Being alone with a child in a closed or private space.

All staff and volunteers must act as positive role models, listen to children, and respect their rights.

6. Safe Recruitment

Terraforming applies strict recruitment procedures:

- Criminal background checks for all employees, volunteers, and trainees working directly with children.
- Reference checks from previous employers or institutions.
- Explicit inclusion of child safeguarding obligations in all contracts and agreements.

7. Data Protection

- Personal data about children (including photos, medical, or family background) must be handled confidentially and stored securely.
- No child's identity will be disclosed in public communication without explicit consent from the child and guardian.
- Sensitive information will never be linked with identifiable photos or videos.

8. Training

- Mandatory induction training on child safeguarding and this CPP for all staff, volunteers, and trainees at the start of their engagement.
- Refresher training provided annually.
- Specialised training for staff working directly with children.

9. Reporting and Response

- A Child Protection Officer (CPO) is appointed by Terraforming to act as the first point of contact.
- All staff must immediately report any suspicion, allegation, or incident of abuse:
 - Inform the Child Protection Officer.
 - The CPO informs the Director.
 - If necessary, immediate referral to police, social services, or other competent authorities.
- Reports are documented in a standard form, kept confidential, and stored securely.
- Failure to report constitutes a breach of duty.

10. External Referrals and Systems

Terraforming cooperates with:

- Centres for Social Work in Serbia.
- Local and national police authorities.
- Ombudsman for Children's Rights.
- Other relevant child protection systems at municipal, national, and international levels.

11. Complaint Mechanism

- Children, parents, and communities must have safe and accessible channels to submit complaints.
- Complaints can be made in person, by phone, by email, or through our website.
- Anonymous complaints are accepted and investigated.

12. Revision and Accountability

- This CPP is revised every two years or earlier if required by law, international standards, or organisational changes.
- The policy is publicly available on our website.
- The CPP is signed and endorsed by the Director of Terraforming.

13. Key Messages

To children:

- You have rights, including the right to say "No".
- Violence is not allowed.
- We listen to you and take you seriously.

To staff and volunteers:

- You are role models.
- You must report any suspected abuse immediately.
- Child protection is everyone's responsibility.

Signed:



Misko Stanisic
Director of Terraforming

Novi Sad, 2025.08.15