YRCI
Youth Rights & Citizenship
Initiative

YRCI ALBANIA – SAFEGUARDING POLICY

JANUARY 6, 2025
YOUTH RIGHTS & CITIZENSHIP INITIATIVE
Neib.5 Maji, St. Kozma Naska, Doko Complex, 2-nd floor

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1. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that children, youth, and other vulnerable individuals involved in any YRCI activity are protected from all forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation, or harm—whether deliberate or accidental—caused by the actions or inactions of YRCI staff, volunteers, partners, or representatives. This policy is a core component of YRCI's commitment to promoting dignity, equality, inclusion, and safe environments for everyone we work with.

2. Core Principles

- **Zero tolerance** for abuse, neglect, and exploitation.
- **Collective responsibility** for identifying, preventing, and responding to safeguarding concerns.
- **Immediate and proportionate response** to all reported cases.
- **Confidentiality and survivor-centered approach** in all reporting and investigation processes.
- **Participation and empowerment** of children and youth.
- **Non-retaliation** for good faith reporting.

3. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to:

- All YRCI staff (permanent or temporary)
- Volunteers and interns
- Youth participants engaged in YRCI projects and activities
- Trainers, consultants, and external experts
- Partner organizations and any third party acting on behalf of YRCI

4. Definitions

- **Safeguarding**: The actions, policies, and procedures undertaken to protect people from harm, abuse, or exploitation—especially children and vulnerable adults.
- **Abuse**: Any behavior or act that causes physical, emotional, psychological, or sexual harm.
- **Youth**: Any individual aged 13–30 who participates in, contributes to, or benefits from YRCI's activities.
- **Volunteer**: Any person offering services to YRCI without receiving financial compensation, including youth volunteers.

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5. Preventive Measures

- Mandatory safeguarding and child protection training for all staff, volunteers, and youth facilitators.
- Code of Conduct signed by all staff and volunteers.
- Background checks and references for individuals working directly with children and youth.
- Youth volunteers must receive safeguarding orientation before any engagement.
- Youth and children participating in activities must be informed of their rights and of the safe spaces created for their participation.
- Risk assessments are conducted for all activities involving youth or minors.

6. Youth Volunteer and Participant Procedures

YRCI recognizes the essential role of youth as change-makers and supports their active involvement in all phases of programming. To ensure a safe and empowering environment:

- All youth volunteers must:
  - Complete a safeguarding briefing session.
  - Read and sign the Youth Volunteer Code of Conduct.
  - Designate a trusted adult contact point within YRCI for support.
- For activities involving minors under 18:
  - Parental or guardian consent is required.
  - Staff must ensure supervision, safety, and participation in age-appropriate ways.
- No youth volunteer or participant shall be left alone with an adult without supervision or visibility.
- All reports by youth are treated confidentially and respectfully, with appropriate referral and support.

7. Reporting Process

Everyone involved in YRCI activities has the duty to report any concern or suspicion of abuse, harm, or inappropriate behavior.

Reports can be submitted via:

- Directly to the YRCI Safeguarding Focal Point _ Agim Gremi
- By email: yrci.alb@gmail.com
- Anonymous report box (available at the YRCI office during projects)

All concerns will be handled sensitively and investigated promptly. Protection of the reporter and the individual at risk is paramount.

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8. Response and Support

- All reported incidents will be assessed within 5 working days.
- Immediate steps will be taken to ensure the safety and well-being of the person at risk.
- Cases with legal implications will be referred to appropriate authorities.
- Survivors and whistleblowers will be offered psychological and legal support as needed.
- A safeguarding case file will be opened and securely stored.

9. Roles and Responsibilities

- **Executive Director**: Ensures policy enforcement, staff training, and resource allocation.
- **Safeguarding Focal Point**: Receives reports, oversees case management, liaises with external services.
- **Project Coordinators**: Monitor compliance at activity level, guide youth volunteers, ensure consent forms.
- **All Staff and Volunteers**: Commit to acting in line with this policy and upholding the protection of others.

10. Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed every 2 years, or earlier if needed due to legal, operational, or contextual changes.

Feedback from youth participants and stakeholders will be incorporated in future versions to ensure relevance and effectiveness.

11. Code of Conduct (Behaviour Guidelines)

All individuals associated with YRCI are expected to:

- Treat all children and youth with respect regardless of gender, nationality, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, or religion.
- Always act professionally and avoid any behavior that could be misinterpreted as abusive or exploitative.
- Never use physical punishment or verbal abuse.
- Avoid being alone with a child or youth in a closed or private space.
- Avoid giving personal contact information or connecting via private social media accounts.
- Immediately report any safeguarding concerns or breaches.

Violations of this code may result in disciplinary measures, termination of engagement, or legal action, depending on the severity.

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12. Risk Assessment and Activity Planning

Before implementing any activity involving youth or vulnerable individuals, the following must be carried out:

- A safeguarding risk assessment to identify potential threats and mitigation measures.
- Inclusion of a safeguarding checklist in all project planning forms.
- Appointment of a responsible Safeguarding Focal Point during all in-person activities.
- Ensuring visibility and supervision at all times during group activities or workshops.

13. Consent, Privacy, and Use of Images

- Written informed consent must be obtained from participants (and legal guardians for minors) before taking photos or videos.
- Participants must be informed about how their images and personal data will be used and have the right to opt out.
- Any digital content shared by YRCI must avoid disclosing personal or sensitive information without permission.

14. Partner and Contractor Safeguarding Compliance

- YRCI requires all partner organizations and contractors to adhere to safeguarding standards equivalent to its own.
- Safeguarding clauses must be included in all partnership agreements, subgrants, and service contracts.
- Partners must report safeguarding incidents related to joint activities within 48 hours of awareness.

15. Recordkeeping and Data Protection

- All safeguarding reports and investigations are documented and stored securely with restricted access.
- Data is retained in compliance with Albania's data protection legislation and donor requirements.
- Anonymity and confidentiality are protected throughout the process.

Executive Director of Youth Rights & Citizenship Initiative

Eliona Gremi

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ELBASAN
NIPT M3293033IM

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Annexes to the YRCI Safeguarding Policy

Annex 1 – Youth Volunteer Code of Conduct

As a youth volunteer representing YRCI, I agree to the following principles and behavioral standards:

1. Treat all children, youth, and adults with respect regardless of gender, ethnicity, religion, or background.

2. Avoid physical contact that can be misinterpreted.

3. Never engage in sexual activity or suggestive behavior with minors.

4. Never be alone in private with a child or youth.

5. Immediately report any safeguarding concerns to the Safeguarding Focal Point.

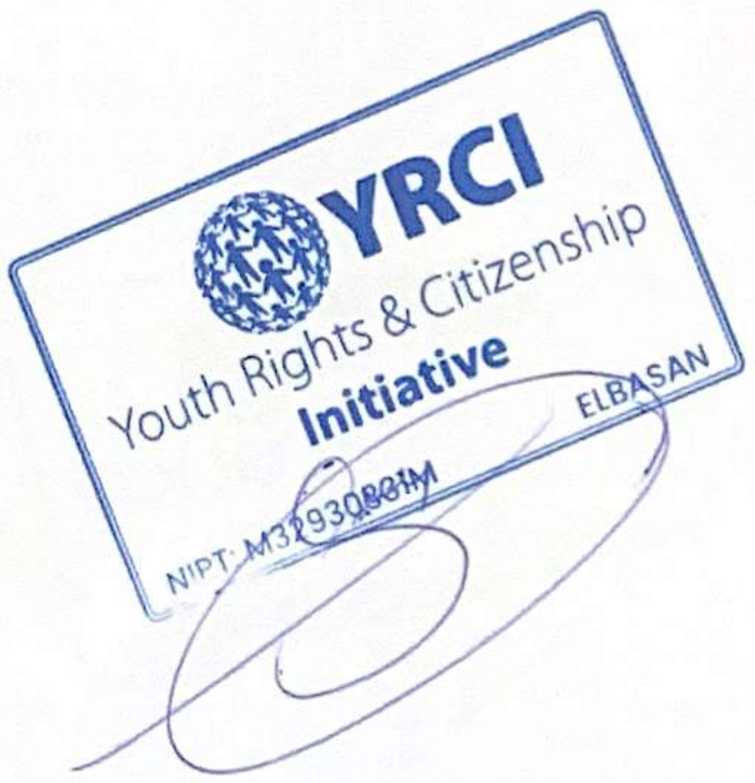
6. Use respectful language and maintain professional boundaries.

7. Avoid connecting with participants through personal social media accounts.

8. Uphold confidentiality and integrity at all times.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Full Name: _____



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Annex 2 – Incident Reporting Form

To be completed by anyone witnessing or being informed of a safeguarding concern.

1. Date of Report: _____

2. Reporter's Name and Role: _____

3. Contact Details: _____

4. Date and Time of Incident: _____

5. Location: _____

6. Individuals Involved: _____

7. Description of the Incident (Include who, what, where, when):

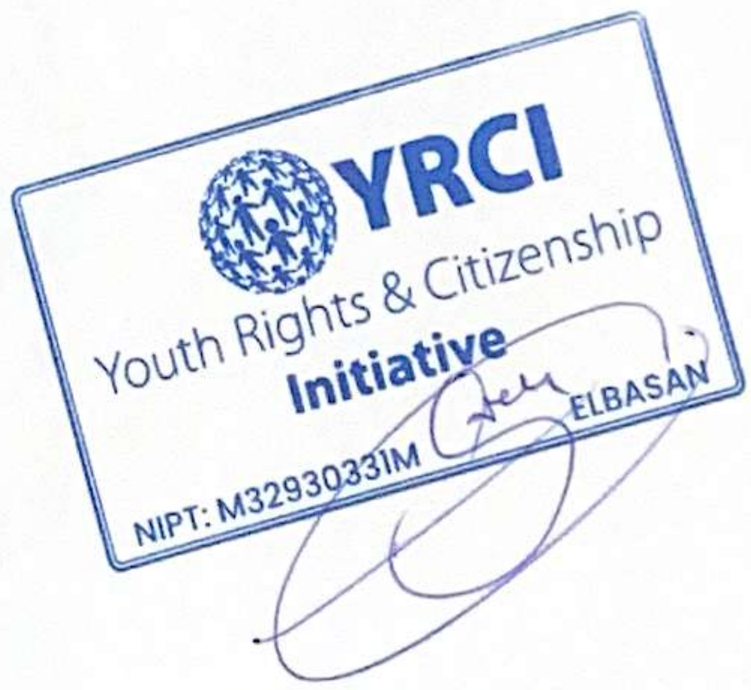
8. Immediate Actions Taken:

9. Names of Witnesses (if any): _____

10. Additional Notes:

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Submit to: yrci.alb@gmail.com



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Annex 3 – Parental/Guardian Consent Form

I, the undersigned, hereby give permission for my child to participate in the activity organized by YRCI.

Child's Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Relationship to Child: _____

☐ I consent to the participation of my child in the activity.
☐ I authorize YRCI to take photos/videos for documentation and visibility.
☐ I acknowledge that my child will be supervised by YRCI staff.

Emergency Contact: _____ (Phone/Email)

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____

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Annex 4 – Safeguarding Risk Assessment Template

This template is to be completed by project coordinators prior to youth-related activities.

Risk Description	Likelihood (Low/Med/High)	Impact (Low/Med/High)	Preventive Measures	Responsible Person

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Annex 5 – Attendance Sheet with Safeguarding Acknowledgment

This sheet records the attendance of participants and their acknowledgment of safeguarding rules.

No.	Full Name	Organization (if any)	Contact Info	Signature	Acknowledges Safeguarding Rules (Yes/No)

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