

2020

CHILD PROTECTION & SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Hikma Charity Association Somalia

(Approved by the Board on: 2nd January 2020)

1. INTRODUCTION

Hikma Charity Association Somalia is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare, dignity, and rights of all children who come into contact with the organization through its programs, operations, partnerships, and public engagement activities.

As a humanitarian and development organization working in vulnerable communities across Somalia, the Association recognizes that children face heightened risks of abuse, exploitation, neglect, trafficking, harmful traditional practices, and violence. The organization acknowledges its moral, legal, and professional responsibility to ensure that children are protected from harm in all areas of its work.

This Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy establishes the standards, procedures, and responsibilities required to prevent harm, respond effectively to concerns, and create a safe organizational culture.

Safeguarding children is a shared responsibility.



2. POLICY STATEMENT

Hikma Charity Association Somalia adopts a **zero-tolerance approach** toward:

- Child abuse
- Child exploitation
- Child neglect
- Child trafficking
- Sexual exploitation of children
- Child labor
- Any form of violence against children

Any violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action, which may include termination of employment and referral to legal authorities.

The best interests of the child shall be the primary consideration in all decisions.

3. PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

This policy aims to:

1. Protect children from harm during organizational activities.
 2. Establish clear behavioral standards for staff and representatives.
 3. Provide clear reporting and response procedures.
 4. Promote safe programming practices.
 5. Ensure accountability at all organizational levels.
 6. Strengthen community trust and organizational integrity.
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4. SCOPE

This policy applies to:



- Board Members
- Executive Management
- Employees
- Volunteers
- Consultants
- Contractors
- Interns
- Partner Organizations
- Visitors
- Suppliers working directly with children

The policy applies in:

- Offices
- Project sites
- Schools and community centers
- Field missions
- Distribution points
- Online/digital communication platforms

5. DEFINITION OF A CHILD

For the purpose of this policy, a child is any person under the age of 18 years, regardless of local customs or marital status.

6. DEFINITIONS OF CHILD ABUSE

6.1 Physical Abuse

Intentional use of physical force that results in injury, harm, or pain.

6.2 Emotional or Psychological Abuse

Behavior that harms a child's emotional development, including humiliation, threats, or rejection.

6.3 Sexual Abuse

Involving a child in sexual activities that they do not fully understand, cannot consent to, or are not developmentally prepared for.

6.4 Neglect

Failure to provide adequate supervision, food, shelter, medical care, or protection.

6.5 Exploitation

Using a child for financial, political, labor, or sexual benefit.

7. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Association commits to the following principles:

7.1 Best Interests of the Child

Every action must prioritize the child's safety and well-being.

7.2 Non-Discrimination

All children must be treated equally regardless of gender, clan, disability, religion, or background.

7.3 Participation

Children have the right to express their views in matters affecting them.



7.4 Confidentiality

Information about child protection cases must be handled with strict confidentiality.

7.5 Accountability

All staff are accountable for safeguarding responsibilities.

8. ORGANIZATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

8.1 Board of Directors

- Approve and oversee safeguarding policy.
- Ensure adequate resources for implementation.
- Review serious safeguarding cases.

8.2 Executive Director

- Ensure policy implementation.
- Appoint a Safeguarding Focal Point.
- Report serious incidents to the Board.

8.3 Safeguarding Focal Point

- Receive and document reports.
- Coordinate investigations.
- Ensure referrals to authorities when required.
- Provide safeguarding training.

8.4 All Staff

- Comply with safeguarding standards.
- Report concerns immediately.
- Promote safe environments.



9. SAFE RECRUITMENT PROCEDURES

To minimize safeguarding risks:

1. All candidates must provide valid identification.
2. At least two professional references must be checked.
3. Criminal background checks shall be conducted where possible.
4. Safeguarding responsibilities shall be included in job descriptions.
5. All staff must sign the Code of Conduct.
6. Safeguarding training must be provided upon induction.

Individuals with a history of child abuse shall not be employed.

10. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR WORKING WITH CHILDREN

Staff and representatives must:

- Treat children with respect and dignity.
- Use appropriate language and behavior.
- Ensure activities are supervised.
- Obtain informed parental consent for activities.
- Maintain appropriate physical boundaries.
- Ensure safe transportation arrangements.

Staff must NOT:

- Engage in sexual relationships with anyone under 18.
- Use physical punishment.
- Exchange assistance for favors.
- Humiliate or degrade a child.
- Spend time alone with a child in private locations.
- Share personal phone numbers or social media contacts without authorization.

11. SAFE PROGRAM DESIGN

All projects involving children must:

- Conduct a safeguarding risk assessment.
- Ensure safe venues and facilities.
- Maintain safe adult-to-child supervision ratios.
- Include community awareness on child protection.
- Monitor partner compliance.

Safeguarding must be integrated into project planning and budgeting.

12. PHOTOGRAPHY, MEDIA & COMMUNICATION

Before photographing or filming children:

- Obtain written consent from parents/guardians.
- Ensure images portray dignity and respect.
- Avoid revealing personal information.
- Avoid images that could expose children to risk.

Images must not be used for exploitative fundraising.

13. REPORTING PROCEDURES

Any suspicion, allegation, or incident must be reported immediately.

Reports may be submitted to:

- Safeguarding Focal Point
- Immediate Supervisor



- Executive Director
- Board Representative (if management involved)

Reports must include:

- Description of concern
- Date and location
- Names of persons involved
- Witness details (if available)

Failure to report may result in disciplinary action.

14. RESPONSE PROCEDURES

Upon receiving a report:

1. Ensure the immediate safety of the child.
2. Maintain confidentiality.
3. Document the incident.
4. Conduct preliminary assessment.
5. Refer to local authorities when required.
6. Provide psychosocial or referral support.

The Association shall cooperate with relevant authorities in accordance with Somali law.

15. CONFIDENTIALITY & DATA PROTECTION

All safeguarding information must:

- Be stored securely.
- Be accessible only to authorized personnel.
- Protect the identity of the child.
- Not be discussed publicly.



Breach of confidentiality is a disciplinary offense.

16. PARTNER & CONTRACTOR COMPLIANCE

All partners must:

- Sign safeguarding agreements.
- Adopt child protection measures.
- Report safeguarding incidents.
- Allow safeguarding audits.

Non-compliance may result in termination of partnership.

17. DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Violation of this policy may result in:

- Verbal or written warning
- Suspension
- Termination of employment
- Reporting to law enforcement
- Legal action

Serious violations (e.g., sexual abuse) result in immediate dismissal.

18. TRAINING & AWARENESS



The Association shall:

- Provide annual safeguarding training.
- Conduct community awareness sessions.
- Include safeguarding in staff orientation.
- Display reporting mechanisms visibly.

19. MONITORING & REVIEW

Safeguarding performance shall be:

- Reviewed annually.
- Included in internal audits.
- Assessed during project evaluations.

This policy shall be reviewed every two years.

20. DECLARATION

we, __BoD of Hikma Charity Association _____, confirm that we have read and understood the Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy of Hikma Charity Association Somalia and agree to comply with its provisions.

Signed on This day 2nd January, 2020

