



WATOTO WASOKA
FOOTBALL MADE IN SLUMS

Child Protection Policy

Policy Document	Version	Drafted	Approved	Next review
Child Protection	4.0	10.09.2024	15.10.2024	11.11.2026

Approval:

Date	Name	Position	Signature
15.10.2024	Francis Mugoya	Executive Director / CEO	
15.10.2024	Rene T. Meyer	Board Chair	

1. INTRODUCTION:

Throughout our work, our clientele is dominated by children. The safety of the child is our prime consideration at all times. This policy seeks to address our need to protect children from exploitation and abuse. As such, developing and implementing a comprehensive Child Protection Policy for Watoto Wasoka is essential to ensure the safety and well-being of all children involved in our activities.

This Policy demonstrates our commitment to protecting children from all harm and abuse, including physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and neglect.

2. PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to provide a safe environment for children and outline the responsibilities of staff, volunteers, and other stakeholders. The policy protects both children and staff by clearly defining what action is required in order to keep children safe, and ensuring a consistency of behaviour so that all staff follow the same process. This policy provides a framework of standards and guidelines on which to base individual and organisational practice in relation to such areas as recognising and responding to abuse, safe recruitment of staff, responsibility and accountability and guidelines for effective communication and working with other agencies.

This policy applies to all children who are part of our organisation, and to those with whom personnel come into contact in the course of our work – in the community, at home, school, camps, events and tournaments. It applies to all employees, volunteers and management of Watoto Wasoka, coaches and partner agencies.

3. KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Abuse	Any action, or lack of, that harms a child's well-being including physical, emotional or sexual abuse, or neglect.
Code of conduct	A clear policy and guide of what is, or not, acceptable behaviour for all personnel employed, and/or associated with Watoto Wasoka.
Child protection	The process of protecting children from abuse; it also includes measures to prevent and respond to abuse.
Neglect	The persistent inattention, carelessness or failure to ensure the child's basic needs which may lead serious impairment of the child's health and development; it's also about failing to provide the child with the necessary care and protection from harm to the extent possible.
Safeguarding	All measures (policies, procedures, practices and initiatives) designed to ensure that no harm happens to people as a result of contact with the organisation's programmes, operations or people.
Child	Anyone under the age of 18.
Staff	People employed directly by, or volunteer for, Watoto Wasoka, as well as staff and volunteers of partner organisations while they are working with children in the care or supervision of Watoto Wasoka.
Exploitation	The use of an individual for one's own benefit, or satisfaction.
Harm	Negative impact on a child's health and well-being. Violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation often lead to a child being harmed.

Sexual exploitation	The abuse of a position of vulnerability, or trust for sexual purposes, including but not limited to, profiting financially, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of a child.
Sexual favour	Any sexual or sexualised acts, in exchange for money, goods, services, opportunities, etc., and includes demands for inappropriate photographs, filming, and exposure to pornography, among others.
Stakeholders	These are people, groups, or organisations who are involved with or benefit from the work of Watoto Wasoka, either directly or indirectly.

4. OUR COMMITMENT TO SAFEGUARDING

- Watoto Wasoka prioritises the safety and well-being of children. Any concerns or allegations of child abuse will be taken seriously and thoroughly investigated.
- It's essential to value, listen to, and respect children to protect them.
- All staff, volunteers, and partners must be familiar with this policy and understand their role in keeping children safe. They should also receive training on child protection and know how to report any concerns or allegations of child abuse.
- We follow national and global laws regarding child protection and reporting abuse.
- We believe it's better to prevent harm than to deal with it after it happens.

5. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

We are committed to raising awareness among staff, enforcing a prevention policy, and addressing any behaviour that violates this policy. Our approach aligns with the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, including:

- The child's best interests must always come first in decisions about them.
- All children, no matter their race, gender, religion, or abilities, have the right to be protected from discrimination and enjoy their rights.
- Children have the right to express their opinions on matters that affect them, and those opinions should be taken seriously.
- Children should be consulted, and their views respected in decisions about their lives.
- Children have the right to actively take part in activities and decisions that affect them.

6. SAFEGUARDING MEASURES

6.1. Zero tolerance to child abuse, exploitation

We will not tolerate any form of child abuse or exploitation, whether intentional or accidental. We will take all necessary steps to address any allegations and ensure the child's safety.

6.2. Recognition of the best interest of the child

Our staff, coaches, volunteers, and partners must always prioritize the best interest of the child in all our work. If one child's needs may harm another or go against our policy, we will seek guidance to ensure the child's safety and well-being.

When abuse is suspected or reported, the first priority will always be the child's safety.

6.3. Sharing responsibility for child protection

We will work closely with families, communities, local leaders, the police, and other agencies to protect children. We will keep an updated list of contacts for agencies and professionals who can help with concerns. We expect all partner organizations and funders to have their

own Child Protection or Safeguarding Policy, and at the very least, they must respect and follow our policy.

6.4. Procedural fairness / Equality statement

We are committed to protecting every child equally, regardless of age, ability, gender, or background. We stand against discrimination and believe in giving every child a fair chance at life and their rights.

6.5. Communication and use of technology

Staff must understand the importance of keeping professional boundaries when communicating with children, whether at work, home, public places, or through mobile and social media. This includes using technology like phones, texts, emails, cameras, and videos.

6.6. Media rights

When working with children, we must get written consent from parents, guardians, or caretakers, and if possible, the child, before taking any photos or recordings. We also have the right to deny media access to a child if it's not in the child's best interest.

6.7. Sexual Contact

Intimate or sexual relationships between children and adults who work with them are a serious breach of trust and completely unacceptable. Encouraging such relationships is also wrong. Any sexual activity between an adult and a child is a criminal offense and will be handled according to state law.

6.8. First Aid and the administration of medication

Some children may need medication while in our care, especially during events and tournaments, so it's important to plan for this. For children needing regular medication, healthcare support should be arranged from a nearby clinic or hospital to keep everyone safe.

6.9. Football camps, Trips, and tournaments

Adults must be especially careful when supervising children during camps, trips, and outings in less formal settings. All adults assigned to care for children at our events must register their group early with our officials. Children, adults, and parents should be informed of these arrangements before the trip. We will always ensure safe staff-to-child ratios and a balanced gender mix of staff, especially for trips and overnight stays.

7. PREVENTION

Watoto Wasoka will take these steps to keep everyone safe during our activities:

- Use safe hiring practices, including background checks and reference checks, to make sure staff and volunteers are suitable to work with children.
- Provide regular child protection training for all staff, volunteers, coaches, and stakeholders, along with resources to help them follow our safeguarding policy.
- Ensure all staff, volunteers, and stakeholders read and agree to our Safeguarding Code of Conduct and sign to confirm this.
- Appoint a senior person as the safeguarding lead, make their contact information known, and provide training for handling safeguarding issues.

RAISING AND RESPONDING TO SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

Watoto Wasoka will provide safe and accessible ways for all stakeholders to report safeguarding concerns. Anyone reporting a concern will be protected by our whistleblower policy, and their concerns will be taken seriously.

We require all staff and stakeholders to report any concerns, suspicions, allegations, or incidents of actual or potential abuse or policy violations involving children by our staff or others. If you suspect abuse or someone shares a concern with you, do not try to determine if abuse occurred. Instead, report it to a designated safeguarding officer, who will handle the case appropriately:

Safeguarding Officer	<i>Name: Mercy Nabulobi</i> <i>Role: Girls Programme Officer</i> <i>Contact: mercy@watotowasoka.ug</i> <i>Phone number: +256 (0) 786 641 320</i>
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If you are not comfortable reporting to the Safeguarding Officer (for example, if you feel the report might not be taken seriously or if that person is involved in the concern), you can report to the Executive Director or a member of the Watoto Wasoka Board of Directors:

Watoto Wasoka Executive Director	<i>Name: Francis Mugoya</i> <i>Contact: +256 (0) 779 439 540</i>
Watoto Wasoka Board Representative	<i>Name: Saumya Kailasapathy</i> <i>Contact: board@watotowasoka.ug</i>

When a report is made, clear steps will be initiated to respond to the same, including immediate safety measures, investigation procedures, and support for the affected child.

In case of reports on alleged child exploitations and abuse, all staff, volunteers, coaches and children in general will be required to:

Respond to all concerns, and to reassure the person who has given them information on an alleged act of child exploitation or abuse.

Record all information and remember to distinguish fact from opinion.

Consult with the designated safeguarding officer, our policy or external agencies.

Report all concerns to officers above, or in case of criminal cases, to the relevant authorities including the police.

Allegations will be treated in such a way that the rights of adults and the stress upon the staff member are also taken into consideration. When there are suspicions of abuse by a staff member, both staff and children's rights are to be attended to; the safety of the child is of first concern, and that the staff member must have access to legal and professional advice.

8. ACTION IN CASE OF POLICY VIOLATION

If behaviour violating this policy is reported, Watoto Wasoka will conduct a thorough, impartial, and timely investigation. We are committed to responding quickly to child protection concerns and treating such reports as a priority.

If it is confirmed that someone associated with Watoto Wasoka has committed violence against a child, a criminal act, or any action violating children's rights or this policy, we will take disciplinary measures, and any other actions suited to the situation.

9. MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy and all its related policies will be reviewed every two years to align it with the changing needs of the child and the organisation in general as well as the laws of the state. In doing so, we incorporate feedback from children, staff, and stakeholders into policy revisions.

Appendices

- Safeguarding Code of Conduct
- Incident Reporting Form

Cross references:

- The Children Act, 1996
- Keeping Children Safe Standards
- Watoto Wasoka Code of Conduct
- Watoto Wasoka Human Resource Policy
- The 1948 United Nations Declaration of Human Rights
- The 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

We also drew lessons and inspiration from fellow Sport for Development practitioners, funders and partners policies in how we formatted the different sections.