

TANZANIA SICKLE CELL WARRIORS ORGANISATION

(TASIWA)



TASIWA CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

2021

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CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this TASIWA Child Protection Policy Manual approved by the Board of Directors during its Meeting held on.....and signed on its behalf by:

Chair of the Board of Directors

TASIWA *Official Stamp*

.....

Date.....

1.0 Introduction

Tanzania Sickle Cell Warriors Organization is known by its abbreviated form as TASIWA. It is a Non-Government Organization, based in Mwanza, Tanzania. It was established and registered in August 2019 under the NGO Act No: 24 of 2002, as amended in 2005, with Registration Number 00NGO/R/0435 to operate in Tanzania Mainland. It is working to promote education and awareness on Sickle Cell Disease, and provides new hopes to the families affected by Sickle Cell Disease and creates forums to air the problems of sickle cell disease.

TASIWA believes in promotion of the sickle cell awareness and understanding through education on various channels, with the aim of improving patient care, eradicating misconception and social stigma as well as supporting economically families suffering from the disease directly or indirectly.

1.1 Vision: The community and the Government cooperating to overcome Sickle cell disease and its negative impacts to social and economic wellbeing of the country.

1.2 Mission Statement: To promote the Sickle cell awareness and understanding through education on various channels, with the aim of improving patient care, eradicating misconception and social stigma as well as supporting economically families suffering from the disease directly or indirectly

1.2 Core Values: TASIWA has developed core values that are committed to live by:

- i) *Respect for Human Rights and Dignity:* We respect the inherent inalienable rights of all human being in all the dealings of the organization while upholding high moral principles in conducting our duties.
- ii) *Transparency and Accountability:* We are stewards of resources entrusted to us by our stakeholders, and use them in performing our duties in a rational manner and taking responsibility for all our actions, by conducting our services in a transparent manner.
- iii) *Culture of Excellence:* We strive to set challenging goals, excel in all our endeavors and innovations so as to deliver the best outcomes possible.
- iv) *Integrity:* We are fair, honest and open in all matters related to affairs of the Council.

- v) *Gender Equality*: We stand against all situations that deny women right to decisions, power sharing and equal access to resources between men and women.
- vi) *Voluntarism*: We generate among the members and the society the spirit of participation and team work in carrying out social and economic engagement based on free will for the common good.

2.0 Organizational Objectives

- i) To conduct various campaigns to bring awareness and understanding of sickle cell disease to the community.
- ii) To mobilize the community on the importance of genotype test on Sickle cell.
- iii) To foster cooperation among Sickle cell patients, parents/families living with sickle cell patients, caregivers, Government branches and religious organizations, in the struggle against the disease.
- iv) To conduct advocacy campaigns focused on breaking down stigmas associated with Sickle cell disease.
- v) To enable and support Sickle Cell patients to access required medical services.
- vi) To support parents/ families affected with Sickle Cell to manage treatment and other care cost through various economic empowerment measures.

3.0 Overview of the Policy

The United Republic of Tanzania has made significant progress as regards child protection, both on a national level and on a global level. Such progress has included ratification of the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child (1991), and accession to the Protocol on Controlling Selling of Children, Preventing Child Prostitution, and Child Pornography (2003). In addition, Tanzania has ratified the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child in (1990) and the African Charter on People's and Human Rights.

Finally, Tanzania is a signatory to the Human Rights Treaties of the East Africa Community (EAC) and has enacted relevant national legislation such as the Law of Child Act (2009). Nevertheless, the achievements are threatened by the number of factors such as persisting poverty, low level of harmonization of laws regarding children, inadequate resources to support children

protection and activities/services, low budgetary allocations, inadequate capacity on actors to be able in implementing protection program, lack of universal awareness, and non-acceptance of child rights.

4.0 Statement of the Policy

Child protection is about protecting a child from intentional and un-intentional harm within organization intended for their benefits. TASIWA as a registered Non-Government Organization is committed to protect the child from all sorts of harm due to its belief that, Child Development is Human Development and, in order for child to grow to his/her full potential has to be protected from all negative influence whether intentional or un-intentional. Therefore, the focus of this policy is to enhance good practices, safety/protection and to make staff/caregivers/members/volunteers informed so as to be able to respond to the protection issues. Application of this policy will respect The National Guidelines, Regulations, Legislations, Development Policies ratified by the United Nations' Child Rights' Convention and the African Charter. In relation to that, the bellow is codes of conduct that will be adhered to all TASIWA workers:

- i) TASIWA workers should be provided an enjoyable and safe environment that will protect children from all forms of abuse/violence/torture.
- ii) TASIWA is dedicated to be a safe organization developing, implementing, and monitoring child protection procedures; that is, in the best interest of the child.
- iii) TASIWA workers will respect each other; therefore, are strictly prohibited and forbidden from using abusive words (verbal/wrings) between themselves, beneficiaries, or to any other persons whom they come into contact.
- iv) TASIWA workers (men/women or boys/girls) who directly/indirectly come into contact with children, will not be allowed to have indecent relations with any person under 18 years old.
- v) TASIWA views all children as principal actors in their own development and proactively seek to create spaces where they can voice their opinions and make positive choices.

- vi) TASIWA workers are forbidden and prohibited from disclosing/gossiping/or spreading any sensitive/confidential information; which is/or will be obtained from the beneficiaries/children, or from any other persons with who come into contact.
- vii) TASIWA believes that, all children regardless of their biological, social or/and economic status, educational level deserve to be protected from all kinds of abuse, neglect, exploitation, violence, or/and tortures.
- viii) Where TASIWA comes into contact with abused children, it is not the role of TASIWA to judge whether a child has physically/sexually abused; instead, TASIWA will facilitate access for the child to the respective services/relevant authorities. TASIWA will provide referral documents, escorts, make follow up enquiries, provide all required support, and seek to ensure that the child's rights are respected.
- ix) TASIWA believes that, having opened lines of communication, listening and responding to the child's concern are one of the priorities of the organization. However, this situation will create a good atmosphere of providing support and encouragement and/or documenting, reporting, and receiving feedbacks.

5.0 Significance of the Policy

This policy sets out TASIWA's Child Protection and Procedures. It is for all staffs, members, and all volunteers who work with TASIWA. However, TASIWA Policy plays its significant roles in the ways:

- i) To protect children from harm of any form and reassuring their security. Having this policy minimizes the risk of abuse and exploitation to children.
- ii) Protect TASIWA workers by having clear guidance on their own behavior around children and what to do if they notice inappropriate behavior on part of others.
- iii) Protect the organization from all accusations of abuse. Since, without proper guidelines, procedures and systems in place, allegations of abuse whether founded/or unfounded can destroy an organization's reputation and the situation has serious implications for fundraising and the entire portfolio of the organization.

6.0 Recruitment Procedures

TASIWA is committed to abiding by the highest standards of recruitment procedures based on its Personnel Policy. Therefore, factors like suitability of working with children, knowledge about children protection, identity, and validity of qualifications will be considered. Other recruitments must be the provision of the self-declarations of the previous convictions and minimum requirements of at least three references. Grievances and any other differences that emerge would also be dealt with reference to TASIWA Personnel Policy.

6.1 Advertisement and Job Interviews

- i) During the recruitment interviews, emphasis will be put upon the past experiences of the interviewees when working with children. However certain questions will be based on the candidate's commitments to the child protection; and, will explore reasons for the candidate leaving his/her previous job. In addition to that, prior to appointment – candidate's former employer will consult for details. During the interviews, the interviewees will be provided with the child protection policy and required to read and agree to follow it before an employment offer made.
- ii)
- iii) TASIWA is committed to refer to the child protection principles when advertising jobs, making job offers and in recruiting personnel. This is to ensure that all recruited staffs/volunteers understood their responsibilities and become committed to child rights.
- iv) All potential staffs must declare whether they have criminal convictions within Tanzania or anywhere else. A false declaration will render the person liable to dismissal without notice.
- v) TASIWA absolutely insists that, employee/volunteers demonstrate behavior that is consistent with protocols, legislation, and suitable for the professional standards.

7.0 Education and Awareness Trainings

TASIWA staffs and volunteers have a responsibility to recognize report and advice children who are at risk of being abused or neglected. All staffs and volunteers should have the capacity to execute their roles effectively and efficiently. Therefore, TASIWA commits to:

- i) Ensure that staffs and volunteers are offered trainings; where, they will have opportunity to learn more about the nature and effects of abuse, how to recognize and respond to a child's disclosure of abuse, as well as gaining information and support on whom to conduct on whom to contact on a given event.
- ii) Ensure the organizational trainings plan and budget cover different subject areas in child protection and is reviewed annually to cover emerging concern in the field of child protection and is reviewed annually to cover emerging concerns in the field of child protection. This means the plan will cover care of abused child, psychological support and child rights.
- iii) Ensure that all employees, children, parents, caregivers, and stakeholders including donors are aware with the procedures and channels for raising suspicions.
- iv) Provide staffs and volunteers with regular training to improve their knowledge and skills which will help them to provide guidance and handling child abuse cases with ease.
- v) Publicize other services it provides to stakeholders according to the policy to seek for strategic alliances with organizations that offer same services and facilitate linkages between them and the communities.
- vi) TASIWA acknowledges that all staffs and volunteers have a role in child protection; therefore, they are subject to annual appraisals. This will act as a reminder to all staffs their responsibilities to safeguard children from harm. All staff appraisals will include feedback on training, support or advice on child protection.
- vii) TASIWA believes that every employee should be aware of the principles and procedures of child protection and that, the management structure should facilitate the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Child Protection Policy. Therefore, the child protection policy will be a standing agenda at the General Annual Meetings.

8.0 Program Development and Implementation

- i) TASIWA guarantees that child protection is an important part of the organization; hence, child protection will be integral to all programs.
- ii) All child protection programs will reflect the voices and interests of children.

- iii) Child protection programs risk assessments will be conducted and risk management plans developed.
- iv) Each year, TASIWA will undertake an internal review of its progress in keeping children safe.
- v) TASIWA recognizes that is important to empower children for self-protection. TASIWA will facilitate communities to establish forums/conferences where children will learn life skills.
- vi) TASIWA will collaborative with strategic partners who will offer expert advice and support services that will be needed by communities to handle child abuse and neglect cases.

9.0 Core Values and Behaviors

TASIWA's values and codes of conducts are aiming at building a safe organization where children will be treated with respect of human rights and dignity, transparency and accountability, culture of excellence, integrity, gender equality, and volunteerism. Therefore, the values and codes of conduct define good practices to be accepted or unaccepted. Therefore, TASIWA:

- i) Will avoid the use of language or images that directly or indirectly could possibly degrade, victimize, or violate children dignity.
- ii) Will avoid making generalizations which do not accurately reflect the nature of the situation.
- iii) Will seek the informed consent of a child before using any image, experience, or story for publicity, fundraising, awareness' raising, or other purpose. The purpose should be made clear to the time of seeking consent.
- iv) Individuals or organizations requesting for the use of the children's photographs will be required to sign an agreement on the proper use of such materials/information.
- v) Personal or physical information relating to the child should not be used in any communications, either for internal or external purposes without having obtained his/her consent.

- vi) This policy is strictly prohibits discrimination or differential treatment to children based on their nationality, religion, region, color, gender, political ideology, or economic status.
- vii) It is strictly prohibited for TASIWA staffs or volunteers to disclose/gossip, or spread any sensitive or confidential information obtained from beneficiaries (children), or from any other persons whom they come into contact while they are carrying out their duties/responsibilities.
- viii) TASIWA staffs or volunteers are not allowed to engage into sexually or physically with or marry with a person under age of 18 years regardless local belief systems and consent.
- ix) TASIWA staffs are not allowed to employ any person under the age of 18 years as a house help or in other capacity. Mistaken belief about the age of the child will not regarded as an excuse hence is not a defense.
- x) It is strictly prohibited for staffs or volunteers to use electronic media for any purposes other to execute their professional duties. Child pornography, processing and/or passing any material which is regarded as inappropriate will not be entertained.

10.0 Reporting, Communication, and Implementation

- i) TASIWA will always seek for informed consent from children, parents, guardians, or any other person responsible to child when her/his images or her/his case studies are to use in documentation or publications.
- ii) Physical addresses of children and their families who come into contact with TASIWA will be regularly reviewed and updated to accommodate changes raised.
- iii) All children's personal information will be kept safe and secured and will only be handled by designated staff of the organization.
- iv) TASIWA will assess and evaluate all activities that children engage in and parents or any other person who is responsible for the child will be informed of the event.
- v) Within TASIWA's fundraising and public materials, children must are presented as human beings with their own identity and dignity preserved. This presentation applies for materials in all media including written, photographic, and films.

- vi) On occasion, these may also be needed to assess risk to other children, and action may need to be taken to protect these additional children until the appropriate authorities can be contacted and mobilized.

10.1 Communication

- i) When communicating with children, ask children whether they feel safe with you/what they want to happen/where they would like to go, or where they would feel safe. If an appropriate age, they will probably be able to tell you very clearly, what their preference is/not.
- ii) Under no circumstances, should any staff member take any child to their home without explicit approval from TASIWA and compliant to the TASIWA's direction.
- iii) There is no *package* to say what must be done in relation to the child, or what actions are best. Each case needs to be considered on an individual basis ensuring that the best interests of the child are being met safely and securely.

10.2 Implementations

- i) In the absence of Social Welfare Worker, it is paramount that a person known and trusted by the child accompanies them to hospital, police station, or court. This may be any person the child has chosen to disclose his/her story to. In making this choice, the child invests a high level of trust.
- ii) The timing of accompanying the child must be in *the best interests of the child* in order to avoid inadvertently inflicting more traumas. Ideally, a Social Welfare Officer should always be present at any interview.
- iii) In the authorities, absolutely cannot be contracted then the main concern must be safety, best interests, and wellbeing of the child. All efforts should be made to care for the child, preferably in environments known to them. If this is not possible, then, explore and assess the possibility of extended family or other *safe people* known and trusted by the child/young person.

10.3 Reporting and Reaction Protocol

- i) TASIWA has identified process for reacting and reporting abuses/violence witnessed, suspected, or alleged according to the Child Protection Policy which is understood by

all staffs and volunteers. This means, acting immediately to report any alleged violations of the Child Protection Policy; ensuring the physical and psychological safety of the child, and protection of the child and others from further harm.

- ii) TASIWA and partner organizations work hand in hand for effective response, reaction and protocols which depend on effective collaboration and a shared understanding, and commitments to child protection.

10.3.1 Incidents and Allegation Managements

What to do if a child reports alleged violations to you?

- i) Reassure the child that he/she is right to report the below
- ii) Listen carefully calmly to him/her and ask questions to clarify the allegations so that you will be able to later report the incident correctly