



# RULES OF COOPERATION FOR PARTNERSHIPS (2026)

CARITAS SOMALIA

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## 1. SCOPE AND APPLICABILITY

These Rules of Cooperation define the standards governing the implementation of projects between Caritas Somalia and its partner organizations. All local associations and local or international NGOs partnering with Caritas Somalia are required to fully comply with this document as a binding condition for cooperation.

Cooperation under these Rules of Cooperation is implemented through individual, project-specific contracts, which define the respective rights and obligations of the parties, as well as the project budget, duration, and reporting requirements.

In addition to operational, financial, and reporting obligations, partner organizations must adhere to Caritas Somalia's policies and principles on Environmental Protection, Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI), Anti-Corruption, Anti-Money Laundering, and Countering the Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT), and Data Protection and Privacy, as outlined below.

## 2. PROPOSAL

The proposal for partnership, which differs from the project proposal, should include at least the following areas:

### I. Description of the current situation of the organization

If the organization is applying for the first time to Caritas Somalia, the proposal should include:

1. A brief history of the organization
2. Main field of activity
3. List of completed projects with a short description
4. Ownership and governance structure
5. Attached references (if available)
6. Documentation of legal registration in the country of operation

### II. Description of ongoing projects implemented by the organization

**III. Short description of completed projects, especially those with a similar scope of the proposed project** (unless already covered by point I.3)

### IV. Contact details

1. Address and telephone number of the organization
2. Email and telephone number of the person responsible for project execution

### V. Financial situation of the organization

1. Latest available financial statements
2. Audit report of the previous financial year, conducted by an independent and qualified auditor (mandatory, unless formally exempted by Caritas Somalia)
3. Description of the financial sustainability of the organization (e.g. ability to cover administrative and running costs)
4. Number and typology of donors at the time of submission

### VI. Description of the proposed project

1. Justification of the project need
2. Scope and objectives of the project
3. Timeframe and start date

4. Expected qualitative and quantitative results
5. Planned activities and beneficiary engagement strategy
6. Means of verification and monitoring indicators
7. Risk analysis and mitigation measures
8. Destination of equipment/tools after project completion and corresponding costing method, to be agreed with Caritas Somalia

### 3. SAFEGUARDING AND ADDITIONAL COMPLIANCE DOCUMENTATION

All partner organizations are required to adhere to safeguarding principles and to prevent any form of abuse, exploitation, or harassment, including but not limited to sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA), child abuse, and abuse of vulnerable adults.

Organizations must submit, where available:

1. A written Safeguarding Policy approved by the governing body.
2. A Code of Conduct applicable to staff, volunteers, and associates.
3. Procedures for reporting, managing, and responding to safeguarding concerns and incidents.
4. Whistleblowing policy
5. Evidence of safeguarding awareness or training activities for staff, volunteers and beneficiaries.

**In the absence of formal safeguarding documents, the organization must formally commit to comply with Caritas Somalia safeguarding standards and to develop the required policies within an agreed timeframe.**

### 4. CROSS-CUTTING COMPLIANCE PRINCIPLES

The following cross-cutting principles are mandatory and apply to all local associations and NGOs partnering with Caritas Somalia. Compliance includes explicit adherence to the Anti-Corruption, Anti-Money Laundering, and Countering the Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) Policy (2026), in addition to Environmental, GEDSI, Safeguarding, and Data Protection requirements.

The following cross-cutting principles are mandatory and apply to all local associations and NGOs partnering with Caritas Somalia. Compliance with these principles is a condition for partnership, funding, and continued cooperation.

#### A. Environmental Policy principles

In line with Caritas Somalia Environmental Policy, partner organizations commit to:

- Protecting the environment as an integral part of humanitarian and development actions.
- Applying the principles of Reduce, Reuse, Recycle (3R) in all operational, logistical, and administrative activities.
- Minimizing negative environmental impacts across the full project lifecycle, including procurement, transport, infrastructure, and waste management.
- Promoting the sustainable use and protection of natural resources, particularly water, soil, and energy.
- Integrating climate change adaptation and mitigation measures into project design and implementation.
- Complying with national environmental legislation and relevant international environmental standards.
- Supporting local communities in building climate resilience and in the sustainable management of natural resources.
- Encouraging collaboration and coordination with local partners, religious groups, government institutions, and civil society actors to strengthen environmental outcomes and advocacy.
- Continuously improving environmental practices through monitoring, evaluation, learning, and adaptive management.

These commitments are guided by the principles of responsibility, precaution, sustainability, participation, equity, climate justice, and collaboration, ensuring that environmental impacts are addressed in a fair and inclusive manner, with particular attention to vulnerable communities.

### **B. Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) Policy**

Partner organizations commit to upholding GEDSI principles by:

- Respecting, protecting, and promoting the human rights, dignity, and equal worth of all individuals without discrimination.
- Prioritizing the poor and most vulnerable through inclusive, participatory, and rights-based approaches.
- Ensuring the meaningful participation of women, persons with disabilities, IDPs, people in mobility, and other marginalized groups in decision-making processes.
- Designing and implementing gender-sensitive and disability-inclusive interventions that are accessible and responsive to diverse needs.
- Addressing structural inequalities, harmful social norms, and power imbalances that perpetuate exclusion.
- Promoting integral human development by linking humanitarian assistance, early recovery, and long-term development.
- Applying the Do No Harm principle and maintaining zero tolerance for discrimination, exploitation, abuse, or harassment.

GEDSI implementation is guided by the principles of equality and inclusion, addressing root causes of inequality, inclusion of marginalized voices, contextualization, collaboration and knowledge sharing, and Do No Harm. GEDSI considerations must be integrated into project design, implementation, monitoring, and reporting.

### **C. Data Protection and privacy**

All partner organizations must process personal data in full compliance with Caritas Somalia Data Protection and Privacy principles, ensuring the protection of the rights, dignity, and freedoms of data subjects.

Key obligations include:

- Lawfulness, fairness, and transparency: Personal data shall be processed only on a valid legal basis and in a transparent manner, with data subjects informed of the purpose, scope, and use of their data.
- Purpose limitation: Personal data shall be collected for specified, explicit, and legitimate purposes and not further processed in an incompatible manner.
- Data minimisation: Data collected shall be adequate, relevant, and limited to what is strictly necessary for project implementation, monitoring, and reporting.
- Accuracy: Personal data shall be accurate, complete, and kept up to date, with inaccuracies corrected or deleted without undue delay.
- Storage limitation and retention: Personal data shall be retained only for as long as necessary and securely deleted, anonymised, or destroyed once the purpose is fulfilled, unless otherwise required by law.
- Confidentiality and security: Appropriate technical and organizational measures shall be in place to protect data against unauthorized access, loss, alteration, or disclosure.
- Protection of children and persons lacking legal capacity: Special safeguards shall apply, including obtaining consent from legally authorized representatives, unless exceptions related to vital interests or essential services apply.

Personal data, including photographs, videos, and testimonials, shall not be shared with third parties without prior authorization and valid consent. Any data breach or suspected misuse must be reported immediately to Caritas Somalia.

### D. Anti-Corruption, Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT)

In line with the Anti-Corruption, Anti-Money Laundering, and Countering the Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) Policy (2026), all partner organizations commit to:

- Upholding a zero-tolerance approach to corruption, fraud, money laundering, and the financing of terrorism.
- Ensuring that all activities, transactions, and use of resources comply with Somali law, relevant UN resolutions, EU regulations, donor requirements, and international Caritas standards.
- Implementing risk-proportionate internal controls to prevent, detect, and respond to misuse of funds, diversion of aid, or illicit financial activities.
- Promoting a culture of integrity, accountability, and ethical management at all organizational levels.
- Maintaining full financial transparency and traceability, ensuring that all expenditures are properly documented, verifiable, and auditable.
- Protecting whistleblowers and ensuring confidential, safe, and non-retaliatory handling of reports made in good faith.
- Cooperating fully with Caritas Somalia, donors, auditors, and competent authorities in the event of audits, reviews, or investigations.

These commitments are guided by the principles of personal and institutional integrity, transparency, accountability, risk-based management, legal and international compliance, and beneficiary protection. Partner organizations acknowledge that failure to comply with AML/CFT requirements may result in suspension or termination of cooperation, recovery of funds, and further legal or contractual actions, as applicable.

## 5. FINANCING DECISION

### I. Based on the received proposal, Caritas Somalia may:

1. Request additional information
2. Return the proposal for revision
3. Decline the request
4. Partially approve the request
5. Fully approve the request

II. **Funding decisions depend** on availability of funds, project relevance, organizational credibility, and operational and financial feasibility.

III. **Funding may be conditional** upon fulfillment of specific requirements or co-financing arrangements.

IV. **The approval of any project by Caritas Somalia shall be followed by the signature** of a specific Project contract / Grant agreement between Caritas Somalia and the partner organization. No project activities, financial disbursements, or obligations may commence prior to the signature of the contract by both parties.

V. **Approved funds will be disbursed in tranches** linked to project progress and reporting.

VI. **Funds must be used strictly for the approved purposes.** Budget variations exceeding  $\pm 10\%$  per cost category require prior written approval from Caritas Somalia. If the destination of funds changes without a written agreement with Caritas Somalia or if the deviation is higher than 10%, Caritas Somalia reserves the right to decrease the subsequent tranches. In case that the whole donation has been transferred, then Caritas Somalia will ask the organization for a refund of misspent costs.

## 6. PROJECT EXECUTION

I. **Any significant change in activities**, budget, or implementation conditions must be agreed in writing with Caritas Somalia. Caritas Somalia reserves the right to suspend or terminate support in case of non-compliance, misconduct, or unforeseen circumstances. In case of early termination, only eligible costs incurred up to the date of termination will be recognized, unless otherwise agreed.

### 7. REPORTING

I. **Reporting shall occur at least quarterly**, unless otherwise agreed.

II. **Reports must include both narrative and financial sections and be signed and supported by verifiable documentation.**

Reports must cover:

- Project overview and implementation period.
- Comparison of planned versus achieved results (both quantitative and qualitative), explanation of the variances and the description of the methods used to measure the outcomes.
- Activity description accompanied by photos that show the progress from the initial state until the prevailing stage. The photos should be taken in a way that enables to trace the project's progress.
- Beneficiary description and participation.
- GEDSI and environmental considerations and results.
- Challenges, lessons learned, and risk management.
- Detailed financial statement and justification of deviations.
- Asset distribution and handover documentation
- Sustainability outlook

### 8. FINAL SETTLEMENT

I. **Upon approval of the final report**, any unspent funds must be returned to Caritas Somalia within two weeks of request. Caritas Somalia may request additional documentation to verify the final accounts.

### 9. ACCEPTANCE

By signing these Rules of Cooperation, the organization confirms its full understanding, acceptance, and commitment to comply with all provisions contained herein, including but not limited to:

- Environmental Policy principles;
- Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) principles;
- Safeguarding requirements;
- Data Protection and Privacy principles;
- Anti-Corruption, Anti-Money Laundering, and Countering the Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) Policy.

Name of the organization:

Address:

Date and place:

Name and surname of authorized representative:

Signature and stamp: