



**MINISTRY OF LABOUR, SOCIAL
AFFAIRS AND FAMILY**

Child Rights Magazine in Somaliland 2025

International Day of the Girl Child 2025



Second Edition 2025

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Message from the Minister of Labour, Social Affairs

and Family

On the Occasion of the International Day of the Girl Child.

Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family | 2025 Second Edition

By H.E. Milgo Mohamed Elmi-Minister of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, Republic of Somaliland



Today, we celebrate the strength, resilience, and boundless potential of every girl in Somaliland and indeed, across the world. As a female minister, and as a woman who has witnessed the journey of many young girls in our nation, I recognize deeply the challenges they endure from limited access to education and healthcare, to the silent struggles of poverty, displacement, and inequality.

Our girls are not asking for special treatment; they are asking for fairness — for the chance to dream, to learn, and to lead without fear

or limitation. It is our shared duty, as a nation, to build a Somaliland where every girl can grow in dignity and hope.

We must prevent conflicts and crises — both human and natural — that disproportionately affect young girls. We must make dignity kits affordable and accessible, not as charity, but as a matter of justice. Our education system must be designed to meet the needs of young girls, creating safe and inclusive spaces where they can stay in school, thrive, and become the leaders of tomorrow.

In partnership with the Ministry of Health, we are working to ensure our healthcare services reflect the realities of girls' lives. Together with the Ministry of Trade and Tourism, we are pursuing measures to reduce taxes on hygiene products — because no girl should miss school or lose confidence simply because she cannot afford basic necessities.

As the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, we are steadfast in our mission to advance female leadership and empower young women to take their rightful place in decision-making spaces. We are building systems, strengthening service delivery, and advancing legislation to protect girls from all forms of violence and harmful traditional practices.

Our vision is clear: a just, equitable Somaliland where every girl can live free from fear and full of promise. This is not only our responsibility it is our legacy. Happy International Day of the Girl Child. May we always stand with our girls, invest in their dreams, and protect their future.

Building the Somaliland We Promised: Sustaining Our Commitments to Children, Adolescents, and Youth

By the Vice-Minister of Labour, Social Affairs, and Family

Mohamed Muse X.Abdi (Galaydh)



The children, adolescents, and youth of Somaliland are not just a priority—they are the heart of the transformative future we seek. They represent the hopes, dreams, and potential of our nation, and it is our collective duty as a government to ensure that every one of them grows up in safety, dignity, and opportunity.

Our journey toward a just and equitable Somaliland requires that we move beyond promises and translate commitments into lasting impact. Today, under the leadership of

Her Excellency Minister Milgo Mohamed Elmi, the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, and Family reaffirms its unwavering dedication to implementing ten bold Presidential Commitments that place our children and young people at the center of national development.

Education remains our first pillar of transformation. With over half of Somaliland's children still out of school, the government is taking concrete steps to make primary education free, inclusive, and accessible. Through digital learning initiatives, double-shift systems, and literacy campaigns, we aim to ensure that no child is left behind.

Health is our promise of protection. Expanding vaccination coverage to reach every child is no longer a choice—it is a national duty. The Ministry of Health, supported by our inter-ministerial collaboration, will work to achieve 80% vaccination coverage by 2026, saving lives and securing futures.

We are equally committed to tackling the social and cultural barriers that continue to harm our children, especially girls. The Presidential Zero Tolerance Policy on Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Gender-Based Violence is a landmark declaration of protection and justice. It calls upon every institution and citizen to end practices that rob girls of their dignity and potential.

Social protection is another cornerstone of our vision. Through the establishment of a National Zakat Commission, the government will channel faith-inspired generosity into structured, sustainable support systems for the poor, the vulnerable, and the displaced. Our goal is to build a homegrown model of social solidarity—Somalilander for Somalilander— that ensures no one is left behind.

Climate resilience is also integral to this vision. Through the Green Somaliland Initiative, we are planting millions of trees, reducing plastic waste, and investing in renewable energy.

This is not just about protecting the environment—it is about protecting our children's future.

In the spirit of inclusive growth, the government will continue to expand investment in social services, strengthen partnerships with the private sector, and establish a Public–Private Sector Agency to drive innovation and youth employment. We are also laying the foundation for a Children's Parliament—a platform for our young citizens to voice their ideas, shape policies, and influence the future of their country.

These commitments are more than policy statements; they are moral imperatives.

They define who we are as a nation and what we stand for as a government.

To the children and youth of Somaliland: we see you, we hear you, and we are committed to walking beside you. Your future is the nation's future, and your success will define our legacy.

May Allah bless the children of Somaliland. May He bless our enduring promise to them and may He bless the Republic of Somaliland.

Messages to International Day of Girls Child Day for 2025

By MOLSAF Director General -Abdishakur Ismail Hussein



Internationally, every single year on October 11, the World celebrates International Day of the Girl Child by a giving big consideration to girls' leadership those who facing critical socio-economic challenges affecting themselves and their families.

In respecting human rights and international laws, in the year, Somaliland Government with its work friends recognized the importance of International Day of the Girl Child to promote and protect.

As Internationally taken, also, we adapted the of this year which is entitled, "The girl I am, the change I lead: Girls on the frontlines of crisis." In our practical context, recognized our young girls those who are facing critical challenges related to livelihood, education, health and socio-economic in general, not only underlined the challenges that they are facing in practical life, but came to know that they are agents of change, as Globally noticed.

We are with those who are in crisis, including conflict and displacement and we getting that they come closing to more risks of child marriage, sexual violence and maternal mortality for girls.

As other parts of the World, we understood, no matter how much critical challenges they face, the young are very dedicated to mobilize their communities to improve the life quality of their people, for climate justice purpose, to prevent and response violence. Since, young girls highly require to create friendly and justice environment for all, it is call for action to facilitate the efforts and dedication of young girls to get the world they are visioning for through amplifying their voices, listening leadership directions that giving for leadership and decision-making inclusion for all.

As government with close friends, we are celebrating with Girls Child because of International day by recognizing the critical challenges and active role they have in development process and future building for the nations. Good Girls Child of International Day.

Happy International Day of the Girl Child 2025.

May your voices be heard. May your dreams take flight. And may Somaliland always stand beside you as you lead the change you wish to see in the world.

ABOUT NASTEEXO PLATFORM:

Empowering Somaliland's Youth for a Brighter Future

By Miss. Muna Issa Mahad-Family and Women Empowerment Director



A transformative, technology-driven solution is charting a course toward improved health and human rights for adolescents and young girls in Somaliland.

This innovative undertaking, the NASTEEXO PLATFORM, addresses deeply rooted social and wellness concerns, notably reproductive health rights and the prevention of gender-based abuses. It is envisioned as a vital tool to empower the nation's rising generation particularly young females to make informed life

choices. ***Informing Critical Decisions:***

The platform's foundational objective is to equip individuals, particularly students in grades 5 to 8, with essential knowledge and critical support. Through digital participation and community involvement, NASTEEXO delivers awareness and education on pressing social issues. The system is designed with a user-friendly interface, ensuring accessibility for diverse literacy levels and making navigation straightforward for young users. Interactive features, such as pre-recorded instructive messages and direct access to essential support hotlines, are central to this design.

This proactive engagement aims to arm youth with skills to champion their own reproductive wellness and advocate against harmful customs within their academic and social environments.

Foundational Achievements and Strategic Adaptability:

A structured five-phase roadmap guides the transition of NASTEEXO from a concept to a fully operational and impactful resource. Key to its early triumph has been the establishment of a robust multi-sectoral cooperative model, securing clear roles for government ministries, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and essential service organizations.

A pivotal early success involved establishing the technical and operational structure. Following initial challenges with content dissemination, a strategic decision was made to engage a new partner, SOMTEL, ensuring the digital development could be finalized and the platform operationalized. This adaptability secured the continuation of the project. The outcome will be a fully functional digital platform complimented by operational hotline assistance and a transparent, effective referral system.

Furthermore, the initiative promotes creative youth engagement through educational drama performances, art, and poetic expression in academic centers and local gatherings.

This approach fosters positive societal attitude shifts and enhances young people's involvement in social advocacy.

A Sustained Vision

The platform also emphasizes strengthening service delivery, ensuring survivors and at-risk people can readily access necessary aid through well-organized referral pathways. This includes expanding hotline operational hours and reinforcing alliances with legal aid and psychosocial wellness providers.

Ultimately, the blueprint for NASTEEXO ensures its longevity through a commitment to securing sustained financing and integrating the platform into national educational and health policies. By 2026, the aspiration is to have a lasting platform that promotes social well-being through advocacy, instruction, and cross-sectoral collaboration, leading to enhanced youth involvement and a safer communal setting for all. This venture represents a significant step toward societal progress in Somaliland.



Breaking the Silence: Addressing Menstrual Health Inequality in Somaliland (Report summary)

By: Muna Hussein Abdi- Head of Child Protection



Menstruation is a natural part of every girl's life — yet across Somaliland, it remains one of the most misunderstood and neglected health issues affecting adolescent girls. A groundbreaking 2025 assessment by the Ministry of Employment, Social Affairs and Family (MOLSAF), supported by UNICEF, has revealed a sobering reality: poor menstrual health and hygiene (MHH) management continues to undermine girls' rights, dignity, education, and health.

The study, conducted across 12 schools and 6 communities in Somaliland's six regions, involved over 1,200 girls, 300 parents, and 200 teachers. It revealed that 7 in 10 adolescent girls lack access to adequate menstrual materials, while over 60% miss school during their periods due to pain, stigma, or lack of sanitation facilities. In rural areas, girls often rely on unsafe materials such as rags or paper, leading to infections and shame that force many to stay home.

Only 28% of schools assessed had separate, functioning toilets for girls, and less than 10% provided disposal bins or water for washing. Teachers reported limited knowledge and discomfort discussing menstruation in classrooms. Many girls said they first learned about menstruation through friends, not parents or school, exposing deep cultural taboos surrounding the topic.

The report further found that menstrual products remain unaffordable for the majority of households. A packet of sanitary pads costs up to USD 2 an impossible expense for families living below the poverty line. Meanwhile, cultural myths—such as beliefs that menstruating girls are “impure” or “unfit for prayer” continue to silence open discussion and reinforce stigma.

However, the assessment also highlights hope. Community dialogues, youth-led awareness clubs, and advocacy by women's groups are beginning to shift perceptions. Schools that integrated MHH education into their life-skills curriculum reported higher attendance rates and reduced stigma among girls.

The report calls for urgent government and partner investment in menstrual education, safe WASH facilities, and affordable menstrual products. It recommends developing a National Menstrual Health Strategy, integrating MHH into the Social Protection and Education Sector Plans, and ensuring budget allocations for girl-friendly infrastructure.

As Somaliland strives toward the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) especially SDG 3 (Health), SDG 4 (Education), and SDG 5 (Gender Equality) investing in menstrual health is

no longer optional; it is fundamental. Empowering girls to manage their periods safely and with dignity means empowering them to learn, lead, and contribute to the nation's future.

The Uncounted Promise: How Empowering Girls Can Secure Somaliland's Future

Editorial Article by Khadar Iman Egeh



The strength of a nation lies not in its wealth or institutions, but in the promise of its children. In Somaliland—a nation striving for global recognition and internal resilience—that promise is being quietly stolen. Beneath the surface of political progress and economic ambition lies a crisis that is both moral and structural: the systematic violence endured by young girls. This is not merely a social issue; it is a national emergency that drains potential, corrodes the economy, and undermines the moral authority of the state.

Thirty years after the world united behind the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and halfway through the journey toward the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Somaliland's reality reveals a painful truth: global commitments to gender equality remain distant dreams for many.

Fragility, poverty, and deep-rooted cultural norms have conspired to silence the very voices that should be shaping the nation's future.

The numbers are staggering. Globally, 122 million girls are out of school.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, one in three child brides lives within the region, and progress toward ending female genital mutilation (FGM) has barely moved the needle.

In Somaliland, nearly every woman between 15 and 49 has undergone FGM—an alarming 98 percent. Almost half of all young women are married before the age of 18.

These figures are not statistics; they are stories of pain, resilience, and lost potential.

At the heart of this crisis lies a broken promise. Global frameworks like SDG 5 on gender equality and the African Union's Agenda 2063—both envisioned as moral compacts have not yet reached the girl in Hargeisa or the student in Burao.

The intersection of poverty and cultural expectation continues to dictate that a boy's education is an investment, while a girl's is an indulgence.

One unpaid school fee, one early marriage, one silenced voice—each becomes a thread in a widening tapestry of inequality.

Somaliland's girls face a triple burden: trauma, exclusion, and poverty. The near-universal rate of FGM represents not just a cultural tradition, but a collective wound—one that inflicts lifelong pain, endangers childbirth, and contributes to maternal and infant mortality.

The shadow of child marriage deepens the tragedy, cutting short education and forcing adolescence into motherhood.

At its core, these practices are not customs—they are symptoms of economic despair and institutional neglect.

Yet the pathway forward is clear. Legislation alone will not uproot centuries of custom, but it can set the foundation for change. Somaliland must move from rhetoric to results—linking gender equality to economic growth, social cohesion, and national stability. Institutionalizing a 30 percent quota for women in leadership and public office would align with Agenda 2063's aspirations and ensure that women help craft the policies that shape their lives.

Economic empowerment must accompany representation. Microfinance programs, vocational training, and entrepreneurship initiatives targeting female-headed households can turn vulnerability into resilience. Health and justice systems must be reformed together—ensuring access to reproductive and maternal care while building a justice system capable of prosecuting gender-based violence with fairness and compassion.

Equally essential is transforming social norms from within. Cultural and religious leaders—long seen as guardians of tradition—must be engaged as allies for change.

When faith and compassion intersect, tradition becomes a tool for progress, not repression.

Finally, accountability must be rooted in evidence. Somaliland needs a national monitoring framework to track progress on FGM reduction, school retention, and child marriage prevention. Real progress begins when every girl is counted, and her rights are measured not in rhetoric but in results.

The protection of girls is not charity—it is nation-building. Each girl denied education, health, or dignity represents a measurable loss to the nation's future.

Somaliland's strength will not be determined by the signatures it gathers abroad but by the safety, equality, and opportunity it guarantees its daughters.

The uncounted cost of fragility and cultural violence is too high to ignore.

A nation that protects its girls protects its destiny.

From Hope to Horror: A Child's Journey Through Violence and Resilience

Written by Magazine team- Ihsan Abdirazack Ali.



Asia (a pseudonym used to protect her identity) is a 15-year-old girl who grew up in a remote rural area of Somaliland, where her family depends on pastoralism for their livelihood. She was raised by her biological parents alongside her siblings in a close-knit, loving household, surrounded by affection, family unity, and the simplicity of rural life. Her childhood was filled with joy and hope, nurtured by a sense of belonging and stability.

However, this sense of security was shattered when she was lured by the promise of better opportunities in town.

A neighbor, a young woman who had recently returned from the city, spoke enthusiastically about job opportunities and the chance to live a better life. For Asia, whose family struggled daily to meet their basic needs, this promise seemed like a lifeline. Determined to support her parents and siblings, she made the difficult decision to leave her rural home and move to the town in search of work. Not long after arriving, she secured employment at a local tea shop. Her working hours were long and exhausting — from 7:00 a.m. until 9:00 p.m. each day — for a meager daily wage of only 20,000 Somaliland Shillings (equivalent to less than two U.S. dollars). Despite the grueling schedule and harsh conditions, Asia persevered with quiet determination, motivated by the hope of improving her family's living situation.

One evening, after finishing her shift, Asia boarded a Bajaj (three-wheeled taxi) to return home. In the vehicle were two boys and another girl. When the girl reached her stop, Asia remained alone with the two boys. Unfamiliar with the area and trusting of others, she did not realize she was in danger. The boys diverted the route and drove her to an isolated area outside the town. There, one of them brutally assaulted and raped her before fleeing the scene, leaving her physically injured, emotionally broken, and completely alone.

In shock and distress, Asia managed to gather her strength and knock on the nearest door she could find. The residents, recognizing her desperate condition, gave her shelter for the night and arranged transport assistance the next morning. When she called her mother to report what had happened, her mother, unaware of the extent of her daughter's trauma, advised her to return home only if her injuries were not severe. The lack of immediate medical and psychosocial support compounded Asia's suffering, leaving her to face the aftermath of violence with little guidance or care.

Several months later, Asia and her mother discovered that she was pregnant as a result of the assault. The news devastated the family, particularly Asia, who was already struggling

with deep emotional wounds. The pregnancy brought immense psychological distress and social isolation.

Living in a rural setting with no access to appropriate healthcare or counseling services, she carried the pregnancy in silence and shame. When her labor began, her mother rushed her to the nearest Maternal and Child Health (MCH) center. Unfortunately, the facility was ill-equipped to handle complicated deliveries, and Asia's condition quickly deteriorated. She developed high blood pressure and endured prolonged labor. The MCH referred her to an urban hospital located 294 kilometers away.

The journey to the hospital was long and excruciating. The baby's head had already started to emerge, and the rough, uncomfortable ambulance ride only worsened her suffering. By the time they reached the hospital late at night, Asia's condition was critical. With the help of nurses, she managed to deliver the baby, but the trauma of prolonged and obstructed labor resulted in an obstetric fistula, and part of the placenta remained inside her womb. Her health rapidly declined as she battled infection, severe bleeding, and exhaustion. After a week in the hospital, doctors informed her family that her condition was beyond their capacity to manage. Desperate to save her life, her family sought treatment at multiple facilities, and eventually, the retained placenta was surgically removed.

Asia spent two months in the hospital recovering from the complications. The prolonged labor and delayed medical intervention caused nerve damage that left her paralyzed from the waist down. Following her discharge, a social worker from the Ministry of Employment, Social Affairs, and Family (MESAF) referred her to WAAPO for psychosocial support, counseling, and shelter. WAAPO provided her with a wheelchair to assist her mobility, while the NAFIS Network offered medical support and transportation assistance. Doctors have since determined that her body is too weak for surgical repair of the fistula. They recommended at least six months of proper nutrition, rest, and medical follow-up before she can undergo the necessary procedure.

Asia's story is a heartbreaking reflection of the far-reaching consequences of sexual violence, inadequate healthcare access, and the lack of protection mechanisms for vulnerable girls. Her experience exposes the urgent need for integrated interventions that combine medical, psychosocial, and legal support for survivors of gender-based violence. It also underscores the necessity of building community awareness and strengthening referral systems so that survivors like Asia can receive timely and compassionate care.

Despite the immense pain, trauma, and physical challenges she continues to face, Asia remains remarkably resilient. Her story stands as a powerful testimony to the human spirit's capacity for endurance and courage in the face of unimaginable suffering. It is a call to action for policymakers, health professionals, and humanitarian organizations to prioritize justice, rehabilitation, and protection for all survivors — ensuring that no girl or woman ever endures such a fate in silence again.

A Silent Dream: A Young Girl's Struggle for Education in Hargeisa

Written by Magazine team-Hodan Abdillahi Mohamed.



In a small neighborhood on the outskirts of Hargeisa lives a bright 10-year-old girl who dreams of going to school like other children her age. She lives with her elderly grandmother and several siblings after the death of her mother — a tragedy that changed the course of her young life.

Originally from a rural village, the family moved to the city seeking safety and better opportunities. However, life in Hargeisa has not been easy.

The grandmother, who is the family's only caregiver, struggles each day to provide food, shelter, and hope for

the children.

At just two years old, the young girl suffered an illness that left her unable to hear. Despite this, her curiosity and determination to learn have always been extraordinary. She eagerly enrolled in a nearby public primary school, believing that education could open a new world for her.

But the school environment turned out to be one of the greatest challenges she would face. Without trained teachers or inclusive support for children with disabilities, she was left isolated and misunderstood. Classmates mocked her, and teachers, unprepared to communicate with a deaf student, often ignored her struggles.

One day, after failing to complete an assignment she could not understand, she was punished in front of her peers. The humiliation and pain she felt that day silenced her spirit. Unable to bear the emotional distress, she stopped attending school.

Now, she spends her days at home — a child full of potential, yet cut off from the education she longs for. Her grandmother, though burdened by poverty, continues to hope that one day, compassionate individuals or organizations will help provide her granddaughter with the support she deserves — a safe, inclusive, and understanding learning environment where she can grow and thrive.

Her story is not one of despair, but of resilience — a reminder that every child, regardless of ability, deserves the right to learn, dream, and be heard.

From Reading to Leading: Arwa's Story of Imagination and Courage

By Arwa Khadar Mohamed



My name is Arwa khadar Mohamoud, am 11yrs old, and am grade 6 in school. I love reading, writing, and learning new things. I enjoy sharing and expressing myself in stories and exploring new worlds through reading.

I started reading when I was around 7yrs old and then I started to write my own small stories. I was inspired by how books can take you anywhere, to different worlds you've never been to, so I wanted to do the same

My biggest encouragement came from my family, especially my aunt fathiya who always supported me and gave me books to read every time I finished one. I'm also part of the Bright Future Development Organization Reading Club for Kids, which helped me meet other readers like me and make friends to stay motivated to keep learning and exploring new books.

A book that really changed me is a book in Somali called "Saxiib Wan Ku Salaamay" It talks about different types of friends and the meaning of true friendship. After reading it I started to see people more clearly and learned how to choose my friends wisely. I love stories that have strong characters, especially girls who are brave, smart, and kind.

I also like adventure and mystery books. additional to fiction, I enjoy reading nonfiction books that teach me about real-life stories, history, and how people overcome difficulties. Reading makes me happy It's like going on an adventure to another world where anything can happen I usually write about myself, my daily life, and the things I care about like friendship, dreams, and life. I like to write stories that show how people can stay strong and never give up, even when things are hard.

I want them to know that what they say and dream about is important, and that they should never stop believing in themselves even little acts of kindness can make someone's day better.

sometimes it's hard to find enough time between schoolwork and other responsibilities. also, there are moments when people don't take young writers seriously its funny and frustrating at the same.

Yes, all of my family and teachers in school really support me. They encourage me to keep reading, writing, and improving every day. I try to plan my time well, I study first, help at home, and then write or read before bedtime or during weekends or whenever else I have time. I follow my family's rules about screen time, so I don't use the internet much but recently the Bright Future Development Organization kindly gifted me Kindle Unlimited for my dedication to the reader's club and I use it to read lots of new books and explore new stories. It's helped me learn from other writers around the world, discover writing tips and new styles of writing. Use it wisely there a lot of educational sites online so go read positive content, and never stop learning It's a special day to celebrate girls Day, it's just like a birthday for us It reminds the world that girls are powerful, talented, and deserve equal

chances in everything in school, leadership, and being creative. I have an important message to all the girls Believe in yourself and don't give up. Every big writer started with one small story. Your words can inspire others, so keep going. Reading gives knowledge, confidence, and imagination. It helps girls find their voice, dream big, and stand up for themselves and others.

My Basketball Journey

"Rising Above: How One Girl's Game Became a Movement"



By Cosob Osman Ismail, 13 years old.

My name is Cosob Osman Ismail, I'm 13 years old, and I'm from Norway. When I first came here, I started looking for a sport to play during recess and discovered my passion and talent for basketball. My mother inspired me to start playing, to follow my talent, and to never back down. I began my basketball journey in 2021, and now, after five years of competitions and victories, basketball has become a big part of my life. I usually practice on the large

basketball court that our school built for girls. Basketball means a lot to me—it has helped me discover my hidden talent, build confidence and bravery, and create wonderful new friendships.

When I first started playing basketball at eight years old, many people didn't like the sport. But after they saw me and my team play and the victories we achieved in every competition more students began joining the club. Girls often face criticism for playing sports, but at my school, Elm School, everyone is supportive, friendly, and respectful.

When my family found out about my journey in basketball, they were proud and excited for me especially my parents. My mother even bought me my first basketball and helped me practice at home.

When I was ten, in class 4J, a big competition was coming up. I was nervous, but my teammates and I practiced for weeks. On the day of the match against 4B, we started losing, and I felt like giving up. But then I remembered everything I had been through and refused to quit. When the final whistle blew, we had won! It was one of the happiest days of my life.

My proudest achievement came this year, on September 23, 2025, during our annual Sports Day. My team and I, now in grade 7, played against grade 8—who were taller and stronger—but we still won by two points, 12–10. It was the biggest game of my life, and we celebrated with cake and confetti!

People always need motivation, and I'm lucky to have my friends and family who constantly encourage me to keep going. I'm also grateful to my school mentor, who helps us improve our skills, and to my mother, who continues to practice with me at home.

I have an important message for all the girls out there who doubt themselves or believe that girls can't play sports: It's not about gender—it's about passion and determination.

Don't wait for permission. Don't let anyone tell you what you can't do. Stand up, believe in yourself, and play for your dreams, not for others.

If I could help make sports more accessible for girls, I would start by building more basketball courts in our country. Right now, there is only one basketball field in Hargeisa. I want to see more girls feeling confident, fearless, and ready to change the world of sports.

I hope my story inspires other girls to never give up—to face every challenge with courage, to believe in themselves, and to follow their hearts. My biggest dream as a basketball player is to change the world of sports and prove that women can play too.

I am deeply thankful to my community and to everyone who has supported me through this journey.

Together, I believe we can create a future where every girl has the right to play, to lead, and to shine.

Breaking Limits: Safa's Fight for Every Girl's Right to Play

By Safa Mustafe Ahmed



I'm Safa Mustafe Ahmed, and I'm ten years old. Every day, I prove to myself that passion and determination have no limits. I'm a proud student in grade 9–12. I spend my mornings in class and my afternoons on the football field defending my team with focus, strength, and heart. My journey into football started at home. One day, my little brother, Idiris, brought home a football and began practicing new moves. I was curious and joined him. What started as a simple game between us quickly turned into

my biggest dream. My brother taught me some football moves, and that's how I became interested in football.

Since then, I haven't stopped playing. I train regularly at school and love spending time on the field with my friends and siblings. I play as a defender, but this year, my proudest moment was when I scored my third goal a victory that made my family and teammates so happy.

I'm really lucky to have the full support of my family and friends. They always encourage me to keep going and never give up.

Their support gives me confidence to face any challenge, on or off the field.

My dream is to become a great footballer one day to be a symbol of hope for all girls who love sports but are afraid to chase their dreams.

My message to other girls is simple: "Keep trying, no matter what they say. Sports are for both girls and boys."

On this International Day of the Girl, I want every girl to know that she has the right to play, dream, and shine whether it's on the field, in school, or anywhere her heart leads her.

Aliya Heartbreaking Journey: A Deaf Child's Struggle for Education.

By Magazine Team

Aliya's story reflects the heartbreaking intersection of disability, poverty, and systemic neglect within education system.

Aliya is a 10-year-old girl from Jigjiga-Yar, Hargeisa. She lives with her elderly grandmother and six siblings after losing her mother at a very young age. The family originally resided in a rural village called Wado-Makahil, but following her mother's death—when Aliya was barely one year old—they moved to Hargeisa in search of support. The grandmother, who has since become the primary caregiver, struggles daily to meet even the most basic needs of the children. The family's economic condition is dire, with no steady source of income or social safety net.

At the age of two, Aliya suffered an illness that left her completely deaf. Despite this life-altering challenge, she displayed an exceptional eagerness to learn and enrolled in a nearby public primary school. However, her experience there soon turned deeply painful. The school was ill-equipped to accommodate children with hearing impairments, no trained teachers in inclusive education, no sign language interpretation, and no support structures. Aliya faced ongoing discrimination and isolation from both her peers and teachers.

Peers would mock and insult her, often laughing at her attempts to communicate. The teachers, rather than showing empathy, exhibited neglect and bias. On one occasion, Aliya failed to complete her homework because she could not understand the teacher's instructions. The next day, instead of receiving understanding or assistance, she was physically punished in front of her classmates while they laughed. This cruel incident deeply traumatized her and destroyed what little confidence she had. She began to dread school, suffering from sleepless nights and constant anxiety over the bullying and violence she endured.

Eventually, the relentless abuse forced Aliya to drop out of school entirely. She now spends her days at home, excluded from education and social interaction. Her grandmother—though determined to help—feels powerless. Without resources or institutional support, she cannot provide Aliya the specialized care or education she desperately needs. The family remains in severe poverty, unable to afford basic educational materials, let alone access to schools with inclusive facilities or teachers trained in special needs education.

Despite all this hardship, hope persists. The grandmother continues to advocate for Aliya's right to education and inclusion. She dreams of seeing her granddaughter in a supportive learning environment where her deafness is not a barrier but a characteristic embraced through empathy, sign language, and inclusive teaching practices. The family's resilience amid adversity highlights the urgent need for targeted interventions to support children with disabilities—particularly in marginalized urban and rural communities.

Aliya's journey underscores the systemic challenges that children with disabilities face in Somaliland—insufficient teacher training, lack of inclusive school infrastructure, and absence

of community awareness on disability rights. Her story is a call to action for educational authorities, civil society, and humanitarian organizations to strengthen inclusive education programs, train teachers in sign language and disability-sensitive pedagogy, and ensure that no child, regardless of ability, is left behind.



Aliya's family home in Jigjiga-Yar

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