



## **Safe House**

Heshima Kenya Safe House program is registered as a CCI (Charitable Children Institution) under department of children services in the Ministry of Labour and Social services. Heshima Kenya Safe House is the only shelter that specializes in serving unaccompanied and separated refugee adolescents girls (minors) and their children in the Country. It receives referrals from UNHCR, Foreign Embassies, and Civil Societies working for refugees, children's department, police and judiciary.

The Safe House Program is a transitional shelter program for vulnerable refugee girls and their children designed to improve and safeguard their protection, health, and wellbeing. The program supports individuals and serves as a therapeutic environment by promoting camaraderie, healing, and peace. The Safe House works to promote the psychosocial healing of residents by structuring a healthy routine of games, homework, sports competitions, movies, chores, and gardening. The program also respects residents' religious and ethnic customs and beliefs by observing religious holidays and supporting group activities that promote peace and celebrate differences.

The Heshima Safe House program is located within a safe suburb of Nairobi. Rented from a local real estate company, the building includes a large kitchen, four bedrooms, a large living and dining area, three guest room quarters that are separate from the main house, a study room, and a large garage that provides space for recreational activities. A large yard, which also includes a playground, has a resident-managed garden and also space for recreational activities, group meetings, and for residents to find solitude. To safeguard the security of residents, there is no signage on the outside gate.

Currently, the Heshima Safe House has a capacity to serve 52 residents at any one time. The program has 11 staff members including four security guards, four live-in female staff, a program manager, a psychosocial counselor and a program cook. Two program staff members remain on-site at all times. The safe house program manager provides daily support and manages the Safe House. Overall the Senior Program manager and Country Director provide oversight of all the programs. All girls and women served by Heshima Kenya are formally referred by partner organizations and assessed at intake by Heshima Kenya's case management team and the Safe House Program Manager. While reviewing each girl's needs, it is determined whether the shelter program is necessary and if so, an action plan is put in place in collaboration with the referring agency. Example referrals include girls who have been abused and left homeless; girls who are living in extremely dangerous situations; girls who have been approved resettlement to a third country of asylum or are awaiting reunification with a family member overseas; girls who have been removed from foster care and are awaiting placement into another foster home.