



STUDENT CHRISTIAN ORGANISATION OF MALAWI (SCOM)

GIVING AND RECEIVING OF GIFTS POLICY

NGO Governance & Ethics Policy

August
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DEFINITIONS

Bribes: Bribes are money or other inducements given or promised to individuals to corruptly influence the performance of their role.

Gifts: Gifts include, but are not limited to money, tuition, books, food items, office furniture and other materials, and vehicles.

Associate: Mature Christian who lives Jesus and who has first been trained by the organization is a duly registered member of a zone and subscribes to the aims of SCOM-AF

NEC/Board Members: This comprises members of the National Executive Committee. A full committee consists of 7 members whose terms of office do exceed 2 terms of 3 years each.

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1.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to articulate expectations in relation to the giving and/or receiving of gifts. This is meant to safeguard the mission, vision and values of SCOM. It is meant to guide, staff, associates and students (post-primary) when dealing with partner groups or individuals that may either want to give gifts to SCOM in general, or to an event organized so as to ensure that there is no compromise on what SCOM stands for in the end. This policy is intended to support individuals and SCOM in general to avoid conflict of interest and maintain high levels of integrity and public trust.

2.0 BACKGROUND

While SCOM strives to build a vibrant, effective, authentic and reputable organization, ministry and movement respectively, there is a high risk of jeopardizing the same through uncared connections that may be formed or perceived by the public by any act of exchanging gifts between SCOM and other organizations. This policy also finds its ground on, first, the reality that SCOM being a ministry being a non-profit organization, much of its programming depends on the generosity of individuals and partners. Secondly, this policy is also crucial because interactions between members of the organization create opportunities for sharing gifts among associates, and between associates and students. Lastly, this policy is very necessary to the ministry of SCOM because gifts between organizations or from individuals could be used to manipulate or advance an unacceptable agenda. In society there are people and organizations that try to take advantage of the needy situation of the individuals and the organization in general by making gifts that are intended to manipulate or to bring negative influence or corrupt the position of our SCOM on some sticky issues in society.

3.0 POLICY SCOPE

This policy applies to organizational leaders, associates, zones, staff, and students across both branches and sections within the organization.

4.0 WHAT GIFTS CAN SCOM RECEIVE OR GIVE

- 4.1. Cash
- 4.2. Cheques
- 4.3. Office equipment e.g., furniture and fittings, computers and other electronic devices, etc.
- 4.4. Literature
- 4.5. Books
- 4.6. Vehicles, motorcycles, or transportation services.
- 4.7. Relief items (personal protective equipment, food, clothes, beddings, utensils, etc.)
- 4.8. Conference supplies
- 4.9. Building materials

- 4.10. Accounting/auditing services
- 4.11. Hospitality services, conference/ meeting venues or office space
- 4.12. Tree seedlings and any creation care materials

5.0 ORGANIZATIONS FROM WHICH SCOM SHALL NOT RECEIVE GIFTS

In order to protect its integrity and sanity, SCOM shall not receive some gifts. Below is a sample list of organizations and individuals from whom SCOM shall not accept any gifts:

- 5.1. Organizations or individuals whose values are in conflict with the Organization's basis of faith.
- 5.2. Organizations that are not operating legally, i.e., those that are not fully registered either in Malawi or in their country of origin.
- 5.3. All organizations that are nationally or globally known for practicing or to be in support of organizations connected to Terrorism.
- 5.4. Individuals or organizations known to be in support of homosexuality or LGBT agenda.
- 5.5. Individuals or organizations associated with any illegitimate business.
- 5.6. Political parties or individuals known to be used by political parties for political agenda.

6.0 SPECIFICS OF THE POLICY

6.1 Receiving Gifts from outside the Organization

- 6.1.1. Giving and receiving gifts is acceptable in SCOM both internally and externally, however, it is the responsibility of all members of Student Christian Organisation of Malawi to ensure that gifts are given and received in ways and from sources that do not endanger the integrity of the organization or its members.
- 6.1.2. Written expressions of gratitude with comments and signatures is encouraged whenever gifts have been given to an individual or any section of SCOM.
- 6.1.3. Receipts must always be issued on gifts that are given to any secretariat office or committee within the organization and must be properly accounted for by whoever is the custodian.
- 6.1.4. Any cash gift that is above MWK 500,000.00 shall only be received through the bank. The giver shall be asked to directly deposit all cash or cheques into SCOM's official accounts. No employee of SCOM shall deposit into SCOM's account on behalf of any donor cash or cheques above the threshold.
- 6.1.5. Any gifts offered from entities or individuals whose agenda is suspicious must be discussed with leadership above that of the receiving individual or group in order to determine whether to receive or deny the gift.

- 6.1.6. Gifts, from any individual or organization offered with a proven bad intention; i.e., any gift that brings real or any threat of conflict of interest must either be rejected or returned upon establishment of facts.
- 6.1.7. Any gift that is given to a student, associate, committee, or section in SCOM that is more than five hundred thousand must be formally reported to the National Secretariat in writing or via email to scommalawi@gmail.com.
- 6.1.8. And any gifts given in preparation of conferences and retreats, a 10% minimum must be remitted to the national secretariat as Conference levy.
- 6.1.9. All unsolicited and anonymous gifts will be accepted for use within SCOM, regardless of the source, on the belief that God can use anyone and anything to advance his mission, provided that such gifts do not come with demands and publicity that may attract the wrong attention.
- 6.1.10. Every individual, office bearer, or committee that is offered non requested gifts from non-regular givers to the ministry are encouraged to go through a “GIFT TEST” as demonstrated in table 1 below:

Table 1: Gift Test

G	Giver	Who is providing the Gift and what is their relationship to me? Does my role require me to select contractors, award grants, regulate industries or determine government policies? Could the person or organization benefit from a decision I make?
I	Influence	Are they seeking to gain an advantage or influence my decisions or actions? Has the Gift been offered to me publicly or privately? Is it a courtesy or a token of appreciation or a valuable Non-token Offer? Does its timing coincide with a decision I am about to make or endorse a product or service?
F	Favour	Are they seeking a favour in return for the Gift? Has the Gift, Benefit or Hospitality been offered honestly? Has the person or organization made several offers over the last 12 months?
T	Trust	Would accepting it create an obligation to return a favor? Would accepting the Gift diminish public trust? How would the public view acceptance of this Gift? What would my colleagues, family, friends or associates think?

7.0 GIFTS TO STUDENTS

- 7.1. No welfare support must be given directly to students under SCOM. Instead, all support e.g., fees, food, accommodation, appliances, etc., must be given directly to the service providers.
- 7.2. All reasoning behind gifts given to selected students must be disclosed properly to avoid jealous or unnecessary competition among peers and demoralization of others within the student body.