



**SISTERS OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN FOUNDATION LTD
ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDING POLICY
APPROVED BY THE BOARD ON**

INTRODUCTION

Sisters of the Good Samaritan Foundation Ltd (**GSF**) is committed to promoting sustainable development. This includes supporting improved environmental and social outcomes in its internal operations and the delivery of its programs and mitigating adverse environmental and social impacts. GSF recognises that these impacts disproportionately affect people living in poverty, as, in developing countries, the majority of the population often depends on the natural environment for food, water, shelter and livelihoods. GSF aims to ensure that its work does not exacerbate negative environmental and social impacts, both in Australia and overseas.

GSF supports action on climate change to reduce poverty and inequality and promote sustainable development. Natural disasters, rising sea levels and water shortages undermine development gains and threaten future development prospects. GSF works to identify climate change risks and support opportunities for climate resilience; thereby, promoting sustainable development and poverty reduction. GSF also recognises that climate change has social impacts upon vulnerable people through displacement and affects the health and safety of those marginalised individuals and communities.

PURPOSE

This policy is intended to help ensure that GSF's work:

- does not cause harm to the environment by maintaining the health, diversity and productivity of the environment;
- seeks to protect the rights, health, safety, and livelihoods of people, specifically by providing guidance on the identification and management of environmental and social risks; and
- identifies opportunities to contribute to positive environmental and social outcomes.

SCOPE

This policy applies to:

- GSF personnel (as defined);
- Contractors engaged by GSF; and
- GSF funded and other partners (as defined).

GSF's management will take steps to ensure that all GSF's personnel, contractors and partners are made aware of their obligations under this policy.

POLICY PRINCIPLES

This policy is underpinned by four principles:

1. *Do no harm:* GSF will consider whether, through its various operations, it will cause, or is likely to cause, a significant impact on the environment, and people as a result; and it will take steps to avoid and/ or mitigate any such negative impacts.
2. *Engage with stakeholders:* GSF recognises that all organisations, including those in partnership with GSF, have a collective responsibility to build capacity to deal effectively with environmental risks and impacts. GSF requires the support of its partners for this policy to be effective.
3. *Five areas for consideration:* GSF commits to considering the impacts in the following areas:
 - The environment
 - Children, vulnerable and disadvantaged groups
 - Displacement and resettlement
 - Indigenous peoples
 - Health and safety
4. *Application process:* For each of the five areas for consideration, a process of risk control will be applied where relevant. This will consist of screening, rating the risk, creating a proportional management plan and then monitoring and reporting on progress.

RISK AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONTROLS

Risk Assessment

GSF works with its funded partners to identify and assess the potential for significant environmental and social impact in its internal operations and programs, to avoid or mitigate these impacts, and to promote positive impacts.

Project risk will be assessed at the start of collaboration, classifying projects into high, medium or low risk categories, based on the nature of projects and their context. These risk assessments

will include identification, treatment and escalation of environmental and social risks in relevant areas of consideration; as well as regular reporting and review where required.

Low	Medium	High
Low risk sector (eg. education) with no construction.	No/ small-scale construction and small-scale, manageable or reversible environmental impact.	Environmental impact over a large or sensitive geographic area and/ or permanent and long-lasting impacts (eg. roads, dams, forestry, mining, increasing greenhouse gas emissions).
Likely to cause minimal to no negative environmental or associated social impact.	Likely to cause mostly local and short-term negative environmental or associated social impacts.	Likely to cause significant negative environmental and associated social impacts that are sensitive and diverse or unprecedented.
No further action required, apart from routine monitoring.	Conduct an environmental analysis.	Conduct an Environment Impact Assessment (EIA), create an Environment Management Plan (EMP) and obtain advice on the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act 1999 from the Australian Government. Discuss this advice with relevant donors.
Review project risk assessment (environmental risks) annually.	Review project risk assessment (environmental and social risks) bi-annually.	Review project risk assessment (environmental and social risks) as agreed with the Australian Government.

When identifying the risks in each area for screening and rating, the following key points should be examined:

1. *Environment*: No degradation or harm should occur to the physical environment, ecosystems, habitat and heritage sites as a result of the project. The project should also consider the potential impact of activities on climate change, seeking to mitigate or offset those activities.
2. *Children, Vulnerable and Disadvantaged Groups*: Given the work undertaken by Good Samaritans, there will be clear identification of both direct and peripheral beneficiaries classified as children, vulnerable and/ or disadvantaged groups in projects. This identification process is to ensure that no unintended consequences occur as a result of the project or that current problems experienced by these groups are exacerbated.
3. *Displacement and Resettlement*: Where a project involves access to land, Good Samaritans will ensure that there is title access to the land in compliance with local and national government regulations. Where there is the need for compulsory acquisition, Good Samaritans will make attempts to ensure that there will be fair compensation. If project participants have access to common lands, then that right of access is to be understood and protected.
4. *Indigenous Peoples* Good Samaritans ensures that indigenous peoples are identified in projects and that there is an understanding of cultures and contexts in project activities, even if they are not beneficiaries of project activities.
5. *Health and Safety*: The principles on which Good Samaritans operates seeks to ameliorate or relieve exploitation and abuse. Project activities will be screened for the potential of forced labour or practices that are clearly exploitative, as well as detrimental to the health of beneficiaries and community groups.

Internal Risk Management Controls

GSF's internal risk management controls are to:

- Provide GSF's Environmental Management and Social Safeguard Policy to all GSF personnel and contractors.
- Minimise air travel by assessing the need for travel, combining GSF field visits and meetings (where travel is necessary), using online platforms (where travel is not essential), and sharing relevant field information within GSF.
- Use technology to reduce printing and paper consumption.
- Promote waste minimisation initiatives, such as recycling of glass, paper, cardboard, metal, plastic, batteries and electronics; and avoiding bottled water.
- Promote energy saving initiatives, such as switching off idle equipment and lights.
- Switch thermostats to more season-appropriate lower energy settings.
- Source environmentally friendly and/ or sustainable office products, wherever possible.
- Undertake a periodic assessment (every 3 years) of GSF's environmental practices.

Programmatic Risk Management Controls

All GSF partners are expected to act in accordance with the principles outlined in this policy. Non-compliance with these standards, where required, may lead to suspension or termination of funding arrangements.

GSF's programmatic risk management controls are to:

- Sign partnership and project-level funding agreements that reflect the principles and requirements in this policy.
- Recommend that GSF funded partners develop and implement their own environmental management and social safeguards policy, or formally adopt GSF's Environmental Management and Social Safeguards Policy.
- Ensure environmental and social impacts are assessed, screened, mitigation controls applied and then monitored and reviewed throughout the project cycle, specifically analysing environmental and social impact risks and opportunities (including climate change mitigation and adaptation, and disaster risk reduction strategies).
- Undertake a periodic assessment (every 3 years) of the environmental practices of GSF.

DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
GSF Personnel	Good Samaritan's Board of Directors, employees (full time, part-time and casual) and volunteers.
GSF Funded Partners	This includes entities engaged to perform any part of GSF's funded activity. These entities have agreed roles and responsibilities monitored by GSF.
Other GSF Partners	Individuals, groups of people or organisations that collaborate with GSF to achieve mutually agreed objectives in development initiatives.
Environment	The environment includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ecosystems and their constituent parts, including people and communities; • natural and physical resources; • qualities and characteristics of locations, places and areas; • heritage values of places; • social, economic and cultural aspects of anything mentioned above.
Environmental Impact	An impact is a change to the environment, including people and communities, whether negative or positive, or wholly or partly resulting from a project's actions. A project can have direct and indirect impacts on the environment. Impacts may be cumulative (over time) or combined (more than one impact in one place).
Significant Environmental Impact	An important, notable or of consequence effect, depending on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the sensitivity, value and quality of the environment, and • the intensity, duration, magnitude and geographic extent of the impact.
Displacement	Displacement refers to both physical and economic impacts occurring because of development-induced land acquisition or restrictions on access to land or other resources that is imposed by governments on individuals, families or communities. Displacement can include both physical and economic displacement.
Sustainable Development	Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future development generations to meet their own needs (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987).

LEGISLATION

<p>GSF personnel, contractors and GSF funded partners must adhere to local and international laws that relate to disability inclusion, anti-discrimination and equal opportunity. These include Australian Commonwealth, state and territory laws, and international conventions and local laws in the countries where GSF works:</p>	
Australian Legislation	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i>
State and Territory Legislation	<p>Victoria: <i>The Environment Protection Act 1970</i> New South Wales: <i>The Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997</i> Queensland: <i>The Environmental Protection Act 1994</i> Western Australia: <i>The Environmental Protection Act 1986</i> South Australia: <i>The Environment Protection Act 1993</i> Tasmania: <i>The Environmental Management and Pollution Control Act 1994</i> Australian Capital Territory: <i>The Environmental Protection Act 1997</i> Northern Territory: <i>The Waste Management and Pollution Control Act 1998; Environmental Assessment Act 1982</i></p>
International Conventions	<p><i>The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)</i> <i>The Kyoto Protocol to the UNFCCC</i> <i>The Paris Agreement</i> <i>Other Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs).</i></p>
<p>Each GSF partner is legally obliged to comply with relevant country laws relating to the environment.</p>	

POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years, or as necessitated by legislative changes, incorporating lessons learned.