

SISTERS OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN FOUNDATION LIMITED

PROJECT DESIGN, FUNDING & MANAGEMENT POLICY

Introduction

This Policy covers project design, funding eligibility criteria, partnership and funding application and approval processes for and The Sisters of the Good Samaritan Foundation Ltd (**GSF**). It reflects GSF's commitment to transparency, accountability, and continual improvement, ensuring that funding achieves maximum impact aligned with best practice development principles.

GSF acknowledges:

- The importance of well-designed, effective, and well-managed projects in achieving its mission and vision.
- Clear funding criteria and processes are essential for transparency and impact.
- Effective programmes demonstrate GSF's professionalism and commitment.
- Monitoring, evaluation, accountability, and learning are vital for improving programme effectiveness.

Purpose

This Policy outlines GSF's approach to programme design, funding, monitoring, evaluation, accountability, and learning, while ensuring high standards of reporting and governance.

GSF

Identity

For over 25 years, the GSF has supported women and children in need, prioritising education, safe havens, food security, and crisis care.

Through 13 programmes across Australia, the Philippines, Kiribati, and Timor-Leste, GSF have reached over 1,000 women, children, and families facing food insecurity, domestic violence, financial hardship, and extreme weather challenges.

Vision

GSF's vision is to connect Good Samaritans to create a safe and sustainable future for women and children in need.

Purpose

GSF supports vulnerable women and children in Australia, the Philippines, Kiribati, and Timor-Leste through early childhood education, scholarships, food security, and protection from domestic violence and climate crises.

Core functions of GSF

GSF's core functions are to:

- Support community-led programmes in Australia, the Philippines, Kiribati, and Timor-Leste focused on learning, inclusivity, empowerment, and local autonomy.
- Assist marginalised groups and disadvantaged communities while advancing education for women and children.
- Partner with various stakeholders to create impactful programmes and foster meaningful donor engagement.
- Expand and diversify funding sources, including government and corporate partnerships.
- Strengthen strategic alliances globally and domestically.
- Build a sustainable, efficient organisation committed to financial transparency and skill development.

Status

GSF is a company limited by guarantee under the Corporations Act 2001 (Cth), with ABN: 54 169 799 606. Its objectives are outlined in Clause 2 of the GSF Constitution.

GSF is registered as a Public Benevolent Institution (**PBI**) with the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission and is endorsed by the Australian Taxation Office (**ATO**) as a Deductible Gift Recipient (**DGR**), allowing it to receive tax-deductible donations.

Project cycle

GSF partners with and funds projects on an annual basis, unless otherwise decided by the directors. Approved partnerships and funding are for one calendar year, unless specified differently in the written agreement. Past support or funding does not guarantee future funding.

The partnership and funding application period is open year-round, subject to the availability of GSF funds.

Project Focus

GSF prioritises partnerships and funding in regions where the Sisters of GSF have previously conducted mission work: Australia, the Philippines, Kiribati, and Timor-Leste.

GSF focuses on education not only for children and women but also on practical skills such as financial literacy, farming, trades, and health.

GSF's priority is to provide education, safety, food security, and crisis care to those experiencing persistent poverty.

Eligibility for Partnership and Funding

To be considered for partnership and funding, an application must align with the project focus outlined above, reflect GSF's vision and purpose as stated in this Policy, and fully comply with all aspects of the Policy.

Eligible Education Projects

Eligible projects include those that provide:

- Formal education, such as primary schools.
- Capacity-building initiatives, like business, agriculture, literacy, or computing skills.
- Capital projects that enhance education facilities (e.g. classrooms).
- Educational resources and learning aids.
- Equipment and machinery supporting education initiatives.
- Nutrition/feeding projects integral to education programmes.

Ineligible Projects

Ineligible projects include:

- Political activity.
- Welfare payments (e.g. medical or emergency assistance) unless part of an approved emergency appeal.
- Non-essential feeding projects.

Project Design, Processes, and Procedures

GSF defines effective project design as identifying social issues, their causes, and consequences, then planning education initiatives that address root problems.

GSF's approach includes:

- **Community development** where communities lead in planning, developing, delivering, and evaluating initiatives.
- **Community-based projects** where partners deliver skill-building initiatives (e.g., literacy, vocational training, etc.).

Project design focuses on:

- Asset-based community development, leveraging local strengths to create sustainable solutions.
- Addressing root causes of poverty and empowering rights-holders to claim their rights.
- Supporting systems that enable people to escape poverty.

Project proposals must be submitted to GSF for appraisal and must align with the following principles:

- Designed in partnership with communities, building on strengths and ensuring full participation.
- Address identified community needs with an educational focus.
- Address root causes through consultation with communities for shared understanding.
- Be time-bound with a clear exit strategy.
- Consider economic, social, cultural, and environmental sustainability.
- Empower stakeholders to claim rights and ensure duty-bearers fulfil responsibilities.
- Ensure long-term sustainability through community ownership and local resources.
- Include thorough research to understand needs and root causes.
- Strengthen local capacity during implementation for project sustainability.
- Engage relevant stakeholders, such as local authorities and organisations.
- Include performance indicators for ongoing effectiveness measurement.

Applying for partnership and funding

GSF accepts applications for eligible development projects year-round for Australia, the Philippines, Kiribati, and Timor-Leste. Priority is given to community-focused, time-bound education programmes that promote local management and autonomy.

All requests for partnership/funding must be submitted via email to info@goodsamsfoundation.org.au.

The application process requires detailed information to appraise organisations and projects in three key areas:

- Organisational structure and operations, including governance, strategy, risk, compliance, and management.
- Project design.
- Capacity to deliver.

Project Timeframe and Budget

A completed timeframe and budget must be submitted with applications, including:

- Total project budget.
- Amount of funding requested from GSF.
- Breakdown of GSF funding use, clearly separating non-development expenditure.
- Details of all other co-funding sources.

Partnership/Funding Application Process

- There is no set minimum or maximum funding amount, but new applicants should consult GSF before submission, and existing partners should consult if requesting more than 10% of previous funding. Each project is assessed based on merits and GSF's ability to secure funding.
- Only applications that meet eligibility criteria will be accepted; ineligible applications will be returned with a brief explanation.
- GSF may seek clarification from applicants before the Board's final decision.
- Upon satisfactory completion of the review, GSF's management makes recommendations to the Board.
- Applications are considered based on merit to ensure fair allocation of available funding.

Partnership and funding assessment criteria

Applications for partnership and project funding will be assessed under the following essential criteria:

- relevance and alignment with GSF's vision;
- evidence of need;
- project strategy;
- project design;
- strategic approach;
- gender equality;
- disability inclusion;
- policy assessment;
- evidence of community support;
- budget and financial management;
- quantum of funding requested;
- diversification of funding;
- cross-cutting policies;
- risk management framework;
- sustainability including climate impact; and
- capacity to deliver.

Transfer of Funds

GSF and the partner will agree on a payment schedule, which will be documented in a written agreement.

GSF will notify the partner's designated contact person about the transfer, and the contact person must email confirmation of the received funding amount.

Funding variations

To redirect funds to a different activity, a written request must be submitted to GSF's Executive Director. GSF will conduct a verification process, and a decision will be made by the Board or Executive Director, per GSF's authority delegations. Written approval from GSF is required before funds are expended on any variation.

For amounts equal to or greater than A\$1,000, prior written approval is required from GSF's Executive Director in the following cases:

- Delay in implementing an approved activity/programme within the calendar year.
- Material underspend (\geq A\$1,000) on the activity/project.
- Request to use funds for an alternate purpose.
- Underspend/overspend on a specific budget line.

Any unexpended funds at year-end must be reported in the annual acquittal and may only be carried forward with GSF's written approval.

Funding Complaints

Appeals or complaints about funding decisions can be submitted to the Chair of the GSF Board via email at info@goodsamsfoundation.org.au. All submissions will be acknowledged within 5 working days, with a response provided within 4 working weeks. If the matter is referred to the full Board, the applicant will be informed of the meeting date, and a final response will be issued within 5 days of the meeting.

Emergency Funding and Special Appeals

GSF acknowledges that funded programmes may occasionally require emergency funding or wish to launch special appeals. To facilitate this, a formal written request must be submitted outlining the

purpose, necessity, amount requested, and timeframes. These requests will be presented to the GSF Board within 2 business days for consideration. A decision will be provided as soon as possible.

GSF Policy Compliance

GSF partner programmes must comply with GSF policies, which may be updated periodically. Partners are responsible for ensuring their programme/project policies align with GSF policies and that staff are properly trained. Partners must review and comply with all GSF policies before submitting a funding application and report on compliance and training throughout the programme/project cycle.

GSF requires compliance with the following policies:

- Commitment to Safeguarding
- Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment (PSEAH)
- Complaints Procedure
- Workplace Health and Safety
- Counter-Terrorism
- Financial Wrongdoing
- Development & Non-Development Activity
- Gender Equality and Diversity
- Disability Inclusion
- Bullying and Harassment

GSF may request copies of relevant policies from partners during the application process.

Programme monitoring, evaluation and reporting

Assessing project performance: monitoring and evaluation

GSF assesses project performance based on two main objectives:

- **Accountability:** Monitoring and evaluation ensure transparency and proper use of resources.
- **Learning:** Lessons learned from projects improve future planning and development.

Monitoring and evaluation: understanding the difference

Monitoring and evaluation (**M&E**) are distinct but closely related management tools, carried out at different stages of the project cycle.

GSF follows these principles for M&E:

- M&E should be planned at the project design stage.
- M&E should involve project partners using participatory methods.
- M&E assesses whether projects meet set targets.
- M&E should strengthen partner systems and staff capacity.
- M&E should provide learning opportunities and improve future project design.
- M&E should support decision-making for both GSF and project staff.
- M&E should meet the information needs of primary stakeholders, including donors.

Monitoring

Monitoring involves tracking project progress throughout the cycle to ensure it stays on track. Its functions are to:

- Ensure effective programme implementation and fund accountability.
- Enable two-way learning and verify progress against objectives.
- Assess partner organisational health and capacity.
- Identify future needs and address issues like project risks and stakeholder concerns.

GSF project monitoring reports

In-country partners prepare reports to help GSF monitor projects and ensure funding accountability. All GSF partner projects must report within the timeframe specified in their written agreement.

Partners are expected to provide materials (e.g. photos, links, printed materials, etc.) for sharing project information through GSF's website, social media, and other channels. These materials must comply with GSF's policies.

GSF expects high-quality reports that address all questions in the reporting form and incorporate feedback. Incomplete reports may result in the suspension of funding.

Evaluation

Evaluation is conducted at specific points to assess if a project has met its objectives as planned. It focuses on:

- **Relevance:** Has the project addressed real local community issues?
- **Efficiency:** Are resources used wisely, with strategies for improvement?
- **Effectiveness:** Are desired outputs achieved?
- **Impact:** Is the project creating long-term positive change in the community?
- **Sustainability:** Is the project sustainable?
- **New knowledge:** What new insights have emerged on effective development practices?

GSF project evaluation reports

The annual acquittal evaluates project performance, measures impact, and assesses how to improve future delivery. It is submitted via email to GSF's Executive Director.

The final budget must include income and expenditure actuals for the last quarter.

Field monitoring and evaluation

All GSF partner projects are subject to field monitoring and evaluation visits by GSF staff or representatives, focusing on specific project issues, compliance, or in-depth evaluation.

Learning

GSF is dedicated to continuous improvement in programme delivery, stakeholder engagement, and organisational sustainability. Through regular monitoring, evaluation, and reporting, GSF refines its project management processes.

Standardised reporting ensures consistency in tracking outputs, outcomes, and indicators, enabling effective assessment and improvement. Field visits provide opportunities to gather insights and share learnings. GSF offers support, feedback, and training to partners and promotes knowledge-sharing across programmes to enhance impact. Feedback from partners and stakeholders is actively sought during reporting and at other times to improve practices.