

“Building resilience of communities for sustainable development”

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY POLICY

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# Introduction

Partners in Community Social Action (PICSA) Uganda is Community Based (CBO) and national, Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) located in Moyo district. It is registered with the national NGO Bureau with INDP126911438ND and Moyo District Local Government registration number of MLDLG/NGO/0084R founded with aim of providing the communities with primary health care services, reproductive, maternal, newborn Child and Adolescent Health and Family planning services, GBV prevention, communicable diseases such as malaria prevention and control, TB and HIV/AIDS services, livelihood education and community-based health interventions.

Vision:

Quality, effective health and livelihood services for the most underserved communities.

Mission:

A non- profit organization Saving lives and improving health by increasing access to quality, effective healthcare and livelihood services for the most underserved communities.

**Purpose:**

The environmental sustainable policy is a set of guidelines and regulations put in place by governments, organizations, and businesses to address and mitigate the negative impacts of human activities on the environment. Developing an effective environmental policy involves considering various aspects of environmental protection, conservation, and sustainability.

Partners in Community Social Action (PICSA) Uganda is an organization that works to promote sustainable development and environmental conservation in Uganda. The environmental policy of PICSA Uganda focuses on addressing key environmental issues facing communities in the country. These key components of the policy include:

Advocating for the protection of natural resources, such as forests, wetlands, and water bodies, through community-based conservation initiatives. Collaborating with local communities, government agencies, NGOs, and other stakeholders to implement environmental projects and raise awareness about the importance of environmental conservation. Supporting efforts to promote renewable energy technologies, such as solar power and biogas, to reduce reliance on fossil fuels and mitigate climate change.

Overall, the PICSA Uganda environmental policy aims to empower communities to take action to protect the environment, promote sustainable development, and build resilience to the impacts of climate change. By working together with various partners, PICSA Uganda seeks to create a more sustainable and environmentally-friendly future for Uganda while contributing to a healthier for communities worldwide.

# About this policy

* 1. This Environmental Sustainability Policy formalizes our commitment to supporting the principles of environmental sustainability and recognizes that a sustainable environment is central to our lives and our work.
	2. Partners in Community Social Action (PICSA) Uganda is committed to managing its activities to promote environmental sustainability, conserve and enhance our natural resources, prevent environmental pollution and bring about continual improvement in our environmental performance.
	3. The aim of this Environmental Sustainability Policy is to integrate a philosophy of environmental sustainability into all of PICSA Uganda’s activities and to establish and promote sound environmental practice in our operations.

We will achieve this by:

1. Informing staff and stakeholders of our commitment to the environment and sustainability.
2. Supporting the implementation of environmental actions within our organization.
3. Monitoring the progress of those environmental actions.
4. Communicating the outcome of those environmental actions to relevant stakeholders.

# Principles of PICSA Uganda’s Sustainable Environmental Policy

In the undertakings and projects PICSA Uganda implements and recognizes its role and responsibilities with reference to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that are part of the United Nations Agenda 2030, PICSA Uganda intends to continue to develop projects, initiatives and adopt behaviors consistent with, among others, the objectives:

1. SDG N.7, which expresses the need to ensure access to clean, cheap and sustainable energy for all;
2. SDG N.9, which expresses support for the construction of infrastructure needed to promote innovation and fair, responsible and sustainable industrialization;
3. SDG N.11, to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, durable and sustainable;
4. SDG N.12, to ensure sustainable patterns of production and consumption of resources and energy;
5. SDG N.13, which summons rapid action to combat climate change and its consequences;
6. SDG N.15, which expresses the need to protect, restore and promote sustainable use of the earth's ecosystem; sustainable forest management; combating desertification, land degradation and loss of biological diversity.

# Who is responsible for this policy?

* 1. This policy is owned by PICSA Uganda. It was adopted on January 15, 2024 and will be reviewed every January 15th. Changes may be made at any time based on guidance or amended organizational priorities
	2. Line managers have day-to-day responsibility for this policy and you should refer any questions about this policy to them in the first instance.
	3. Suggestions for changes or additions to this policy are welcome and should be reported to the Project lead PICSA Uganda.

# Who does this policy apply to?

* 1. This policy covers all employees, officers, directors, consultants, contractors, volunteers, interns, casual workers and agency workers.
	2. This policy has been agreed upon / implemented following consultation with the Board of directors.
	3. This policy does not form part of any contract of employment or other contract to provide services, and we may amend it at any time.

# Policy Statement

PICSA Uganda is committed to protecting the environment, the health and safety of her employees, and the community in which we conduct our business. It is our policy to seek continual improvement throughout our business operations to lessen our impact on the local and global environment by conserving energy, water and other natural resources; reducing waste generation; recycling and; reducing our use of toxic materials. We are committed to environmental excellence and pollution prevention, meeting or exceeding all environmental regulatory requirements, and to purchasing products which have greater recycled content with lower toxicity and packaging, that reduce the use of natural resources.

# Environmental sustainability statement

* 1. The earth’s environment is under severe stress from uncontrolled human activity, threatening the survival of our society and the performance of PICSA Uganda’s mission.
	2. PICSA Uganda respects our relationship with the natural environment and its ecosystems. We acknowledge the adverse impacts that human activity can impose and take actions to prevent degradation of those natural systems. We acknowledge the specific impacts of our business on the natural environment, and our responsibility as a good corporate citizen to ensure a natural environment that is sustainable.
	3. PICSA Uganda commits to the following principles and practices:
1. Monitoring and managing our environmental performance and working towards targets set to reduce adverse impacts.
2. Complying with all relevant international, national, state and local environmental policy, practices, regulations and legislation, and industry-specific best practices.
3. Reducing the consumption of natural resources in daily operations, including water, paper and energy.
4. Maximizing the recycling of resources.
5. Disposing of all waste appropriately, and minimizing waste sent to non-recyclable disposal sites.
6. Committing to the principles of preventing pollution to the environment and continual improvement in our environmental management.
7. Minimizing pollution by taking steps to limit carbon emissions resulting from vehicle and air travel.
8. Where possible, encouraging suppliers to meet the highest standards of environmental performance.
9. Communicating this policy to all employees, contractors and other stakeholders, as well as making this policy available to the general public.
10. Reporting on the company’s environmental performance in both internal and external communications, where relevant.
11. Reviewing this policy annually and measuring targets and performance as part of that review.

# The natural environment and our assets

* 1. PICSA Uganda commits to increasing opportunities for nature to thrive on the assets we own, lease or manage. This includes land, water and air which we have a financial interest in, own, lease, or otherwise manage.
	2. We are committed to biodiversity, and will work to ensure our actions on the assets we own or manage do not have a detrimental impact on the natural environment and will support biodiversity.
	3. PICSA Uganda will achieve this by:
1. Protecting and enhancing the quality and extent of the natural environment in the assets we own, lease or manage.
2. Supporting the conservation of trees, hedgerows, ponds, streams, coastal habitats and other aspects of the natural environment.
3. Managing our assets and those adjacent, such as public rights of way, coastal areas, play areas, playing fields and verges, in a manner that protects and increases biodiversity.
4. Introducing environmental growth opportunities and activities wherever we can on our assets.
5. Banning the use of balloons, sky lanterns, inefficient outdoor heating, and other materials and activities which could have a detrimental impact on the natural environment.
6. Phasing out the use of chemicals and pesticides on the assets we own, lease or manage.
	1. PICSA Uganda encourages the efficient use of water on all assets we own, lease or manage.
	2. PICSA Uganda will ensure staff and other users of our buildings are aware of how to reduce the use of water, and reuse water wherever possible.

# Sustainable travel

* 1. PICSA Uganda will promote and support modern working practices including remote working and hybrid working.
	2. We encourage the use of digital meetings wherever possible.
	3. We encourage staff to take public transport, cycle or walk to work wherever possible.
	4. We support and encourage the use of electric and other ultra-low emissions vehicles.
	5. We will actively work to reduce air travel as much as possible. Where there is a recognized business need for air travel, we will work towards offsetting our emissions for air travel.

# Waste and recycling

* 1. PICSA Uganda commits to keeping waste to an absolute minimum by preventing, reusing, recycling or recovering waste wherever possible. We will ensure waste is sorted, stored and disposed of properly and in a sustainable manner in all of our locations.
	2. We aspire to be a zero-waste organization. We will achieve this by:
1. Phasing out the use of single-use plastics.
2. Recycling 100% of recyclable material.
3. Reducing the use of non-recyclable material and offsetting where this is not possible.
4. Promoting and encourage recycling by all staff.
5. Using recyclable, compostable and/or recycled products on our premises.
6. Reducing the production of non-recyclable resources such as laminated or plastic based publicity material.
7. Minimize the amount of printing and the amount of wastepaper.
8. Using electronic communication as our primary method of communication and use an opt-in scheme for paper-based communication.
9. Minimizing pollution and preventing it wherever possible, including light, noise, solids, liquids and chemicals.
10. Promoting the use of composting for organic waste.

# Environmentally Preferable Purchasing (EPP) Policy

The goal of this policy is to ensure that products and services purchased or contracted for conform to the goals of our company’s environmental policy. We will strive, where feasible, to purchase environmentally preferable products and services to meet the company’s office and operational needs. We will also favor suppliers who strive to improve their environmental performance, provide environmentally preferable products, and who can document the supply chain impacts of their efforts.

Wherever possible, purchasing decisions will favor products and feedstocks that:

* 1. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
	2. Are made with renewable energy.
	3. Reduce pollution from all discharges (releases to air, water, and land).
	4. Reduce the use of toxic materials hazardous to the environment, employees and public health.
	5. Contain the highest possible percentage of post-consumer recycled content.
	6. Reduce packaging and other waste.
	7. Are energy efficient.
	8. Conserve water.
	9. Are reusable and/or durable.
	10. Minimize transportation (local sources, concentrated products).
	11. Serve several functions (examples: copiers/printers, multipurpose cleaners) to reduce the number of products purchased.

Environmentally preferable products and services that are comparable in quality to their standard counterparts will receive a purchasing preference. In situations where the most environmentally preferable product is unavailable or impractical, secondary considerations will include production methods and the environmentally and socially responsible management practices of suppliers and producers. Environmentally preferable purchasing is part of our long term commitment to the environment. By sending a clear signal to producers and suppliers about this commitment, we hope to support wider adoption of environmentally preferable products and practices.

# Sustainable procurement

* 1. We aspire to reduce our carbon footprint throughout our supply chain. We commit to the principles of buying locally, seasonally, and making a concerted effort in all our procurement decisions to reduce the distance travelled between source and destination.
	2. We commit to timely procurement and encourage less environmentally damaging ways for international procurement needs. When these decisions are made in a timely manner, overland or overseas shipping can be used instead of flights, which reduces the carbon footprint of the procurement spend compared to aviation.
	3. Where air freight is unavoidable, we will monitor and record the emissions generated and seek to offset this as part of our carbon reduction plan.
	4. We will meet the objectives of sustainable procurement by:
1. Sourcing materials and services locally and seasonally.
2. Ensure catering and foodstuffs are sourced from organic, local, and/or fair-trade sources.
3. Ensure timber or other wood-based materials are sourced from recyclable or sustainable sources.
4. Ensure all consumables such as cleaning materials and inks are eco-friendly.
5. Encourage suppliers to document their sustainability policies and report their measures.
6. Review existing and plan for new procurement spending within the principles of environmental sustainability.
	1. We will encourage all suppliers to adopt principles of environmental sustainability.

#  Our duty to the wider world

* 1. Human activities over the past 200 years, such as the burning of fossil fuels and land clearing, have led to an increased concentration of greenhouse gases in the lower atmosphere – increasing the average global temperature and precipitating a climate crisis. The 1997 Kyoto Protocol has defined the most prominent greenhouse gases as carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide, as well as sulphur hexafluoride, hydrofluorocarbons and perfluorocarbons. Taken together, these greenhouse gas emissions are a key contributor to rapid climate change.
	2. The use of electricity and gas is a key contributor to greenhouse gas emissions; however, our organisation cannot function without energy. Therefore, energy is one of the clearest and most important ways to reduce our overall emissions, and is a key part of our commitment to reducing our carbon footprint.
	3. To accomplish a reduction in emissions from energy use, we will:
	4. Undertake an energy audit.
	5. Produce a plan to reduce our energy usage.
	6. Produce a plan to switch to 100% renewable energy procurement.
	7. Investigate how wind and solar energy can be used on our assets.
	8. We will review and reduce our Scope 1 emissions. These are emissions which occur from sources directly controlled by our organization, such as furnaces, boilers and owned vehicles. We will produce a plan to reduce and offset our Scope 1 emissions.
	9. We will review and reduce our Scope 2 emissions. These are indirect emissions from sources such as purchased electricity. We will produce a plan to reduce and offset our Scope 2 emissions.
	10. We will review and reduce our Scope 3 emissions. These are emissions from our supply chain, travel and purchased goods. We will produce a plan to reduce and offset our Scope 3 emissions.

# Information technology and sustainability

* 1. We will work towards the use of certified sustainable PCs, laptops, monitors, mobile devices, network and server hardware.
	2. Where possible, we will source IT equipment from recycled sources.
	3. Non-standard IT equipment will not be used unless there is an unavoidable technical requirement precluding this. Non sustainable equipment or equipment with low energy efficiency will only be used where there is no alternative.
	4. All equipment must be disposed of correctly through an approved e-waste recycling contractor. No IT equipment should be sent to landfill or thrown out.
	5. We will make available the use of applications and systems to reduce the need for printing paper and reduce the use of personal printers where they are not required.

# Raising awareness

Raising awareness to the beneficiaries of our projects on environmental issues, also through specific activities included in the projects themselves. Human activities such as pollution, deforestation, and over consumption can have negative impacts on the environment. These activities can lead to environmental degradation, resulting in serious consequences for humans and the environment, such as climate change, habitat loss, and resource depletion. Encourage your friends, family and co-workers to reduce their carbon pollution.

# Training and staff involvement

* 1. This document must be given maximum visibility and dissemination also through training of employees and collaborators on environmental issues, making them responsible for the contribution that the individual, through his or her behaviour, can make to environmental protection.
	2. We will encourage all staff to undergo training on environmental sustainability and climate change. We will aim to raise awareness of environmental sustainability across our operations.
	3. We encourage collaboration and involvement of all staff in our environmental sustainability efforts. Staff involvement is critical to ensuring the adoption of this policy and in our efforts to tackle climate change.
	4. We will establish a sustainability steering group to drive involvement and stewardship of sustainability across the organization.
	5. Our employees must always have at their disposal the necessary information to apply internal procedures in order to make informed choices and the means to implement them effectively.
	6. The induction and training process for all new staff members should include a specific session to present this Policy.
	7. This Policy shall be periodically reviewed and supplemented in the light of any legal provisions or new aspects to be considered.