



Partner Housing Australasia (Building) Incorporated  
 ABN 88 722 057 429 CFN: 15429  
 Web: [www.partnerhousing.org](http://www.partnerhousing.org)  
 Pro-bono professional services and funding for South Pacific  
 village infrastructure, housing, water, sanitation and training.



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Partner Housing is a signatory to the ACFID Code of Conduct, which is a voluntary, self-regulatory sector code of good practice. As a signatory we are committed and fully adhere to the ACFID Code of Conduct, conducting our work with transparency, accountability and integrity.

## Environmental Impact Policies and Procedures



**Declaration** – These policies and procedures have been approved by the Partner Housing Australasia (Building) Incorporated General Meeting of 3 April 2023. They set out the means of complying with the “Constitution & Code of Conduct”, and the requirements of the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID).

**Signed**

Rod Johnston, President, Partner Housing Australasia (Building) Incorporated

### Adoption of Document Revisions

Reference	Revision	Date of Adoption	Principal Amendments
P23040325	1	3 April 2023	Revision to align with Vision, Mission, Values & DFAT requirements

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## Vision

Partner Housing Australasia is an entirely voluntary organisation, which aims to transform the lives of people living in Asia-Pacific villages by improving the cyclone, earthquake, and tsunami resistance of their houses, clinics, schools, and community buildings; and by providing clean water supplies and hygienic sanitation.

## Commitment

Consistent with the vision, Partner Housing Australasia and its Partner Organisations are committed to programs that minimise any environmental impact during construction or operation of the infrastructure.

## Code of Conduct

Partner Housing Australasia is a signatory to the ACFID Code of Conduct, which is a voluntary, self-regulatory sector code of good practice. As a signatory, we are committed and fully adhere to the ACFID Code of Conduct, conducting our work with transparency, accountability, and integrity. The following policies and procedures have been developed to reflect the vision, and to simultaneously ensure consistency with the ACFID Code of Conduct.

## Scope

These Policies and Procedures apply to Partner Housing Australasia, its Partner Organisations, Representatives, and any guests who might accompany these people to the locations where the programs are implemented. The “Policy” expands the organisation’s vision, mission, and values; together with satisfying the DFAT and ACFID requirements, and the “Procedures” set out the means of implementing policy. An associated “Training” document provides additional material and background, and “Compliance and Audit Record” documents provide the relevant records of compliance and verification.

## Definitions

A comprehensive set of definitions is set out in “Constitution & Code of Conduct”. Definitions specific to this policy are set out below.

Partner Organisations are those bodies working with Partner Housing Australasia to implement the programs. For purposes of this document, they include (but are not limited to) Vision for Homes [PNG] and South Ranongga Community Association [SRCA]).

Representatives is the term used to describe collectively the Board Directors, Managers, Volunteers, Staff (if so engaged), Contractors and Consultants who administer the programs and projects.

Volunteer means a person who carries out executive, management, administrative, operations, design, project management and/or similar functions (whether executed in Australia or overseas) on a probono basis, under the direction of the Chief Executive Officer (on behalf of the Board). A Volunteer may also be a Member or a Director. Partner Housing Australasia is an entirely voluntary organisation. Volunteer does not include “Contractors” or “Consultants”, who provide goods or services on a probono or commercial basis, or people who provide minor assistance on a casual and infrequent basis.

Risk Analysis is a systematic use of available information to determine how often specified events may occur and the magnitude of their likely consequence. For purposes of this policy, Risk Analysis, and associated terms (including those listed herein) are as defined in ISO 31000 and AS/NZS 4360.

Program is the overarching development approach and initiative that set priorities and guide project outcomes, results and activities. Programs constitute a coherent set of development projects that pursue a single focus, which may be regional, sectoral or country based.

Project is the practical implementation of an NGO’s overarching development approach or program. Projects are discrete investments in particular countries, contexts and/or sectors, with a specific start and end date and identified funding.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is the assessment of the environmental consequences of a plan, policy, program, or actual projects prior to the decision to move forward with the proposed action.

Sustainable Development means ‘Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’ as defined by World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987.

# Policy

## *B3.3 Environmental Impact*

Partner Housing Australasia recognises and adheres to the following principles –

Principle 1: Partner Housing Australasia shall do no harm (to the environment) through the following –

- a) Protect and maintain the health, diversity and productivity of natural habitats.
- b) Protect the health, welfare, and livelihoods of people including women and vulnerable groups, including children and people with a disability.
- c) Apply pollution prevention and control technologies and practices consistent with international good practice and standards. Avoid the use of hazardous materials subject to international bans and phase outs.
- d) Provide safe and healthy working conditions that prevent accidents, injuries and disease to workers and local communities.
- e) Protect and conserve natural and cultural heritage.

Principle 2: Partner Housing Australasia shall assess and manage environmental risk and impact of the construction programs through the following –

- a) Conduct an assessment of each proposed activity to identify potential direct and indirect impacts on the environment and the potential significance of any identified impacts. Undertake due diligence reviews of associated facilities where appropriate.
- b) Ensure environmental risks are identified early and presented in relevant risk and decision-making processes and documents.
- c) Avoid, or where avoidance is not possible, minimise, mitigate, or as a last resort, offset negative environmental impacts.
- d) Monitor and report on environmental management during design and implementation.
- e) Conduct strategic environmental assessment of the policies, programs, and plans when appropriate.
- f) Seek advice from environmental experts on any activities which are assessed as having, or likely to have a significant environmental impact.

Principle 3: Partner Housing Australasia shall disclose information transparently through the following –

- a) Use transparent accessible form and language to report environmental information based on internationally recognised methods (e.g., life-cycle analysis and/or ISO standards).

Principle 4: Partner Housing Australasia shall consult with stakeholders through the following –

- a) Conduct meaningful consultation with affected parties, including women and vulnerable groups. The consultations shall be free from external manipulation, interference, coercion or intimidation and provide information that is relevant, understandable and accessible to the affected people in a timely manner.
- b) Establish a grievance redress mechanism to receive affected parties' concerns and grievances on environmental performance and facilitate resolution.

Principle 5: Partner Housing Australasia shall work with partners through the following –

- a) Comply with environmental laws, standards and/or policies of the governments in the countries where the programs are based (e.g., Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands).
- b) Build the capacity of Partner Organisations to develop and implement environmental governance frameworks as appropriate.
- c) Harmonise with international development partner environmental safeguard policy principles.

Principle 6: Partner Housing Australasia shall promote improved environmental outcomes through the following

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- a) Integrate environmental considerations into programs to reduce pollution and improve the sustainable use of resources including energy, forestry and water resources. (See details below)
- b) Promote the principles of ecologically sustainable development as outlined in the EPBC Act by ensuring aid activities address these principles.

In more detail –

Partner Housing Australasia shall ensure that all undertakings are environmentally sustainable, employing materials and practices that minimize environmental impact. Following is a list of the principal sustainability elements addressed in the Partner Housing Australasia programs.

- a) Greenhouse gas capture and storage, through consideration of –
  - greenhouse gas emission during building product manufacture (see further comments on use of timber); and
  - operational greenhouse gas emissions, through the minimization of heating and cooling energy. Depending on the climate, these will be commonly achieved through roof insulation and roof ventilation (respectively). Considerations can include the use of naturally occurring local materials as insulation.
- b) Soil erosion, as affected by both logging and replanting practices.
- c) Water quality, as affected by –
  - both logging and replanting practices;
  - siting latrines and septic tanks, particularly in respect of potable water sources;
  - effluent disposal (where applicable).

## Responsible Personnel

The person with overall responsibility for implementing this policy is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), with delegated responsibility to the –

- Regional Managers for the execution of the programs,
- Code of Conduct & Training Manager for the monitoring and reporting to the Board of the environmental considerations of the programs, and
- Humanitarian Engineering Manager for specifying the practical engineering aspects of minimising environmental impact.

## Procedures

### Review of these Policies and Procedures

The policies and procedures set out in this “Policies and Procedures” document shall be reviewed at each Annual General Meeting, as part of the scheduled general policy review.

### Risk Analysis

The CEO shall implement the following:

- Prepare a Risk Analysis for the risk of failing to minimise any environmental impact during construction or operation of the infrastructure.
- Assess and prioritize the risk associated with each program and its component projects, and determine the appropriate mitigation actions.
- Record the Risk Analyses in the Strategic Plans appropriate to each program.
- Summarize the Risk Analyses and the mitigations in a Risk Register.

### Environmental Oversight of Programs

The Humanitarian Engineering Manager shall –

Determine that proposed programs (and the infrastructure construction projects incorporated in the programs) are assessed for potential environmental impacts, using a checklist of possible environmental impacts.

The assessment shall include –

- All programs and associated projects must comply with the environmental laws of countries in which the programs are based (e.g., PNG and Solomon Islands)
- Identification, assessment, and mitigation of potential environmental impacts

References:

- [DFAT’s Environment Protection Policy for DFATs Aid Program.](#)
- [DFAT’s Environment Protection Policy Good Practice Notes.](#)

### **Village buildings and engineering**

The Regional Manager shall ensure that –

- Village houses, clinics and educational buildings are constructed.
- The materials used in the projects shall be common building materials and fittings. Rare or endangered species of timber shall not be used.
- These projects provide safe shelter and community health and education facilities without any detrimental effect the natural environment.
- An Environmental Impact Statement is produced for each project.

### **Village water reticulation**

The Regional Manager shall ensure that –

- Water reticulation projects provide drinking water from clean sources in the hills. This is piped to villages in which communal stand-pipes are constructed. The projects replace labour-intensive had collection of water with efficient piped water and do not have any detrimental effect the natural environment.
- Water spring-box projects provide clean water to a remote village where no reliable source existed without any detrimental effects on the natural environment.
- The material used in these projects shall be common plumbing pipes, tanks, and fittings.
- An Environmental Impact Statement is produced for each project.

### **Village sanitation**

The Regional Manager shall ensure that –

- Dry pit latrines or (where water is available) water-flush pit latrines replace defecation in the sea or bush.
- Latrines are sited such that they do not pollute drinking water sources.
- Where practical, the pits drain through the porous bedrock and do not pollute either the sea or the adjacent land.
- These projects reduce health hazards without any detrimental effect the natural environment.
- The materials used in the projects shall be common building materials and fittings.
- An Environmental Impact Statement is produced for each project.

### **Internal Operations**

The CEO shall facilitate practices that adopts practices that minimise its domestic environmental effect, through the following –

- Partner Housing Australasia Volunteers do not work from a centralised office. They work from their own home or office and are therefore conscious of reducing lighting and heating/cooling.
- The Board only meets four times per year for Board Meetings and the Annual General Meeting. The rest of the time communication is by phone, text, email or teleconference. This reduces travel and its environmental impact.

## **Compliance and Auditing**

The Responsible Personnel shall implement the following:

- Initiate the required monitoring, evaluation and learning functions associated with this “Policies and Procedures” document.
- Initiate both internal and external auditing, consistent with ISO 9001 principles of the policies and procedures herein.
- Ensure that the compliance with the policies and procedures herein, and the associated internal and external audits, are recorded in the associated “Compliance and Audit Records” documents.

## **Training**

The Responsible Personnel shall implement the following:

- Distribute a reference and link to this “Policies and Procedures” document to all Directors, Regional Managers and Partner Organisation Managers, and other personnel working on behalf of the organisation. (Partner Housing Australasia is a voluntary organisation and does not employ staff).
- Distribute a reference and link to the associated “Training” package. Request that all Directors, Regional Managers and Partner Organisation Managers use this to increase their awareness and understanding of these policies and procedures.
- Include a reference and link to this “Policies and Procedures” document in all Memoranda of Understanding with Partner Organisations.
- Table this “Policies and Procedures” document at the Annual General Meeting, for discussion and adoption.
- Review the training effectiveness at the February Board Meeting.