

# Rural Education and Environment Development Center (REED-Nepal)



## ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT POLICY

<b>Policy Owner:</b>	Chief Executive Officer
<b>Approved by:</b>	Executive Committee of REED Nepal
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## 1. BACKGROUND

The majority of people across the Himalaya depend on the natural environment for their food, water, shelter and livelihoods. The environment is, however, under increasing pressure to support them - **exacerbated** by the increasing impacts of climate change and associated frequency and intensity of natural disasters. Environmental management in this context is key to the long-term reduction of poverty and improved social development – to allow the most disadvantaged people to retain access to their main sources of food, water, incomes and livelihoods.

The Strategic *Plan 2017-2021* commits the Rural Education and Environment Development Center (REED-Nepal) to improve environmental management and community-based adaptation to climate change and disaster risk management through: awareness-raising programs, integrating education and sustainable livelihoods into conservation efforts, and supporting community-based responses to natural disasters. This will be supported by enhanced integrated community development - linking education, income generation, health and environmental (and climate change adaptation) outcomes and operations in target communities by building on relationships with and the capacity of local communities and district authorities.

## 2. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

All REED Nepal programs will be designed and implemented according to the following guiding principles:

1. **Do no harm** – Protecting: natural habitats and cultural heritage; and the health, welfare, and livelihoods of people including women and vulnerable groups, children and people with a disability. This includes applying pollution prevention and control technologies and practices; avoiding the use of hazardous materials; and providing safe and healthy working conditions that prevent accidents, injuries and disease to workers and local communities.

2. **Assess and manage environmental risk and impact** – Assessing all potential environmental risks when designing and implementing projects and ensuring that those activities likely to have environmental impacts are properly managed and monitored.

3. **Disclose information transparently** – Applying transparency principles to all information on environmental considerations and providing access to this information in an accessible form and language.

4. **Consult stakeholders** – Conducting meaningful consultation with stakeholders, including women and vulnerable groups, along with a complaints mechanism to allow people’s concerns on environmental performance be heard for appropriate resolution.

5. **Work with partners** – Complying with government environmental laws, standards and/or policies as well as Multilateral Environment Agreements to which they are signatory. This will include supporting the capacity partners to develop and implement environmental governance frameworks as appropriate. REED Nepal will also harmonize its approaches with other international development partners to enhance development effectiveness, reduce transaction costs, and encourage collaborative behavior.

6. **Promote improved environmental outcomes** - Maximizing the environmental benefits of REED Nepal programs and avoiding adverse environmental impact. Through its programs REED Nepal will promote: environmentally sustainable practices; awareness and education on the need to protect the natural environment and its natural ecosystems and resources; and responsible citizenship and operations in regard to the environment.

**2. OPERATIONS**

Environmental impacts of all REED Nepal programs will be considered to support integration of environmental protection and effectively manage any adverse environmental impacts.

**Concept/Proposal and Design Phases** - To assess and manage the environmental impacts of each program or project, and what actions are necessary, REED Nepal will undertake a number of steps to categories the project or program. This involves a checklist of the following:

- Will the project involve the use and alteration of environmentally sensitive land?
- Will it have a land use component?
- Will it adversely affect sustainable land use practices?
- Will it adversely impact any endangered species or ecosystems?
- Will it involve building of infrastructure?
- Will it involve the use of significant amounts of non-renewable energy?
- Will it involve use of significant amounts of water?
- Will it create a significant and unsustainable increase in demand for natural resources, especially local natural resources?

The checklist and the nature of the proposed project in relation to it will determine whether the project/program is designated as:

Category 1 - A project with no potential for significant adverse environmental impact - i.e. projects not in an environmentally sensitive location or sector.

*If a project is determining to be in Category 1, an Environmental Assessment and Management Report is not conducted.*

OR

Category 2 - A project with the potential to have a significant adverse impact on the environment.

*If a project is determined to be in Category 2, further Environmental Assessment will be undertaken and a Management Report produced.*

This report will include:

- Project description
- Project area description
- Potential environmental impacts
- An Environmental Management Plan

Further, there will be on-going assessment of whether environmental issues are receiving due attention during the project design and implementation.

Category 2 projects may include REED Nepal proposed projects that are primarily environmental in nature and have environmental protection and sustainability as the major objective: i.e. specifically designed to deliver and implement environmental and sustainability improvements, or specific environmental protection and sustainability measures (e.g. protection of habitat or species; and renewable energy projects; sustainable water use projects).

**Implementation, monitoring and reporting:** Program management will ensure that identified environmental issues and risks are monitored during implementation of projects. Under REED Nepal's *Performance Management Framework*, as well as its *Organization and Program Risk Management Framework*, environment issues and risks are assessed through partner reporting, field visits, and/or consultations. Project reports will highlight existing environment issues and risks as well as new ones that arise during implementation.

### **3. RESPONSIBILITIES**

REED Nepal's GM will have operational responsibility for ensuring that REED Nepal systems and processes and those of in-country partners meet the obligations of this Policy.

In applying the maxim of 'minimum impact – maximum benefit', all REED Nepal personnel will be expected and instructed to act in an environmentally responsible manner and to employ all reasonable measures to minimize environmental impact (e.g. proper use of energy and water; recycling and reuse where possible; use of sustainably-produced and recyclable materials where possible).