



PWWSO Environmental Policy

Palestinian Working Women Society for Development

Drafted by	PWWSO	Approved by General	Feb. 05, 2025
Responsible person	Amal Khreishe	Director on	Scheduled review date
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1. Introduction

Empowering women and achieving gender equality are deeply connected to protecting the environment and building a sustainable future. In Palestine, women are among those most impacted by environmental challenges, including pollution, limited access to clean water, and the growing threats of climate change. Addressing these issues requires both individual responsibility and collective action to advance the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly those related to health, clean energy, water, and environmental protection.

For the Palestinian Working Women's Society for Development (PWWSO), incorporating a gender-responsive approach into environmental work is essential. Women must be seen not only as those affected by environmental harm, but also as leaders, advocates, and changemakers. By strengthening grassroots activism and mobilizing civil society—including women's groups, youth movements, and NGOs—Palestinian communities can push for policies and legislation that promote environmental justice and sustainability.

Palestine has affirmed its commitment to global environmental efforts by joining key international agreements, including the Rotterdam Convention on hazardous chemicals, the Stockholm Convention on persistent organic pollutants, and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. These commitments highlight the need for inclusive, gender-aware approaches to environmental action at both national and community levels.

Women have long played a vital role in environmental movements worldwide. Building on this legacy, PWWSO's environmental policy affirms the central role of Palestinian women in protecting natural resources, advancing eco-justice, and shaping a sustainable, equitable future for all.

2. Purpose and Objectives

This Environmental Policy establishes a framework to:

- Reduce the **negative environmental impact** of the organization's daily activities.



- Ensure that PWWSO's **projects, offices, and procurement processes** follow principles of ecological sustainability.
- Increase **awareness and responsibility** among staff, volunteers, partners, and communities.
- Align PWWSO with global environmental standards, **Palestinian environmental laws**, and the **UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**.
- Advocate for **environmental justice** as a fundamental women's rights and human rights issue.

Objectives:

- Integrate environmental considerations in all phases of project planning and implementation.
- Reduce waste, and energy consumption.
- Promote local and eco-friendly products through ethical procurement.
- Build capacity of women to lead in environmental protection and eco-resilience.
- Incorporate environmental indicators in M&E systems.

3. Scope of Application

This policy applies to:

- **All administrative and community spaces** managed or funded by PWWSO (offices, shelters, training centers).
- **All staff and volunteers**, regardless of location or contract type.
- **Partner organizations, contractors, and suppliers** who are expected to comply through procurement or grant agreements.
- **All programs**, particularly those in economic empowerment, humanitarian response, infrastructure support, and awareness raising.

4. Principles and Values



PWWSO's environmental policy is grounded in the following principles:

- **Feminist Environmental Justice:** Recognizing that environmental destruction intersects with gender-based oppression.
- **Accountability:** Institutional responsibility for reducing ecological harm.
- **Sustainability:** Balancing present needs with future generations' rights to a healthy environment.
- **Participation:** Ensuring community involvement—especially women—in shaping eco-responsive solutions.
- **Localization:** Promoting local knowledge, resources, and resilience strategies.

5. Areas of Environmental Action

5.1 Waste Management

PWWSO aims to implement a **zero-waste approach** wherever feasible.

Office and Center Practices:

- Reuse office supplies (folders, envelopes, boxes).
- Limit paper use by shifting to **digital documentation, cloud storage, and e-signatures**.
- Ensure responsible disposal of hygiene or medical waste during humanitarian interventions.

Community Programming:

- Educate beneficiaries on composting, recycling, and waste sorting.
- Use biodegradable packaging and reusable materials in dignity kits and food distributions.
- Collaborate with local municipalities for community-based waste campaigns.

5.2 Energy and Water Use

In Facilities:



- Install **LED lights**, and **natural lighting** where possible.
- Encourage a "switch-off" culture for computers, lights, ACs when not in use.
- Prioritize **solar power installation** in rural centers when funding allows.

Water Management:

- Install **low-flow taps**.
- Train staff in water-saving behaviors, especially in water-scarce areas like Gaza.
- Use greywater recycling in centers with gardens or agriculture components.

Mobile and Transport:

- Promote **public transport or carpooling** for staff when traveling.
- Limit printing and courier services unless essential.

5.3 Sustainable Procurement

Procurement policies must:

- Prioritize products that are **locally made, recyclable, organic, or ethically sourced**.
- Avoid **single-use plastic** and items with excessive packaging.
- Require vendors to confirm adherence to **environmental standards**.
- Select construction contractors who use **eco-friendly and non-toxic materials**.

Example:

In economic empowerment programs, prioritize women's cooperatives that use **eco-agriculture, seed-saving, or green production** methods.

5.4 Pollution Control and Environmental Risk Reduction

- Avoid activities that contribute to **air, water, or soil pollution**, especially during infrastructure development or cash-for-work programs.
- Conduct **environmental risk assessments** before launching construction or humanitarian distribution projects.



- Use **environmentally safe cleaning products** in all PWWSO buildings.
- Train local women in **solid waste management, eco-sanitation, or green business opportunities**.

5.5 Environmental Awareness and Community Education

- Integrate environmental education into:
 - Awareness campaigns on women's rights and health.
 - Livelihoods training for green businesses (e.g., organic farming, recycling, soapmaking).
 - School-based and youth engagement projects.
- Celebrate Earth Day and related events with **community clean-up drives, tree planting, and forums** on environmental justice.
- Collaborate with **eco-feminist and environmental CSOs** for joint campaigns and research.

6. Environmental Justice in Programming

PWWSO recognizes that Palestinian women are:

- Among the **first to feel the impacts of climate shocks, land degradation, and poor sanitation**.
- Often **excluded from environmental policy-making**, despite being primary caregivers and land users.
- Vulnerable to **water scarcity, forced displacement**, and loss of agricultural income due to occupation.

Therefore, PWWSO will:

- Integrate **environmental justice analysis** in program design (e.g., impact of land confiscation on women farmers).



- Promote **women-led climate adaptation initiatives**.
- Advocate for **gender-sensitive climate policies and disaster risk reduction frameworks** at the national level.

7. Compliance with Environmental Laws and Standards

PWWSD commits to:

- Abiding by **Palestinian Environmental Law**, particularly around waste disposal and pollution control.
- Aligning with relevant global frameworks, including:
 - **UN SDGs** (Goals 6, 7, 12, 13, 15).
 - **UNFCCC/Paris Agreement** (as indirectly applicable through donor compliance).
 - **CEDAW** General Recommendations on climate and environment.
- Meeting **donor environmental due diligence requirements**, including for EU, UN, and bilateral programs.

8. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting

PWWSD will track its environmental progress by:

- Including **environmental impact indicators** in program logframes (e.g., number of programs using eco-supplies).
- Conducting **annual internal environmental audits**.
- Requiring project teams to complete **Environmental Compliance Checklists** at proposal and closure phases.
- Including an **environmental responsibility question** in beneficiary feedback forms.



9. Roles and Responsibilities

Actor	Key Responsibilities
Senior Management	Set organizational goals, mobilize green infrastructure funding
Procurement & Logistics	Enforce sustainable procurement practices
Project Managers	Integrate environmental planning into all stages of project cycle
Field Officers	Ensure field-level waste management, educate communities
M&E Team	Develop and track environmental indicators
Partners & Suppliers	Comply with environmental clauses in MoUs or contracts

10. Review and Revision

- The policy will be reviewed **every two years** by a working group made up of:
 - A representative from senior management
 - A field team member
 - A community focal point (optional)
 - An external environmental expert (where feasible)
- Feedback from audits, community reports, and evaluations will inform updates.
- Any changes to the policy must be approved by the **Board of Directors**.

11. Conclusion

As a feminist organization operating under occupation and environmental stress, PWWSO views environmental protection not just as technical compliance, but as a **political, social, and ethical responsibility**. Through this policy, PWWSO reaffirms its role as a champion of dignity and justice—for people and planet alike.