



SUCON



Multidisciplinary Consultancy Services

Inclusive and Gender Responsive Infrastructure Policy

Published & Effective: 06/05/2024

SUCON INTERNATIONAL
Multidisciplinary Consultancy Services

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	APPLICATION	2
2	EFFECTIVE DATE: 06/05/2024.....	2
3	POLICY IMPLEMENTATION, APPROVAL, MONITORING AND REVIEW.....	2
4	PURPOSE AND DEFINITION.....	2
5	GUIDING PRINCIPLES	3
6	ETHICAL BOUNDARIES AND CULTURAL RESPECT	3
7	KEY POLICY COMPONENTS	4
7.1	Gender-Responsive Planning and Budgeting	4
7.2	Inclusive Design Standards	4
7.3	Community Engagement and Representation	4
7.4	Gender-Sensitive Employment and Procurement.....	4
7.5	Risk Prevention and Response Measures.....	5
8	CHILD AND CARE-TAKER PROTECTION IN INFRASTRUCTURE.....	5
8.1	Objectives	5
8.2	Strategies	5
8.3	Internal Child-Protection and Caretaker Protocols (Outside of Projects)	6
8.4	Child-Sensitive Infrastructure Impact Indicators.....	6
9	REPORTING PROCESS AND PROCEDURES.....	7
9.1	Non-Compliance	7
9.2	Appeal Process.....	7
9.3	Whistleblower Protection and Retaliation Prevention	8
9.	POLICY FEEDBACK.....	8

1. APPLICATION

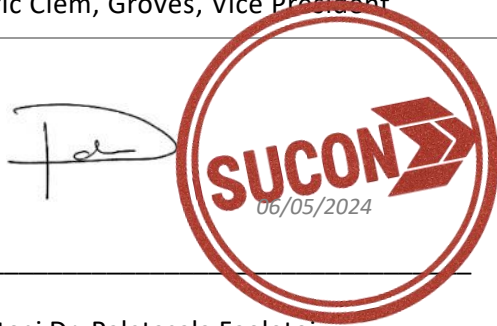
This policy applies to all paid, contracted, and volunteer staff of Sucon International (hereinafter referred to as 'Sucon'). This policy also applies to all Sucon associates, subcontractors, and freelancers. This policy also extends to all business extensions of Sucon.

2 EFFECTIVE DATE: 06/05/2024

This applies to all Sucon-relevant operations effective as of the date stipulated above. As of the date specified above, all previous policies and practices are hereby repealed.

3 POLICY IMPLEMENTATION, APPROVAL, MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Central Administration and the responsible officer(s) of Sucon, acting under the authority of the President, Vice President, and Operations Manager, are liable for the management and implementation of this policy, ensuring that its provisions and records management are applied and adhered to. This includes establishing relevant record-keeping systems.

APPROVAL AND REVIEW	DETAILS
Policy Author	Dr. Eric Clem, Groves, Vice President
Council Approval	 Lefaotogi Dr. Paletasala Faolotoi Founder & President
Next Review Date	Next Review June 2027

4 PURPOSE AND DEFINITION

This policy aims to ensure that all infrastructure planning, design, construction, operation, and maintenance activities are inclusive, gender-responsive, and socially equitable. Infrastructure should improve access and quality of life for all, regardless of gender, age, ability, or socio-economic background, and uphold the rights, dignity, and safety of women, men, and children, persons with disabilities, elderly populations, and marginalised groups.

This policy shall be read in conjunction with the following applicable Sucon policies and procedures:

- Anti-Corruption Policy
- Environmental Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Design Policy and Procedure
- Human Resources Policy Manual (for internal members only)
- Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy

Once PRINTED, this is an UNCONTROLLED document. Please email info@sucon.ws for latest version.

5 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Below are the guiding principles of this policy:

- a) **Equity and Non-Discrimination:** Ensure equal access, use, and benefits from infrastructure services by all users.
- b) **Participation and Representation:** Actively involve women, men, youth, and minority groups in infrastructure decision-making processes.
- c) **Do No Harm:** Prevent and mitigate risks of gender-based violence (GBV), exploitation, and discrimination throughout the infrastructure lifecycle.
- d) **Child and Care-taker Sensitivity:** Recognize the unique needs of children and their care-givers, and provide safe, accessible, and supportive infrastructure environments.
- e) **Accountability and Transparency:** Monitor inclusiveness and gender outcomes and promote institutional responsibility for equitable implementation.

6 ETHICAL BOUNDARIES AND CULTURAL RESPECT

This policy reflects Sucon International's core principles and unwavering commitment to promoting inclusive, gender-responsive, and socially equitable infrastructure. It underscores Sucon's responsibility to protect the dignity, safety, and rights of women, children, persons with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups across all projects and operations. However, Sucon acknowledges that it does not hold legal or contractual authority to impose this policy onto its clients, partners, or host governments. Instead, Sucon is committed to advocating for and encouraging the adoption of inclusive and protective measures in every possible aspect of its project lifecycle, from design through to implementation and evaluation.

Sucon operates in a diverse regional context and maintains deep respect for the cultural, religious, and traditional norms of the communities it serves. Sucon is equally committed to remaining independent from influencing these cultural domains. Accordingly, the application of this policy shall be undertaken with respect to local norms and the financial and budgetary limitations of each client. Nonetheless, if at any stage a project or activity directly contravenes Sucon's core principles, particularly where it risks or results in harm to children, women, or vulnerable populations, Sucon reserves the right to withdraw its participation from such projects. This decision will be made within the limits of applicable legal and financial frameworks, and in compliance with contractual and jurisdictional regulations.

In such cases, if deemed appropriate and legally permissible, Sucon may confidentially notify or advise relevant oversight authorities or protection bodies. However, Sucon will not engage in or initiate legal action for or against its former client. Sucon shall maintain an anonymous, neutral, and independent posture, in keeping with its obligation to uphold ethical standards while respecting sovereign processes and community autonomy. This statement ensures that Sucon can remain principled, professional, and impartial, balancing ethical responsibility with respect for the legal, cultural, and operational environments in which it works.

7 KEY POLICY COMPONENTS

This policy is guided and administered according to the below referenced key policy components:

7.1 Gender-Responsive Planning and Budgeting

All Sucon initiatives, projects and internal administration must ensure the following pertaining to the delivery of planning and budgeting activities:

- a) Conduct gender and disability social inclusion (GEDSI) assessments during feasibility studies and design phases.
- b) Allocate budgets specifically for gender-responsive components (e.g., lighting, access ramps, breastfeeding stations, etc.).
- c) Use sex- and age-disaggregated data to inform service delivery.

7.2 Inclusive Design Standards

All infrastructure based projects developed and delivered by Sucon must comply with the following:

- a) Ensure Universal Design principles are applied across projects.
- b) Provide gender-segregated and accessible sanitation and hygiene facilities.
- c) Design public spaces and transportation with features such as lighting, visibility, surveillance¹ (CCTV), and emergency call points to improve safety for women and vulnerable groups.
- d) Incorporate waiting areas and service counters that are child- and elderly-friendly.
- e) Ensure that HVAC and Plumbing facilities cater to the different temperature and waste needs for women and children.
- f) Harmonise the balance between cultural and traditional features and ensure it does not affect inclusivity. If cultural requirements do not meet inclusive standards, the cultural requirements must be waived.

7.3 Community Engagement and Representation

It is vital that the community and the eventual beneficiaries of the project(s), get to influence the design and delivery as they will be directly impacted once it use.

- a) Where possible, ensure a minimum 40% representation of women and marginalised groups in stakeholder consultations, planning meetings, and community committees. However, the threshold must reflect local baselines and realities on the ground, and specific to the political and cultural context. It is to be highly encouraged with flexibility, and should not be forced.
- b) Use culturally appropriate and multilingual outreach methods to reach excluded groups.
- c) Conduct targeted capacity-building for women to participate meaningfully in decision-making processes.

7.4 Gender-Sensitive Employment and Procurement

All recruitment, employment and procurement must comply with the following:

¹ Surveillance measures must comply with privacy laws and standards, with special care to protect the rights and privacy of children and vulnerable individuals.

Once PRINTED, this is an UNCONTROLLED document. Please email info@sucon.ws for latest version.

- a) Encourage and prioritize employment of women, persons with disabilities, and youth in infrastructure projects.
- b) Require contractors to adopt gender-equal employment practices, including non-discrimination, equal pay for equal work, and provision of family-friendly workplace conditions.
- c) Use procurement criteria that incentivize inclusive hiring and workplace protections.
- d) Conduct targeted capacity-building for women to participate meaningfully in decision-making processes.

7.5 Risk Prevention and Response Measures

Below are the risk prevention and response measures of this policy.

- a) Conduct GBV risk assessments for all infrastructure projects as part of environmental and social impact assessment.
- b) Establish grievance redress mechanisms that are safe, anonymous, and gender-sensitive.
- c) Train all workers and implementing partners on workplace ethics, anti-harassment, and child protection protocols as part of mandatory occupational, health and safety trainings.

8 CHILD AND CARE-TAKER PROTECTION IN INFRASTRUCTURE

This sub-component ensures that the rights and safety of children and their care-takers are actively protected throughout infrastructure projects.

8.1 Objectives

Below are our child-protection and caretaker objectives

- a) Safeguard children from harm or neglect in infrastructure environments.
- b) Support care-givers (primarily women) in safe and effective use of infrastructure.
- c) Integrate child-friendly spaces and services into public infrastructure.

8.2 Strategies

The below strategies must be complied with to ensure protection of children and care-takers who are predominantly women:

a) Infrastructure Design Considerations

- i. Integrate safe pedestrian crossings, sidewalks, and road signage near schools, clinics, and childcare centers.
- ii. Provide dedicated, shaded waiting areas for mothers and care-takers.
- iii. Include child play areas in public parks and community buildings with appropriate fencing, seating, and supervision measures.
- iv. Design bus terminals, markets, and public transport to accommodate strollers, children's needs, and pregnant women.

b) Child Protection Protocols

- i. Train infrastructure workers and staff on child safeguarding policies.
- ii. Implement child protection codes of conduct for all project contractors and employees.
- iii. Prohibit child labor in all infrastructure-related work, including informal support roles (e.g., food vendors, loaders).

Once PRINTED, this is an UNCONTROLLED document. Please email info@sucon.ws for latest version.

- iv. Ensure that protocols, and staff trainings reflect the latest child-protection laws in-country or within the region. In the absence of national or provincial standards, universal practice is to be adopted flexibly to the local context.

c) Supportive Services for Care-takers

- i. Design breastfeeding rooms and child-friendly sanitation in public buildings and transportation hubs.
- ii. Ensure availability of seating and rest areas along routes frequented by care-takers and elderly.

8.3 Internal Child-Protection and Caretaker Protocols (Outside of Projects)

All Sucon staff are required to fully comply with the organisation's Human Resources Policy, which outlines entitlements such as up to five (5) Work-from-Home (WFH) leave days per year and care-taker leave provisions to support employees attending to children, elderly family members, or other dependents. These flexible work and care-support measures are essential to promoting a work-life balance and a family-friendly work environment. Staff must coordinate such arrangements directly with their line managers and submit the appropriate leave or WFH request forms in advance.

In addition, all staff must uphold Sucon's Anti-Corruption Policy, which strictly prohibits bribery, unauthorized financial gain, or misuse of company resources. Any real or perceived conflict of interest must be declared promptly. Sucon is also committed to maintaining a safe and healthy workplace, and staff are expected to comply fully with all Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) policies and procedures. Internally, staff conduct must always reflect Sucon's inclusive values. Discrimination, harassment, bullying, or any form of harmful behavior, whether physical, verbal, or digital, will not be tolerated and will trigger a formal investigation process.

8.4 Child-Sensitive Infrastructure Impact Indicators

These figures represent Sucon International's first-year baseline performance on child-sensitive infrastructure implementation. Data will be published in the 2024-2025 End-of-Year Combined Annual Report:

Thematic Area	Indicator	2024 -2025 Baseline	Disaggregation	Data Source / Tool
Safety	% of infrastructure sites with built-in child safety features (e.g., fencing, signage, safe crossings)	34%	By project type	Site inspection checklists
	# of reported child-related safety incidents or near misses at construction or operational sites	2 incidents	Approximate age group (if recorded)	Site logs, incident reports
Accessibility	% of community facilities with child/stroller-friendly access (e.g., ramps, wide paths)	41%	Urban vs. rural	Engineering site reports
	% of public toilet designs that include child-specific amenities (e.g., low sinks, changing tables)	18%	By facility type	Architectural drawings
Inclusivity	% of projects where care-taker perspectives were explicitly recorded in consultations	27%	By gender	Stakeholder meeting minutes

Once PRINTED, this is an UNCONTROLLED document. Please email info@sucon.ws for latest version.

	% of infrastructure designs incorporating family resting/waiting areas	22%	By sector	Drawing reviews, BOQ analysis
Protection	% of Sucon projects with a signed child safeguarding clause in contractor agreements	36%	By contractor	Contract documentation review
	% of Sucon and site contractor staff trained on child protection and GBV awareness	24%	By gender, role	Training records, attendance logs
	% of construction or public-use sites with visible grievance signage accessible to children/care-takers	31%	Urban vs. rural	Site photos, field verification
M&E Integration	% of infrastructure projects with at least one child-sensitive indicator embedded in M&E framework	29%	By donor/client	M&E frameworks, log-frames
	% of post-occupancy evaluations that included feedback from care-takers	19%	By gender, age	Community interviews, FGDs

9 REPORTING PROCESS AND PROCEDURES

Employees must report any suspected violations of this policy or any incidents related to the breach of the Design Policy and Procedure to the President's Council. All reports of alleged violations or incidents will be investigated promptly, thoroughly, and confidentially. Employees must cooperate fully with any investigations related to suspected violations or incidents where the quality or integrity of the design or annexe documents has been compromised. Sucon prohibits retaliation against any employee who reports or participates in an investigation of a possible violation of our code of conduct, our policies, including this policy, or the law. If you believe you are being retaliated against, please contact the Operations Manager or the Vice President. Sucon reserves the right to review any communications to investigate suspected violations or incidents. This includes but is not limited to emails, messages, prompts, attachments, and files.

9.1 Non-Compliance

Failure to comply with this Policy may result in severe consequences, which could include internal disciplinary action or termination of employment or consulting arrangements without notice, in accordance with the Misconduct Process and Procedures outlined in the Human Resources Policy. Violation of this Policy may also constitute a criminal offence under the laws of Samoa, American Samoa, the Solomon Islands, and New Zealand, depending on the location of the project. Suppose the President's Council determines that any director, officer, employee, consultant, or contractor of Sucon may have violated such laws. In that case, Sucon may refer the matter to the appropriate regulatory authorities, which could result in civil or criminal penalties being imposed on Sucon and/or the responsible person.

9.2 Appeal Process

Verdicts that are believed to be unfair by the Administration can be challenged by writing to the Council. Appeals against Council decisions must be submitted in writing to the Legal Counsellor,

Once PRINTED, this is an UNCONTROLLED document. Please email info@sucon.ws for latest version.

in accordance with the 'Misconduct Process and Procedures'

9.3 Whistleblower Protection and Retaliation Prevention

It is the responsibility of all Sucon staff, Council, and affiliating members to protect the identity, security, and employment of the whistle-blower to prevent confrontation and retaliation from the alleged suspect and violator. Sucon staff, Council and affiliating members found to have leaked the identity of the whistle-blower are subject to suspension or termination by the Council or Administration, depending on the level and severity of the case. Sucon staff, Council and affiliating members found to have participated directly or indirectly in retaliation are subject to suspension or termination by the Council or Administration, depending on the level and severity of the case.

Whistle-blowers who are found to have falsified claims in an attempt to defame are also subject to suspension or termination by the Council or Administration, depending on the level and the severity of the case.

9. POLICY FEEDBACK

All Sucon employees and associates may provide feedback about this document by emailing info@sucon.ws.

SUCON International

Address: Sucon Headquarters
Sanalele Complex, Vaea Street,
Apia Samoa

website

<https://sucon.ws/>