



**Environmental Safeguarding Policy**  
WeWorld-GVC Foundation

# Index

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>1. FOREWORD</b> .....   | <b>1</b> |
| <b>2. PURPOSE</b> .....  | <b>2</b> |
| <b>3. ENTRY INTO FORCE AND RECIPIENTS</b> .....  | <b>2</b> |
| <b>4. POSITIONING</b> .....  | <b>3</b> |
| <b>5. PRINCIPLES OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION</b> .....   | <b>3</b> |
| COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS AND REGULATIONS.....  | 3        |
| PURSUIT OF BEHAVIOUR CONTRARY TO ENVIRONMENTAL LEGISLATION, REPORTING<br>AND TACKLING THE CONSEQUENCES ..... | 3        |
| PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND ECOSYSTEMS.....  | 4        |
| SUSTAINABLE USE OF NATURAL RESOURCES.....  | 4        |
| WASTE REDUCTION, REUSE AND RECYCLING .....   | 4        |
| RESPONSIBLE USE OF ENERGY SOURCES.....   | 4        |
| TRAVEL AND RESPONSIBLE USE OF TRANSPORT .....  | 4        |
| GREEN PROCUREMENT .....  | 4        |
| RISK ANALYSIS AND REDUCTION.....   | 5        |
| AWARENESS AND TRAINING .....   | 5        |
| ACCOUNTABILITY.....  | 5        |
| <b>6. OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION MEASURES</b> .....  | <b>6</b> |

# 1. FOREWORD

WeWorld-GVC (hereinafter WeWorld, in short) is the Foundation born in December 2018 from the union of WeWorld Onlus, founded in Milan in 1999, and the GVC Association, established in Bologna in 1971.

The Organization is active in over 20 countries and works, in Italy and around the world, to ensure that the fundamental rights of every human being, especially of girls, boys and women, are recognized and respected, fighting poverty, violence and injustice, generating opportunities and sustainable development. WeWorld is committed to providing a timely and effective response also in emergency situations, in case of conflict or natural disasters.

WeWorld works alongside individuals on the geographic, economic and social margins to overcome inequality and build a fairer future – one that upholds the dignity and diversity of people and the planet. We support individuals and communities with humanitarian assistance in crisis contexts and promote pathways to self-determination and development, contributing to structural change and creating opportunities for all.

WeWorld, as expressed in its mission and by virtue of its mandate, cannot ignore how the phenomenon of the climate emergency profoundly impacts our lives, and especially those of the beneficiaries of its own interventions. The climate crisis seriously endangers sustainable development, and in the long run it can be the cause for wars over resources, famine, drought and other natural disasters, as well as the increasing of widespread poverty.

WeWorld recognises the importance of the environment as a common resource to be safeguarded and defended, and through its programmes actively pursues the goals of the Agenda 2030, including taking action to combat climate change and its impacts. WeWorld also adheres to the International Red Cross Code of Conduct, which explicitly states a commitment to minimize environmental impact in the implementation of emergency response. In addition, the Organization recognizes the importance of the UN Global Compact initiative, to which it adheres, aimed at encouraging organizations to promote greater environmental responsibility and more widespread use of low environmental impact technologies. WeWorld also adheres to ASVIS, the Italian Alliance for Sustainable Development, the largest initiative in OECD countries of organizations committed to the Agenda 2030.

In order for WeWorld's mission to be fulfilled in accordance with the commitments set out in its Code of Ethics and Conduct and internationally, the organization recognizes the need to pay attention to environmental issues in all its areas of work.

## 2. PURPOSE

The adoption of this document responds to WeWorld's intention to strengthen its commitment to environmental protection and its willingness to reduce, as far as possible, the environmental impact resulting from the implementation of its institutional activities, being aware that this is the only way to promote a development that can truly be defined as sustainable.

With this document, more specifically, WeWorld intends to set out the principles and good practices that it adopts, indicating a framework of measures put in place to contribute to a sustainable development, compatible with environmental protection.

Finally, WeWorld informs third parties, who come into contact with it for the realization of its institutional activities, of the standards of environmental conduct applied by the Organization.

## 3. ENTRY INTO FORCE AND RECIPIENTS

This document is approved by the Board of Directors of WeWorld, which hereby states its coming into force. The Board of Directors is also responsible for promoting subsequent updating initiatives.

This environmental protection policy is addressed not only to the Board of Directors and the Board of Auditors, but also to all WeWorld staff members: employees, collaborators, interns and volunteers employed for the realization of its institutional activities, also abroad. The staff members commit themselves, by signing the collaboration contract with the Organization, to respect this policy.

The Organization also makes clear that all those, who in different ways, collaborate with WeWorld for the realization of their activities - consultants, suppliers, and professionals - are called to observe the legislation on environmental protection, and clarifies that WeWorld will not accept to undertake any relationship, and/or will reserve the right to interrupt it, if the third parties mentioned above do not comply with the legal requirements for the protection of the environment.

This policy is also part of the 231/01 system adopted, in accordance with the Italian legislation on the responsibility of entities.

### 4. POSITIONING

WeWorld is committed to emergency response and sustainable development programs as well as to awareness and advocacy ones. It is also aware of the threat that the climate emergency entails, hindering access to food, water and real development opportunities.

WeWorld is actively committed to the sustainable development goals set out in the Agenda 2030 and aims at observing environmental protection standards within its humanitarian and development programs. The Organization aims at reducing the environmental impact of its operations by balancing the environmental protection requirements with those related to the execution of its mandate.

This document sets out WeWorld's commitment to defining a framework of actions aimed at protecting the environment and it establishes the willingness of the entire organization to move towards a progressive and increasing reduction of its emissions and environmental impact, also in line with technological development.

### 5. PRINCIPLES OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

#### COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS AND REGULATIONS

WeWorld ensures, in the implementation of its institutional activities, compliance with environmental protection regulations in force both in Italy and in the countries of intervention. It is also committed to adapting its standards to the best practices widespread at international level.

#### PURSUIT OF BEHAVIOUR CONTRARY TO ENVIRONMENTAL LEGISLATION, REPORTING AND TACKLING THE CONSEQUENCES

WeWorld, is ready to act promptly to denounce any violation of the law, national or international, committed during the implementation of its interventions, by itself or by third parties who may collaborate with it.

In this regard, WeWorld has set up a whistleblowing system that enables both internal and external stakeholders to report conduct that contravenes the law or organizational policies or procedures. The system can be accessed through the platform set up by WeWorld for this purpose and accessible at the following link <https://whistleblowersoftware.com/secure/WeWorld>. The platform guarantees confidentiality and protects from retaliation anyone who, having knowledge or suspicion of unlawful conduct, decides to report it in good faith.

WeWorld also guarantees that it will act proactively to remove any negative consequences of accidents that may endanger the environment, the local flora and fauna, or have adverse effects on the health and safety of people.

### **PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND ECOSYSTEMS**

WeWorld will reduce, and where and to the possible extent, eliminate emissions that are harmful to the environment, ecosystems or its inhabitants.

The Organization also contributes, through its programs, to designing and implementing interventions that propose sustainable solutions that respect the environment and the communities with which it works. It therefore includes, in its emergency and development projects, awareness raising activities aimed at a better use of water, both for agricultural and domestic use, and organizes campaigns to promote good hygiene practices. In addition, where possible, WeWorld constructs wastewater treatment plants, both grey and black, for their re-use in agriculture, and carries out activities that contribute to a better waste management in the lens of a greater protection of the environment.

### **SUSTAINABLE USE OF NATURAL RESOURCES**

WeWorld encourages, promotes and implements sustainable use of renewable natural resources wherever possible.

### **WASTE REDUCTION, REUSE AND RECYCLING**

WeWorld promotes and strives to reduce waste generation wherever possible, including the reuse of materials. In addition, the Organization encourages and adopts recycling systems, encouraging the reuse of materials through the appropriate collection systems. Waste management is conducted responsibly, in line with the law.

### **RESPONSIBLE USE OF ENERGY SOURCES**

WeWorld is committed to reducing energy consumption by promoting energy-efficient practices and using and promoting the sustainable use of resources wherever possible.

### **TRAVEL AND RESPONSIBLE USE OF TRANSPORT**

WeWorld is committed to reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from the use of transport and travel in pursuit of institutional needs and therefore encourages the use of travel options that minimize environmental impact when practicable.

### **GREEN PROCUREMENT**

WeWorld purchases sustainable, environmentally friendly products wherever possible, giving preference to suppliers with recognized and certified ethical and environmental standards.

The Organization adopts tools aimed at facilitating the inclusion of environmental requirements in the tender documents, adopting as reference the GPP of the European Union<sup>1</sup>; in the awarding of the tender procedures WeWorld balances the needs aimed at achieving a good balance of environmental performance, and those related to the

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<sup>1</sup> EU GPP criteria e toolkit

consideration of costs, the availability of materials on site, availability and speed in finding supplies.

### **RISK ANALYSIS AND REDUCTION**

WeWorld analyses and considers the risks related to the environmental impact deriving from the implementation of its institutional activities and, where possible, implements mitigation measures to prevent and reduce and remove possible negative consequences for the environment deriving from the implementation of its programs, also preparing, where feasible, ad hoc solutions in relation to the specific context.

### **AWARENESS AND TRAINING**

WeWorld will strive to promote good environmental protection practices and will also raise awareness among its partners, suppliers, consultants, external collaborators and donors. The Organization will also promote training courses addressed to its staff, in order to increase the awareness of all employees about the importance of adopting measures that reduce as much as possible the negative impacts of human activities on the environment. In addition, WeWorld, also through its institutional programs, promotes the spread of greater awareness, attention and sensitivity to the environment, organizing training, discussion and advocacy activities on the subject also at European level.

### **ACCOUNTABILITY**

Each member of staff has a duty to read and familiarize themselves with the content of this policy, and WeWorld relies on the awareness and sensitivity of its staff to ensure that each member of staff, including in relation to their role, responsibilities and duties, takes action to establish measures consistent with this policy and to remove any obstacles that prevent the adoption of environmentally sustainable solutions.

WeWorld relies on the individual and collective sense of responsibility of its staff, in the awareness that climate change mitigation and adaptation actions concern everyone, and require the commitment and intervention of everyone, no one excluded.

## 6. OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION MEASURES

Below, without claiming to be exhaustive, and being aware of the need for constant evaluation and adaptation to best practices, we indicate the measures taken by WeWorld for a better environmental protection:

- **Office management**

- Existence of collection points in the offices for the separable waste, and recycling of materials such as paper, cardboard, plastic, aluminum, and organic waste;
- Disposal of plastic (glasses, cutlery, etc.) in offices and their replacement with similar material in recycled/recyclable paper corn and/or bamboo;
- Use of biodegradable wipes for toilet paper and handkerchiefs;
- Use and preference for the purchase of eco-friendly stationery and recycled paper material, to be preferably used also for the production of visibility materials;
- Preference of eco-friendly detergents and low environmental impact for workplace cleaning;
- Gradual elimination of paid beverage dispensers and their replacement with water dispensers located in offices in places accessible to all;
- Use of a timing system for heating and cooling the office rooms, for better energy efficiency and reduction of waste;
- Prolonged closure of offices during public holidays, for energy efficiency and reduction of costs and waste.

- **Work management**

- Possibility of working in smart-working mode, to reduce the need to move around and lower consumption in offices;
- Use of videoconferencing tools to limit the need for travel where unnecessary and where the videoconferencing system still allows activities to be carried out efficiently;
- Recognition of incentives, in the form of benefits, for the use of public transport to travel to the workplace.

- **Missions abroad**

- Appropriate planning of missions in the countries, to reduce the need for travelling to those strictly necessary, trying to achieve the best balance between cost-benefits also for the environment when traveling abroad;
- Implementation of training activities, when possible, in e-learning mode, allowing to reduce the number of air trips, trips and consequent CO2 emissions.

- **Purchases**

- Preference for purchases made directly on site, which makes it possible to reduce or reduce logistics and transport costs and the resulting inputs;
- Reference to EU GPP, where possible and also taking into account other requirements such as delivery time, availability of materials in the countries of intervention, etc..

- **Hospitality**

- In the organization of catering and / or events, preference for food and beverage certified fair-trade, organic, organic and vegetarian.

- **Awareness raising**

- Dissemination of greater awareness, among all staff, including local staff, of the measures that each can actually implement to reduce the negative impact on the environment, including through messages addressed to staff e.g.: reminding them not to waste water, not to leave lights and / or electrical or electronic appliances turned on unnecessarily, incentives for using the stairs instead of the lift, etc..



**Fondazione WeWorld-GVC**

Via Serio 6, 20139, Milano

Tel +39 02 55231193

Fax +39 02 56816484

Via Baracca 3, 40133, Bologna

Tel +39 051 585604

Fax +39 051 582225

[www.weworld.it](http://www.weworld.it)