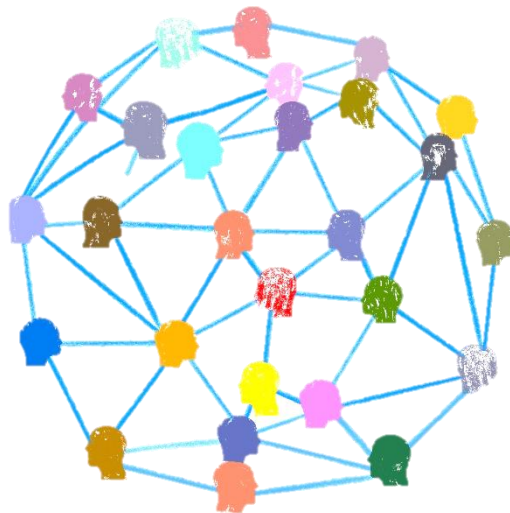


# ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARD POLICY

**Janathakshan (GTE) Ltd**



## Environmental and Social Safeguard Policy

Date issued	1st February 2025
Version	1 <sup>st</sup> Version
Last approved review	N/A
Applicable to	The policy is applicable to all Janathakshan staff, partners, consultants, contractors, community-based organizations, suppliers, beneficiaries, and government counterparts.
Purpose	The purpose of Janathakshan’s Environmental and Social Safeguard Policy (ESSP) is to increase environmental and social sustainability, and to minimize and address any potentially negative impacts of Janathakshan’s interventions may pose on the environment, people, and communities. It applies across the theme of building economic and social resilience of vulnerable communities and ecosystems through promoting sustainable livelihoods and disaster risk reduction, and partnerships towards sustainable development. It provides practical guidance to conduct Environmental and Social Risk Screening (ESRS), Environmental and Social Impact Assessments (ESIA), and to develop, implement, and monitor Environmental and Social Risk Management Plans (ESRMP) throughout the project lifecycle.
Related Policies, Procedures & Guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Janathakshan strategic plan (2025-2030)</li> <li>• Janathakshan’s Gender Policy</li> <li>• Janathakshan’s Child Protection Policy</li> <li>• Janathakshan’s PSEAH policy</li> <li>• Janathakshan’s Employee Code of Conduct</li> <li>• Janathakshan’s Grievance Handling Policy</li> <li>• Janathakshan’s Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Policy</li> <li>• Janathakshan’s Accountability Policy</li> <li>• Janathakshan’s Whistle-blowing policy</li> <li>• Janathakshan’s Procurement policy</li> <li>• Janathakshan’s HR policy</li> <li>• Janathakshan’s Leave Policy</li> <li>• Janathakshan’s Safety and security policy</li> <li>• Janathakshan’s other procedures and manuals (Finance and procurement manual, etc.)</li> </ul>

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## INTRODUCTION

1. Established in 2011, Janathakshan Guarantee Limited is a non-profit organization operating under the “people’s technology” or “technology for people” philosophy. Janathakshan has a head office in Colombo and field offices in Anuradhapura, Trincomalee, and Kurunegala districts in Sri Lanka. As per Janathakshan’s new strategy (2025 to 2030), the mission is to “foster innovative, environmentally sound technologies and solutions through respect for diversity, wider stakeholder mobilization, and evidence-based actions”. Recognized as leaders in green technologies, Janathakshan pioneers environmentally friendly solutions with equity for development challenges.
2. As a signatory to global frameworks such as the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals, Sri Lanka is committed to significant contributions. Civil society organizations play a crucial role in developing sustainable solutions, and as a leading CSO, Janathakshan GTE Ltd is committed to formulating and fostering the adoption of inclusive and sustainable technologies and strategies. Janathakshan intensifies efforts to maintain local and international relationships and partnerships, widen the outreach, and contribute to a “sustainable and equitable future through green growth.”
3. Sri Lanka’s social and economic development achievements since the end of the war in 2009 have been overshadowed by continuous conflicts and calamities during the last decade. This includes severe climate impacts in 2016, 2017, and 2018, impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in the years 2020 and 2021, food crisis due to the swift change to organic agriculture policy (2021 and 2022), and economic crisis (2023 and 2024). Sri Lanka has been ranked among the top ten most climate-vulnerable countries in three consecutive years over the last decade. Although Sri Lanka is on the road to regaining some stability at the macroeconomic level in the recent past, the risk of reversing the economic gain by a growth without equity, livelihood vulnerabilities in rural and urban communities, climate impacts, and food insecurity cannot be undermined. Currently, Sri Lanka is experiencing a high poverty level, declining agricultural production, loss of income opportunities, and the breakdown of businesses, particularly MSMEs. This situation threatens to disrupt the existing social fabric and systems. Vulnerable groups, including children, women, the elderly, and persons with disabilities, are at heightened risk. Moreover, environmental degradation, the effects of climate change, and the increasing severity of natural disasters further exacerbate these challenges.
4. Despite these difficulties, Sri Lanka, alongside other nations, has made global commitments to climate change mitigation and adaptation, disaster risk reduction (DRR), and sustainable development. These commitments include the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Paris Agreement, and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. The government alone cannot fulfill these commitments. Achieving these goals requires the active contribution and cooperation of all relevant stakeholders, including public, private, and civil society organizations, through a collective and collaborative approach.
5. The above social and economic challenges have pushed Janathakshan to revisit its strategic plan from 2017 to 2021, which was extended till 2024. The new strategy was launched in 2025 and is effective till the year 2030, which aims to address the existing socio-economic challenges and contribute to the country’s sustainable development by leveraging its expertise, partnerships, and strategic initiatives to foster the adoption of technologies and green growth.
6. As per Janathakshan’s new strategy (2025 to 2030), the goals are;
  - Goal 1: Strengthen the resilience of vulnerable communities & ecosystems by effectively managing disaster risk and impacts of climate change.
  - Goal 2: Foster economic and social resilience of the communities by promoting sustainable livelihoods, ensuring equitable development.
  - Goal 3: Strengthen policy engagement, foster impactful partnerships, and advance knowledge sharing to drive sustainable development

7. As per the above goals, and building on lessons learnt under the previous strategy, Janathakshan's Environmental and Social Safeguard Policy applies across the theme of building economic and social resilience of vulnerable communities and ecosystems through promoting sustainable livelihoods and disaster risk reduction, and partnerships towards sustainable development.
8. Janathakshan's Environmental and Social Safeguard Policy is developed based on the lessons learnt on environmental sustainability and social inclusion during the previous strategic plan from 2017 to 2024. It is anchored on Janathakshan's new strategic plan for the years 2025 -2030 and is compliant with the requirements of donors and partners. Janathakshan's Environmental and Social Safeguard Policy also contributes to achieving Sustainable Development Goals and the implementation of Nationally Determined Contributions. The Environmental and Social Safeguard Policy contributes to eight principles, viz
  - (1) Compliance with national and international laws and regulations,
  - (2) Protecting human rights and labor rights,
  - (3) Sustainable management of the environment,
  - (4) Promoting green growth,
  - (5) Do no harm,
  - (6) Gender equality and women's empowerment,
  - (7) Climate adaptation, mitigation, and resilience building
  - (8) Inclusion of disabled and marginalized groups.

## POLICY STATEMENT

1. Janathakshan strives to ensure that our programs and interventions are environmentally sustainable and socially inclusive. The organization recognizes the potential risks and impacts its projects may have on people, communities, and ecosystems, and therefore applies a structured and transparent approach to identify, manage, and mitigate such risks.
2. Janathakshan commits to act for environmental and social safeguard by promoting and adhering to eight core principles viz (1) Compliance with national and international laws and regulations, (2) Protecting human rights and labor rights, (3) Sustainable management of the environment, (4) Promoting green growth, (5) Do no harm, (6) Gender equality and women empowerment, (7) Climate adaptation, mitigation and resilience building (8) Inclusion of disabled and marginalized groups, in our projects, programs, organizational management, partnerships and any public engagement.
3. The Environmental and Social Safeguard Policy (ESSP) sets out Janathakshan's commitment to "do no harm" and to contribute positively to sustainable development through all its operations, partnerships, and stakeholder engagements.

## PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

1. The purpose of Janathakshan's Environmental and Social Safeguard Policy (ESSP) is to increase environmental and social sustainability, and to minimize and address any potentially negative impacts of Janathakshan's interventions may pose on the environment, people, and communities. It applies across the theme of building economic and social resilience of vulnerable communities and ecosystems through promoting sustainable livelihoods and disaster risk reduction, and partnerships towards sustainable development. It provides practical guidance to conduct Environmental and Social Risk Screening (ESRS), Environmental and Social Impact Assessments (ESIA), and to develop, implement, and monitor Environmental and Social Risk Management Plans (ESRMP) throughout the project lifecycle.

## SCOPE OF THE POLICY

1. This Environmental and Social Safeguard Policy (ESSP) applies to all programs, projects, partnerships, and activities implemented or supported by Janathakshan GTE Ltd, regardless of funding source or geographic location. It is applicable across all thematic areas, including but not limited to climate change adaptation

and mitigation, sustainable agriculture, disaster risk reduction, green livelihoods, environmental conservation, and circular economy initiatives.

- 2. The ESSP is relevant at all stages of the project cycle from planning to implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.**
- 3. It is applicable to all types of interventions, including infrastructure development, research, capacity building, and technical assistance.**
- 4. The policy is applicable to all Janathakshan staff, partners, consultants, contractors, community-based organizations, suppliers, beneficiaries, and government counterparts.**
- The policy guides the organization in conducting Environmental and Social Risk Screening (ESRS), Environmental and Social Impact Assessments (ESIA), and the development, implementation, and monitoring of Environmental and Social Risk Management Plans (ESRMP) as necessary.
- The ESSP ensures that environmental and social considerations are integrated into Janathakshan's project design and decision-making processes. It aligns with the organization's commitments to national and international standards, including compliance with donor safeguard requirements, the Sustainable Development Goals, and Sri Lanka's Nationally Determined Contributions under the Paris Agreement.

## DEFINITIONS

- Janathakshan staff:** Under the terms of this policy, the term "Janathakshan staff" refers to any person employed by Janathakshan under any means of legal agreement with the organization. All beneficiary partners, consultants, contractors, suppliers, and interns are considered to fall within this category, for the purposes of this policy.
- Stakeholder:** Any individual, community, group, institution, or entity that is affected by, has an interest in, or can influence Janathakshan's project activities or outcomes.
- Beneficiary:** An individual, group, or community that directly receives benefits, services, or positive outcomes from a project or program implemented by Janathakshan. Beneficiaries may include target populations such as smallholder farmers, vulnerable households, or other stakeholders impacted by project interventions.
- Environmental and social impact:** Any positive or negative change to the natural environment or social conditions of individuals, communities, or stakeholders, caused wholly or partly by a project or program, including effects on ecosystems, natural resources, health, livelihoods, cultural heritage, and well-being.
- Climate change:** A change of climate which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere, and which is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods (UNFCCC, 1992).

## GUIDING FRAMEWORK

### 1. PLANNING LEVEL:

#### Strategic Planning Level

- Strategic Assessment of Environmental and Social Sustainability**

- Building on the lessons of its previous strategic period (i.e. from year 2017 to 2024), and analyzing socio-economic development context, Janathakshan aims at addressing 07 development challenges viz (a) Heightened vulnerability to climate risks, (b) Economic instability and limited income diversification, (c) Rising frequency and severity of natural disasters, (d) Inadequate collaboration and partnerships, (e) Limitations in the policy implementation, (f) Limited progress in low-carbon development, (g) Gaps in Knowledge sharing and learning. These 07 development challenges broaden the existing Environmental and Social challenges and vice-versa.

2. Building on the lessons from implementing previous strategy, and addressing above development challenges, Janathakshana's new strategy focus on 05 priority areas viz (a) Diversification of income sources, (b) Strengthening local economies, (c) Promoting Circular Economy Processes, (d) Promote Sustainable Agriculture, (e) Promote green livelihoods. New strategy (year 2025 to 2030) is reinforced with an Environmental and Social Safeguard Policy which will apply across these 05 priority areas under the theme of building the economic and social resilience of vulnerable communities and ecosystems through promoting sustainable livelihoods and disaster risk reduction, and partnerships, towards sustainable development.
3. While adhering to environmental and social principles advocated by key donors, building on lessons from previous strategic period, and aligning with SDGs, and NDC targets, and aligning with Janathakshana's strategic priorities, the Environmental and Social Safeguard Policy is anchored on key eight main principles viz (1) Compliance with national and international laws and regulations, (2) Protecting human rights and labor rights, (3) Sustainable management of the environments, (4) promoting green growth (5) Do no harm, (6) Gender equality and women empowerment, (7) Climate adaptation, mitigation and resilience building (8) Inclusion of disabled and marginalized groups. These principles represent actionable pathways toward meaningful impact at the community, national, and regional levels while safeguarding environmental and social spheres.
4. Parallel to the Annual Business Planning Process of the organization, alignment between Janathakshana's projects/ programs and the Environmental and Social Safeguard Policy will be reviewed, and changes and improvements will be implemented, and monitored.

#### **Program and Project Planning Level**

- **Environmental and Social Risk Screening**

1. All the donor funded projects, activities under agreements with government, private sector and CSO partners, UN agencies, and activities under Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), and construction contracts are subjected to Environmental and Social Risk Screening, before their commencement.
2. The party to carry out Environmental and Social Risk Screening will be determined by the relevant Contract Agreement or MOU. However, all the key stakeholders including relevant government entities, need to be involved in the screening process. If required, external experts shall also be involved in the screening process.
3. The Entity that carryout the Environmental and Social Risk Screening is responsible for using correct procedures, involving experts, and ensuring accuracy and completeness of the screening.
4. The entity and person to sign off the Environment and Social Screening shall be determined by respective contract agreement or MOU. However, the person who sign off the Environmental and Social Screening will not involve in carrying out the screening. The entity and the person that sign off the screening is responsible to collect evidences for carryout the screening using correct procedures. The final responsibility of the screening is held with the Person who sign off the screening.
5. Tools to carry out the Environmental and Social Risk Screening shall be determined by the respective contract agreements and or MOU. The list shall include screening tool provided by the donors and/ or screening tool provided by the government. Project specific screening tool agreed amongst all stakeholders can also be used.
6. Environment and Social Risk Screening shall have four main steps viz (1) context analysis and consultations with stakeholders and beneficiaries to collect information, (2) screen the intervention and/or implementation plans to identify the environmental and social risks with a severity and probability ranking, (3) Adjust and /or finalize the implementation plan with necessary risk mitigation measures, or revisit the project/ activity design in order to avoid the risks, (4) Signing off the Environment and Social Risk Screening by the entity identified in the agreement/ MOU, (5) Implementation and monitoring of the project with necessary risks mitigation measures.

7. Environmental and Social Risk Screening will categorize project into three types viz (a) high risk projects, (b) medium risk projects, and (c) low risk projects.
  - a. **High risk projects:** Projects with high and irreversible environmental and social impacts are categorized as high-risk projects. In case of high-risk projects, the design of the projects should be changed to reduce the level of risk to medium or low, or Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) shall be carried out. ESIA will suggest measures to reduce the risk, and they shall be included into the Environmental and Social Risk Management Plan (ESMP).
  - b. **Medium risk projects:** Projects with some risk of adverse environmental or social impacts are categorized as medium risk projects. In case of medium risk projects, negative environmental and social impacts shall be avoided or reduced by adjusting the design of the project. The mitigation measures must be included into the Social and Environmental Risk Management Plan (ESMP).
  - c. **Low risk projects:** Projects with no or limited risk of adverse environmental and social impacts are categorized as low risk projects. In case of low-risk projects, design of the activities needs minor or no revision, and no mitigation measures are required. No Environmental and Social Risk Management Plan (ESMP) is required.
8. Janathakshan's Environmental and Social Risk Screening will identify the risk against following environmental and social checklist.
  - a. Noncompliance with relevant local and international Law and regulations
  - b. Risk of violating human rights
  - c. Risk of violating labor rights
  - d. Risk of denying access to resources, and increase the inequality including gender inequality
  - e. Risk of negative impacts on marginalized and vulnerable groups
  - f. Risk of negative impacts for indigenous peoples
  - g. Risk of social, physical and economic displacement and involuntary resettlement
  - h. Risk of damaging natural habitats
  - i. Risk of damaging biological diversity
  - j. Risk of contributing to climate change and increasing the vulnerabilities
  - k. Risk of environmental pollution
  - l. Risk of unjustifiably high use of natural resources and generating waste and pollutants
  - m. Risk of affecting public health
  - n. Risk of damaging physical and cultural heritage
  - o. Risk of high level of soil erosion and land degradation

- **Environmental and Social Impact Assessments**

1. ESIA is mandatory when Environmental and Social Risk Screening categorizes any project as a high-risk project. ESIA will be carried out by external experts (not in-house), as specified by national regulations, donors, and partners.
2. Environmental and Social Impact Assessment shall have seven main steps as follows;
 

**Step 01: Background study:** A background study will be carried out by an external consultant or Janathakshan through collecting data from primary and secondary sources. Background study will determine the scope of the ESIA, propose a methodology for ESIA, and develop Terms of Reference for the ESIA.

**Step 02: Solicitation:** As per the scope and TOR determined in step 01, Janathakshan will hire external consultants to carry out ESIA.

**Step 03: Carry out ESIA:** ESIA will be carried out by the external consultants hired in step 02 as per the scope determined in step 01. External consultants will collect data, carry out impact analyses, and develop a draft ESIA report. The type of data will depend on the scope of ESIA, and it can include collection and analysis of

samples, mapping exercises, and interviews with key informants and stakeholders. The ESIA report will include potential impacts, proposed changes to design, mitigation measures, and the outcome of not implementing the project.

**Step 04: Developing Environmental and Social Risk Management Plan (ESRMP):** Based on mitigation measures proposed in the ESIA, the external consultant will develop a draft Environmental and Social Risk Management Plan.

**Step 05: Disclosure:** The external consultant and Janathakshana will share the findings of ESRS, ESIA, and ESRMP with the stakeholders for consultation and commenting. Based on the comments of stakeholders, the external consultant will make necessary improvements to the ESIA and ESRMP reports. If a design change is required, the external consultant will interact with the project design entity to accommodate them into the ESIA and ESRMP.

**Step 06: Finalization of ESIA and ESRMP:** Following the stakeholder consultation, the External Consultant will develop a final report of ESIA and ESRMP.

**Step 07: Integration of ESRMP into the project:** Following the ESIA, Janathakshana and partners will integrate ESRMP into the implementation and monitoring plan of the project.

- **Environmental and Social Risk Management Plans**

1. Janathakshana will develop an Environmental and Social Risk Management Plan (ESRMP) for medium-risk projects and high-risk projects.
2. In case of medium-risk projects, ESRMP will be developed by Janathakshana or partners, whereas it will be developed by external consultants for high-risk projects (i.e., the same consultant who carries out ESIA for high-risk projects).
3. The ESRMP contains measures proposed to manage the risks with the cost, implementation timeframe, and the responsible entity to implement risk management measures. ESRMP also includes a mechanism to monitor the risks and implementation of risk management measures.

## **2. IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL:**

1. ESRMP must be a key aspect of the project implementation plan, and its progress should be periodically reported. ESRMP should be explicitly mentioned in the contract agreement and/or MOU with the partners.
2. The cost for implementing risk management measures shall be borne from the project activity implementation budget.

## **3. MONITORING LEVEL**

1. Monitoring the implementation of ESRMP must be a key aspect of the project's Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) framework, and the cost shall be borne from the MEL budget.
2. The progress of Environmental and Social Risk Management Measures will be monitored at quarterly and annual progress review meetings.

## **3. EVALUATION LEVEL**

1. **Compliance of interventions:** The compliance of interventions with the Environmental and Social Risk Management Plan will be evaluated at mid-term and end-term project evaluations.

2. **Effectiveness of the Environmental and Social Safeguards:** The adequacy and effectiveness of environmental and social safeguards of Janathakshan will be evaluated at mid and end points of the strategic period.

## COMPLIANCES AND MAIN PRINCIPLES OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAGEGUARD POLICY

### Principle 1: Compliance with national and international laws and regulations

1. Janathakshan will ensure that all its projects and programs are compliant with applicable domestic and international laws and regulations. Since the proposal planning stage of projects, Janathakshan shall analyze local and international legal and regulatory frameworks affecting the interventions. Janathakshan shall obtain prior permission, such as planning permission, environmental permits, construction permits, permits for water extraction, emissions, and use or production or storage of harmful substances if any. For each such requirement, Janathakshan will ensure strict compliance with relevant domestic and international laws.

### Principle 2: Protecting human rights and labor rights

2. Janathakshan abides by promoting international human rights. Janathakshan shall follow the standards of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) of 10 December 1948. Janathakshan shall consider strictly adhering to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as an overarching principle in the design, execution, monitoring, and evaluation of its projects, and awareness of human rights will be created among parties involved in Janathakshan projects.
3. Janathakshan will meet the core labour standards as identified by the International Labour Organization as per the 1998 ILO Declaration of Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, which state four fundamental principles and rights, viz (a) Freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining (conventions ILO 87 and ILO 98); (b) Elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour (conventions ILO 29 and ILO 105); (c) Elimination of worst forms of child labour (conventions ILO 138 and ILO 182); (d) Elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation (conventions ILO 100 and ILO 111). Janathakshan shall create awareness with all involved on how these standards apply.

### Principle 3: Sustainable management of the environment

1. In its projects, Janathakshan shall promote utilizing natural resources in a way that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. Janathakshan shall adopt a holistic approach that considers ecological, social, and economic aspects to ensure long-term viability and ethical responsibility. This included promoting:
  - (a) environmentally friendly sustainable practices,
  - (b) Lands and Soil Conservation,
  - (c) Pollution prevention and enhancing resource efficiency,
  - (d) Protection of Natural Habitats, and
  - (e) Conservation of Biological Diversity.
2. *Environmentally friendly sustainable practices:* Janathakshan will promote environmentally friendly sustainable practices such as Climate Smart Agriculture that increases agricultural productivity while improving the climatic resilience and reducing emissions. Janathakshan shall follow the National Guidelines for Climate Smart Agriculture in Sri Lanka. Janathakshan also promotes a range of environmentally friendly, sustainable practices such as Good Agriculture Practices (GAP), Integrated Pest and Disease Management, Integrated approach to water management that increases productivity while protecting the environment.

3. *Land and Soil Conservation:* Agriculture and water-related projects/programmes of Janathakshana shall be designed and implemented in a way that promotes soil conservation and avoids degradation or conversion of productive lands or land that provides valuable ecosystem services.
4. *Pollution prevention and enhancing resource efficiency:* Projects/programmes of Janathakshana shall be designed and implemented in a way that meets applicable international standards for maximizing energy efficiency and minimizing material resource use, the production of waste, and the release of pollutants.
5. *Protecting natural habitats:* Janathakshana shall not engage in any projects/programmes that would involve unjustified conversion or degradation of critical natural habitats, including those that are (a) legally protected; (b) officially proposed for protection; (c) recognized by authoritative sources as critical habitat; or (d) recognized as protected by traditional or indigenous local communities.
6. *Conservation of Biological Diversity:* Projects/programmes of Janathakshana will be designed and implemented in a way that avoids any significant or unjustified reduction or loss of biological diversity or the introduction of known invasive species.

#### **Principle 4: Promoting green growth**

1. Janathakshana will promote a low-carbon development strategic pathway, focusing on reducing GHG emissions and enhancing carbon fixation through sustainable practices and innovative technologies, including renewable energy, energy efficiency, and nature-based solutions to mitigate climate change impacts. By adopting scientific methodologies and standardized carbon accounting frameworks, Janathakshana will quantify its environmental impact, ensuring greater transparency, accountability, and alignment with global climate action goals.

#### **Principle 5: Do no harm**

1. Janathakshana will apply the do no harm principle to people, society, and the environment throughout its operations, including projects and programs. Janathakshana will comply with international standards if any of its projects potentially affect any individual community, cultural heritage, and/or involve any resettlement activity.
2. *Indigenous Peoples:* Janathakshana shall not implement/ engage in any projects/programs that are inconsistent with the rights and responsibilities set forth in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and other applicable international instruments relating to indigenous peoples.
3. *Involuntary Resettlement:* Janathakshana will design and implement its Projects/programmes in such a way that avoids or minimizes the need for involuntary resettlement. When limited involuntary resettlement is unavoidable, displaced persons will be informed of their rights, consulted on their options, and offered technically, economically, and socially feasible resettlement alternatives.
4. *Physical and Cultural Heritage:* Projects/programmes of Janathakshana shall be designed and implemented in a way that avoids the alteration, damage, or removal of any physical or cultural resources, cultural sites, and sites with unique natural values recognized as such at the community, national, or international level.

#### **Principle 6: Gender equality and women's empowerment**

1. Janathakshana prioritizes gender equality by evaluating and addressing the social dimensions of men, women, and their interactions. It ensures that equality is embedded in all its projects and decision-making processes, fostering an environment where everyone has an equal opportunity to contribute and benefit. Gender equality and women's empowerment shall be applied in the project/programme designs and their implementation.

#### **Principle 7: Climate adaptation, mitigation, and resilience building**

1. Under its low-carbon green growth strategic pathway, Janathakshana shall not implement Projects/programmes that result in an unjustified increase in greenhouse gas emissions. Janathakshana will directly engage in climate adaptation and resilient building projects, promoting it as a cross-cutting theme in other projects.

### Principle 8: Inclusion of disabled and marginalized groups

1. Using accepted methods based on disaggregated data, where possible, the Janathakshan shall identify and quantify the vulnerable groups (children, women and girls, the elderly, indigenous people, tribal groups, displaced people, refugees, people living with disabilities, and people living with HIV/AIDS) in their operational areas. Any Projects/programmes of Janathakshan shall not create disproportionate adverse impacts on marginalized and vulnerable groups.

### CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA PROTECTION

1. Janathakshan respects and upholds stakeholders' right to privacy and confidentiality while being sensitive to possible social, environmental, and gender impacts during the development and implementation of its policies, programs, and projects.
2. In alignment with good global practices and ethical standards, the organization is committed to the principles, viz.
  - a) Informed consent and privacy
  - b) Confidentiality of sensitive information
  - c) Secure data handling
  - d) Non-retaliation and disclosure
  - e) Gender, ethnically, and culturally sensitive practices
3. Janathakshan is committed to safeguarding personal and sensitive information shared through assessments, consultations, and project activities. When communicating project outcomes via websites, social media, or publications, the organization ensures that individuals' identities and community details are protected, and all disclosures are conducted ethically and responsibly.
4. This commitment applies across all phases of project and program implementation. All staff, consultants, and implementing partners engaged in Janathakshan's work are required to uphold these principles.

### GRIEVANCE HANDLING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

1. Janathakshan shall establish and maintain a dedicated Environmental and Social Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) for its projects.
2. Grievance redress is governed by Janathakshan's Grievance Handling Policy, which outlines procedures for receiving, documenting, and resolving complaints in a timely and confidential manner.
3. The GRM for environmental and social safeguards aims to ensure that any stakeholder, individual, group, or community affected by actual or potential environmental or social impacts of Janathakshan's projects has access to a safe, accessible, transparent, and responsive platform to lodge complaints, seek resolution, and request corrective action.
4. Janathakshan is committed to addressing any environmental or social concerns raised by stakeholders through a clear, fair, and accessible process.
5. All stakeholders, including individuals and communities, have the right to raise grievances related to the design, implementation, or impacts of projects. Janathakshan ensures that such concerns are addressed respectfully and without fear of retaliation.
6. The grievance mechanism shall:
  - a. Be widely communicated to stakeholders at the community level and during public consultations.
  - b. Be accessible through multiple channels, including physical locations /field offices, email, telephone, or via partner organizations.
  - c. Ensure confidentiality, protection against retaliation, and non-discrimination.
  - d. Acknowledge complaints within seven (7) working days and respond or provide status updates within thirty (30) working days.
  - e. Maintain a register/log of grievances and actions taken, which will be reviewed by management.
  - f. Allow for escalation of unresolved grievances to the senior management or independent mediators as necessary.

- g. Be integrated with the project's Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) framework to track systemic risks and recurring concerns.
7. Janathakshan will ensure that all environmental and social complaints or incidents reported through the established grievance mechanism are recorded, resolved, and reflected in project decision-making. Any required corrective or preventive actions will be documented, assigned to responsible units, and tracked through the project monitoring system. Lessons learned will be used to strengthen future project design and safeguard measures.
8. Janathakshan will ensure that all project-affected communities are informed about the availability and access points of the Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) before the start of project activities. Posters, leaflets, and verbal communication in local languages will be used during mobilization and stakeholder meetings.

## **JANATHAKSHAN'S EXPERIENCE AND LESSONS LEARNT IN ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION**

1. Using circular economic principles, Janathakshan has demonstrated significant expertise in planning, researching, and implementing waste management initiatives, including recycling, composting, resource recovery, and biodegradable waste management, alongside awareness, capacity building, and advocacy programs. During its previous strategic cycle, Janathakshan implemented six waste management projects funded by USAID (CCBO), DFAT (KLI), The Coca Cola Foundation (SWYFT), World Bank (BLUCAP), BMZ-World Vision (PHINLA), and EU (TESS), covering 19 districts across Sri Lanka with a number of partners including government agencies, the private sector, civil society organizations (CSOs), and academic institutions. These projects informed the Environmental and Social Safeguard Policy to use circular economic principles in collaboration with partners to address environmental concerns while enhancing the income and participation of communities.
2. During the strategic period of 2021–2024, Janathakshan directly contributed to reducing multi-dimensional vulnerabilities in socio-economic, climatic, and ecological fronts, and building resilience of around 730,000 individuals, including 306,600 women and 423,400 men, across 146,000 households in 7 (i.e., out of 9) provinces in Sri Lanka. Under the climate and resilience theme, Janathakshan's national-level contributions during this period included (a) development of a Green Growth Strategy for Sri Lanka, (b) updating the National Climate Change Policy of Sri Lanka, (c) development of Provincial Level Climate Policies, (d) rehabilitation of small tank based cascading systems and related infrastructure and facilitating sustainable, climate proof agricultural practices in targeted areas (e) promoting protection and solidarity for climate migrants and displaced communities in South Asia through evidence-gathering, research analysis and knowledge building on climate migration, (f) conducting Participatory Climate Risk Vulnerability Capacity Assessment in various districts of Sri Lanka, and (h) establishment of Sri Lanka National Climate Resilience Center (SLNCR). These initiatives positioned Janathakshan as a key national institute to provide technical and policy guidance to climate adaptation and mitigation, environmentally sound, resilient green growth with equity and inclusion, which informed the Environmental and Social Safeguard Policy under the new strategic plan.
3. Between 2021 and 2024, Janathakshan implemented two key interventions under its Low-Carbon Development Strategic Pathway, focusing on (a) reducing Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions and enhancing carbon fixation through sustainable practices and innovative technologies including renewable energy, energy efficiency, and nature-based solutions to mitigate climate change impacts, (b) strengthening Janathakshan's organizational capacity to accurately calculate, monitor, and report GHG reductions resulting from its initiatives. By adopting scientific methodologies and standardized carbon accounting frameworks, Janathakshan improved its ability to quantify its environmental impact, ensuring greater transparency, accountability, and alignment with global climate action goals. These interventions aligned Janathakshan's Environmental and Social Safeguard Policy with the low-carbon development strategic pathway.

## ALIGNMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARD POLICY WITH SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

- Development must balance social, economic, and environmental spheres. Given the inter-twined nature of the 17 SDGs, action in any area will affect outcomes in environmental and social spheres. Hence, Janathakshan’s environmental and social safeguard policy is aligned with the 17 goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. However, aligning with its new strategic plan, the Environmental and Social Safeguard Policy applies as a cross-cutting theme in the projects and programs towards achieving the most relevant 11 SDGs, viz
  - SDG 1: No poverty,
  - SDG 2: End hunger,
  - SDG 5: Gender Equality,
  - SDG 8: Decent work and economic growth,
  - SDG 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and foster innovation,
  - SDG 10: Reduce inequalities,
  - SDG 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable,
  - SDG 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns,
  - SDG 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts,
  - SDG 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, and halt biodiversity loss.
  - SDG 17: Partnership for the Goals.

## ALIGNMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARD POLICY WITH NATIONALLY DETERMINED CONTRIBUTIONS:

- Projects / Programs of Janathakshan shall contribute to the environmental and social development sphere of both mitigation and adaptation NDCs. Aligning with its strategic plan, the Environmental and Social Safeguard Policy will be applied as a cross-cutting theme of projects and programs towards (but not limited to) achieving the following NDCs.

NDC No	NDC Action
<b>Mitigation NDCs</b>	
<b>Industry sector</b>	
NDC 1	Continue fuel-switching to sustainable biomass energy and improve user efficiency in selected industrial sub-sectors (tea, rubber, apparel, hotel & tourism, rice processing)
NDC 2	Enhance the application of Resource Efficient Cleaner Production (RECP) practices in selected industrial sub-sectors
NDC 3	Establish eco-industrial parks and villages
NDC 4	Introduce the Circular Economy concept to selected industrial sub-sectors and selected industrial zones
<b>Waster sector</b>	
NDC 1	Improve “Circular economy” practices in all MSW generation sources
NDC 2	Manage the biodegradable waste component through biological treatments
<b>Forestry sector</b>	
NDC 1	Increase the forest cover of Sri Lanka up to 32% by 2030
NDC 2	Improve the quality of the growing stock of natural forests and plantations
NDC 3	Strengthen catchment protection of major rivers and cascade systems

NDC 4	Improvement and increase of Trees outside Forests (TRoF)
<b>Agriculture sector</b>	
NDC 2	Increase crop productivity
NDC3	Improve the adoption of renewable energy for crop farming/value addition
NDC 6	Adopt renewable energy for livestock applications
<b>Adaptation NDCs</b>	
<b>Agriculture sector</b>	
NDC 1	Climate change considerations are being mainstreamed into agriculture in Sri Lanka
NDC2	Promote Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and Integrated Plant and Nutrition Systems (IPNS) in the most vulnerable areas/districts/crops
NDC 5	Enhance sustainable land and water management practices in areas where anticipated climate vulnerability is severe
<b>Fisheries sector</b>	
NDC 1	Ecosystem-based Approach to Fisheries Management (EAFM) adopted in areas of high climate vulnerability to enhance resilience
<b>Livestock sector</b>	
NDC 3	Improve research, education, awareness, and capacity building for climate change adaptation
<b>Water sector</b>	
NDC 1	Integrated River Basin Management (IRBM) was adopted in 15 prioritized river basins in Sri Lanka
NDC 2	Ground and surface water monitoring in the Northern, North Central, and North Western provinces and other areas of high drinking water vulnerability to drought
NDC 3	Promote climate-resilient water supply schemes
NDC 4	Promote the use of wastewater for gardening, sanitary, construction, and other purposes to reduce demand for treated water
NDC 8	Introduce or promote alternative water resources as a climate change resilience-building intervention for domestic and supplementary irrigation
NDC 10	Assess river floods and mitigation measures, and early warning systems for possible flash floods for the five priority basins
<b>Biodiversity sector</b>	
NDC 1	Management of climate-sensitive areas and restoration of degraded areas inside and outside the protected areas (PAs) network to conserve habitats that are highly vulnerable to climate change
NDC 2	Increase connectivity in the zones that will be subjected to climate-driven changes according to current predictions through landscape approaches
NDC 3	Expansion of the Protected Area (PA) extent to enhance the ability of the PA network to function as a buffer for climate change
NDC 5	Effective management of the spread of Invasive Alien Species (IAS) triggered by favorable climatic conditions
<b>Coastal and marine sector</b>	
NDC 4	Identify and declare coastal and marine natural areas of high priority for building resilience to climate change impacts
<b>Health sector</b>	
NDC 3	Manage the worsening of under-nutrition and malnutrition due to climate change
<b>Urban Planning and Human Settlement Sector</b>	
NDC 1	Enhance the resilience of human settlements and infrastructure through mainstreaming climate change adaptation into national, sub-national, and local level physical planning
NDC 3	Establish a climate-resilient built environment
<b>Tourism and the recreational sector</b>	
NDC 3	Promote climate resilience in the tourism sector by introducing green building design to all new constructions and refurbishments

**This policy was adopted by the Janathakshan (GTE) Ltd, this day of 1<sup>st</sup> February 2025**

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Dr. Janaka Hemathilaka

CEO/Executive Director