

Students at the Chelanko Lola Primary School learning the importance of facial cleanliness and sanitation thanks to the provision of a 5000 litre water tank from The Fred Hollows Foundation and Caritas as part of SAFE Strategy Education.



The Fred Hollows
Foundation

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY DISCLOSURE 2024



PHOTO: TILGANGA EYE CENTRE

VISION & VALUES



WHO WE ARE

The Fred Hollows Foundation is an international development organisation which has worked in some of the world's most remote and under-served communities for over 30 years. We are independent, not-for-profit, politically unaligned and secular.



OUR VISION

A world in which no person is needlessly blind or vision impaired.



OUR PURPOSE

To deliver bold eye health solutions that transform lives.

We work around the world so that no one is left behind, and in Australia we work tirelessly to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people can always exercise their right to sight, good health and self-determination.

In addition to delivering life-changing surgeries and treatments, our priority is to strengthen health systems around the world. We do this by training local doctors and health workers and collaborating with governments and local health organisations in the countries where we work.



OUR VALUES

Our values of Integrity, Empowerment, Collaboration, Action and Resourceful underpin every aspect of our work both in Australia and around the globe.

INTRODUCTION

Climate change, pollution and environmental degradation present major threats to global eye health and delivery of eye health care, and risk undermining decades of progress in reducing the burden of avoidable blindness and vision impairment.

Recognising these risks, The Foundation is committed to good environmental stewardship in supporting eye care services, and to building resilience by understanding and adapting our programs and operations to climate risks.

Our **Environmental Sustainability Policy** sets out requirements for annual reporting on our efforts to integrate environmental sustainability in our operations, programs and advocacy, and to mitigate the environmental impacts of our work.

In 2023, The Foundation's Environmental Sustainability Working Group (**ESWG**) progressed its key environmental sustainability priorities, as identified in our **2022 Disclosure**, through a number of initiatives including:

1. Organisational Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions baseline and decarbonisation planning

The Foundation started discussions with an expert consultancy, Pangolin Associates, to help prepare a detailed baseline of The Foundation's organisational GHG emissions, focussing on activities where The Foundation has operational control. This baseline data will also allow for preparation of annual disclosures on The Foundation's carbon footprint and reporting on progress towards reducing emissions year on year.

The Foundation decided to focus this GHG baseline assessment on The Foundation's in-Australia operations, as well as a sample of 3-5 country programs. This approach will allow The Foundation to better understand the main sources of emissions across multiple countries, and to design a decarbonization plan and activities that could be implemented not only in Australia, but across the organization.

Pangolin Associates were formally engaged in January 2024 to undertake this project and will commence data collection in Q1 2024.

2. Expansion of environmental sustainability activities in The Foundation's eye health programming by identifying at least 3 additional pilot projects to build the capacity of partners to integrate environmental sustainability in policy, governance, and program operations.

In 2023, The Foundation commenced 2 separate assessments of environmental sustainability capacities and gaps of partner facilities and operations in

Palestine (St John Eye Hospital) and Bangladesh (Dr K Zaman BNSB Eye Hospital, Mymesingh) respectively.

This assessment is the first stage of a planned process to **pilot Environmental Sustainability & Climate Change (ESCC) activities in 2-3 key diverse demonstration projects**. This process will assess and build the capacity of our partners to integrate environmental sustainability across policy, governance, and program operations.

The assessment in Palestine is currently on hiatus given the ongoing Gaza conflict. The Foundation continues to monitor the situation closely and will consider whether to identify an alternative country and partner to complete the assessment in Q1 2024.

The assessment in Bangladesh commenced in November 2023, working with a Bangladesh based consultancy with expertise in Environmental assessments, Sustainability Nexus. The assessment is expected to be completed by around March 2024. Findings will be shared across the eye health sector via the IAPB Climate Action Working Group (CAWG).

3. ESGW to support integration of practical, evidence-based environmental sustainability commitments and climate change action in the next organisational strategy.

The ESGW served as an Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change (ESCC) task team in the development of The Foundation's 2024-2028 Strategy, providing a detailed list of recommendations on the inclusion of environmental sustainability language, commitments and targets.

Goal 1: of the new strategy, **Strengthen integrated people-centred eye care to protect and restore sight to those most in need** now includes an explicit objective to *Adapt to and mitigate the impacts of climate change*.

Goal 2: **Advance transformative solutions that address key eye health challenges** also includes an objective to *Optimise the supply chain and reduce environmental and other costs of eye care consumables and equipment*.

In 2024, the key priorities for The Foundation are:

1. Organisational Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions baseline and decarbonisation planning

Pangolin Associates have been engaged and have commenced activities in Q1:

- Data collection and validation for the baseline, as well as presentation of the Emissions Reduction Strategy, is expected to be completed by early Q2 2024.
- Following this, Pangolin will work with The Foundation to develop an Emissions Reduction

Strategy, that identifies opportunities for GHG emissions reductions and a plan to achieve these.

2. ESCC assessment and capacity building of sample partners

Following completion of the partner ESCC assessments, findings and lessons learned from the design process, successes and challenges will be shared across The Foundation and more broadly within the eye health sector via the IAPB Climate Action Working Group (CAWG).

This will be followed by a **second stage** of this project will be developed to implement the recommendations in the partner facilities.

Stage three will involve capturing the lessons learned to inform an internal review to mainstream environmental sustainability throughout all Foundation supported project design and implementation, as well as driving broader advocacy within the eye health sector through key fora such as the IAPB CAWG.

3. Implementation of ESCC elements of The Foundation's 2024-2028 Strategy

The ESGW will continue to serve as a key technical resource to support implementation, monitoring and reporting of the new objectives, as well as documenting and sharing learnings to inform programming within The Foundation and the eye health sector more broadly.

All images in this statement are representative of The Foundation's work.



The **SAFE Strategy Education** encourages students from Chelanko Lola Primary School to teach their family members about hand and face washing.

Mohammad is now able to perform simple daily tasks such as fetching water from his village well after cataract surgery.



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