

Sustainability and Inclusion Guidelines for External Events

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Date:	March 2025
Scope:	All Employees, Trustees, Consultants and others acting on behalf of Practical Action or its subsidiaries
Review Date:	March 2026 (Annual Review)

1. Practical Action's Mission

Practical Action is a global development organisation with a vision of a world that works better for everyone.

Core to all Practical Action's work is an ambition to safeguard the planet today and for the benefit of future generations. We recognise that our activities have an impact on the environment, and it is our responsibility to minimise the negative impacts as far as possible. We will operate in compliance with all relevant environmental legislation, and we will strive to use environmental best practices in all we do.

We believe that an important element of constructively addressing environmental problems is to consider all the elements that contribute to the production of carbon emissions and environmental pollution. To this end, **we introduced an organisational [environment policy](#) and a [net zero commitment](#)**, which we update at regular intervals.

2. Scope and Objective

These guidelines outline Practical Action's approach to sustainability and inclusion at external events. We regularly participate in events, expos, conferences, and festivals where we showcase our work. Therefore, our approach to sustainability and inclusion should be tailored in the light of our existing policies and according to the specific requirements of each event.

Big change starts small

3. Human Rights, Gender Equality, Inclusion, and Safeguarding

We should only collaborate with events with demonstrable focus on ensuring and promoting environmental protection, human rights, gender equality, and other aspects of inclusion (e.g., persons with disabilities, children and youth, age, neurodiversity).

As outlined in our [Gender Policy](#), Practical Action is committed to ensuring equitable opportunities for all women and men. We aim to advance **gender equality** and **women's empowerment** through all of our work including programmes, knowledge sharing, advocacy, and external communications, and through our own organisational development.

Practical Action is also committed to creating a strong and effective enabling environment and a safeguarding culture to promote the rights and protection of beneficiaries, community members, staff, volunteers, or anyone else impacted by our work. **As outlined in our [Safeguarding Policy](#), we take seriously our responsibility to safeguard those who come in contact with our work.** Therefore, our activities at external events should be designed with gender empowerment and safeguarding considerations in mind.

4. Energy

We should collaborate with events and venues that foreground sustainable practices and policies, such as energy-efficient lighting, use of natural daylight where possible, and energy from renewable sources. At the event site, our staff and volunteers should ensure that lighting and other energy-consuming devices are turned off and/or unplugged when required to save energy.

5. Transport

We should collaborate with events and venues that are local to Practical Action staff and volunteers to the extent possible, and encourage sustainable travel such as public transport, car sharing, cycling, and walking. We should collaborate with event organisers to assess required equipment to reduce the environmental impact of transporting and delivery of equipment and materials.

6. Water Usage

We should collaborate with events and venues with sustainable policies on water use for drinking and general consumption. We should encourage our staff and volunteers to practise water saving measures and use tap water or filtered water provided by the facility where possible.

7. Food Supplies

We should collaborate with events and venues with sustainable policies on healthy and ethically sourced foods with inclusive dietary options.

8. Waste and Recycling

We should refrain from using single-use plastics in our stalls and exhibitions. We should ensure that all waste from our stalls is properly disposed as per the recycling guidelines of the venue, and we should aim to reuse event materials to the extent possible.

9. Sourcing of Promotional Materials

We should source all our print materials from local partners and ensure that any promotional materials distributed to event guests are made of sustainable and reusable materials (e.g., hemp tote bags, notebooks from recycled paper). We should follow the established good practice of reusing promotional materials and recycling old materials (e.g., materials with old branding) appropriately.

10. Carbon Footprint

Practical Action aims to keep its carbon footprint as small as possible. This means exploring ways to reduce our footprint, while still being able to carry out work effectively. Practical Action has undergone a carbon footprint baselining process and developed an organisational carbon footprint reduction plan. Every year, we will continue to measure our carbon footprint and report progress against our baseline. The key findings being measured are flights (international and regional), use of vehicles, gas and electricity usage, paper and other consumables. **Further details can be found in our [net zero commitment](#) document.**

11. Compliance

Practical Action's environmental policy and net zero commitment are in compliance with appropriate UK regulations, including Section 172 Governance disclosure on carbon reporting, the [UN Global Compact](#), [Climate and Environmental Charter for Humanitarian Organisations](#), and specific environmental commitments outlined in agreements with our donors.

12. Linked Practical Action Policies and Commitments

[Policies and commitments - Practical Action](#)

- Environmental Policy
- Gender Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Net Zero Commitment
- UN Global Compact
- Climate & Environment Charter for Humanitarian Organisations.