



# LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY





## **SAEDI Consulting (Barbados) Inc.**

### **Learning & Development Strategy**

SAEDI Consulting (Barbados) Inc., a virtual and values-driven firm, is committed to fostering a culture of continuous learning, collaboration, and innovation. Recognising the dynamic nature of our work in gender equality, social inclusion, climate resilience, and development consulting, we prioritise the development of a knowledgeable, and well-supported team. Recognising that our team is our greatest asset, and by investing in both their professional and personal growth, we aim to ensure that our services remain responsive, future-oriented, and of the highest quality.

This strategy affirms our commitment to equipping our team with the tools, knowledge, and support they need to thrive in a virtual workspace and contribute meaningfully to transformative change in the Caribbean region, their own countries as well as globally.

This policy applies to current and future team members and is also built on a strategy of knowledge sharing as well as individual and group-based capacity building. While team members are expected to build specialties that support the project pipeline for design, implementation, monitoring and reporting, it is also acknowledged that assessment skills for both environmental and social factors are needed and that generalist skills and knowledge are also assets for a team like SAEDI Consulting.

#### **1. Purpose & Scope**

The purpose of this strategy is to position SAEDI Consulting (Barbados) Inc. as a learning organisation that thrives on reflection, shared knowledge, and adaptive growth. By integrating learning into our organisational culture, we aim to build a resilient, agile, and socio-environmentally responsive team. This strategy intentionally links capacity building with our mission to drive gender equality, climate justice, and inclusive development – both in terms of our internal process and how and what we deliver in capacity building external to our organisation.

We believe that by prioritising learning, we unlock the full potential of each individual member as well as the collective that is our team and ensure that our consulting practice remains visionary, true to our GEDSI Approach (Appendix I), and impact-oriented.

This strategy applies to all team members—consultants, staff, interns, and rotating roles—

regardless of seniority or contract type. Everyone at SAEDI Consulting is both a learner and a contributor to our culture of growth, reflection, and equity.

## 2. Guiding Principles

Learning and development activities will be grounded in the following principles:

- Evidence-based and adaptive: Learning is tested, refined, and evolved through application, collection of data and feedback.
- Leadership-led: Leaders model and support learning by participating, sharing, and advocating for continuous development.
- GEDSI-centred learning: All L&D efforts must reflect an intersectional gender equality, disability and social inclusion lens. Within this, a focus on specific needs, nuances and realities of Indigenous, tribal and local communities will also be reflected and considered. The latter will be informed significantly by work being conducted in 2025 and 2026.
- Lifelong and adaptive learning: Encourage continuous skill renewal, especially in emerging areas like digital tools and Artificial Intelligence (AI) as well as new forms of assessment and ways to increase our efficiency in three areas: data analysis and baselining, document review and policy analysis.
- Applied learning: Focus on practical application—workshops, simulations, targeted sessions and on-the-job learning over theory alone.
- Decolonial and inclusive: Respect diverse knowledge systems, especially Global South feminist perspectives and Indigenous knowledge systems.
- Wellbeing and sustainability: Learning is a process of growth, not burnout. We value care of self, team, and communities as integral to transformative learning and justice-oriented work.

## 4. Learning Priorities

Our learning priorities are aligned with our core work in consulting, capacity building, and advocacy. They reflect the evolving landscape of gender, climate, and social justice, and are curated to build both individual competencies and collective capability across the organisation.

Thematic Area	Topics
Gender & Inclusion	Gender-transformative approaches, intersectionality, methods from the margins, anti-oppressive facilitation
Climate & DRR	Climate justice frameworks, vulnerability assessments, gender in DRR policy, GEDSI-inclusive adaptation planning

Digital & AI Tools	Responsible AI, Co-Pilot in MS Word, Slack-related AI tools for writing and analysis, Canva for visual design. We will evaluate existing and new AI tools including the safeguarding risks they pose in conflict to our organisational values and principles.
Consulting Skills	Gender assessment, social and environmental impact assessment, gender responsive proposal writing and project design, ToR analysis and development, gender and climate responsive project budgeting, stakeholder mapping and engagement, gender responsive monitoring, evaluation and learning.
Facilitation & Communication	Online workshop design, intercultural sensitivity, feminist leadership, participatory methods
Compliance & Ethics	Safeguarding, anti-harassment, ethical AI use, data protection
Rest & Resilience	Burnout prevention, boundaries, somatic practices, climate anxiety/grief, feminist self-care, trauma-informed work

## 5. Learning Methods

We are committed to offering a flexible and accessible mix of learning methods that meet team members where they are on their professional journey. These methods foster continuous engagement, accommodate diverse learning styles, and support real-time knowledge application.

Type	Description
Monthly Learning Circles	Rotating facilitation on priority topics, 1–1.5 hours
Quarterly Deep Dives	Skill-building workshops, e.g. using AI for Research and Analysis
Peer Learning	Debriefs after every assessment or proposal submission or capacity building project. Team members should ensure they review all training materials produced by SAEDI Consulting including flagging areas where additional support/knowledge is needed

Microlearning	Curated 10–20 min videos/webinars/articles published quarterly
External Training & Certification	Possible annual budget allocation to support team members as well as taking advantage of offerings by other stakeholders and partners with a cycle of team members identified to ensure equity of access to these opportunities
Somatic Practices	Reflection time and mental health check-ins as part of all team events

We also intend to invite experts and guests in for team meetings and other events to inform our learning and development as well as integrating new aspects such as culture and social standing in our work.

Learning can also occur through invited peer reviewers whom we invite, with client agreement, to review draft documents and then to have a session with the team to review their comments and recommendations.

## 6. Tools & Platforms

To deliver our learning vision effectively, we leverage a suite of collaborative and digital tools. These platforms allow for dynamic engagement, real-time collaboration, and the ongoing curation of learning resources. As technologies evolve, we will continue to explore and integrate tools that enhance knowledge sharing and learning access.

The company will use as many platforms as are available and necessary for team growth and development. Below is a suggested list and how they can be used:

- SLACK: Used as the central learning hub for sharing resources, starting asynchronous discussions in L&D channels (e.g., learning circle, and supporting peer-to-peer learning. This includes existing learning and capacity building materials.
- ZOOM: Used for hosting Learning Circles, webinars, and virtual trainings with breakout rooms, polls, and recordings.
- GOOGLE WORKSPACE: For organising L&D calendars, storing materials, and tracking participation.
- AI TOOLS: Grammarly, Canva, Descript for producing quality content, CoPilot for more concise writing and analysis.
- SURVEY TOOLS: Google Forms, Mentimeter, Survey Monkey for gathering information and data as well as feedback for evaluating training impact.

## 7. Roles & Responsibilities

A clearly defined set of roles and responsibilities ensures the successful implementation of our learning strategy. Each team member, regardless of their role, contributes to cultivating a vibrant learning culture.

The table below outlines how different roles contribute to learning across SAEDI Consulting.

Role	Responsibilities
Managing Director	Sets L&D vision; approves strategic priorities and budget allocations.
Learning Lead (rotating)	Coordinates monthly sessions, updates learning library, tracks participation.
Team Members	Identify personal learning goals, engage in peer learning, and complete required trainings. L&D should be included in monthly workplans as well as quarterly performance review sessions.
Project Leads	Embed L&D opportunities into project workflows and identify team capacity gaps.
Admin/Support Staff	Provide logistical support for L&D sessions and monitor usage of tools/platforms.

## 8. Well-being & Self-Care

Learning must be viewed as part of well-being. It nurtures resilience, community connection, and purpose. Structured learning time must be celebrated as part of a healthy work rhythm.

We recognise that the emotional and cognitive labour of gender and climate justice can be deeply personal and taxing. Our L&D approach includes:

- Emphasizing rest and reflection as learning practices,
- Integrating discussions on burnout, trauma, and resilience,
- Creating brave, psychologically safe caring spaces where vulnerability is respected, and
- Promoting resources and tools that nourish emotional, mental, and spiritual wellbeing.

### *8.1 Facilitator Safety and Support*

Recognising that facilitators of sensitive content— such as SGBV, SEAH, and gender justice— may face unique risks, SAEDI is committed to protecting their well-being and

creating a safe environment. Pre-training risk assessments will be conducted, and co-facilitation encouraged in high-risk contexts.

Facilitators may decline sessions where personal safety is at risk. A post-training debrief, and peer support check-in will be offered for emotionally taxing sessions.

### *8.2 Trauma-Informed and Intersectional Learning*

Facilitators will have access to confidential mental health referrals and the Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) if needed. Anonymous participant feedback tools will be used to flag any harmful behaviours and uphold safety.

A Code of Conduct (Appendix II) for both in-person and virtual learning will guide respectful participation and moderator escalation protocols. These measures are rooted in SAEDI's survivor-centred, non-retaliatory, and intersectional approach.

These approaches ensure that our feminist and GEDSI-centred principles are practiced not only in what we teach externally but how we work internally. Learning remains a practice of care, and facilitators must be supported to thrive emotionally and professionally.

SAEDI commits to embedding trauma-informed practices and principles in its learning and development strategy. This includes training on trauma-awareness, psychological safety, and the impacts of vicarious trauma. Particular attention will be given to the risks and lived experiences of facilitators and team members from marginalised or minority groups.

Mentorship, inclusive facilitation roles, and safe peer learning spaces will be prioritised.

## **9. Monitoring & Evaluation**

To ensure our Learning & Development efforts are and remain effective as well as aligned with our strategic goals, we have established a practical M&E framework. This allows us to track participation, measure the impact of learning on performance, and continuously adapt our approach for greater relevance and effectiveness.

- ❖ Focus on 3–5 key indicators such as engagement, skill application, and business impact.
- ❖ Pre- and post-training self-assessments
- ❖ Bi-annual L&D reflection sessions
- ❖ KPI: 100% of staff receive/participate in at least 2 capacity-building opportunities/year, at least one of which is an organisational priority focus area.

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This policy is subject to review within 2 years of approval, or earlier in the event of strategic organisational changes.

	<b>Date</b>	<b>Signature</b>
Approved	July 16 <sup>th</sup> 2025	Leisa Perch
Reviewed		



## **Appendices**

### **Appendix I**

#### **SAEDI Consulting (Barbados) Ltd GEDSI Approach**

##### **1. Foundational GEDSI Principles:**

SAEDI's GEDSI approach is grounded in:

- Feminist principles and intersectionality
- A commitment to gender and climate justice
- A focus on empowerment and inclusion of historically marginalised populations, including women, persons with disabilities (PWD), Indigenous and tribal peoples, LGBTQIA+ communities, youth, and the elderly

These values are actively embedded in policy, operations, stakeholder engagement, and partnerships.

##### **2. Internal GEDSI Practices (Institutional Level)**

Human Resources:

- Equal opportunity hiring and contracting
- Flexible and inclusive working conditions
- Grants in lieu of paid leave for maternity, paternity, and health-related challenges
- Gender-sensitive Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM)
- Anti-discrimination and zero tolerance for harassment

Environmental and Social Safeguards:

- Promotes gender-sensitive and inclusive virtual workspaces
- Encourages reduction of environmental footprint
- Treats care work and social wellbeing as professional concerns

##### **3. External GEDSI Commitments (Programs and Projects)**

Stakeholder Engagement:

- Inclusive stakeholder mapping and participation tools
- Core values: trust, collaboration, equity, sustainability, empowerment
- Multiple inclusive communication mechanisms
- Gender- and power-sensitive grievance redress systems

CSR Commitments:

- Links corporate responsibility to gender and environmental justice
- Grants for women-led environmental and disaster resilience initiatives
- Support for Indigenous knowledge and inclusive technologies
- Internships for young professionals from marginalised groups

#### **4. Integration Across Policies**

SAEDI aligns all its core operational policies with a coherent GEDSI framework. This approach reinforces accountability and ensures GEDSI is not treated as an add-on, but as a cross-cutting imperative.

#### **Conclusion**

SAEDI Consulting's GEDSI approach is systemic and strategic. It is:

- Gender-transformative: seeks to shift power relations
- Disability-inclusive: promotes universal access and targeted support
- Socially responsible: guided by climate justice and care ethics

SAEDI Consulting demonstrates a good practice model for GEDSI integration in consulting for social change.

## Appendix II

### Learning & Development Code of Conduct

#### 1. Commitment to Justice and Social Inclusion

Uphold the principles of gender equality, disability rights, and social inclusion. Recognise and respect the intersectional identities of all learners, facilitators, and stakeholders. Promote decolonial knowledge systems and Global South feminist perspectives.

#### 2. Respect and Dignity for All

Treat all participants, facilitators, and colleagues with dignity, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or social status. Value each voice in learning spaces, especially those historically marginalised.

#### 3. Do No Harm

Ensure all learning activities are designed and delivered in ways that do not retraumatize, discriminate, or harm participants. Avoid reinforcing oppressive narratives or excluding sensitive perspectives.

#### 4. Facilitator Safety and Support

Acknowledge the unique risks faced by facilitators, especially those delivering SGBV/SEAH, feminist, or decolonial content. Support safety planning, mental health access, and allow facilitators to opt out without stigma when safety or wellbeing is compromised.

#### 5. Zero Tolerance for Harassment and Retaliation

Commit to a zero-tolerance policy on harassment, bullying, or intimidation in any learning environment—virtual or in-person. Ensure reporting mechanisms are safe, confidential, and free of retaliation.

#### 6. Transparency and Accountability

Be open about power dynamics, expectations, and learning goals in all sessions. Accept responsibility for mistakes and be willing to learn and adapt based on feedback.

#### 7. Confidentiality and Consent

Respect the privacy of all participants and ensure that personal stories or disclosures are not shared without explicit consent. Use participant input responsibly and credit contributors appropriately.

## 8. Care and Well-being

Foster psychologically safe, brave spaces that prioritise emotional safety, rest, reflection, and care. Acknowledge the mental and emotional load of social justice work and incorporate practices that support long-term resilience.

## 9. Ethical Use of Technology

Use AI and digital tools in alignment with SAEDI's ethical values and safeguarding principles. Avoid bias, misinformation, or exploitation through technological platforms.

## 10. Commitment to Continuous Learning

Recognise that ethical learning and facilitation is an ongoing process. Stay engaged with new thinking, feedback, and community practices to grow individually and collectively.