

Implementation Guide

Health & Wellbeing
Framework

September 2021



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COUNCIL



BETTER PLACES
FOR PEOPLE

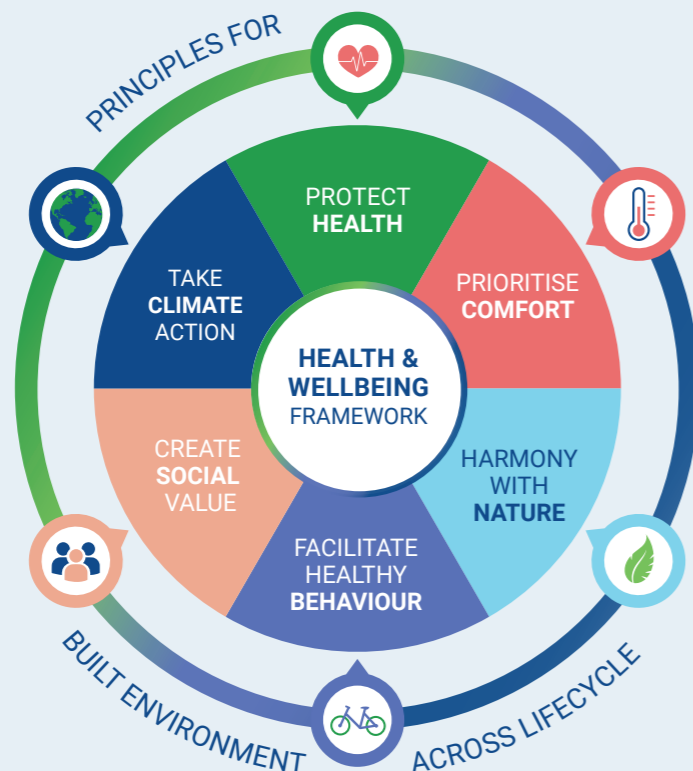
The WorldGBC Health & Wellbeing Framework

The World Green Building Council's (WorldGBC) Health & Wellbeing Framework is a set of principles for enhancing human health, wellbeing & social value through the built environment.

Over the past two years, the WorldGBC network has collaborated to redefine the scope of health and wellbeing for the built environment sector. An extensive consultation, incorporating feedback from around 50 countries, has led to the development of a holistic definition that speaks to all geographies, and captures all health and social sustainability challenges across the building and construction lifecycle. With this Framework, a new, inclusive and equitable set of principles that considers all people impacted by the building and construction sector has materialized.

With this publication, we invite the industry to explore opportunities to integrate this holistic approach to health, wellbeing and social sustainability into your building, construction or real estate project - be it design stage, renovation, organisational strategy or even regulatory change. This Implementation Guide will demonstrate factors to be considered across the value chain, at all stages of the lifecycle, and how to utilise these principles alongside sustainability rating tools and certifications.

The six principles that underpin WorldGBC's Health and Wellbeing Framework are:



Discover WorldGBC's Health & Wellbeing Framework online at worldgbc.org/health-framework

Six Principles for a Healthy, Sustainable Built Environment

1 PROTECT AND IMPROVE HEALTH	2 PRIORITISE COMFORT FOR BUILDING USERS	3 DESIGN FOR HARMONY BETWEEN THE NATURAL AND BUILT ENVIRONMENTS
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- 1.1 Maintain air quality at appropriate levels to minimise health risks
- 1.2 Maintain water quality at appropriate target to minimise health risks
- 1.3 Support and enhance mental and social health through considered building design
- 1.4 Reduce the transmission of infectious disease within the built environment

- 2.1 Ensure consistent thermal comfort to enhance wellbeing with awareness of varying occupant needs
- 2.2 Maintain exemplary lighting to enhance wellbeing, prioritising natural and energy-efficient solutions
- 2.3 Maintain acoustic comfort within appropriate parameters
- 2.4 Consider wider comfort indicators to avoid occupant wellbeing risk
- 2.5 Ensure inclusive design of the built environment

- 3.1 Ensure occupant access to nature within building, providing biophilic benefits
- 3.2 Ensure occupant access to nature outdoors, encouraging biodiversity within site footprint and surroundings

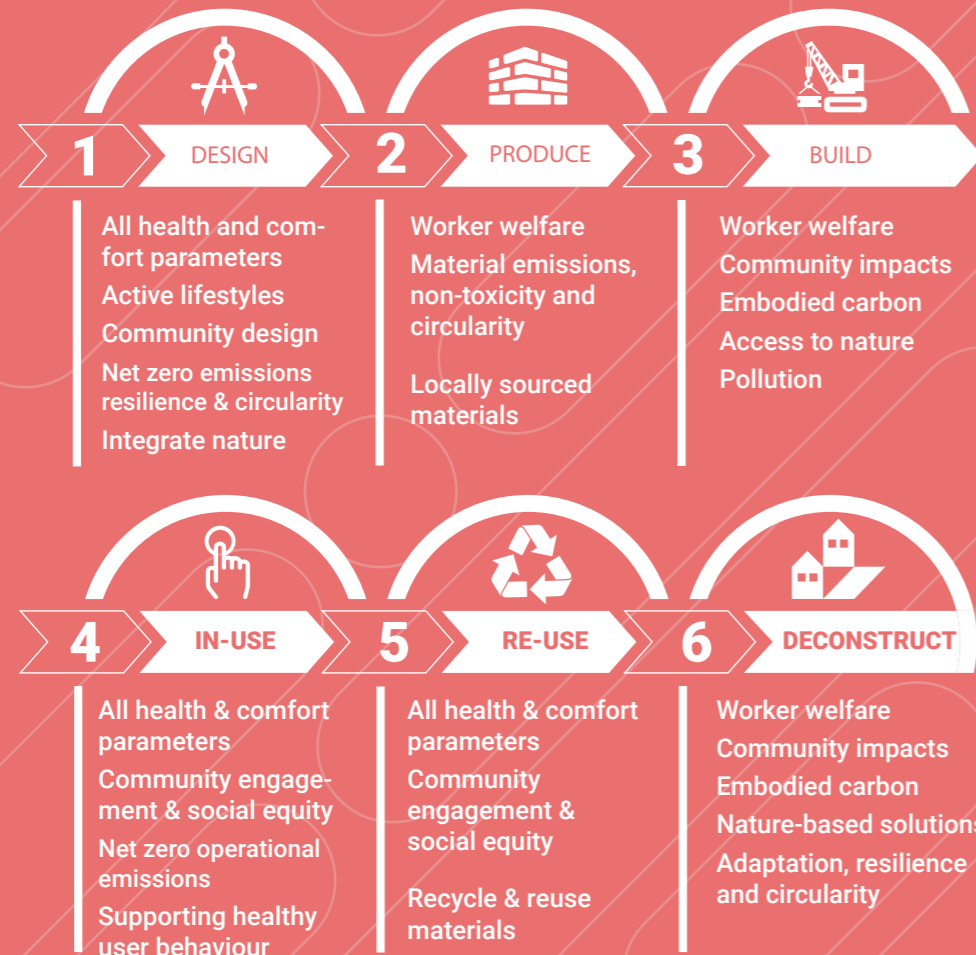
4 FACILITATE POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR AND HEALTH	5 CREATE POSITIVE SOCIAL VALUE WITH BUILDINGS AND COMMUNITIES	6 TAKE CLIMATE ACTION
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- 4.1 Design to promote activity, indoors and outdoors, to encourage physical health of occupants
- 4.2 Encourage beneficial lifestyle practices for occupants, including nutrition, hydration and social connectivity

- 5.1 Protect human rights relating to health through the building and construction lifecycle
- 5.2 Commit to protecting health and wellbeing of people
- 5.3 Provide long term value to communities and improve local quality of life

- 6.1 Commit to net zero whole-life carbon emissions to contribute to climate change mitigation
- 6.2 Encourage resilience strategies in preparation for climate change and extreme weather events
- 6.3 Use water efficiently, working to avoid local shortage crises
- 6.4 Ensure safe, healthy, and circular use of materials across the building lifecycle

The Health & Wellbeing Framework offers guidance and solutions at every stage of the lifecycle:



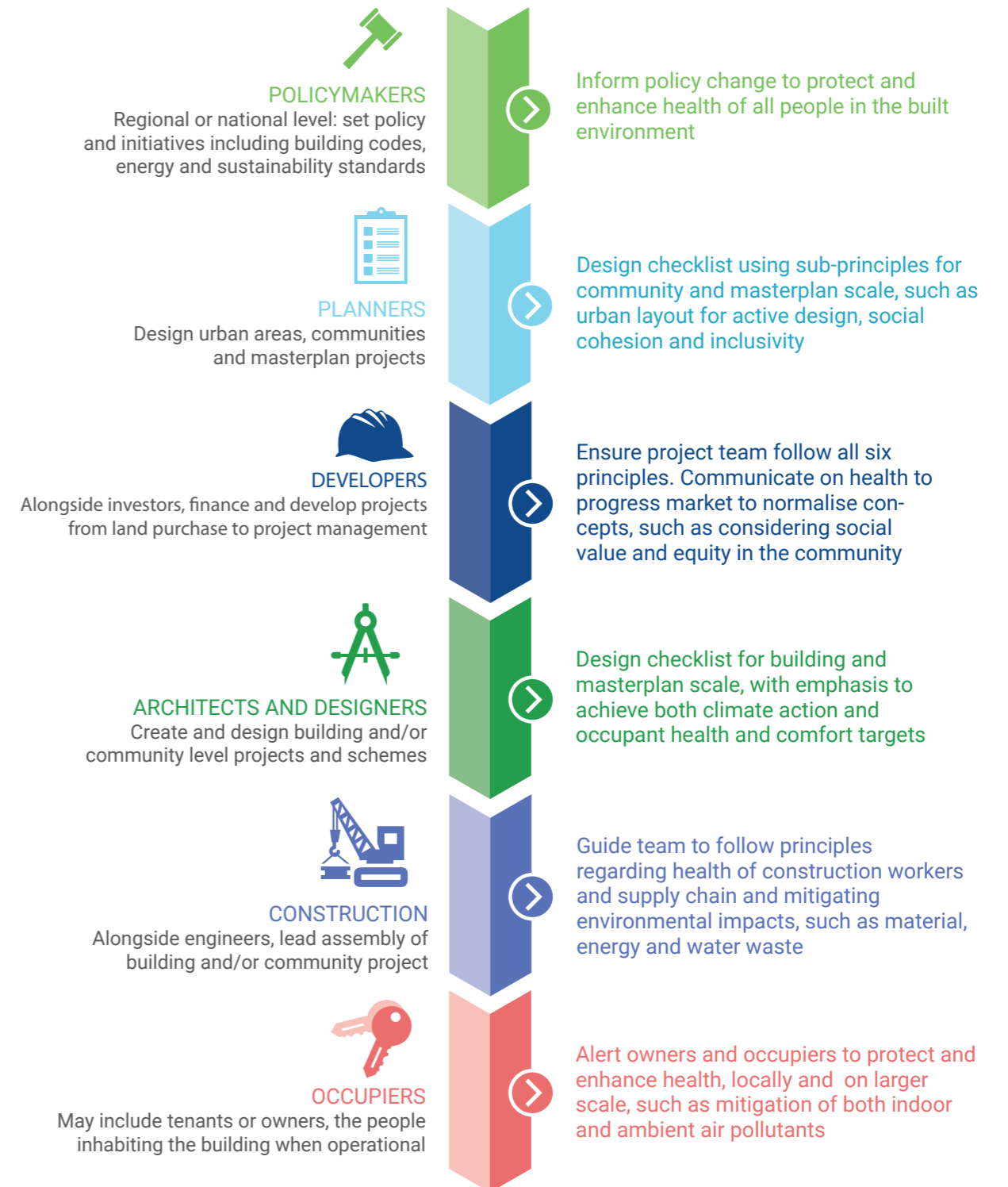
The Framework can be used as a foundation to a sustainability strategy, alongside a rating tool or certification to demonstrate market accreditation & performance verification.



WorldGBC considers the Health & Wellbeing Framework to be a stepping stone on the pathway to certification, and supports the uptake of rating tools for sustainability by increasing awareness of the role of the building and construction sector on human health.



Call to Action across the Value Chain





How can you use the Health & Wellbeing Framework to create greater health outcomes in your projects, in your buildings and in the community?



The Health & Wellbeing Framework Checklist

Align your project or strategy to the World Green Building Council's principles for health in the built environment

Principle	Sub-principles	Alignment to SDG	Sub-Principle Outcome	Lifecycle Stage Consideration(s)	Stakeholder relevance
 Principle 1. Protect and Improve Health	1.1 Improve Air Quality	SDG 3.9, SDG 11.6	Building provides only clean air through the mitigation of air quality risks and incorporation of health-based strategies, whilst maintaining energy efficiency. Air quality should be enhanced at all stages of lifecycle, including construction workers, and protecting health of people within and outside, considering both building occupants and neighbouring people.	Design, Construction, Building, In-use, Deconstruction	Engineers, Designers, Manufacturers
	1.2 Improve Water Quality	SDG 6.1-6.6	All buildings should provide occupants with adequate, safe, and sustainable access to clean water and sanitation, whilst maintaining efficient use of water and striving for circularity on-site.	Design, Construction, Building, In-use, Deconstruction	Engineers, Designers, Building occupants, Manufacturers
	1.3 Improve Mental Healthy	SDG 3.4	The built environment is designed and operated to enhance occupant and neighbouring community mental health and wellbeing. Ensure design strategies are accessible and inclusive to support social health for people of all levels of physical, cognitive and mental ability.	Design, Construction, Building, In-use, Deconstruction	Designers, Architects, Building occupants
	1.4 Reduce Infection Disease Transmission	SDG 3.3	The indoor and outdoor built environment actively mitigates risk of infectious disease transmission, including both strategic design measures and implementation of building policies to enhance health, whilst maintaining energy efficiency.	Design, Construction, Building, In-use, Deconstruction	Engineers, Designers, Architects, Building occupants
 Principle 2. Prioritise Comfort for Building Users	2.1 Ensure Thermal Comfort	SDG 7.1, SDG 9.1, SDG 9.4	Design for user control of heating, cooling & humidity control in space to ensure optimal individual comfort in operational buildings, while maintaining energy efficiency with broad consideration of the environment. Sustainable master-planning mitigates community level thermal comfort issues, such as the (Urban) Heat Island effect.	Design, Construction, Building, In-use	Engineers, Designers, Architects, Manufacturers
	2.2 Maintain Exemplary Lighting	SDG 7.1, SDG 9.1	Provision of adequate artificial lighting that is flicker free, meets minimum requirements for lighting colour, have little glare and ideally, have localised lighting controls and is appropriate for space use. All lighting should be energy efficient.	Design, Construction, Building, In-use	Engineers, Designers, Architects
	2.3 Maintain Acoustic Comfort	SDG 9.1, SDG 9.4	Mitigation of steady state noise exposure: this is defined as noise, the level of which does not change by more than 5dB at a given place and during a given time period. Continuous background sound in offices is mostly generated by heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) equipment. External noise should be mitigated with building features as far as possible, as openable windows should be optimized for ventilation control and therefore not be relied upon as acoustic control.	Design, Construction, Building, In-use	Engineers, Designers, Architects
	2.4 Ensure Olfactory, Ergonomic and Visual Comfort	SDG 9.1	A built environment that incorporates strategies to improve occupant visual, olfactory and ergonomic comfort, whilst actively mitigating wider wellbeing risk to people. Visual comfort and interior design for aesthetics should be designed in accordance with guidance on hazardous chemicals in Principle 6.4.	Design, Construction, Building, In-use	Engineers, Designers, Architects
	2.5 Ensure Inclusive Design	SDG 9.4	Inclusive design must keep the diversity and uniqueness of each individual building occupant in mind, considering all people utilising a built environment, including those with mental and physical disabilities as well as vulnerable and ageing populations. An environment that is designed inclusively must apply to buildings, their surrounding open spaces, and local urban infrastructure and services.	Design, Construction, Building, In-use	Engineers, Designers, Architects

Principle	Sub-principles	Alignment to SDG	Sub-Principle Outcome	Lifecycle Stage Consideration(s)	Stakeholder relevance
 Principle 3. Design for Harmony with Nature	3.1 Ensure Indoor Biophilic Design	SDG 12.8	Buildings to ensure occupant access to nature within the indoor environment, following principles of biophilic design to maximise mental and physical health and wellbeing benefits for occupant.	Design, Construction, Building, In-use	Engineers, Designers, Architects, Building occupants
	3.2 Ensure Outdoor Nature Access and Biodiversity	SDG 11.7, SDG 12.8	Access to quality green space on building footprint, in addition to local community. Maximise biodiversity on site and encourage implementation of nature-based solutions at community level.	Design, Construction, Building, In-use	Engineers, Designers, Architects, Building occupants
 Principle 4. Facilitate Positive Behaviour & Health	4.1 Promote Activity & Physical Health in Design	SDG 11.7	Buildings and local community play a supportive role in the healthy lifestyle of occupants, including the reduction of obesity, by designing the space to encourage regular physical activity, reducing barriers to accessibility, availability and affordability.	Design, Construction, Building, In-use	Designers, Architects, Building occupants
	4.2 Encourage Good Nutrition Hydration & Social Connectivity	SDG 2.1, SDG 11.A	The built environment actively contributes to the improvement of nutrition, hydration and social connectivity of building occupants and people in the local community, where possible, by supporting healthy food choices and hydration practices, and providing infrastructure for positive social engagement.	Design, Construction, Building, In-use	Designers, Architects, Building occupants
 Principle 5. Create positive social value with buildings & communities	5.1 Protect Human Rights	SDG 4.7, SDG 16.3	The ethical management of human rights relating to the construction industry and built environment should be considered and enhanced at each stage of the building lifecycle. Strategies should be incorporated by all relevant stakeholders in the value chain, with emphasis on both employment rights and quality for supply chain and construction workers, and rights and quality of buildings for the occupants.	Design, Construction, Building, In-use, Deconstruction	Designers, Architects, Building occupants
	5.2 Commit to Construction Workers Health & Wellbeing	SDG 8.7-8.8	Health-focused construction principles implemented, and practices standardised, particularly minimising worker exposure to hazardous materials, chemicals, and carcinogenic substances.	Design, Construction, Building, In-use, Deconstruction	Designers, Architects, Building occupants
	5.3 Improve Quality of Life	SDG 1.5, SDG 4.7, SDG 11.1	The health and wellbeing of all people impacted by a building in operation should be considered, and consciously enhanced where possible, incorporating environmental, social and economic indicators of health. The creation of positive social impact should be universal, with principles of equity and fairness underpinning design and operational decisions that would impact local community. Resilience-focused design and master-planning of cities, communities and built environment should also be sought.	Design, Construction, Building, In-use, Deconstruction	Designers, Architects, Building occupants
 Principle 6. Take climate action	6.1 Commit to Climate Change Mitigation	SDG 12.4, SDG 13.3	All new and existing buildings demonstrate improvements in lifecycle energy efficiency, targeting net zero operational carbon emissions in all new buildings by 2030, and net zero embodied carbon in all new buildings by 2050 (including emissions from equivalent greenhouse gases, specifically HFCs).	Design, Construction, Building, In-use, Deconstruction	Designers, Architects, Building occupants
	6.2 Design for Resilience and Adaptation action	SDG 1.5, SDG 9.4, SDG 13.1	The design and operation of buildings and urban areas should incorporate strategies to enhance community resilience to the climate crisis. Strategies must not exacerbate societal inequalities and should account for the needs of vulnerable populations locally.	Design, Construction, Building, In-use, Deconstruction	Designers, Architects, Building occupants
	6.3 Ensure Water Efficiency	SDG 6.3-6.6	Reduce demand, enhance water efficiency, & ensure sustainable drainage & water management through the design, construction, and operation of built environment to reduce stress on water bodies and related ecosystems. Explore utilisation of other sources of water, such as treated greywater, on-site and at community level where feasible.	Design, Construction, Building, In-use, Deconstruction	Designers, Architects, Engineers
	6.4 Ensure Resource Efficiency	SDG 7.1 - 7.3, SDG 12.1-12.2	Building projects consciously avoid the use of hazardous materials & chemicals during construction projects (including retrofit & deconstruction), facilitating the extraction from existing materials and projects to avoid contamination & further circulation in industry. All projects support the built environment sector's transition to a circular economy with minimal waste leakage into the natural environment.	Design, Construction, Building, In-use, Deconstruction	Designers, Architects, Engineers, Contractors

Hear from the WorldGBC global network

The Health & Wellbeing Framework in use

"At **Shaw Contract**, we believe we have a responsibility to each other and to our habitat - to people and the planet. The Framework provides us with a foundation for engaging with our clients and partners, fostering conversation and offering dedicated training, aiming to encourage a **holistic view** of sustainable development across the entire built environment lifecycle." - **Kellie Ballew, Vice President, Global Sustainability, Shaw Contract.**

"At **Qatar GBC**, developing and promoting the health and wellbeing agenda, nationally and regionally, is **an integral driver of sustainability and climate actions.** The Framework has been instrumental in guiding our initiatives, programs and policy recommendations." - **Hamoda Youssef, Qatar GBC's Head of Technical Affairs.**

"At **Johnson Controls** our mission is to reimagine the performance of buildings to serve people, places and the planet. The Framework is well-aligned to our **Healthy Buildings, Net Zero Buildings as a Service**, and other key global initiatives. It provides a clear and concise blueprint that enables us and our client partners to achieve our mission to set the standard for **smart, healthy & sustainable buildings.**" - **Leigh-Golding DeSantis, Executive Director, Sustainability Products and Solutions, Johnson Controls.**

"At **Chile GBC**, we are working on a seal called **"SafeBuilding"**, that evaluates health, wellbeing, accessibility, integration, as well as the performance of the building throughout its lifecycle, based on the concepts of the Framework." - **Gabriela Sabadini, Project Manager at Chile GBC.**

"At **Colombia GBC**, the Framework was used to evaluate and position our housing rating system **CASA Colombia** as a sustainable and healthy housing standard, and developed various articles and courses to educate our market on the impact of a healthy built environment." - **Viviana Valdivieso, CEO Colombia GBC.**

"At **GBC Brazil**, we developed two new programs based on the Framework: a 12-hour content online course; and 'LIFE' certification/seal for residential interiors, as a **communication bridge** between the green building movement and the civil society" - **Felipe Faria, CEO, GBC Brazil.**

"At **India GBC**, with the Healthy Building concepts gaining momentum, we aspire to make it a larger movement by demonstrating its benefits through the Framework and creating an **enabling environment** for wider adoption, with the support of all the stakeholders" - **S Karthikeyan, Principal Counsellor, IndiaGBC.**

"At **GBC Australia**, when the largest voluntary sustainability rating system for building, fitouts and communities was developed, **"Green Star"**, the Framework served to remind us of our responsibility to deliver **healthy, resilient, & positive places for people.**" - **Jorge Chapa, Head of Market Transformation, Green Building Council of Australia**

[**Discover WorldGBC's Health & Wellbeing Framework**](#)

About WorldGBC

The World Green Building Council (WorldGBC) catalyses the uptake of sustainable buildings for everyone, everywhere.

Transforming the building and construction sector across three strategic areas — climate action, health and wellbeing, and resources and circularity — we are an action network comprised of more than 70 Green Building Councils (GBCs) around the globe. As members of the UN Global Compact, we work with businesses, organisations and governments to drive the ambitions of the Paris Agreement and UN Global Goals for Sustainable Development. Through a systems change approach, our network is leading the industry towards a net zero carbon, healthy, equitable and resilient built environment.

This Implementation Guide has been developed in partnership with the Better Places for People Steering Committee and global partners, and is intended to complement the full Framework, available at worldgbc.org/health-framework.

Global Partners



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ENGINEERING**

Framework Partners



MULTIPLEX



Join Us

WorldGBC invites everyone to join us in utilising the Health & Wellbeing Framework as a tool to catalyse to a sustainable built environment that protects and enhances the health of people and planet. Contact your local Green Building Council or WorldGBC to put into practice the principles set out in this framework.

For the online version of the WorldGBC Health & Wellbeing Framework and most recent updates, please visit the WorldGBC at: worldgbc.org/health-framework.

