



INNOVATION WITHOUT BOUNDARIES

# SUSTAINABILITY REPORT

Communication  
on Progress  
2021

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# COMMITMENT FROM THE FOUNDER

**Just like the rest of the world, the members of the Gobi Partners family have been deeply affected by the unprecedented global pandemic that has irrevocably transformed our lives. The last two years have seen families losing loved ones and livelihoods being disrupted in ways we have never foreseen.**

Simultaneously, the world has had to cope with global supply chain disruptions, urban protests over inequality, and the fear of potential nuclear conflict. In the face of so much chaos and uncertainty, one thing has become clearer than ever – that we cannot treat global health, environmental calamity, social unrest and other seemingly “black swan” events as issues distinct and separate from our regular conceptions of risk, but rather as integral parts of our daily fabric that deserve greater respect and attention.

Here at Gobi Partners, we have always prided ourselves on our commitment to championing the underserved and emerging markets. Our teams collaborate across 13 countries to unearth category-defining companies which go on to chart their own successes. Now in our 20th year, we recognise that our values in empowering diverse leaders and championing gender equality have always been aligned with the Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) frameworks that have become necessary to navigate 21st century risks. As one of Asia’s largest VC firms, we are in the unique and privileged position to make an impact on the way businesses conduct their operations going forward.

Our formalisation of our ESG strategy and transformation started in 2018 with the formation of our ESG Committee, chaired by partner Soo Wei Shaw. We then welcomed veteran venture capitalist and startup ecosystem builder Paul Ark as Gobi’s Head of ESG last year. Our ESG Committee and ESG Task Force have worked hand-in-hand to strengthen our ESG Policy, protocols and feedback systems by expanding

our strategy to include Socially Responsible Investing and Gender Lens Investing, as well as integrating international ESG standards into our multi-stack investment approach. In further affirming our promise to create a better tomorrow with full transparency and accountability, we became a participant of the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC) and a signatory to the Women’s Empowerment Principles (WEPs) by UN Women in 2021. This inaugural Sustainability Report is the fruit of these partnerships.

Gobi remains steadfast to our values of delivering returns to underserved markets and segments. We give special attention to the under-represented segments of women-led businesses and Muslim entrepreneurs, both critical components of and contributors to the region’s communities and economies. Investments towards the latter come under our TaqwaTech strategy, which represents Gobi’s investments in Islamic ventures and the Muslim economy. Launched in 2016, TaqwaTech recognises the lack of opportunities and inclusion faced by entrepreneurs from Muslim-majority nations or startups catering to the nearly two billion Muslim adherents globally.

As we celebrate our 20th anniversary, we understand that post-pandemic recovery must come hand-in-hand with responsible investment. This Sustainability Report will be a testament to the work that we have done so far and the work that lies ahead.

**"As one of Asia’s largest VC firms, we are in the unique and privileged position to make an impact on the way businesses conduct their operations going forward."**

## Purpose Driven Values

In the 20 years since our founding, Gobi has constantly championed the underserved and developing communities through our investments, bringing highly accessible financial services to previously underbanked communities and financially enable female-founded businesses to scale and have impact in their communities. Our membership in the UNGC signals our continuing commitment to championing the underserved and emerging markets as we integrate global ESG standards into our strategy and operations. In the past year, we conducted surveys with our colleagues as well as with our portfolio companies to assess attitudes towards and progress on our collective ESG journey, and highlight areas that require continued attention. The methodology and the findings of the surveys revealed that our existing ESG strategy, policy, and initiatives have provided a solid foundation to address issues about the impact on the environment, labour, human rights, and anti-corruption.

As a VC, Gobi's key mandate is to invest capital into high-growth, and high-return startups that are sustainable long-term for our key customers: the limited

partners (LPs) and external organisations that trust our expertise to bring them efficient returns on investment from Asian markets. A major LP that joined the Gobi family in 2021 was the United Kingdom's British International Investment (formerly named CDC Group), one of the world's largest impact investors with an active investment presence in the Middle East and North Africa. In September 2021, they invested in our Pakistan-based joint venture, Fatima Gobi Venture's maiden fund, Techxila Fund I (Techxila). This successful onboarding was only made possible by Gobi Vice President and ESG Task Force member Taraec Hussein's year-long negotiations and Gobi's initiatives around and commitment to ESG. The addition of the British International Investment is a vote of confidence in Gobi's Muslim economy vertical, TaqwaTech, as a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) focus area. To date, Techxila has backed startups as diverse as AgriTech Tazah Tech (small farmers), edutech Maqсад (education for rural girls), and quick commerce startup Airlift (micro SMEs), to name a few.



## Setting the Scene for 2022

In 2022, we cement our commitment to our long-term partnership with UNGC through the publication of a clear and transparent Communication on Progress on all our initiatives going forward. Paramount of these initiatives is our ongoing advocacy of gender diversity in the regional venture capital ecosystem by hosting thought leadership platforms such as Asia Gender-Smart Investing Forum co-organised with UN Women, She Loves Tech pitch competitions in Southeast Asia, and co-organising mentorship programmes for women entrepreneurs with aforementioned partners. Most notably, we commemorate our 20th Anniversary with the launch of the Ratu Nusa Fund, a US\$10 million seed-stage gender lens fund based in Surabaya, Indonesia. Launched in partnership with local VC firm Ozora Yatrapaktaja, the fund focuses on companies that improve the livelihoods of women and girls across Indonesia; that reside in emerging secondary and tertiary cities such as Surabaya, Bali, Nusantara and Medan; and that leverage technology to broaden access and have the potential to create enhanced efficiencies and scalability.

In addition to expanding the scope of our investment and community-building activity around gender diversity, Gobi's ESG objectives include continued investment in underserved and emerging investment verticals such as TaqwaTech and Circular Economy; enhancing our ESG policy by developing robust processes to manage relevant tech industry risks; further integrating ESG frameworks and criteria into our investment processes; collaborating within portfolio companies post-investment to identify opportunities for sustainable value creation; and the promotion of ESG thought leadership by our partners and colleagues.

In closing, it is my pleasure as Co-founder of Gobi Partners to invite you to engage with our inaugural Sustainability Report, which solidifies Gobi Partners' commitment to using venture capital as a force for good.



**Thomas G. Tsao**

Co-Founder, Gobi Partners





## About Us

Gobi Partners is the most interconnected Pan-Asian venture capital firm with US\$1.5 billion in assets under management (AUM) across North Asia, South Asia, and ASEAN. Headquartered in Kuala Lumpur and Hong Kong, the firm supports entrepreneurs from the early to growth stages and focuses on emerging and underserved markets.

Founded in 2002, Gobi has raised 14 funds to date, invested in over 320 startups and nurtured 9 unicorns. Gobi has grown to 15 locations across key markets in Bangkok, Beijing, Guangzhou, Ho Chi Minh City, Hong Kong, Jakarta, Karachi, Kuala Lumpur, Lahore, Manila, Riyadh, Shanghai, Shenzhen, Singapore and Surabaya.

As a Participant of the United Nations Global Compact, Gobi Partners is committed to aligning strategies and operations with universal principles on human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption to ensure long-term value creation and sustainability across our portfolio.

## Our Values

### We Strive

to uplift people across gender, race, religion and ethnicity in emerging and underserved markets. We are committed to improving ourselves as well as our community around us.

### We Believe

in connecting entrepreneurial ecosystems, one emerging market at a time. We believe in entrepreneurs in Asia and their ability to empower communities and address socio-economic issues, given the opportunity and capital to do so.

### We Invest

in diverse sectors and founders, supporting female leaders, promoting gender equality and the Muslim economy.

### Our Entrepreneurs

are often pioneers in new markets and technologies, carving their own niches to solve Asia's greatest challenges. Our entrepreneurs constantly thread new paths and break new ground, backed by Gobi's Pan-Asian network of investors, startups, public and private sector partners.

### Our Portfolios

create thousands of jobs, uplift their local communities and reach millions of people across the continent each year.

### We Are Privileged

to work with entrepreneurs, governments, corporates, investors and NGOs to bring the best ideas to life.

# OUR ESG PHILOSOPHY



**Danny Yeung**  
Co-founder & CEO, Prenetics

**Prenetics™**

Prenetics' mission is to bring health closer to people, by decentralising health care, and focusing on the comprehensive testing capabilities covering prevention, diagnostics, and personalised care.

**HONG KONG**

[prenetics.com](https://prenetics.com)

# OUR ESG PHILOSOPHY

Gobi's philosophy and approach to ESG and sustainability are natural outgrowths of our company values, which espouse the advancement of politically, economically, and culturally empowered communities of diverse groups and individuals through investments into creativity and innovation. As a new member of the UNGC, Gobi is marrying core UNGC precepts with our own values to put our own stamp on how ESG and impact-driven VC investments should look like within the Asian startup ecosystems in which we are active. The opportunity before us lies in developing optimal ESG frameworks for the Pan-Asian markets by leveraging existing frameworks already used in more ESG-mature Western markets, which are traditionally focused on more downstream asset classes like public or large-cap

private equity, and adapting them to suit Asian technology-enabled startup investments, which are earlier in their lifecycle and entail materially different risks.

Our ESG philosophy threads a delicate balance between adhering to the values and principles that have been the bedrock of Gobi's existence over the past 20 years and maintaining attentiveness and adaptability to emerging ESG risks in the VC industry and startup ecosystems, all the while catering to the innovative technologies and business models in the markets in which we invest in and remaining mindful of the different needs and investment mandates of each of our funds.

## Gobi's View on Environmental Stewardship

As a VC firm, Gobi generates almost no environmental impact from Scope 1 or Scope 2 greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, which present an immaterial operational risk for Gobi. However, Gobi does produce an indirect impact through Scope 3 activities, predominantly through business air travel, leased office space, employee commutes, and investment activities. Given the relative ease of tracking our Scope 3 emissions, opportunities may open up for Gobi to monitor its emissions on a regular basis, and simultaneously reduce business travel (and travel expenses) and GHG emissions as business travel picks up following the COVID-driven travel slump. Refer to Our Stakeholder Surveys on **page 27** for details on Gobi's carbon footprint.

Gobi takes a more expansive view of environmental impact in its work with and management of its portfolio investments. While much of our portfolio has traditionally been in highly digital businesses that generate very little direct Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions (with the main impact being through Scope 3 emissions from activities such as power consumption and cloud storage), the increased amount of Gobi investment towards industries and technologies such as smart manufacturing, agriculture, food service, deep tech, and blockchain means that Gobi's funds can be expected to increasingly link to Scope 1 carbon

emissions and merit increased attention from our ESG teams.

While Gobi's ESG collaboration and consultation with our portfolio companies currently focus on developing robust governance practices and promoting diversity to enhance company growth and operations, our ESG implementation programme and roadmap includes development of a work process with portfolio companies to assess the materiality of environmental risks of specific industries and tech verticals, as well as risks to portfolio startups on a case by case basis, and co-develop strategies to mitigate material environmental risks and enhance climate readiness. As regional VC investment increasingly flows to areas such as AgTech, smart cities, and manufacturing and industrial tech, environmental impact assessment is expected to become a necessary component of entrepreneurs' and VCs' skill set.

In addition to managing the environmental footprint within Gobi's internal operations and among our portfolio companies, growing awareness and creating outreach on environmental issues will play an increasing part in our ESG strategy. Refer to "Promoting Circular Economy" on **page 38** for more detail on Gobi's advocacy initiatives on Circular Economy and environmental stewardship.



## Spotlight: Environmental Stewardship and the UNGC Principles

The UNGC's Principles specifically address environmental risk through Principles 7, 8, and 9:



### ENVIRONMENT

#### PRINCIPLE 7

Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;

#### PRINCIPLE 8

undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility, and

#### PRINCIPLE 9

encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.

Gobi's philosophy and approach towards environmental risk are consistent with these pillars through the rejection of investments that involve environmental activities prohibited by Gobi's Exclusion List (refer to Gobi's ESG Investment Exclusion List" in the Appendix for the full list of exclusions), and the technical assistance Gobi's ESG Task Force makes available to portfolio startups to monitor and manage environmental footprint.

## Gobi's View on Social Equity and Diversity

Over the past 20 years, the core of Gobi's investment philosophy has been to seek investments in startups and entrepreneurs with a knack for generating value by identifying untapped opportunities and catering to underserved markets and consumers. In recent years, those untapped reservoirs of value have come from empowering female entrepreneurs and consumers, and from funding startups that cater to the Muslim economy, an often overlooked market.

To effectively facilitate greater investment allocation to startups with all-female founders or gender-diverse founding teams, it is important to foster greater gender diversity within the VC industry itself, especially in senior ranks on investment teams where critical capital allocation decisions are made. Achieving greater diversity in the VC industry and increased capital allocation to gender-diverse startups first rests on adopting meaningful definitions of diversity in both the VC and startup space, and actionable metrics on which to measure progress towards that diversity.

To benchmark Gobi's progress towards achieving optimal gender representation as a VC fund, we look to 2X Collaborative's frameworks which are setting global standards for gender-focused investment. While Gobi is not a formal member or signatory to 2X Collaborative, we refer to their criteria and standards as global best practice that measures diversity in investment firms along four dimensions, which we utilise to gauge our own diversity.

Prior to the adoption of and transition to the 2X Collaborative criteria and definition of a gender-focused investment, Gobi measured its investment in diversity as an investment into startups that are managed by

diverse teams — defined as having at least one female founder or C-level executive. As of the end of 2021, 31% of Gobi's portfolio startups in Southeast Asia and Hong Kong met this definition; in comparison, 20% of startups globally are estimated to be managed by gender-diverse teams. In Southeast Asia, such teams received less than 9% of venture capital funding in 2021 (**Sources: Statista, DealStreetAsia**).

In addition to monetary investment, Gobi works closely with its portfolio companies post-investment to enhance its ongoing business operations and growth. The scope of this collaboration includes work to enhance the diversity of its management teams and workforce, as the performance of Gobi's portfolio has shown that diverse startup teams outperform homogeneous, all-male startup teams across several key dimensions, including revenue and traction growth, talent retention, and ability to raise follow-on rounds of funding at up-round valuations. Refer to the case study "Gobi-Backed Gender-Diverse Teams in ASEAN and Hong Kong Have Demonstrated Favourable Results" on **page 33** for more detail on how Gobi's gender-smart investment strategy creates investment and impact value.

Building on our experience investing in and working with gender-diverse founding teams, Gobi launched the Ratu Nusa Fund in partnership with Indonesia VC firm Ozora Yatrapaktaja, with a focus on investing in startups from underserved second and third-tier cities that improve the livelihoods of women and girls across Indonesia. The Ratu Nusa Fund marks Gobi's foray into thematic funds, specifically a dedicated gender lens fund.

## 2X Collaborative's Criteria for Funds

		Bank, MFI, or other Non Bank Financial Intermediary	Fund
Direct Alignment	Entrepreneurship	Aligned if it meets threshold for ownership or is founded by a woman/group of women	
	Leadership	Aligned if it meets 30% threshold for Board or Senior Management composition	Aligned if it meets 30% threshold for Investment Committee or Senior Management composition
	Employment	Aligned if it meets financial sector threshold for employment & has one quality indicator beyond compliance	
	Consumption	Aligned if it meets consumption criteria, i.e., offering financial products that specifically or disproportionately benefit women	Not relevant
Indirect Alignment	Indirect Criteria	<p><b>Directed lending:</b> At least 30% of the Member investment (by value) must go towards businesses that are aligned under 2X direct criteria.</p> <p><b>Non-directed lending:</b> Either the on-lending partner commits that 30% of the Investor/FI's investment will go towards businesses that are aligned under 2X direct criteria OR the on-lending partner's existing portfolio is comprised of at least 30% businesses (by volume or value) that meet the direct criteria</p>	<p>One of the following conditions are met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The fund specifically targets women's economic empowerment, with a low and/or middle-income country focus</li> <li>At least 30% of the fund's portfolio companies (by volume or value) are aligned or will be 2X aligned (as per a commitment) Criteria can apply to existing or new funds</li> </ul>

## 2X Collaborative's Criteria for Investments

Direct Criteria	1	Entrepreneurship	1A. Share of women ownership	51%
			OR	
			1B. Business founded by a woman	Yes/No
			OR	
Direct Criteria	2	Leadership	2A. Share of women in senior management	20% - 30%
			OR	
			2B. Share of women on the Board or Investment Committee	30%
			OR	
Direct Criteria	3	Employment	3A. Share of women in the workforce	30% - 50%
			AND	
			3B. One "quality" indicator beyond compliance	Yes/No
			OR	
Direct Criteria	4	Consumption	4. Product or service specifically or disproportionately benefits women	
			OR	
Indirect	5	Investments through Financial Intermediaries (FIs)	5A. On-Lending facilities: Percent of the Investor/FI loan proceeds or percent of FI's portfolio supporting businesses that meet direct criteria	30%
			5B. Funds: Percent of portfolio companies that meet the direct criteria	30%

Beyond gender diversity, Gobi has prioritised employee physical and mental well-being as a key social risk to manage and mitigate. In 2021, Gobi's expanded employee healthcare and insurance benefits to include coverage for preventative healthcare (such as cancer screenings, mammograms, and pap smears) and voluntary fertility treatments, greater coverage of dependents (parents, children and spouse), as well as flexible working hours and remote work arrangements. In 2022, Gobi will expand its approach to social risk by developing initiatives around data privacy and protection - a major risk in the tech industry that impacts all stakeholders.



Founding Partner Margaret Srijaya of Ozora Yatrapaktaja and Thomas G. Tsao at the Ratu Nusa Fund Launch, Surabaya)



Gobi Partners together with the Ozora Team at the Ratu Nusa Fund Launch, Surabaya

## Spotlight: Social Equity, Diversity, and the UNGC Principles

The UNGC's Principles touch on various aspects of social risk through Principles 1 and 2 on human rights, and through Principles 3, 4, 5, and 6 on labour:



### HUMAN RIGHTS

#### PRINCIPLE 1

Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights; and

#### PRINCIPLE 2

make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.



### LABOUR

#### PRINCIPLE 3

Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;

#### PRINCIPLE 4

the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour;

#### PRINCIPLE 5

the effective abolition of child labour; and

#### PRINCIPLE 6

the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

Gobi's philosophy and approach towards human rights and labour are consistent with these pillars through the rejection of investments that involve social activities prohibited by Gobi's Exclusion List, and through Gobi's efforts to advance gender equity within its own workforce, and those of the portfolio companies in which Gobi invests.

## Gobi's View on Governance and Good Business Practice

Governance, investor oversight, professionalisation of business operations, transparency and reporting have traditionally been top priorities for venture capital companies such as Gobi, both in establishing proper practices within the startups they invest in, and vis-a-vis Gobi's own management and operations in relation to limited partners.

As a VC firm, Gobi places the highest priority on open, frequent, transparent communication, disclosures and engagement with our limited partner investors, as well as with our stakeholders in the startup and investment community at large. This communication is reflected across multiple platforms including our annual investor days, quarterly reports to our limited partners, and regular newsletters to stakeholders. This is supplemented by frequent press announcements and

market reports that are intended to simultaneously impart knowledge on cutting-edge technologies and investment trends, and provide near-real-time updates on the performance of Gobi's funds.

To facilitate good business practice among Gobi employees, we have also adopted a robust Code of Ethics and ESG Policy, and encourage company training across a wide range of risk management, ESG, and sustainability topics. In 2021, Gobi employees collectively engaged in over 350 person-hours of training. Refer to our commitment to "Developing In-House ESG and Sustainability Capabilities" on **page 41** for more detail on the range of training topics with which our team members engaged.

## Spotlight: Governance and the UNGC Principles

The UNGC's Principle 10 on anti-corruption addresses key governance risks around corruption, fraud, and bribery:



**ANTI-CORRUPTION**

### PRINCIPLE 10

Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.

Gobi's philosophy and approach towards governance risk are tightly aligned with this pillar through Gobi's efforts to advance proper and professionalised governance and business practice to international standards in every portfolio company in which Gobi invests. All Gobi employees adhere to the firm's Code of Ethics and Employee Handbook, each of which addresses corruption, fraud, and bribery in business operations.

# OUR ESG LEADERSHIP



Aerodyne, the largest drone-as-a-service company in the world, enables data-driven precision agriculture by using drones to monitor crop health and in turn increasing productivity and harvest yield, benefiting farmers, agriculture landowners and ultimately the economy of the host country.

**MALAYSIA**

[aerodyne.group](https://aerodyne.group)

# OUR ESG LEADERSHIP

## ESG Committee and Task Force

Gobi's ESG and sustainability efforts are overseen and carried out by our ESG Committee and ESG Task Force. The ESG Committee, composed of Partners and senior management-level Gobi professionals, charts out Gobi's ESG and sustainability strategy in alignment with Gobi's overall investment strategy, with specific duties that include:

- 01** To chart, develop and implement Gobi's ESG policies and strategies to ensure that they are in line with the needs and objectives of Gobi and its Portfolio and to comply with applicable legal and regulatory requirements;
- 02** To regularly monitor and analyse the Portfolio's ESG performance data to review and report on the progress and opportunities in line with the management performance objectives;
- 03** To monitor external ESG regulations that are affecting the formulation of ESG policies, strategies and objectives;
- 04** To publish Gobi's annual ESG-related disclosures, in line with the requirements of the United Nations Global Compact;
- 05** To identify ESG risks associated with Gobi and its Portfolio and assess the impact of such risks and on risk response;
- 06** To receive and facilitate resolution of public concerns and grievances regarding Gobi's ESG performance;
- 07** To provide ESG-related training materials and related courses to all relevant employees of Gobi; and
- 08** To perform other applicable ESG duties as authorised by Gobi.

The Committee also provides oversight and guidance to the ESG Task Force, which is responsible for day-to-day operations, integration and achievement of ESG policies and objectives, and is made up of market and service-specific leaders from across Gobi's operations.

This dual team structure ensures there is continuity

across all 13 of Gobi's offices and across all divisions. Additionally, the geographic dispersion of ESG Committee and Task Force members across Gobi's various offices ensures that ESG capability is developed and is practised across Gobi's areas of coverage and operation.

## ESG Committee

Set long-term strategy & policy and cultivate partnerships



**Soo Wei Shaw**  
Chair of ESG Committee



**Paul Ark**  
Head of ESG



**Dan Chong**  
Head of Investments



**Angel Chau**  
Governance & Audit



**Carlo Delantar**  
Head of Circular Economy



**Sarah Jin**  
Legal Compliance

## ESG Taskforce

Develop & execute programs and initiatives that advance ESG Strategy



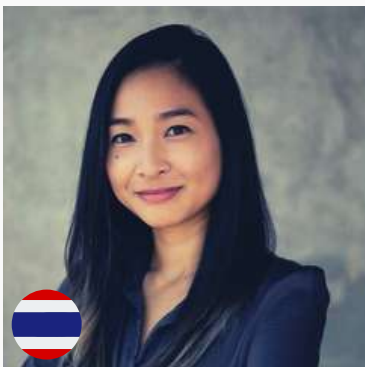
**Paul Ark**  
Head of ESG



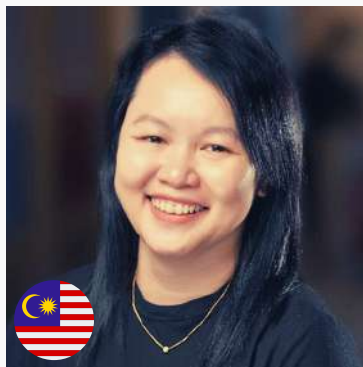
**Taraec Hussein**  
Training & Strategic Partnerships



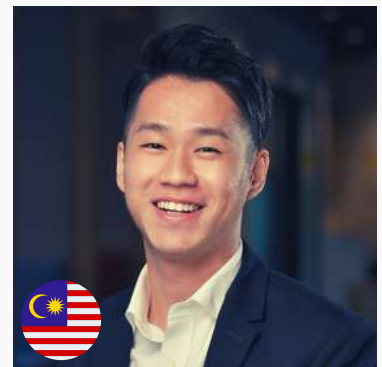
**Alan Chan**  
ESG Due Diligence & Audit



**JJ Erpaiboon**  
Diversity & Environment



**Angie Lam**  
Social & Human Resources



**Wayne Chan**  
ESG Monitoring & Measurement

# OUR ESG POLICY



**BIG BANG**  
ACADEMY

Founded in early 2020, Big Bang Academy is on a mission to make learning as compelling as watching a movie, as fun as a theme park, as educational as a classroom.

**HONG KONG**

[bigbangacademy.hk](http://bigbangacademy.hk)



# OUR ESG POLICY

In line with global best practice, Gobi has refined its ESG policy to three components:

## Statement of Intent

Gobi's overall vision, mission, and intent with regards to ESG and sustainability.

## Risk Approach

Outlines Gobi's approach to ESG risk management and mitigation.

## ESG Processes

Internal management systems to address and mitigate specific ESG risks.

## Gobi's ESG Statement of Intent

Gobi's Statement of Intent defines our approach to integration of ESG risks and sustainability-minded value creation opportunities into investments made through its venture capital funds. Gobi commits to weighing material ESG issues during its due diligence and monitoring of portfolio investments while fulfilling its

duty to maximise returns on investment for all partners of its venture capital funds.

Gobi's complete Statement of Intent is printed in full and will be accessible to all interested parties via Gobi's website:

Gobi Partners is a venture capital firm whose central purpose is to not only maximise investment return but to minimise risk and produce optimised portfolio returns to its investors on a risk-return basis appropriate for the asset class.

Gobi manages the financial, operational, strategic, technological, and legal risks typically encountered by venture investors and technology startups and prioritises the need to manage the environmental, social, and governance (ESG) risks that could significantly impact the long-term sustainability of its portfolio investments. Gobi recognised the lack of ESG standards, practices, and leadership in the Asian venture capital industry, and in 2018, drafted its first ESG policy document, taking its earliest steps as one of the first institutional VC firms in the region to develop an ESG practice. In 2021, Gobi further strengthened its ESG practices and policies through the formation of its ESG regional leadership teams, and partnerships with the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC) and UN Women. These actions reflect Gobi's commitment to transparency and accountability in its ESG strategy and must be managed with the same consideration, diligence, and care as its core investment activity.

Gobi's belief that financial return and impact are intertwined is core to our ethos, and Gobi's ESG policy and approach is not just company practice towards mitigating risk, but also a mechanism through which we exercise core values of the company and our people. Those values are manifested in our risk mitigation and value creation in several key areas:



Serving under-represented communities and demographics: Gobi's investment track record has been built on identifying opportunities in little or underserved markets, such as female entrepreneurs and the She Economy, or Muslim consumers and TaqwaTech.



Developing emerging economies and ecosystems: by connecting Gobi's investment activities to gains in infrastructure development and capacity building, we strive to extend the concepts of economic, educational, and health inclusion through the activities of the technology startups we invest in and nurture.



Becoming mindful stewards of the environments in which we live and work: Gobi's investment opportunities are expanding to include potential investments in climate technologies and circular economy business models, and our portfolio management activities are opening up avenues to work with portfolio companies of all verticals to manage their resources, waste, carbon footprints, and environmental impacts.



Creating a company and culture that is viewed not only as a great place to work, but also as an ideal platform on which to build one's career. Gobi recognises that this entails more than just optimising on employee compensation, benefits, training, and advancement, but also leveraging the interests, talents, and values of our employees to devise strategies, initiatives, and activities that promote wellness and morale within our company, and advance the principles of ESG and sustainability in our industry.

## Gobi's ESG Risk Approach

The world of venture capital investment is unlike private equity or public equity asset classes. The high-risk nature of investing in emerging technologies or unproven business models entails courting risks that entrepreneurs and investors alike may have little experience with or precedent cases to draw upon to manage such risks. In some instances, pioneering technologies and business models can create risks that have not even existed before. These novel risks are often emerging and evolving as quickly as the technologies they are associated with or creating

impacts on customers and stakeholders as unanticipated and unpredictable as the new business models that give rise to them.

Gobi has adopted a framework to manage ESG risk in its fund operations, and applies that framework in carefully evaluating candidates for investment as well as in the fund's monitoring and management of portfolio companies. In each category of risk, Gobi considers a broad range of sub-risks including, but not limited to:



### Environmental Risks

Resource usage & depletion, waste management & disposal, emissions production & remediation, ecosystem change & degradation, and climate change risks & opportunities.



### Social Risks

Diversity & inclusion, living wages & fair pay, health & safety, forced labour, population displacement, product safety, data privacy & security.



### Governance Risks

Shareholder rights, fraud & corruption, conflicts of interest, executive pay & compensation, accounting & tax practices, and organisational resilience & succession.

In addition to active monitoring and management of risks among its portfolio companies, Gobi also proactively manages and mitigates its investment risk through adherence to its Exclusion List, which details the range of activities that would disqualify a company from receiving Gobi investment if the company were to engage in any such activity. Our current Exclusion List is detailed in the Appendix.

To remain alert and vigilant towards novel emerging risks and adaptable towards managing them, Gobi's approach to risk will involve periodic review and re-evaluation of risk categories, its Risk Approach, and its Exclusion List to ensure that we are managing those risks that are most relevant to Gobi, our portfolio companies, and our stakeholders.

**While Gobi's Risk Approach outlines our overarching philosophy, strategy, and approach to ESG risks at a broad level, more detailed, action-oriented processes and management systems need to be developed and implemented to manage specific risks that Gobi might expect to encounter as a VC firm.**

### **Bias, Harassment, and Inequality**

To address individual or systemic incidences of abuse or discrimination by and towards Gobi stakeholders, including company staff, investors, portfolio company entrepreneurs and their employees, and members of the community at large that engage with any of the previously listed stakeholders. Gobi's processes will address inequities based on gender, race, sexual orientation, religion, ageism, and ableism.

ESG risks particular to startup investors are dynamic and may fluctuate over time with the adoption or failure of technologies and business models. Some risks may disappear altogether, and new ones may emerge.

Over the course of calendar year 2022, Gobi will develop and implement the first of its ESG management systems, specifying procedures to manage the following risks:

### **Governance**

As both Gobi and its portfolio companies encompass operations that span multiple regions as well as multiple accounting and legal jurisdictions, it is important for both investor and investee alike to practise robust governance and oversight, and adopt accounting, budget, and compensation policies that minimise risks of fraud and malfeasance. Additionally, as Gobi expands its TaqwaTech investment portfolio, a cultural understanding of and sensitivity to investments targeting the Muslim community (both by the startups and their investors) will become a critical component of governance. Gobi's processes will address this diverse range of issues and risks.

### **Data Privacy and Security**

The digital and data-intensiveness of tech startups exposes most Gobi portfolio companies as well as their employees and customers to a myriad of related risks, including cybersecurity breaches, loss of data and privacy, and fraud, among others. Gobi's processes will address both preventative measures and post-breach/loss measures.

Until ESG management systems addressing specific risks are implemented, Gobi's existing ESG Policy drafted in 2018 outlines Gobi's default processes for dealing with any given ESG risks. Over time, Gobi will develop and implement additional management systems as it continues to assess risks that are most material to its operations and those of its portfolio companies.

# OUR ESG PRACTICES



Tazah aims to streamline the extremely complex agriculture value chain end-to-end through tech, resulting in dividends for both farmers and businesses

PAKISTAN

**Abrar Bahwa & Mohsin Zaka**  
Founders, Tazah Technologies

[tazahtech.com](http://tazahtech.com)

# OUR ESG PRACTICES

**At Gobi Partners, we believe that integrating good ESG practices into the operations of early-stage startups is fundamental to building an important foundation for not only our company's sustainable growth but also that of our portfolio companies. Companies with good ESG standards not only retain employees better but enhance their value to customers, stakeholders and investors.**

To ensure that Gobi is able to provide our portfolio companies with thoughtful ESG guidance, it is important to lead by example as well as operate in accordance with the highest level of ESG compliance and to the standards to which we evaluate our portfolio investments. Within Gobi itself, our ESG standards and practices are governed by two key internal documents:



**Gobi's Code of Ethics**



**Gobi's Employment Handbook**



## Gobi's Code of Ethics

Under Gobi's Code of Ethics, Gobi Partners and employees must:

**01**

**Act with integrity, competence, diligence, respect and in an ethical manner with the public, investees, employers, employees, colleagues in the investment profession, and other stakeholders.**

**02**

**Place the integrity of the investment profession and interests of Gobi's partnership above their own personal interests.**

**03**

**Use reasonable care and exercise independent professional judgement when conducting investment analysis, making investment recommendations, taking investment actions, and engaging in other professional activities.**

**04**

**Practice and encourage others to practice in a professional and ethical manner that will reflect credit on themselves and the profession.**

**05**

**Promote the integrity and viability of the venture capital markets for the ultimate benefit of Gobi's stakeholders.**

**06**

**Maintain and improve their professional competence and strive to maintain and improve the competence of other investment professionals.**

**07**

**Abide by Gobi's ESG Policy.**



Gobi's Employment Handbook, distributed to each new employee upon onboarding, sets out the duties and responsibilities of employees and the company to one another, in accordance with Malaysian laws and regulations, including but not limited to those concerning Human Rights and Labour laws. For Gobi employees hired and working in countries other than Malaysia, they are to follow the Employee Handbook to the extent that it does not conflict with the local labour and employment laws where they are employed to work. Where a policy in the handbook conflicts with that local law, the law supersedes.

The Employment Handbook covers the following:

## 1 Forward

## 2 Employment/Resignation Policy

- 2.1 Employment Contract
- 2.2 Probation Period
- 2.3 Contract / Permanent Staff
- 2.4 Termination of Employment Contract

## 3 Remuneration Policy

- 3.1 Base Salary
- 3.2 Bonus
- 3.3 Project Bonus
- 3.4 Working Hours
- 3.5 Personal Income Tax
- 3.6 Payment of Salary
- 3.7 Performance Appraisal

## 4 Welfare Policy

- 4.1 National Holidays
- 4.2 Paid Annual Leave
- 4.3 Sick Leave
- 4.4 Compassionate Leave
- 4.5 Marriage Leave
- 4.6 SOCSO and EIS (Employment Insurance System)
- 4.7 Employees Provident Fund (EPF)
- 4.8 Allowance
- 4.9 Overtime Allowance
- 4.10 Outpatient Medical Benefits
- 4.11 Group Medical Insurance
- 4.12 Group Personal Accident, Term Life and Critical Illness Insurance

## 5 Maternity Policy

- 5.1 Maternity Leave

## 6 Discipline

- 6.1 Verbal Warning
- 6.2 Written Warning
- 6.3 Demotion
- 6.4 Dismissal

## 7 Office Management Regulations

- 7.1 Office Daily Regulations
- 7.2 Employees' Dress Code
- 7.3 Safety and Confidentiality
- 7.4 Regulations for the Use of Office Supplies
- 7.5 Alcoholic Beverages and Dangerous Drugs

## 8 Employees' Code of Conduct

- 8.1 All Employees
- 8.2 Conflict of Interests
- 8.3 Adherence to Rules and Systems
- 8.4 Job Responsibilities
- 8.5 Internal Grievance Mechanism Procedure

# OUR ESG INVESTMENT APPROACH



مقصد

Maqsad (which means “purpose” in Urdu) is building a mobile-only platform to offer after-school academic support to 100 million Pakistani students.

PAKISTAN

maqsad.io

# OUR ESG INVESTMENT APPROACH

In crafting our ESG investment approach and in remaining true to our values, Gobi understands that as an external investor, we play a strong role in guiding investee companies on a sustainable growth path. Beyond exercising thematic impact investments – either via blacklisting certain carbon-heavy industries or focusing on enterprises that were driven to solve key socio-economic problems – we also apply Socially Responsible Investment principles in our screening process to align our portfolio with both Gobi and our LPs' values. That screening process not only applies to our investments, but also to our investors; we conduct rigorous know-your-customer (KYC) checks on our LPs to ensure that our entire financing chain from LP to startup is values-aligned.

By screening for ESG risks from the get-go, Gobi proactively uses ESG criteria alongside financial analysis to decide whether certain companies are investable, or in the case of current investees, is a viable candidate for an increased stake via a follow-on investment.

In 2021, Gobi Partners made a concerted effort to integrate global ESG standards throughout our investment lifecycle. UNGC's Principles and the WEPs Transparency and Accountability Framework directly influenced Gobi in the design of our ESG screening, due diligence, and investment processes, which also incorporated elements, standards and metrics from a number of key international organisations to construct a holistic ESG framework customised for venture capital investment.

	<b>United Nations Global Compact</b>
	<b>Global Reporting Initiative (GRI)</b>
	<b>International Labour Organization (ILO) Multinational Enterprises (MNE) Declaration</b>
	<b>International Finance Corporation's (IFC) Performance Standards and Corporate Governance Methodology</b>
	<b>United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)</b>

Gobi integrates ESG practices and principles into its pre-investment activities through rigorous screening and analysis of investment candidates, as well as post-investment activities through active monitoring and management of ESG risks in portfolio companies.

## Screening

Startups that engage with Gobi for potential investment are not merely screened for standard financial, operational, strategic, technology, and legal risks, but are also assessed for ESG risks. Any such startup that seeks Gobi investment accepts that ESG considerations will factor into Gobi's investment decisions, as well as Gobi's post-investment management process, especially if Gobi plays an enhanced governance role as a member or observer on the startup's board of directors.

## Due Diligence

Gobi requires startups seeking investment to complete an ESG due diligence questionnaire in addition to a questionnaire assessing financial, operational, strategic, technology, and legal factors. The ESG questionnaire assesses whether an investment candidate has engaged in any prohibited activities that would preclude it from receiving Gobi investment (refer to Gobi's Exclusion List

in the Appendix), as well as any activities or policies (or lack thereof) that would affect ESG-related risks and therefore be considered in the investment decision making process by the Investment Committee.

This questionnaire is utilised with all new investment candidates for Gobi funds active in Southeast Asia, South Asia, and the Middle East, and will be implemented into the due diligence process for Gobi funds operating in the Greater Bay Area (China & Hong Kong) in 2022.

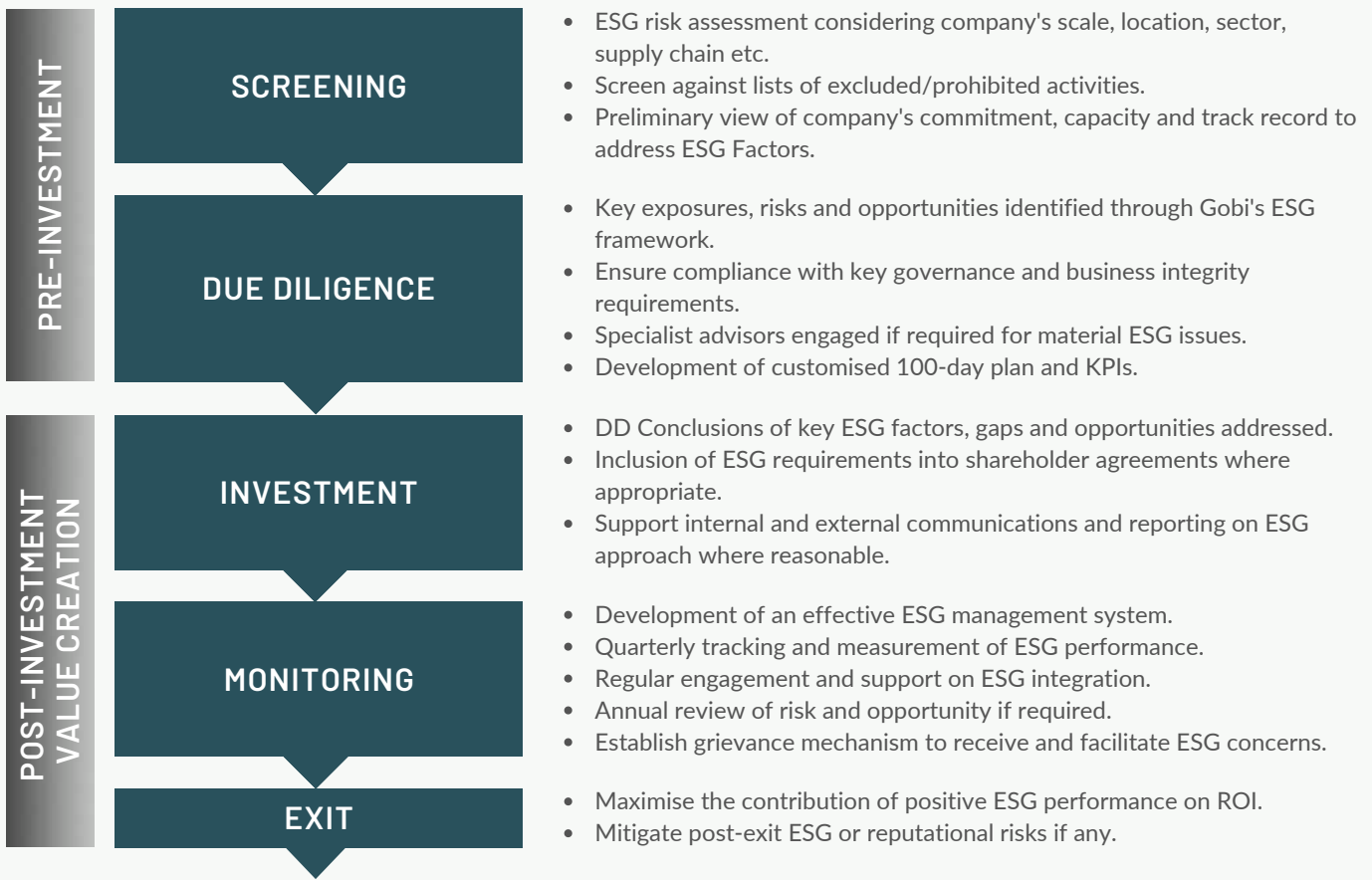
## Investment

The results of Gobi's ESG due diligence questionnaire for each investment candidate are submitted to the Investment Committee as a complement to the standard investment proposal, with a summary of material ESG risks, proposed post-investment ESG Work Plan indicating key implementations and



## Our ESG Value Creation Approach

We integrate ESG international standards throughout the investment life cycle.



deliverables expected from the investment candidate, and depending on the candidate's capacity, technical assistance from the ESG Task Force may be required to facilitate the ESG Work Plan.

Any investment candidate that engages in any of the prohibited activities (i.e. does not pass the exclusionary checklist) is ineligible, while the remainder of the questionnaire results are used at the discretion of the Investment Committee to determine a candidate's ESG risk and its impact on investment attractiveness.

### Monitoring

We are evolving our post-investment strategies to manage ESG risk among our portfolio investment startups. These strategies include consultation and collaboration with each startup to determine appropriate metrics and key performance indicators to monitor, policies and processes that the startup should adopt. Gobi plans to supplement this consultation with content and training programmes to assist each startup in its transition towards ESG competence and compliance.

### Exit

Gobi regularly works with our portfolio companies to facilitate follow-on financing rounds, facilitate exits via acquisition, or enhance financial and operational profiles in preparation for initial public offerings (IPO). Gobi incorporates ESG strategies in its consultation and collaboration with startups to enhance its prospects in any of these scenarios through improved risk mitigation and connecting startups with investors amenable to ESG-compliant startups. Moreover, as proper ESG disclosure and compliance become increasingly important to raise later stages of capital investment, and mandatory for companies looking to go public, such ESG consultation with startups can be expected to become a core activity for venture capital funds in Asia.

# OUR STAKEHOLDER SURVEYS



**CARSOME**

Carsome is Southeast Asia's largest integrated car e-commerce platform and aims to digitalize the region's used car industry by reshaping and elevating the car buying and selling experience.

**MALAYSIA**

[carsome.my](https://carsome.my)

**Juliet Zhu**

Group President & CFO, Carsome

# OUR STAKEHOLDER SURVEYS

Establishing baseline ESG metrics and engaging with our stakeholders are critical components to carry out our ESG initiatives, better understand our progress in ESG implementation, and identify areas to focus on for improvement and development.

## Employee Engagement

The Employee Engagement Survey was sent out in early January 2022 to Gobi's 72 employees in 15 offices, featuring 30 questions touching on topics ranging from employee well-being; work recognition; personal development; ethics and compliance; assessing the effectiveness of our ESG Policy in addressing our impact on the environment; support of human rights; and promotion of anti-corrupt practices.

As a response to feedback from the Survey, Gobi proactively addressed any concerns raised by our employees and within a month, the firm launched new initiatives to support the professional and personal development of our team members including:

- Formalisation of fully remote work-from-home (WFH) arrangements utilised through the course of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Key amendments to our employee healthcare and insurance benefits package to make it more inclusive for families of all shapes and sizes, and expand the scope of healthcare services to include voluntary fertility treatments and a range of preventative measures, such as cancer screenings, mammograms and pap smears.
- Establishment of a formal mentorship programme that matches mid and junior-level employees with Gobi partners and senior managers to provide both personal and professional mentorship.

In addition to the survey, a Sustainability Report Tracking Form was distributed so that Gobi employees could catalogue their hours of community service, thought leadership, ESG training and Gobi-related air travel in 2021, which enabled us to measure our community engagement, ESG knowledge and carbon footprint.

- Gobi colleagues actively contributed to the community by participating in a total of 450 hours

of mentorship and volunteer opportunities and to enhance their professional skills and knowledge through 350 hours of continuing education.

- Reduced business travel, in conjunction with the shift to (WFH) practices over the past two years, has seen Gobi employees produce drastically lower carbon footprints than they otherwise would in a business-as-usual environment of cross-border travel, in-person meetings and regional conferences. In 2021, Gobi employees travelled **21,700 kilometres**, producing **2,194.4 kilograms of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalents** (refer to the [United Nations' International Civil Aviation Organization Carbon Emissions Calculator](#) for the calculation of greenhouse gas emissions and CO<sub>2</sub> equivalents, which utilises a globally accepted methodology for estimating carbon impact from air travel). While we expect these numbers to go up as the world normalises and business travel picks up, they establish an important baseline from which Gobi might better manage and account for our environmental impact going forward.



\*These numbers only include Gobi's Scope 3 emissions, and are based on a greatly reduced level of company travel due to COVID-19

- Gobi's ESG Task Force is developing auditing processes to benchmark the environmental impact of Gobi operations across all 15 locations, as well as our portfolio companies. Information from this auditing process will then be used to set emission reduction and offsetting targets. Offsetting solutions will be localised and specific to the respective offices, colleagues, and portfolio companies.

## Portfolio Engagement

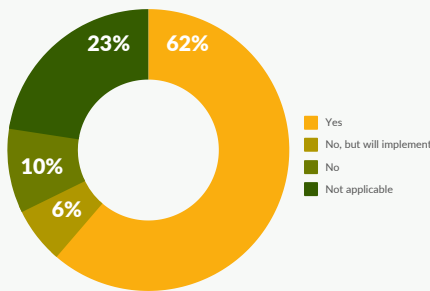
Gobi's Portfolio Survey was distributed to selected portfolio companies across Southeast Asia, Pakistan, and Hong Kong in 2021 to assess awareness of and attitudes towards ESG and the level of ESG implementation, practice, and proficiency among Gobi's portfolio companies. The survey was developed taking into account international sustainability standards from United Nations Global Compact (UNGC), Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO). Participation in the survey was voluntary, and as of the publication of this report, garnered a 32% respondent rate.

From the survey responses, we found that late-stage companies (Series B fundraising and above) were more likely to take ESG into consideration in their practices,

compared to early-stage investees (Seed to Series A fundraising), which reflects the larger teams and greater resources that more mature startups have at their disposal for ESG management. As a result, Gobi's ESG strategy with regards to its portfolio companies is more oriented towards awareness and education for early-stage companies, and strategic development and execution for growth-stage companies.

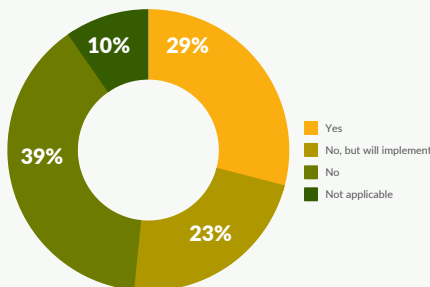
In the pages that follow, we present some of the survey's high-level responses that summarise the current state and progress of Gobi's portfolio companies towards ESG readiness, as well as shine a spotlight on the key challenges and opportunities that merit increased attention from both Gobi and our portfolio entrepreneurs.

## Overall ESG Compliance and Practices



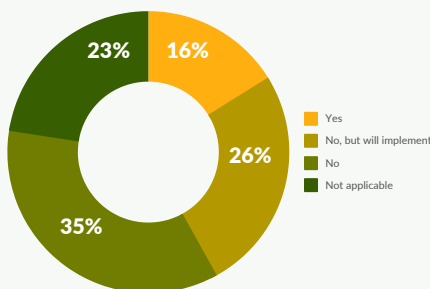
### Does your company's product, service, technology, or field of activity help to promote or achieve any of the UN Sustainable Development Goals?

The overall compliance and preparedness in ESG for our portfolio companies show great potential for growth, with as many as 62% of portfolio companies engaged in activities or producing products or services that promote the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.



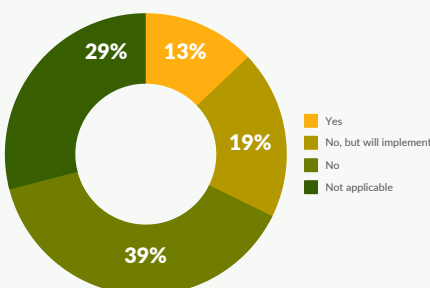
### Is there a designated person at your company with day-to-day responsibility for and oversight over ESG policies, risk assessment and compliance?

Only 29% of the companies surveyed have a designated employee overlooking ESG policies, risk assessment and compliance. This is in line with expectations that for early-stage startups with lean management teams, ESG is a function often overseen by individuals with other responsibilities relating to human resources, finance, and compliance.



### Does your company provide training and/or briefing for your ESG policies to your employees?

35% of the companies surveyed said that they do not provide any ESG training/briefings to employees, a gap that Gobi will fill through bespoke training programmes and content developed by the ESG Task Force in collaboration with its network of subject matter experts. Gobi views ESG awareness and education as a critical first step for early stage startups to implement ESG strategies and processes.

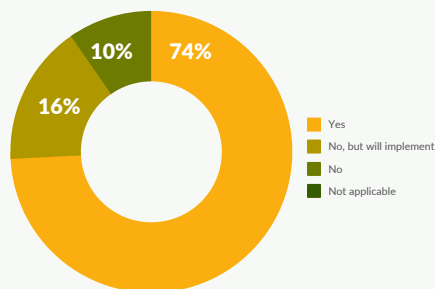


### Does your company have environmental policies for: (i) Energy, (ii) Water, (iii) Waste?

39% of the companies surveyed have not implemented any environmental (energy, water and waste) policies. This is in line with Gobi's expectations, as many of the companies in our portfolios are digital technology startups, which generate little to no Scope 1 or Scope 2 emissions, and often negligible Scope 3 emissions.

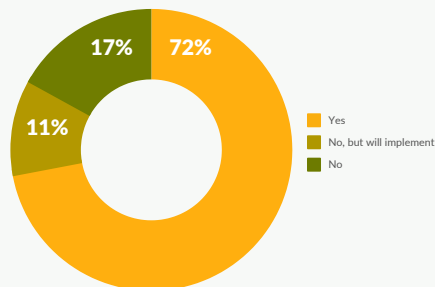
A key goal and responsibility for Gobi will be to assist the portfolio companies in either starting their ESG implementation or strengthening it further.

## Company Policies and Governance



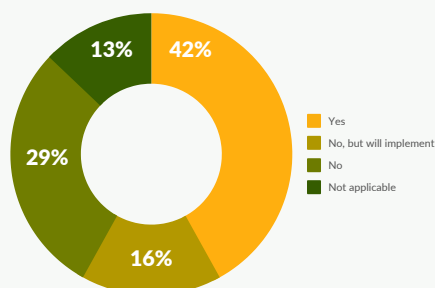
### Does your company have in place policies relating to data privacy for internal and external stakeholders e.g. Personal Data Protection Act (PDPA)?

As the majority of digital and tech startups deal with data, safeguarding customer and employee data and privacy needs to be a primary focus for risk management for many of Gobi's portfolio companies. Accordingly, 74% of survey respondents have already implemented data privacy policies for both internal and external stakeholders.



### Does your company have policies on anti-corruption?

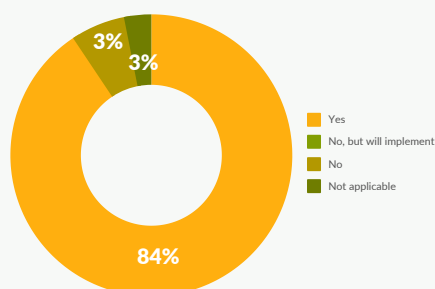
It is critical for young startups to manage the transition to high-growth companies, and avoid the risks and pitfalls that beset them. That 28% of respondents have yet to put anti-corruption policies in place highlights the need for Gobi to lend its assistance and expertise to startups to develop more robust governance practices.



### Does your company have an approach to corporate social responsibility activities, philanthropy and/or public advocacy?

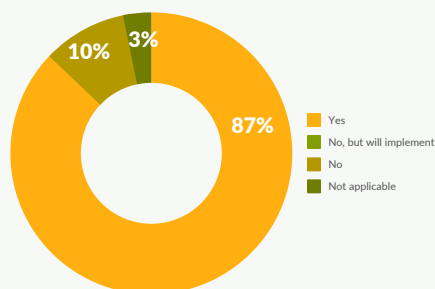
Being at an early stage of their life cycle, startups tend to be myopically focused on generating revenue and building market share, and activities such as CSR or philanthropy tend to be a distant afterthought (if they get any consideration at all). That 42% of survey respondents are actively looking into CSR or public advocacy as means to make an impact in their respective communities indicates a strong predisposition in Gobi's portfolio towards ESG.

## Human Capital and Employment



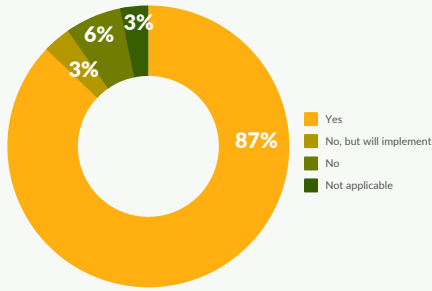
### Does your company comply with all relevant local labour laws, standards and regulations through policies on (i) compensation for overtime, (ii) staff remuneration, (iii) working hours and leave days, (iv) performance review?

Of the various aspects of ESG, our portfolio companies are strongest in their compliance with labour laws in their respective countries. As much as 84% of Gobi portfolio companies surveyed provide overtime compensation and leave days, and conduct annual performance reviews.



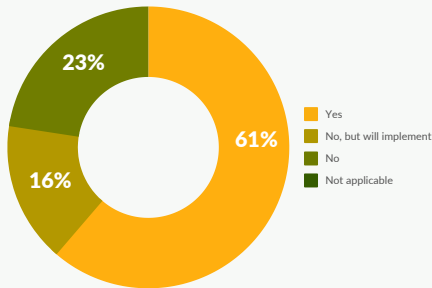
### Does your company promote work-life balance by implementing flexible work schemes such as: (i) work from home, (ii) flexi-working hours; or, (iii) part-time work?

Beyond labour law compliance, agility and adaptability to crisis are essential components of risk management. During the COVID-19 pandemic, 87% of the companies implemented flexible work schemes.



**Does your company provide non-discrimination and equal employment opportunities, regardless of the following: (i) gender, (ii) ethnicity, (iii) age, (iv) religion, (v) disabilities?**

87% of respondents practice non-discrimination and offer equal employment opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity, age, religion, and disabilities.

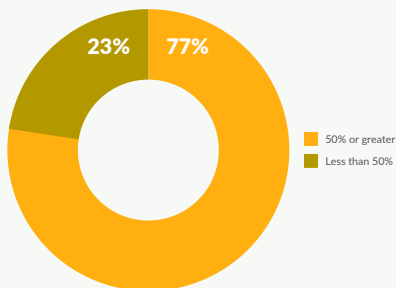


**Does your company have a whistleblower policy for processing grievances such as harassment (e.g. sexual, physical, verbal) and acts of discrimination by employees?**

61% of the companies surveyed have a whistleblower policy for processing grievances such as harassment (sexual, physical and verbal) and acts of discrimination by employees. However, 23% do not, while the remaining 16% intend to do so in the future. Gobi will be guiding these companies in the implementation of the policy.

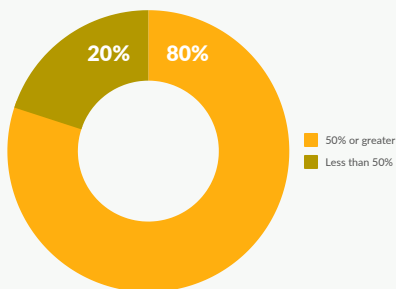
**Gender Diversity**

While Gobi prides itself on its efforts towards promoting and investing in diversity in tech and startups, there is still much work that needs to be done to enhance such diversity among Gobi’s portfolio companies, as well as in Asia’s tech ecosystem at large.



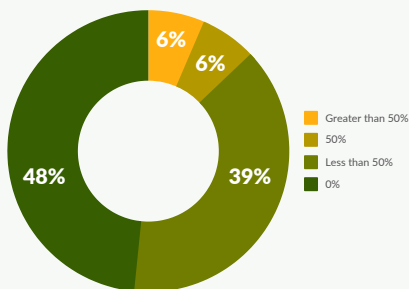
**What is your gender diversity ratio in the workplace? - Total Staff Force**

77% of the respondents have workforces where women have parity with or outnumber men.



**What is your gender diversity ratio in the workplace? - Senior Management**

While over 40% of Gobi’s portfolio companies within ASEAN have diverse leadership teams consisting of at least 1 female officer, only 20% have an equal representation of men and women in leadership positions.



**What is your gender diversity ratio in the workplace? - Board of Directors**

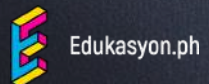
Nearly half of survey respondents report no female representation on their Board of Directors.

As an investor and value-added partner, Gobi works with its portfolio startups to identify and recruit top talent and candidates to their executive teams and work forces that simultaneously enhances company performance and actively promotes gender diversity in tech. Gobi is aware that gender diversity is a significant challenge for early stage startups, and is committed to driving greater gender participation in the region’s startup ecosystems over the long term.

# UNLOCKING VALUE CREATION IN UNDERSERVED MARKETS



**Henry Motte-Munoz**  
Founder, Edukasyon.ph



Edukasyon.ph is the largest education technology platform in the Philippines, connecting millions of Filipino youth to multiple avenues for self-discovery and relevant advice on education, career, and life

**PHILIPPINES**

[edukasyon.ph](https://edukasyon.ph)

# UNLOCKING VALUE CREATION IN UNDERSERVED MARKETS

Gobi actively develops and integrates its ESG policies in partnership with international and regional sustainability organisations to ensure community impact, accountability and transparency. Gobi's DEI initiatives are currently focused on two groups: women founders and the Muslim economy.

**"Women entrepreneurs who are able to stand out in a business world dominated by men are definitely some of the strongest entrepreneurs any investor can hope to find."**

**Kay-Mok Ku**

Senior Advisor, Gobi Partners



## Backing Women Founders and Building the Gender Lens Investing Ecosystem

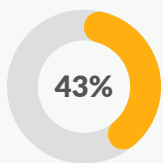
For Gobi, the gender lens opportunity is clear. As many as 70% of women-owned SMEs in the formal sector in developing countries are unserved or underserved by financial institutions. This amounts to a financing gap of approximately US\$260 billion to US\$320 billion per year, and improving women's economic empowerment could add US\$4 trillion to APAC's GDP each year. Gobi's commitment to women in tech has produced tangible results, creating financial value for investors and social value for multiple stakeholders. Our commitment to supporting diverse and inclusive management teams has made investment in women founders a key pillar in Gobi's investment strategy.



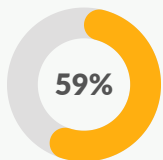
## CASE STUDY: GOBI-BACKED GENDER-DIVERSE TEAMS IN ASEAN AND HONG KONG HAVE DEMONSTRATED FAVOURABLE RESULTS

Gobi-backed gender-diverse teams in ASEAN and Hong Kong have outperformed their all-male counterparts through higher returns and ability to raise up-rounds. From a portfolio composition standpoint, while gender-diverse founding and executive teams make up 43% of ASEAN and Hong Kong's AUM, startups with gender-diverse teams make up 59% of Gobi's holding value, representing a compelling business case for investing into startups with women founders and senior executives.

### Portfolio Composition (Investment Cost VS. Holding Value Comparison)

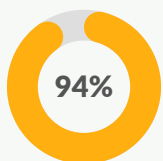


43% of Gobi's portfolio by investment and AUM are invested in startups with gender-diverse founding teams/executive teams



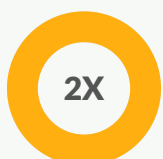
59% of Gobi's portfolio by holding value are invested in startups with gender-diverse founding teams/executive teams

### Higher Returns (MOIC Comparison)



Gender-diverse founding teams were able to achieve 94% higher average MOIC than all-male founding teams

### Increased Ability to Raise Up Rounds



Diverse founding teams were 2X more likely to raise up rounds than homogeneous, all-male teams.



**Juliet Zhu**  
Group Chief Financial Officer  
Carsome



**Vanessa Hendriadi Li**  
CEO & Co-Founder  
GoWork



**Kimberly Yao**  
CEO & Co-Founder  
CloudEats



**Lucy Liu**  
President & Co-Founder  
Airwallex

## Gender Lens Partnerships and Initiatives

Gobi has been a key supporter of women entrepreneurs, and an active contributor to the gender lens investing ecosystem across Asia with a number of partnerships, events, pitch competitions, mentorship mechanisms, and more.



October 2018

### The Billion Dollar Fund

Gobi was one of the first VC funds to make a pledge at the launch of The Billion Dollar Fund for Women in 2018 where we **publicly disclosed our target of US\$50 million to be deployed in under two years.**

By the end of 2020, Gobi not only exceeded its pledge to invest US\$50 million into female-led startups, but observed diversely-managed startups achieving enhanced revenue growth, greater employee retention, and more fundraising with up-round valuations, validating Gobi's investment strategy of a more equitable gender-based distribution of VC investment.



April 2019

### She Loves Tech

She Loves Tech is the world's largest startup competition for women in technology, with regular competitions held in over 50 countries around the world. It aims to provide advocacy and capacity-building support for women-led businesses.

Since 2019, Gobi has become an international organising partner to She Loves Tech and has since then:

- Hosted 4 gender lens startup pitch competitions
- Mentored 40 early-stage startups
- Organised 19 mentorship webinars
- Engaged with 130+ regional VCs, corporate executives, and founders to participate as a judge, mentor, or speaker.



April 2020

### Karandaaz Pakistan's Women Ventures Programme

Gobi signed an MOU to facilitate deal referrals, co-investment and investment management for women-owned and managed businesses. The programme has served over 850,000 micro-enterprises and SMEs, facilitated over US\$340 million in financing, and supported nearly 1 million jobs.

### WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT PRINCIPLES

April 2021

### Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs) by UN Women

In addition to signing Gobi's commitment to the WEPs, Gobi and UN Women have signed an MOU which establishes the framework for the two partners to strengthen their collaboration in advancing women's economic empowerment (WEE) and women in leadership roles in Southeast Asia.

The goals of this agreement are as follows:

- To build awareness on the merits of investing in women leadership and entrepreneurship;
- To increase opportunities for women to have access to finance, including sensitising the business and financial ecosystem to become more gender-responsive;
- To expand support and mentoring mechanisms for women from networks, peers, and business leaders;
- To promote the WEPs in each other's networks in order to get more financial investors and companies to commit to WEE.

The WEPs Transparency and Accountability Framework directly influenced Gobi in the design of our ESG Due Diligence and investment screening process, especially as it pertains to gender and diversity criteria and measurement.

**WE SUPPORT**



May 2021

### **UN Global Compact (UNGC)**

As a Participant of the UNGC, Gobi is committed to aligning its business strategies and operations with universal principles on human rights, labour, environment, and anti-corruption. Gobi proactively takes actions that advance societal goals.

Gobi employees participated in UN Global Compact's six-month SDG Ambition Accelerator. Facilitated by Accenture, the programme set targets and goals in line with UNGC's principles and UN SDGs, focusing on SDG 5: achieve gender balance and empower all women and girls.

The UNGC Principles directly influenced Gobi in the design of our ESG Due Diligence and investment screening process.



June 2021

### **CodeGirls**

CodeGirls is a community-funded coding boot camp for girls based in Pakistan. Gobi signed an MOU to conduct joint training and recruitment activities as well as rendering support by sponsoring and nominating candidates for the programme. Over 800 women have graduated since inception of the programme.



November 2021

### **Asia Gender-Smart Investing Forum**

The inaugural Asia Gender-Smart Investing Forum was hosted on November 2-3, 2021, a virtual event jointly organised by Gobi Partners and UN Women to provide investors, entrepreneurs, corporates and advocacy organisations with guidance and good practices to advance women's economic empowerment (WEE) and women in leadership roles in Asia.

The two-day forum featured 34 speakers and thought leaders from across Asia and garnered over 550 registrations from across 48 countries.

## **The Muslim Economy: An Underserved Jewel**

Another key underserved market for Gobi is the Muslim economy. Muslim consumers drive a US\$2.2 trillion market opportunity, and the Muslim community is anticipated to make up more than 31% of the world's population by 2060. The Muslim community's digital needs are largely unmet or underserved, creating the opportunity for Gobi to pioneer its **TaqwaTech** investment strategy.

**"The opportunity for TaqwaTech investments is bigger than you can imagine. Technology breaks down borders."**

**Thomas G. Tsao**

Co-Founder, Gobi Partners

**We define TaqwaTech as an investment thesis targeting growth companies that use technology for purpose-driven innovation to serve the Ummah – Muslim consumers, businesses or communities around the world.**



HALAL  
FOOD



ISLAMIC  
FINANCE



MUSLIM-FRIENDLY  
TRAVEL



MODEST  
FASHION



HALAL  
PHARMACEUTICALS

One of our most active markets within this segment is Pakistan, where Gobi is represented in Fatima Gobi Ventures (FGV), a joint venture with local conglomerate Fatima Group. FGV charted a record-breaking year in 2021, thanks to our early entry into Pakistan's startup ecosystem and investment in the country's most innovative Muslim entrepreneurs.



**Fatima Gobi  
Ventures**



Managing Partner Jamaludin Bujang and Fatima Gobi Ventures Partner Ali Mukhtar launches Techxila Fund for Pakistan with Former Malaysian Prime Minister Tun Mahathir Mohamad and Former Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan



Fatima Gobi Ventures (From the left: Head of Investments Taraec Hussein, General Partners Ali Mukhtar and Thomas G. Tsao)

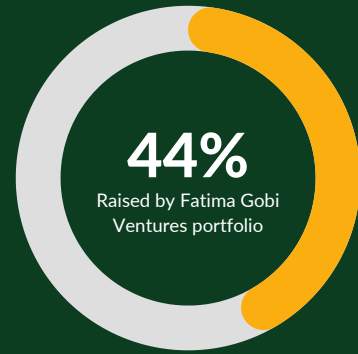
## CASE STUDY: FATIMA GOBI VENTURES' TECHXILA FUND I IN PAKISTAN

Launched in late 2019, the Fund target sectors include travel, logistics, fintech, healthcare, education, e-commerce, consumer tech, and industrial Internet.



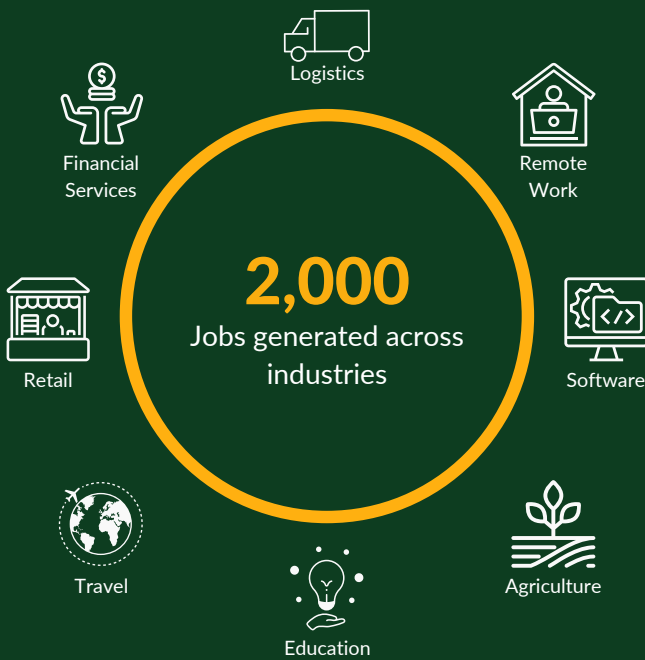
Fatima Gobi Ventures has **raised over US\$160 million, representing ~44% of total venture funding** in Pakistan.

Our companies generated **millions** in gross revenues, served **thousands** with tech-enabled solutions, and highlighted Pakistan as an **attractive venture destination for global investors**.



**+US\$360M**

Aggregate venture funding raised by Pakistani startups in 2021



**+ US\$1.3 B**

Total portfolio GMV generated in 2021

**+2,000,000**

Consumers served in 2021

**+600,000**

MSME served in 2021

**Safepay**

**udhaar book**

**Sastaticket.pk**

**airlift**

**abhi**

**RUCK IT IN**

**مقصد**

**savvour**

**rider**

**TAG**

**Tajir**

**تازة**

**Priceeye**

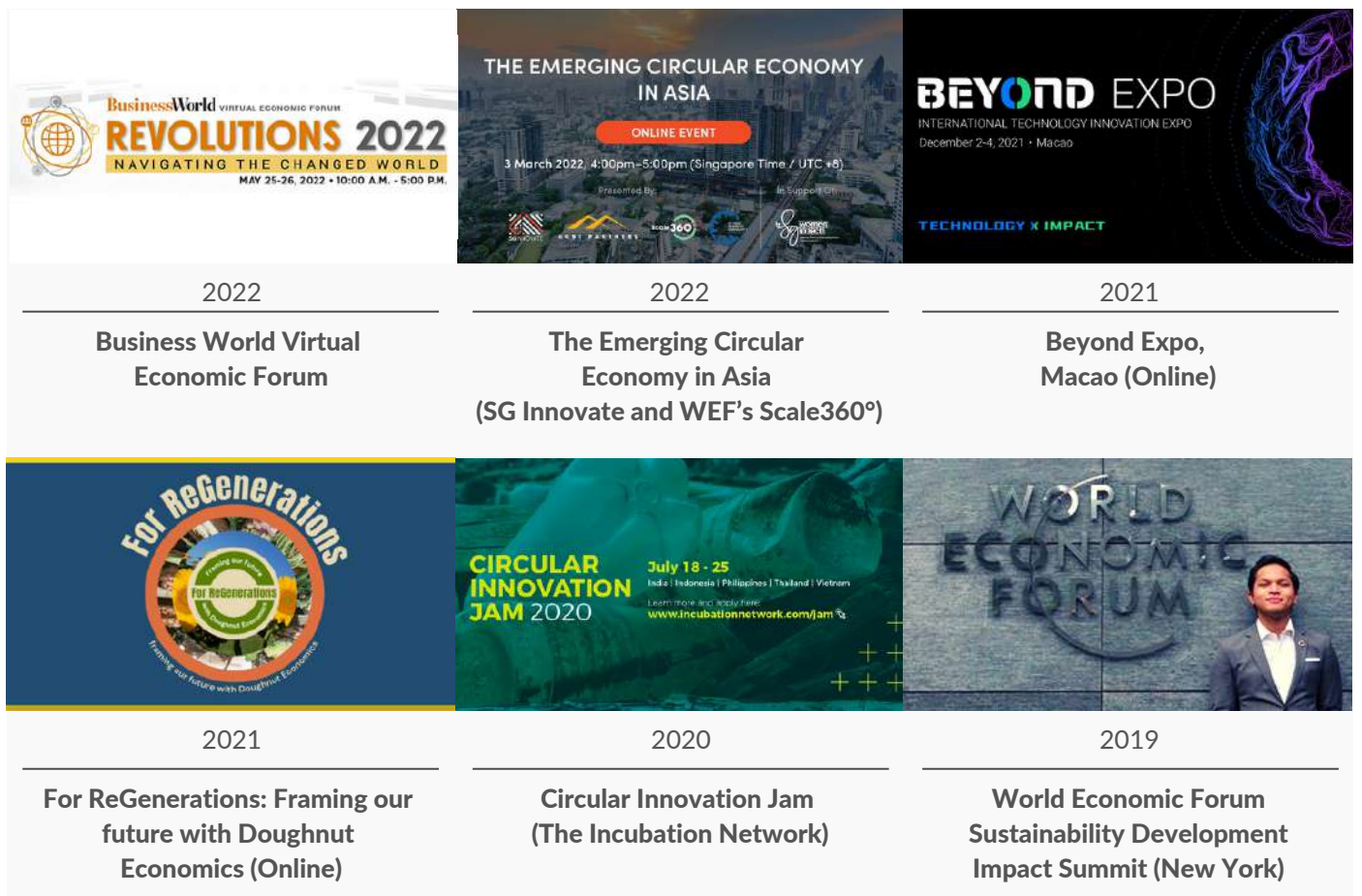
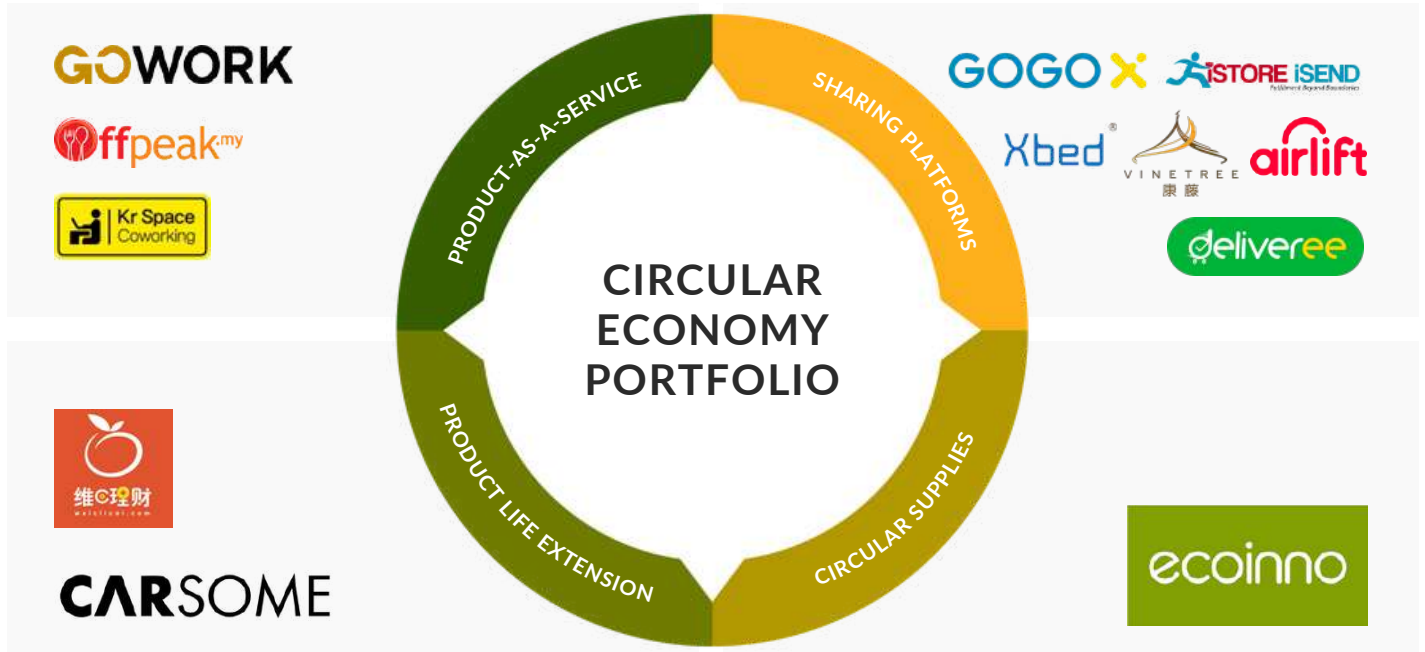
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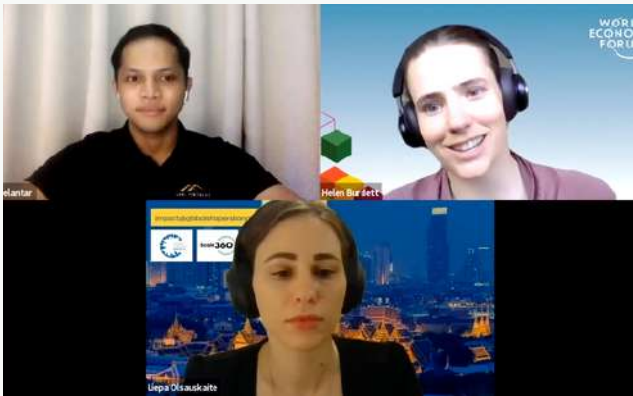
## Promoting Circular Economy

While Gobi's investment mandate doesn't specifically cover investments in green tech, blue tech, or net zero/decarbonisation, we recognise the potential value creation opportunities through investment in startups promoting or leveraging circular economy business models. Under the direction of our Head of Circular Economy, Carlo Delantar, we have supported various initiatives to build awareness and capacity for the Pan-

Asia region's ecosystem by participating, contributing and investing in the circular economy startup ecosystem. Since 2019, Gobi has hosted topical webinars and events, and has collaborated in the region with fellow advocates such as SG Innovate, Accenture's Circularity Accelerator, and the World Economic Forum's Scale360° programme.



In 2021, Gobi launched its first thought leadership platform on [Sustainable Cities](#) and [Circular Economy \(Part 1, Part 2\)](#) gathering global leaders in environmental protection.



### Circular Economy Part 1 | Moving Asia from a Linear to Circular Economy

As Asian countries have experienced rapid growth, urbanisation, and industrialisation alongside the associated negative environmental impacts of a linear approach (the take-make-waste extractive industrial model), we take a look into the transition to a more Circular Economy in Asia across all industries.

**Speakers:**

- **Carlo Delantar** | Head of Circular Economy, Gobi Partners
- **Helen Burdett** | Circular Economy Innovation Lead, World Economic Forum
- **Liepa Olsauskaite** | Project Lead, Scale360°



### Circular Economy Part 2 | Redesigning The Economy in Asia: From Linear To Circular

As Asian countries have experienced rapid growth, urbanisation, and industrialisation alongside the associated negative environmental impacts of a linear approach (the take-make-waste extractive industrial model), we take a look into the transition to a more Circular Economy in Asia across all industries.

**Speakers:**

- **Lakeesha Ransom** | Enterprise Engagement Director, Asian Institute of Technology
- **Lerwen Liu** | Director of Circular Economy Accelerator, Knowledge Exchange Innovation Center
- **Chris Oestereich** | Circular Economy Consultant, World Bank Group & Co-Founder of Circular Design Lab
- **Amm Virodchaiyan** | Co-Founder of MoreLoop

We are an active participant for two World Economic Forum's (WEF) initiatives: [Scale360°](#) and the [Circulars Accelerator](#). Scale360° is in partnership with the Global Shapers community, the grassroots action-oriented networks formed by WEF to create sustainable change. Several Gobi employees have participated in the Scale360° leadership team in 2021 to drive youth

engagement in grassroots circular innovation initiatives in 10 cities around the world. Additionally, Gobi continues to be an active participant and supporter for the Circulars Accelerator since its inception in 2020 - a programme led by Accenture in partnership with Anglo American and Ecolab and hosted digitally on the WEF's platform for SDG innovation.



Scale360° fast-tracks Fourth Industrial Revolution impact in the circular economy by bringing together public and private sector leaders and innovators to jumpstart collaboration for circular innovation.



The Circulars Accelerator is advancing the global transition to a more circular economy, connecting organisations prioritising circular innovation, with disruptors seeking to scale circular solutions.

# Developing the Local and Regional Startup Ecosystem

We believe in building an enabling environment and inclusive startup ecosystem for entrepreneurs from all backgrounds to build, grow, and sustain innovative ideas. Our local and regional platforms connect leaders in sustainability and diversity to inspire action and positive change, and Gobi actively promotes capacity building and skill development through mentorship, industry events, and thought leadership.

## 450+ VOLUNTEER HOURS

### Mentoring over 300 founders and judging at pitch competitions:

- Eastern Pacific Accelerator Powered by Techstars
- SPACE-F Showcases Innovative Food-tech Accelerator
- She Loves Tech Southeast Asia: VC Office Hours
- Endeavor Malaysia's Mentorship Program
- Impact Collective Pitch Clinic

### Sharing thought-leadership at events and conferences:

- Asian Financial Forum: Fireside Chat on Global Venture Capital Outlook
- Malaysian Sustainable Finance Initiative: Private Equity and Venture Capital Funding for the Green & Circular Economy
- 22CT Summit PANEL: Investing Responsibly for the 22nd Century
- Carbonless Asia Leadership Series: What role should finance play in the transition to net zero?
- Wild Digital Southeast Asia 2021: Female Founders Setting Record for A Standout Year

### Founding and hosting platforms for the community:

- Asia Gender-Smart Investing Forum, co-organised with UN Women
- She Loves Tech Thailand, Vietnam, and Cambodia
- Entrepreneurship World Cup Southeast Asia: Social Impact Pitch Competition
- Gobi Partners' Sustainability Innovation Series
- Asia Asset Owner Series Virtual Summit, co-organised with CFA Society New York



## Spotlight: Sustainability Innovation Series

Gobi Partners' monthly YouTube webinar series aims to educate investors, entrepreneurs, and key ecosystem players on how to tackle global issues and advance the UN SDGs, as well as explore ways to promote ESG and sustainability in Asia.

The monthly series covered four salient topics:

- ESG & SDGs: A Guide to Navigating Good Business Practices in Asia
- AgriFoodTech in Thailand: The Next Green Revolution
- Moving Asia from a Linear to Circular Economy
- Building Smart and Sustainable Cities





## Advancing In-House ESG and Sustainability Capabilities

Our employees are committed to be the very best at implementing ESG policies and practices at both the fund and portfolio levels. To this end, our team members have undergone hours of ESG training and upskilling workshops.

Over 350 ESG advancement training hours completed by the ASEAN team from virtual training, including:

- ESG and BI Management in the Emerging Markets Venture Capital Ecosystem, led by CDC Group and PWC
- SDG Ambition Accelerator, led by UNGC and Accenture
- TCFD & SDGs Workshop: ESG Risk Analysis and GHG Accounting, led by the Stock Exchange of Thailand
- Fintech Foundation Program: 10x1000 Tech for Inclusion, led by Ant Group
- Impact Measurement and Management 101, led by ANDE
- Advanced Certificate in Sustainability & Sustainable Businesses, led by UNGC
- Deepening Human Rights Due Diligence, led by UNGC



### Spotlight: Sustainability Innovation Series

Gobi is proud to make progress towards setting ambitious corporate targets to advance the Global Goals through the six-month UN Global Compact SDG Ambition accelerator programme. Represented by two members of the ESG Task Force team, Wayne Chan (Monitoring & Measurement Lead) and JJ Erpaiboon (Diversity & Environment Lead), the programme co-facilitated by Accenture, accelerated Gobi's contributions to the 2030 Agenda. The SDG Ambition Benchmark of focus was SDG 5 to achieve gender balance and empower all women and girls, where Gobi has aligned our goal-setting to the 2X Collaborative's Criteria. Key actions include implementing requirements for gender diversity in candidate pools, implementing non-bias training and developing an internal playbook to ensure fair interviews, due diligence, and decision-making practices, and investing in pipeline development and ecosystem-building to increase the female talent pool in VC and support female entrepreneurs.

### Spotlight: ESG and Business Integrity Management in the Emerging Markets Venture Capital Ecosystem, led by British International Investment (previously CDC Group) and PWC

In May 2021, Gobi investment team members participated in a three-day training workshop on ESG and business integrity management. The workshops had been specifically designed for VC fund managers in British International Investment's portfolio/pipeline and their partners.

Key topics included:

1. **Business case** – What value does an ESG and BI lens add in a VC context?
2. **Timing** – When should early-stage companies begin focusing on ESG and BI management? And how can this help to support, rather than stifle, growth?
3. **Integration** – What does it mean in practical terms to integrate ESG and BI into the investment process of a VC fund?



# OUR ESG & SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT



**Sastaticket.pk**

Sastaticket.pk is the largest online travel company in Pakistan, with a market of over 220 million people and the world's largest religious tourism market.

**PAKISTAN**

[sastaticket.pk](https://sastaticket.pk)

**Shazil Mehkri**  
Co-founder & CEO, SastaTicket.pk

# OUR ESG & SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT

While awareness and implementation of ESG practices have yet to become commonplace among Asia's startup ecosystems, there is a growing population of startups integrating ESG policies and risk management processes to manage both their financial and non-financial objectives.

Gobi is proud to count many of these progressive, forward-looking, and sustainability-minded startups among our portfolio investments, and is delighted to feature the work and accomplishments of a few of them in the portfolio spotlights that follow.

## AQUMON

AQUMON is a leading digital wealth management company based in Hong Kong. Their mission is to leverage technology to make next-generation investment services smarter, simpler, and more accessible to individual and institutional investors. Through their proprietary algorithms and scalable, technical infrastructure, AQUMON's automated platform empowers anyone to invest and maximise their returns. AQUMON was rated by KPMG as one of China's Top 50 Fintech companies and has partnered with over 150 financial institutions to provide scalable wealth management solutions.

### 8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



In line with AQUMON's commitment to empowering every investor to grow their wealth, their SmartGlobal Max Aggressive Portfolio achieved an average annualised return of 15% per year (data from 2018/12-2021/12). The AQUMON app has over 100,000 downloads as of 2022. Through their WealthTech B2B offerings, they have powered over 150+ institutional partnerships and brought robo-advisory services to over one million users across Hong Kong and China.

To better align with the national goal of common prosperity as proposed by the Chinese government in 2021, they have a vision to provide accessible

financial wealth management services to the public with low entry fees. Their vision is bolstered by strategic partnerships to leverage their technological expertise with institutional user base, thereby servicing a greater number of people more effectively. They will be tracking the number of partnerships and their onboarded users as well as the customised investment strategies performance.

In addition, they will be enriching their portfolio variety to provide greater product choices for investors to choose and invest with AQUMON, for example, offering investment strategies in ESG-related themes, including low carbon companies.

Carsome is Southeast Asia's largest integrated car e-commerce platform with a presence across Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, and Singapore. Carsome aims to digitalise the region's used car industry by reshaping and elevating the buying and selling experience by providing end to end, convenient and efficient solutions to consumers and used car dealers.

## 5 GENDER EQUALITY



The automotive industry has traditionally seen a less gender-diverse workforce compared to other industries. Carsome recognises the female talent gap that exists within the automotive industry and its potential to create a more equitable and inclusive workforce in the markets it operates in and produce greater financial performance and a competitive advantage at the corporate level. Carsome thus prioritises the retention and growth of its top female talent, and tracks gender diversity at the management levels and implements paid parental leave. The elevation of Group CFO Juliet Zhu to Carsome's Group President in February 2022 makes her one of the highest profile senior executives in the Southeast

Asian startup ecosystem, and enhances the automotive industry with her visionary leadership.

In addition to promoting gender equity in its company and the automotive industry, Carsome also supports greater gender representation in car ownership. More than 40% of Carsome customers are women, far higher than the percentage of female car ownership by women in their markets, a proportion of ownership Carsome has achieved by changing the experience of transacting a used car to make it more professional, accessible, and comfortable for women who are increasingly making more and more household decisions.

## 8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



The pandemic caused many inspection centres to close temporarily as safe-distancing measures were imposed, leaving many of Carsome's inspectors without work during the lockdown period. Recognising this as an opportunity, Carsome decided to launch the Carsome Academy to upskill their employees to ensure that the automotive industry was well-equipped to meet the pent-up demand as the lockdown measures eased.

employees in essential areas, from inspections, operations and product knowledge to adapt to the changing business environment. Courses were made available to over 5,000 employees across the Customer Service, Operations, Business Development and Sales teams amounting to over 4,900 hours of training, resulting in a 20% uplift in productivity.

### Internal Carsome Academy - Upskilling Carsome Employees

During COVID-19, Carsome focused on upskilling

### External Carsome Academy - Building Career Pathways in the Automotive Industry

Carsome launched Carsome Academy as a human capital development initiative to create a positive social impact in the local communities where Carsome

operates, providing Malaysian youth with technical education and guaranteed career opportunities. Through rigorous training, students are equipped with technical skills around physical inspection as well as digital skill sets leveraging Carsome's industry-leading productivity digital toolsets.

Since launching Carsome Academy to the wider community in 2021, 90 students have joined the programme, completed 1,840 hours of training, and

been offered jobs with Carsome. Carsome hopes to contribute to the economic growth of their operating markets and increase labour force participation. Carsome has also been building up partnerships with dealerships within their operating markets to facilitate site visits for Academy students, giving them the opportunity to apply their technical knowledge in real-life and practical situations.

## 12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



As one of Gobi's champion cases in supporting a circular economy, Carsome's high level of quality assurance through a 175-point expert inspection allows cars that leave the Carsome refurbishment facility to have the potential to be repurposed more than once. Their refurbishment model provides a smooth and accessible platform for second-hand car

owners and buyers, creating a system of product-life extension of the vehicles.

To cater to customers who are looking for more environmentally friendly options, Carsome includes hybrid vehicles with improved fuel economy and reduced fuel consumption in its automotive offerings.



Founded in 2009, iStore iSend is an e-commerce fulfillment provider with a fully optimised warehouse management system designed to automate online operations. Their system allows sellers to increase their market entry and expand into omnichannel. As pioneers in the e-fulfillment market, iStore iSend ensures the most secure warehouses, packing services, delivery, and order tracking features.

## 3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



At iStore iSend, a Wellness Allowance was implemented and extended to all employees to encourage and support employee wellness and a healthy, active lifestyle in an effort to increase employee satisfaction and engagement within the Company.

This includes:

- Any medical expenses incurred from visits to non-panel doctors/specialists, certified medical/health practitioners including consultation and treatments from alternative medical approaches, such as Traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) which

includes various forms of herbal medicine, acupuncture, cupping therapy, gua sha, tui na, bonesetter (die-da), and dietary therapy; Chiropractic treatment; Physiotherapy; Psychotherapy/Counselling; Preventive health screening/check-up; Vaccinations; Dental; Optical (include prescription spectacles/contact lens and sunglasses).

- Fitness expenses incurred from certified fitness centre and/or trainer, such as: Yoga; Pilates; Zumba; H.I.I.T workout; Boxing, kickboxing, Muay Thai, M.M.A

- Other general wellness expenses incurred, such as: Health supplement; Massage/Spa; Nutrition/Dietary/Weight loss program by certified medical/health practitioners (iStore iSend weight loss challenge)

On a quarterly basis, the Human Resources team arranges 60-90 minute talks with all employees related to good health/well-being. There are also various different training ongoing across different departments every month from communications, negotiations, data analytics, and leadership.

## Prenetics™

PRENETICS is a global diagnostics and genetic testing company founded in Hong Kong with the mission to bring health closer to millions of people globally and decentralise healthcare by making the three pillars – Prevention, Diagnostics and Personalised Care – comprehensive and accessible to anyone, at anytime and anywhere. Prenetics' operations encompass 11 laboratories, with over 700 employees in 9 markets.

### 3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



The pursuit of good health and well-being is embedded in Prenetics' mission to decentralise healthcare and make preventive, diagnostic testing and personalised healthcare comprehensive and accessible to anyone, at anytime and anywhere. Prenetics' approach to health care delivery rests on three pillars: responsible pricing, robust supply chain management, and convenience and ease of use.

In 2019, Prenetics launched and delivered over 120,000 of its CircleDNA consumer genetic testing offering globally. CircleDNA brings technologically advanced genetic testing and gives customers access to over 500 reports across 20 categories covering disease risks, drug response, cancer risk, family planning, diet, common health risks, personal traits and nutrition, among others, which enable early detection of diseases and allow them to take preventive measures and make healthier life choices.

From the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Prenetics has emerged as a leading player in the diagnostic testing market, operating 11 laboratories in the United Kingdom and Hong Kong to provide a daily testing capacity of over 40,000 COVID-19 tests. Since April 2020, the company has completed over 6 million COVID-19 tests, and has enabled recovery in air travel, re-opening of schools and workplaces, and the resumption of sporting and entertainment events.

Prenetics' product pipeline will expand its offerings in preventative and diagnostic healthcare, and extend the company's reach into personalised healthcare.

## 5 GENDER EQUALITY



Prenetics promotes a discrimination-free, diverse and inclusive environment where everyone receives equal treatment regardless of gender, color, nationality, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, marital status or work nature. This has resulted in a

management team (including C-level executives, vice presidents, and functional heads) that boasts a 53% female representation, and a gender pay ratio of 1 to 0.92 (female to male).

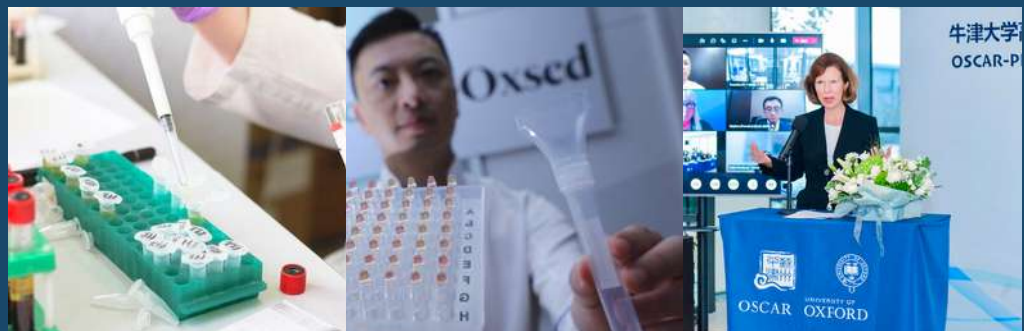
## 9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE



Investment in R&D is at the core of Prenetics' technology strategy and success. In 2020, the company entered into cooperation arrangements with Oxford University ("Oxford") to work on research projects at the Oxford Suzhou Centre for Advanced

Research ("OSCAR"). Over a nine-month period from January to the end of September 2021, Prenetics spent US\$5.1 million on R&D.

## 17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



Partnerships among business, governments and civil society are critical to the success in development and provision of healthcare services. Following the launch of its rapid COVID-19 testing using technology developed in collaboration with Oxford University, Prenetics formed a three-year collaboration with Oxford and OSCAR to establish the OSCAR-Prenetics Innovation and Technology Centre for Advanced Molecular Diagnostics ("OSCAR-Prenetics ITC") in Suzhou, China, which brings together leading researchers in bio-sensing, clinical virology, microbiology and medical devices in efforts to enrich technology development for molecular diagnostics.

In addition to collaborative R&D works, Prenetics also partners with celebrity brand ambassadors and key opinion leaders and launches campaigns to promote health messages, raise awareness on the importance of rapid and at-home tests in managing the pandemic, and encouraging the public to take charge of their health.

# SUSTAINABILITY GOALS FOR 2022



**GO**WORK

GoWork is the largest leading premium coworking and office space in Indonesia that allows you to work from anywhere.

**INDONESIA**

[go-work.com](https://go-work.com)

**Vanessa Hendriadi**  
Co-founder & CEO, GoWork



# GOBI PARTNERS' SUSTAINABILITY GOALS FOR 2022

**Sustainability and ESG are not destinations but rather ongoing journeys. While this Sustainability Report is a platform for Gobi to share our efforts and accomplishments, it is also an opportunity to consider the goals we set for ourselves and welcome any feedback from the community.**

For 2022, Gobi's ESG team has outlined five key initiatives that we deem critical to carrying out Gobi's long-term ESG and sustainability strategy:

## Enhance Diversity at Gobi

The key to enhancing gender diversity in the Asian startup ecosystems is to improve the amount of venture capital flowing to female-founded/led businesses. One factor driving those flows is the level of gender diversity in the venture capital industry, particularly in investment decision making. In 2022, Gobi will work towards increasing gender diversity not only in its portfolio but within its own ranks along four key dimensions:

<b>37%</b>	Female representation in Gobi's workforce *as of publication of this report,
<b>11%</b>	Female representation in Gobi's management ranks
<b>24%</b>	Female representation in Gobi's investment teams, and
<b>14%</b>	Female representation at Gobi's partnership level.

In addition to gender, we will expand our DEI initiatives to encompass race, sexual orientation, physical ableism, and other groups.

## Establish Regional Best Practice in ESG

Gobi adopted its original ESG Policy and investment Exclusion List in 2018, and as Gobi's capabilities at managing ESG risks continue to become more robust and sophisticated, we expect to continuously evolve our ESG Policy to align with ever-changing risks and trends in the regional startup ecosystems, and create benchmarks and best practices for ESG in the regional venture capital industry. In 2021, we drafted our Statement of Intent and Risk Approach, and updated our Exclusion List. In 2022, Gobi will enhance our ESG Processes by developing and implementing process management systems to address:

- Bias, harassment, and inequality risks,
- Governance risks, and
- Data privacy and security risks.

## Construct Resilient Portfolios by Strengthening ESG Practices in the Investment Screening Process

In 2018, Gobi developed its investment Exclusion List, and in 2021 applied a comprehensive ESG Due Diligence framework to all new investment prospects for Gobi's ASEAN funds, and is being adapted for use in Gobi's Greater Bay Area (GBA) investments. The results of the framework, as well as a post-investment ESG work plan, are summarised and presented to Gobi's Investment Committee as an addition to our traditional investment proposal. Goals for 2022 are to enhance the ESG due diligence process by incorporating ESG risk materiality assessments.

## Create Portfolio Value by Strengthening ESG Practices in the Investment Monitoring and Management Processes

To date, Gobi's work towards integrating ESG frameworks and practices in its investment activities has focused primarily on pre-investment screening and risk assessment. In 2022, Gobi will strengthen the scope of its ESG work with startups post-investment to either enhance their existing ESG practices (29% of Gobi's portfolio startups surveyed indicated that they have established some form of ESG policy and practice), or develop an ESG regimen based on their materiality assessment (23% of Gobi's portfolio startups surveyed indicated that they do not have an ESG practice in place, but have indicated an awareness of ESG and interest in adopting ESG practices), in accordance to bespoke ESG work plans co-developed with portfolio companies during the investment due diligence process.

## Enable a Regional ESG Ecosystem through Thought Leadership

Gobi recognises that creating a rich ecosystem for ESG investment and risk management in Asia necessitates both investment leadership and thought leadership, the latter being vital to spread awareness and knowledge of foundational ESG concepts and practices. In 2021, Gobi laid the groundwork for thought leadership in ESG through various initiatives including launching ASEAN's first gender-smart investing forum and the production of a series of topical webinars on sustainability. Gobi will build upon these efforts in 2022, continuing to work with partners to create sustainability-related content and platforms that will establish a community of ESG-minded entrepreneurs and investors and establish standards of practice in the region. We will be hosting the 2nd Asia Gender-Smart Investing Forum, continuing our Sustainability Innovation webinar series, and launching a regular blog with contributions from our partners, ESG team, and invited experts.

# APPENDIX



**ecoinno**

Ecoinno is a green material technology company that focuses on developing multiple categories of consumer packaging products with its proprietary Green Composite Material™, derived from natural plant fibre, an abundant naturally occurring biopolymer, using advanced processing technology.

**HONG KONG**

[ecoinno.com.hk](http://ecoinno.com.hk)

# APPENDIX

## Gobi's ESG Investment Exclusion List

Gobi adheres to its Exclusion List, which encompasses the range of prohibited activities that Gobi will not engage in. Likewise, any startup receiving investment funds from Gobi must attest that it does not engage in such prohibited activities. Prohibited activities on Gobi's Exclusion List are:

- Prostitution-related activities;
- The manufacture, sale or distribution of pornographic materials or content;
- The development, production, maintenance, trade or stock-piling of weapons of mass destruction, including radiological, nuclear, biological and chemical weapons;
- The production or trade of illegal drugs or narcotics;
- Racist and/or anti-democratic media;
- Gambling, casinos and equivalent enterprises;
- The manufacture or sale of tobacco and tobacco products, including e-cigarettes;
- Alcoholic beverages;
- Forced labour or child labour;
- Activities or materials deemed illegal under host country laws or regulations or international conventions and agreements, or subject to international phase-outs or bans, such as:
  - 10a. Ozone depleting substances, Polychlorinated Biphenyl (PCB)'s and other specific, hazardous pharmaceuticals, pesticides/herbicides or chemicals;
  - 10b. Wildlife or products regulated under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species or Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES); or
  - 10c. Unsustainable fishing methods (e.g. blast fishing and drift net fishing in the marine environment using nets in excess of 2.5km in length);
- Cross-border trade in waste and waste products, unless compliant to the Basel Convention and the underlying regulations;
- Destruction of High Conservation Value areas; or
- Radioactive materials and unbounded asbestos fibre.

