

# MONITORING REPORT ON THE STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT 5 YEARS ON

Statement of Commitment by Humanitarian Organisations on Climate Change, launched in December 2020



## REH - RÉSEAU ENVIRONNEMENT HUMANITAIRE

In response to the urgency and gravity of climate and environmental challenges, the Humanitarian Environment Network (REH) works to improve understanding and awareness of these challenges among francophone humanitarian and development aid actors and supports them in adopting more environmentally friendly practices. It has over 300 members, including some 30 organisations.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

REH's Secretariat would like to thank the 15 signatory organisations and their representatives in REH for taking the time to complete the questionnaire, for coming together for a discussion of the results and for reading through the report in its final stages. The Secretariat would also like to commend the signatories' efforts to reduce their environmental footprint and to adapt their practices in view of the climate and environmental crisis, as well as their commitment to increasing resilience among those affected.

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACF	Action Contre la Faim
AECID	Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo
ALIMA	Alliance for International Medical Action
CDCS	Centre de Crise et de Soutien (du ministère des affaires étrangères français)
CEDRIG	Climate, Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction Integration Guidance
COP	Conference of the Parties
CRESH	Climate Resilient and Environmentally Sustainable Healthcare
CVCA	Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Analysis
DG ECHO	Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations
EST	Environmental Stewardship Tool
EVCA	Enhanced Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment
FEAT	Flash Environmental Assessment Tool
FRAME	Framework for Assessing, Monitoring and Evaluating the Environment
FTE	Full-time Equivalent
GAC	Global Affairs Canada
GCI	Global Climate Initiatives
GHG	Greenhouse Gases
GFFO	German Federal Foreign Office
GRASP	Green Reduction & Adaptation Support Plan
HR	Human Resources
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IPCC	International Panel on Climate Change
MERA	Multi-sectoral Environmental Risks Analysis
MOOC	Massive Open Online Course
NEAT	Nexus Environmental Assessment Tool
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
OIE	Outil d'Intégration Environnementale
REH	Réseau Environnement Humanitaire
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
Tdh	Terres des hommes
TGH	Triangle Génération Humanitaire
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
URD (Groupe)	Urgence Réhabilitation et Développement
VEHA	Virtual Environmental Adviser for Humanitarians

## INTRODUCTION

In 2020, ten international aid sector actors (NGOs and think-tanks)<sup>1</sup> signed the [Statement of Commitment on Climate by Humanitarian Organisations](#), and in doing so made **five commitments to reduce the environmental footprint of their activities, and to better adapt to climate change**. Five more organisations have since signed the statement, in 2022,<sup>2</sup> 2023<sup>3</sup> and 2024.<sup>4</sup> **Five years after the statement was launched, and with the first decarbonisation target date reached this year (2025), where do the NGOs stand in meeting their commitments?** This annual report takes stock of progress made; and analyses the results, considering the wider context of NGO activity. In addition, thanks to carbon calculations done by the NGOs in question, **this monitoring report makes it possible to see, for the first time, several trajectories of the movement towards decarbonisation**, while underscoring the difficulties of monitoring them.

### THE ENVIRONMENTAL DYNAMICS OF INTERNATIONAL AID

It is now generally acknowledged that international aid relies on operating models that contribute to climate change and environmental degradation, affecting first and foremost the most vulnerable groups of people. **In the context of the climate and ecological emergency which increases the number and incidence of humanitarian crises as it intensifies, international aid organisations must re-think their ways of operating** in order to be consistent with the humanitarian principle of 'do no harm', and in order to take fuller account of climate and environmental issues in their programmes.

The requirement to transform their ways of operating has nonetheless been hamstrung by the exceptional structural and funding crisis in the international aid sector since the beginning of 2025.<sup>5</sup> The shutdown of USAID and the drastic reduction in funding by other major donors represent a severe blow to the sector, which is without precedent. Many NGOs have seen the scope and scale of their activities reduced, sometimes to the point of collapse, entailing closing down programmes and letting go staff in droves, while humanitarian needs are only increasing.<sup>6</sup> **Faced with serious budgetary constraints, organisations try to reconcile humanitarian imperatives and ecological objectives** but this inevitably entails trying to choose between the dictates of head or heart. Despite this turmoil, **some aid organisations strive to maintain an ambitious environment agenda**. In June 2025, in the framework of the [Humanitarian aid donors' declaration on climate and the environment](#),<sup>7</sup> and in support of the [Climate and Environment Charter](#), the Donor Greening Working Group<sup>8</sup> launched the ['Common Donor Priority Actions for Greening of Humanitarian Assistance'](#).

Furthermore, new ideas are emerging on the issues of climate and environmental justice. In January 2025, Groupe URD published a [report on 'a fair and equitable decarbonisation target for an international NGO'](#) and, more recently, Coordination Sud's Climate and Development Committee produced two notes on issues of climate and environmental justice.<sup>9</sup> The analysis in these documents led to an [REH position paper on the](#)

<sup>1</sup> Action Contre la Faim, ACTED, ALIMA, CARE France, Électriciens sans Frontières, Groupe URD, Médecins du Monde, Première Urgence Internationale, Secours Islamique France, Solidarités International.

<sup>2</sup> Le Gret.

<sup>3</sup> Handicap International/Humanity and Inclusion, Fondation Terre des Hommes.

<sup>4</sup> La Croix-Rouge française, Triangle Génération Humanitaire.

<sup>5</sup> [La solidarité internationale fragilisée par des coupes budgétaires sans précédent \(\(International aid and development cooperation undermined by unprecedented budgetary cuts\) - Coordination SUD](#) Note: this report is available in French only.

<sup>6</sup> [Global Humanitarian Overview 2025 - The Cruel Math of Aid Cuts \(Hyper - Prioritized Report\) - June 2025 | OCHA](#)

<sup>7</sup> The signatories of the Humanitarian aid donors' declaration on climate and environment also publish an annual monitoring report on their activities. See the foot of the page in the declaration that is headed European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations.

<sup>8</sup> This currently includes six donors: AECID, CPCS, DG ECHO, GAC, GFFO and the SDC.

<sup>9</sup> Coordination Sud (2025). Note 43. Pertes et dommages : prendre la mesure des conséquences locales et injustes de l'inaction climatique (Loss and damage : assessing the unjust local consequences of climate inaction) ; and Note 40. La prise en compte des informations sur le climat et la biodiversité, un prérequis indispensable des projets de développement (Taking account of

targets of the Statement of Commitment on Climate by Humanitarian Organisations which was presented during the most recent meeting, on 17 October 2025, of the respective directors of REH's member organisations. The outcome is a new version of the Statement of Commitment, to be issued in January 2025. It should be noted that **the present monitoring report relates to the initial version of the statement and the commitments of its 15 signatories.**

## FIRM, QUANTIFIED COMMITMENTS

As a result of the Climate and Environmental Charter and other declarations on the part of groups of organisations, such as REH, there are now hundreds of international aid and cooperation organisations that have recently committed themselves to take better account of the ecological dimension in their work. However, **fewer than 20% of organisations that have signed the Climate and Environmental Charter have defined targets.**<sup>10</sup> The Charter's secretariat has observed that targets defined by NGO **signatories are very diverse.**<sup>11</sup> They are sometimes quantified, sometimes not; they may relate to a few sectors or specific activities, or may, by contrast, cover the whole scope of the organisation's activities. Quantified targets may themselves vary: carbon neutrality;<sup>12</sup> or a 55% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2031;<sup>13</sup> with most organisations opting for a target of a 50% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030.

The Statement of Commitment on Climate by Humanitarian Organisations prescribes quantified targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions: **a 30% reduction by 2025 and a 50% reduction by 2030.** This **signifies a powerful policy choice** of getting to grips with climate and environmental issues, not only in the implementation of programmes but also within the organisations' own operating structures.

The Statement includes a total of five commitments, as follows:

1. **Measure** the environmental and carbon impact of their actions on a regular basis.
2. **Reduce** their carbon footprint by setting reduction targets in line with IPCC recommendations to halve emissions by 2030 and by at least 30% by 2025.<sup>14</sup>
3. **Adapt** humanitarian action to new environmental and climate challenges:
  - Include the analysis of climate and environmental risks into all actions and encourage the implementation of prevention, mitigation and adaptation measures where appropriate.
  - Reduce negative impacts and promote humanitarian and development actions that have a positive impact on the environment and climate.
  - Develop and call on local expertise in line with the Grand Bargain's commitments on localisation.
4. **Communicate** publicly any information on progress as soon as it is available, and on an annual basis.
5. **Get other players on board** to raise the bar:
  - Raise awareness among as many employees as possible about the major impact of climate and environmental crises on the most vulnerable, using the means available.
  - Contribute to the development of an environmental and climate charter for the entire sector.

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*information on climate and biodiversity, an essential prerequisite for development projects). Note: these notes are available in French only.*

<sup>10</sup> *The position on 24 November 2025 was that there were 86 defined targets for 504 signatories. See <https://www.climate-charter.org/targets/>*

<sup>11</sup> *On-Target-Climate-and-Environmental-Programming-Case-Study-Report.pdf*

<sup>12</sup> *See ACTED's targets: <https://www.acted.org/en/what-we-do/green-strategy/>*

<sup>13</sup> *See Plan International's targets: <https://www.climate-charter.org/wp-content/uploads/201/Plan-International-Climate-Environment-Charter-Report-2023-2024-Final.pdf>*

<sup>14</sup> *As expressed, Commitment 2 lacks precision. Some details (reference date and type of reduction) are left to be defined by the signatories after signing.*

## MONITORING REPORT FOUR YEARS ON

The REH Secretariat prepares an annual monitoring report on environmental progress in signatory organisations,<sup>15</sup> as required by commitment 4, to enable other organisations and actors in the sector to draw their own lessons.

The year +4 report indicated that signatory NGOs were implementing the ecological transition, but at somewhat different rates, **making very variable progress**. All of them stated nonetheless that they had in place a structured approach to reducing their environmental footprint – often centred on energy, procurement and travel – and had completed or begun work on a carbon footprint calculation. The monitoring exercise also revealed an **increasing use of environmental screening tools** (particularly NEAT+), despite technical constraints and despite sectoral coverage that is still less than perfect. There are some new ideas emerging on the **risks of maladaptation** and the **need to coordinate adaptation and mitigation**. The monitoring exercise revealed that the environment featured in communication strategies, especially in-house strategies aimed at increasing awareness, but also – if to a lesser extent – external strategies. More generally, **previously identified difficulties persisted**: inadequate human and technical resources, the limitations of the awareness-raising tools needed to generate genuine change – even resistance to change –, difficulties arising from operating conditions and in-country operating capacity. To sum up, the monitoring exercise illustrated a continuing process, sustained by stronger institutional support and the availability of spaces or sites for exchanging ideas; and, at the same time, a **sense that those responsible for the issue might potentially be running out of steam**. Technical challenges, it seemed, were progressively giving way to organisational, ethical and strategic challenges: how best to manage change, which ecological measures were considered acceptable and the growth of organisations in the sector.

The summary of the year +4 report concluded with an appeal to the sector at large:

### FOR THE SECTOR

We invite the international aid sector to collectively reflect on the above issues and to consider their environmental commitments from a **more holistic perspective, for the benefit of the most vulnerable populations**. In addition, we continue to encourage organisations in the sector to sign the Statement, which is a genuine tool for collective mobilisation **to link social and ecological solidarity**.

### Where do the signatories stand five years on?

<sup>15</sup> All the monitoring reports are available at <https://www.environnementhumanitaire.org/en/ressource/statement-of-commitment-on-climate-by-humanitarian-organisations-december-2020/>. Note that there was no 'two years on' (+2) report.

## METHODOLOGY

An online questionnaire was prepared by the REH Secretariat as the basis for this monitoring report. This year's questionnaire was somewhat modified in comparison with the previous year's (2024), **including questions relating to the current situation in the humanitarian aid sector (because of budgetary cuts) as well as a table to fill in to facilitate more accurate monitoring of the decarbonisation trajectories of signatory organisations.**

The questionnaire was sent out in August 2025 to the 15 signatory organisations. They were given a month to respond. They were also sent copies of their responses to the 2024 questionnaire, to enable them to make comparisons. This is an annual reporting exercise, and **questions about changes made referred to the period from September 2024 to September 2025** (the past 12 months' at the date when organisations received the questionnaire).

The questionnaire comprised:

- Questions both qualitative and quantitative, in order to assess the progress made by each organisation in respect of the five commitments made in the Statement;
- A table to complete, specifically analysing carbon footprint measures.

No response was mandatory, which explains the different response rate to some questions. That said, all signatories provided a response to the questionnaire (thank you, all of you!). **Questionnaire responses were then anonymised**, except when some organisations wanted to make overt reference to specific publications. The questionnaire will be reusable in future years, to enable comparisons over time. (Note: the questionnaire is available, in French only, as an annex to the original (French) version of this report.)

The results of the monitoring questionnaire were presented to the signatories at a meeting in October 2025, which led to the **development of a collective analysis of the results and agreement on new avenues to explore** which are presented at the end of each section (below) describing the results by commitment.

The questionnaire and the process of analysing it had several limitations which should be kept in mind:

- First, the questionnaire was long, which may have influenced responses, especially towards the end;
- Second, the report depended on declarative data. The results – and therefore the analysis – show only what respondents chose to declare, and there was no means of testing the veracity of their comments or the information given. There might therefore be a social expectation bias in signatories' responses;
- Third, the widely varying levels of technical expertise among respondents might have had the effect of eliciting very different responses from them individually. Differences may also be explained by questions perhaps perceived as ambiguous or poorly formulated, which might thus have been differently interpreted by different respondents;
- Fourth, and despite the distribution of each organisation's responses from 2024, some responses did not appear to be consistent with responses given in previous years. This could be due to a loss of institutional memory, with respondents perhaps changing from year to year, or simply a different interpretation (for example, of what is or is not a 'strategy').

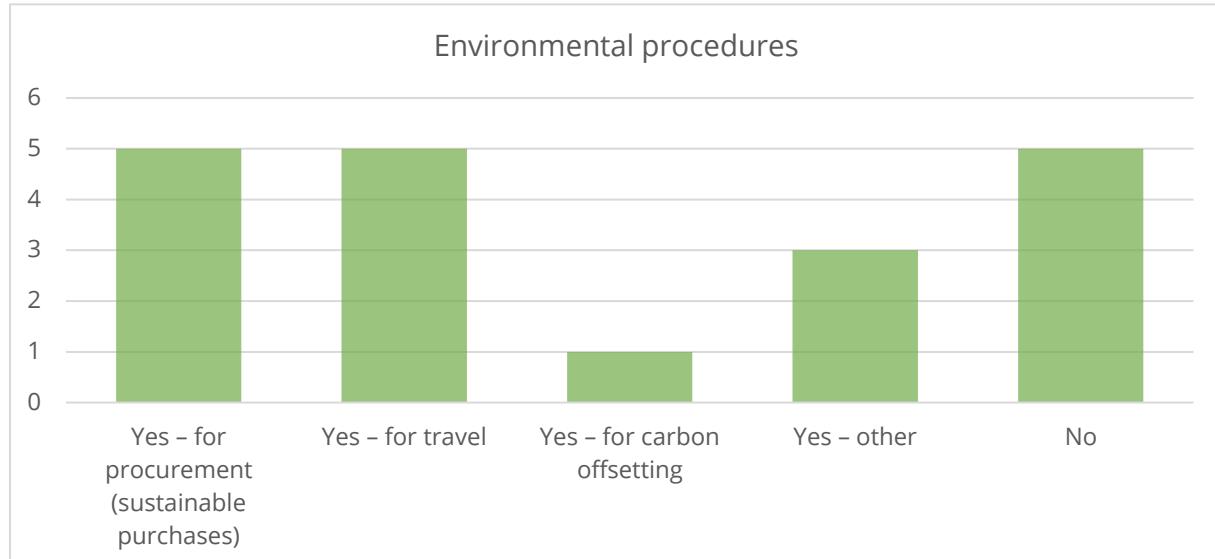
Finally, to supplement the questionnaire, the websites of the NGOs were also consulted when it came to Commitment 4, on the issue of communication.

# RESULTS

## OVERVIEW

### STRATEGIES AND PROCEDURES

All the signatory organisations stated that they had a strategy for reducing their environmental footprint. While some organisations planned to update their strategies, several others indicated that they did not have adequate human resources to do so. One organisation spoke of 'an abrupt braking back or marked slowdown in several areas of in-house activity, including the environment' because of funding cuts.



**Figure 1.** Responses to 'In the course of the last 12 months, have you updated or created in-house environmental procedures?' (n=15, several possible responses)

Some NGOs referred more specifically to an **evolution in environmental procedures** for procurement (5), travel (5), carbon compensation (1) and also for waste management (1), environmental evaluations (1) and monitoring of a decarbonisation trajectory (1).

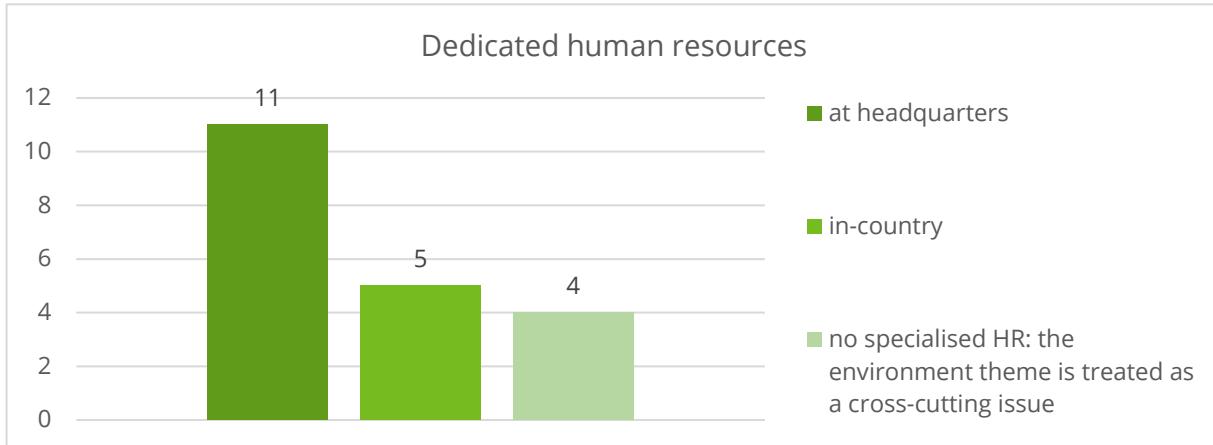
**On procurement**, NGOs refer in particular to the development of procurement or purchasing guidelines (1) or of a directive for sustainable practices in their offices (1) as well as the revision or integration of environmental procurement criteria (4).

**On travel**, two NGOs have revised both their national and their international travel policy to integrate environmental considerations. One organisation indicates that it has enhanced travel procedures for headquarters staff (line manager approval, systematic terms of reference, planning ahead for ticket purchases, priority given to direct flights, etc.). Similarly, another organisation describes updating its model terms of reference for travel from headquarters to the field, to raise awareness of its carbon impact. It may be noted that while an increasing number of organisations appear keen to prioritise direct flights, one organisation has a nuanced position on this, indicating that it does so 'when this is possible and acceptable from a financial perspective'. Finally, one NGO notes that the current funding crisis has led to stricter procedures being applied to travel, for economic (not environmental) reasons.

Just one organisation indicated that it had updated its **carbon offsetting policy**, after taking part in December 2024 in a carbon finance workshop,<sup>16</sup> and had amended the concept of 'offsetting' to the concept of 'contribution', hoping to acknowledge thereby the potential snare represented by the concept of 'offsetting'.<sup>17</sup>

**The absence of updates of procedures may also be explained by the need to take account of specific timetables.** For example, some organisations are waiting to finalise their carbon footprint calculation or waiting for the end of a pilot phase before modifying their in-house procedures.

## HUMAN RESOURCES



**Figure 2.** Responses to 'Do you have within your organisation human resources (HR) dedicated to issues relating to environmental and climate challenges?' (n = 15, several possible responses)

This year, instead of making a distinction between human resources (HR) dedicated to mitigation and those dedicated to adaptation, we attempted to study the way HR dedicated to environmental and climate issues were shared between headquarters and in-country representation. The mitigation/adaptation topic was nonetheless addressed during the preliminary presentation to signatories of the results of the questionnaire: signatories for the most part indicated that the two themes are covered in a complementary manner by their dedicated HR teams, and that no distinction is really made between them.

**11 NGOs stated that they had dedicated HR at headquarters**, adding up to a total of 26 people. However, not all of them work full-time on environmental issues, and included among them are several students doing work experience. **Among the NGOs, 5 also mentioned HR based in-country who were active on environmental issues**, including numerous focal points. We should note that, in practice, these latter have several functions and they may not have a specific number of hours allocated to their work as environmental and climate focal points. Two organisations referred to in-country HR linked to projects with specifically environmental objectives. Another organisation indicated that it has posts in two regions with the job title 'responsible for environmental issues' and aims to create one in due course in every region it covers.<sup>18</sup>

In the case of the **4 NGOs that state that they have no dedicated environmental HR at all**, the subject is monitored **as a cross-cutting issue (or transversally)** by staff from several departments, both at headquarters and in-country (green teams, environmental contact points, etc.). In the case of two of these organisations, **the lack of dedicated HR is directly due to funding cuts** which have led to the suppression of dedicated positions or to a freeze on the recruitment of an environment and climate specialist.

<sup>16</sup> See the report on the workshop on the dynamics of carbon finance in international development cooperation, REH, December 2024. <https://www.environnementhumanitaire.org/compte-rendu-de-latelier-sur-les-dynamiques-de-finance-carbone-dans-la-solidarite-internationale-reh-decembre-2024/> Note: this report is available in French only.

<sup>17</sup> See Groupe URD's note on carbon contributions. [https://www.urd.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/2025\\_03\\_01-briefing-note-carbon-contribution.pdf](https://www.urd.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/2025_03_01-briefing-note-carbon-contribution.pdf)

<sup>18</sup> On human resources in-country dedicated to the ecological transition, see also the box describing Action Contre la Faim's short-term contracts, in the *Monitoring report on the Statement, four years on (+4)*, p. 11

More generally, **10 organisations state that they have made changes to their HR in the past 12 months**:

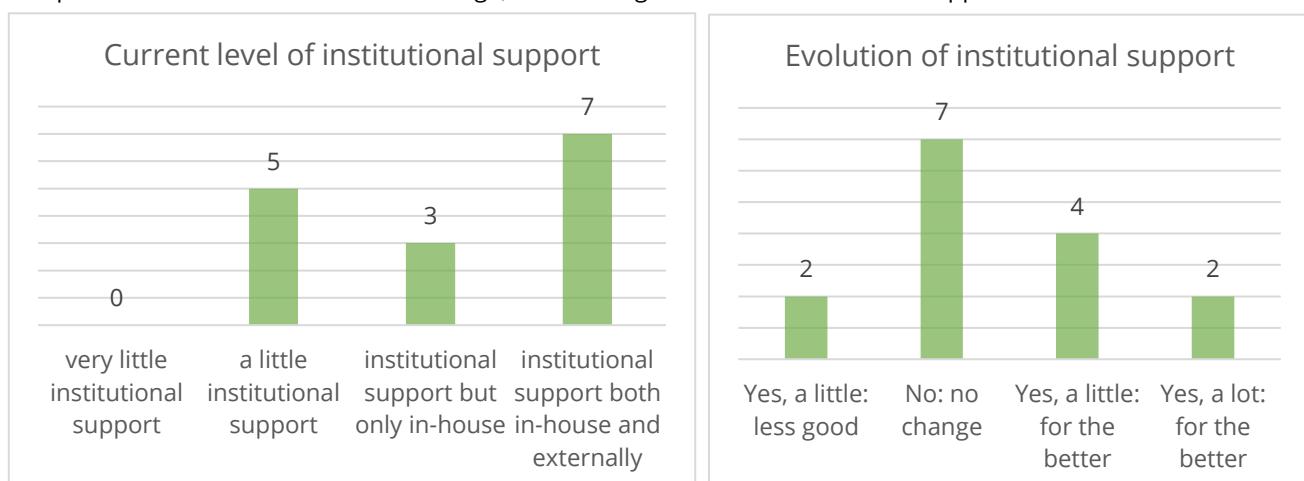
- One additional HR staff member at headquarters (2 NGOs), one of which is a student doing work experience;
- Additional HR in-country, via specific projects (3 NGOs);
- One fewer HR staff member at headquarters (4 NGOs);
- Two fewer HR staff members at headquarters (2 NGOs).

Five organisations had no change in their available HR.

In general, budget cuts are having an impact on HR, although some organisations have decided to maintain some posts at their own expense. This means that **some dedicated environmental posts are likely to disappear before the end of the year**, leaving one new organisation without any dedicated HR. We should also note that one organisation makes mention of changes in job descriptions to cover new environmental themes.

## INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

Among the 15 NGOs, six thought that their organisations' institutional support on environmental and climate issues had evolved for the better (two said much better, four a little better), seven organisations have the impression that there has been no change, and two organisations consider that support has declined a little.



**Figure 3.** Responses to 'What is your current assessment of institutional support?' (n = 15)

**Figure 4.** Responses to 'Has institutional support evolved since last year?' (n = 15)

According to the responses, **strong institutional support**

**or institutional support that is improving may have the following characteristics:**

- Formal arrangements: institutional policies, dedicated budgets, consolidated in-house strategies;
- Governance bodies or specialised groups are supportive: executive boards, strategy steering committees, operational climate/environment committees;
- Regular review processes: annual or quarterly assessments, webinars, dedicated meetings, etc., making use of monitoring indicators from road maps;
- Engagement beyond the organisation: participation in networks (REH, Coordination Sud, Groupe Initiatives,<sup>19</sup> etc.), a public stance on issues, participation in the COP, etc.
- Recruitment of HR and specific training on environmental issues;
- Rejection of a partnership on ethical or environmental grounds.

<sup>19</sup> It is a collective bringing together fifteen French organizations engaged in international solidarity: Agrisud, APDRA Peasant Fish Farming, AVSF, Ciedel, CRAterre, Essor, Geres, Grdr, Gret, Initiative Développement, Inter Aide, Iram, Seves, Solthis, and Le Partenariat.

**To explain their perception of inadequate institutional support or a slowdown in such support, respondents cited the following:**

- Watering down of environmental issues among other organisational priorities;
- Lack of allocated resources (financial and human resources);
- Lack of effective monitoring of environmental policies;
- Failure to adapt in-house practices despite active participation in networks;
- Strategic vision about the issues remains unclear, or is undermined by the current crisis;
- Instability in governance arrangements;
- Initiatives at irregular intervals, or relying on individuals rather than on institutional volition;
- Limited external communication.

Unsurprisingly, several respondents (4) underscored the fact that **the funding crisis and the increasing complexity of the situation in the sector have had a serious impact on support for climate/environment issues.**

It is interesting to note also that one NGO indicated strong, improving institutional support, despite the lack of HR backing. To mitigate this lack, the organisation has chosen to **make the environmental agenda part of the mandate of its General Secretariat, to good effect.**

***How to maintain or improve institutional support for the environment agenda despite a fall in dedicated human resources? Example: Handicap International/Humanity and Inclusion***

'At present, the question is not so much one of means but one of strategic prioritisation.' After the environment contact point left, the job was not readvertised because of the financial crisis that the sector is currently facing. Nevertheless, to maintain the organisation's environmental aims and credentials, the environment agenda has been made part of the mandate of the General Secretariat, which means that it is under the responsibility of the Director General. For the REH focal point, who is also a member of COPIL, the reduction in human resources is not incompatible with the implementation of environmental measures within the organisation: it is possible to have greater impact if the issue of the environment is 'moved higher up', even if fewer resources are actually made available for it. Higher-level support within the organisation makes it possible to take action more rapidly, or in a way that has greater impact.

**Box 1. How to maintain or improve institutional support for the environment agenda despite a fall in dedicated human resources? Example: Handicap International/Humanity and Inclusion**

There is a final interesting point to underscore: if we compare the perception of the evolution of institutional support by respondents in 2025 with the evolution described as actually occurring within organisation, then some responses on support levels in 2024 and 2025 seem incoherent. Three NGOs refer to an improvement or to a situation where there has been no change even though the level of support indicated for 2025 seems to have fallen in comparison with 2024. These inconsistencies may be due to different people responding, or to finer distinctions in assessing support than the questionnaire allows for, or simply to the fact that perceptions may have changed over time.

## NEEDS

**Finally, needs** – as formulated by organisations, if they are to succeed in their ecological transition – fall into four major categories:

- **Human resources:** dedicated human resources and additional time for set-up/steering; specific technical skills (in agro-ecology, water resource management, carbon analysis, and climate risk management), a network of outsourced and localised skills and competencies (to reduce travel and to make the most of

expertise available in-country), and more generally an active commitment to networks and joint initiatives with other NGOs.

- **Training needs:** extensive awareness-raising to improve broader understanding of environmental issues among non-specialist teams; structured, continuous training programmes; support for processes of change.
- **Financial resources:** funding dedicated to the ecological transition, particularly to cover expensive investments (solar panels, renewal of vehicle fleets, technical equipment); financial resources may in some circumstances be pooled or shared among organisations.
- **Support and change within the organisation:** strategic alignment and communication that draws together all the different departments, and links headquarters and in-country offices; strengthened institutional support; prioritisation of environmental issues despite the current crisis; a decentralised approach to the ecological transition.

### Overview – Analysis

Examining the responses to the monitoring questionnaire indicates that the NGOs that are signatories to the Statement are still committed to the reduction of their environmental footprint, but their commitment is presently **constrained by the fraught organisational and financial context**.

Most of the NGOs continue to develop or amend their environmental strategies and procedures but some are encountering difficulties, because of budget cuts and lack of human resources. In general, **the scaling back of dedicated teams limits progress on environmental goals**. Also, while the increase in the number of in-country focal points is a good approach to operationalisation of environmental strategies, it relies at present on a model that is insufficiently robust, since it often functions without properly dedicated resources of time.

This year's report confirms another key point: **institutional support is a decisive factor**. Where senior management integrates environmental issues in its tools, processes, organigrammes, discourse and management practices, the approach inculcates itself, despite the difficulties. By contrast, without institutional support, the issue tends to be watered down and little by little it gets forgotten. Strong institutional support, however, may compensate – at least to some extent – for the loss of dedicated human resources.

Finally, the needs that the NGOs describe – time, skills, funding and organisational support – remain relatively unchanged over time because the ecological transition in fact **requires structural investment**, not simply modified practice. This investment, unfortunately, is precisely what the current crisis renders difficult. As a result, **the crisis marks the distinction** between organisations where climate and environmental issues are becoming inherent in the structure and indeed help provide the structure, and organisations where these issues still rely on the interventions of individuals or the contribution made by specific projects.

### COMMITMENT 1: MEASURE OUR IMPACTS

Signatories to the Statement have committed to: **Measure the environmental and carbon impacts of our actions on a regular basis.**

#### CARBON FOOTPRINT CALCULATION

The table below summarises each NGO's practices in respect of carbon footprint measurement. It can be seen that **practice varies widely when preparing carbon footprint calculations**.

Base year for commitment to reduce GHGs	Years for which carbon footprint calculations have been completed (* indicates that carbon footprint calculations are not complete enough to be taken into consideration)	Geographic al scope	Project activities included	Partner project activities included	Monetary transfer activities included
2021	2021	all areas	yes	yes	yes
2021	2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024	all areas	yes	no	no
2020	2019, 2020, 2022, 2023, 2024	all areas	yes	yes	yes
2023	2014*, 2021*, 2023	some areas	yes	no	no
?	2019*, 2020*, 2021*, 2022*, 2023*, 2024*	France only			
2022	2019*, 2022	France (no in-country areas)	yes	no	n/a
2019	2022*, 2023*, 2024*	some areas	no	no	n/a
2019	2019, 2022	France (no in-country areas)	no projects	no	n/a
2019	2019, 2022, 2023	some areas	yes	no	n/a
2023	2019*, 2021*	some areas	yes	no	n/a
2022	2022	all areas	yes	yes	yes
2023	2023	all areas	yes	no	yes
2022	2019*, 2022*, 2023*, 2024*	France only	yes	no	no
2021	2021, 2024	some areas	yes	no	yes

**Table 1.** Characteristics of the measurement of progress by each organisation in carbon footprint calculation. Each line represents one NGO. One NGO has not yet carried out carbon footprint calculation, so has not provided a response. (n = 14)

The number of carbon footprint calculations carried out by NGOs varies considerably. **Five organisations complete carbon footprint calculations each year**, and have done so for some time, with their calculations varying in their degree of completeness. For example, for two NGOs only their French location is covered.

**Four NGOs have a** single carbon footprint calculation, or **none**. We may also note that **at present five NGOs do not have a baseline carbon footprint calculation** (two because the baseline year has not yet been selected; one because the carbon footprint calculation done for the baseline year only covers its French location; and two others because while they have carbon footprint calculations, they do not have them for the chosen baseline year); and **six NGOs carried out a carbon footprint calculation in 2024**.

To complement this, **one NGO further notes that it estimates its carbon footprint** (for years when it does not carry out a carbon footprint calculation), based on one monitoring indicator (air travel is the one chosen); **two NGOs indicate that they monitor annually several indicators** (travel, energy consumption, etc.) without however extrapolating from the data to estimate their carbon footprint. Finally, **one other NGO specifies that in order to be approved all its projects must have a carbon footprint calculation**, using an in-house measurement tool, which makes it possible to monitor accurately emissions linked to procurement and travel (the two most significant sources of emissions).

**The geographical scope covered by NGOs' carbon footprint calculations shows variations between different NGOs and between different carbon footprint calculations.** Among the 14 NGOs that have carried out these assessments:

- 5 NGOs collect data for all the regions where they intervene or are active;
- 5 NGOs only collect data for some of the regions where they intervene or are active;
- 2 NGOs only collect data in France;
- 2 NGOs do not have offices or staff outside France.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>20</sup> However, emissions relating to their travel outside France to the field are duly taken into account.

Apart from one NGO that has made a deliberate choice not to count emissions from its projects,<sup>21</sup> and another that does not itself directly manage projects, **all the other NGOs indicated that they take project emissions into account in their carbon footprint calculations**, i.e., emissions relating to goods and services provided to partners or 'beneficiaries'. **Most NGOs do not count emissions relating to projects run by partners** (only 3 NGOs do so). **5 NGOs take monetary transfer activities into account in their carbon footprint calculations** while 3 have chosen not to do so (5 NGOs do not engage in this type of activity; and 2 NGOs have not yet got far enough in their thinking on carbon footprint calculations as applied to in-country activities). It may be noted that **there was no question raised about taking inflation into account**. However, many data or emission factors are in fact monetary. Some organisations mention of their own accord specific corrections made in the light of inflation.

Thus, whether because of decisions about methodology or because of the difficulties of collecting data, **carbon footprint calculations are rarely 'complete'** (see those marked with an asterisk \* in the table), **to the extent that they do not appear to be of use in monitoring decarbonisation trajectories**, not to mention the fact that several organisations indicate that they **change their methodology in carrying out carbon footprint calculations from one year to the next**.

The methodologies and tools used are largely standard.<sup>22</sup> It is worth drawing attention to the fact that only 3 NGOs use the [Humanitarian Carbon Calculator](#), a tool which was of course developed specifically for the humanitarian sector. **How, therefore, do the NGOs propose to monitor their decarbonisation trajectories in the coming years** and particularly for the target year 2030?

**11 NGOs indicate that they plan to carry out carbon footprint calculations** either annually or *ad hoc*, relying on outside help if necessary. **9 NGOs propose, as an alternative or complementary solution, to use their indicators** as part of a simplified monitoring-and-evaluation exercise – in most cases, still to be devised – and via **specific dedicated arrangements involving senior management** (e.g., annual COPs, a focal point on the executive board, etc.). 2 NGOs explicitly referred to the fact that **they have not defined monitoring procedures** for their decarbonisation trajectories.

In response to a question about the baseline date used for forthcoming carbon footprint calculations, the NGOs indicated 2023 (1), 2025 (6), 2026 (3), 2027 (4). One NGO did not respond to the question since the date of its next carbon footprint calculation has not yet been decided.

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*'Given the massive amount of work it took us to carry out our first calculation, we absolutely cannot do it again every year. We're going to have to think about the methodology of our next calculation, and who should carry it out.'*

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**Monitoring carbon trajectories in a way that is both simple and appropriate in the field: Solidarités International's simplified carbon calculators.**

Carrying out a full carbon footprint calculation requires a considerable amount of work and takes time, making it difficult to ensure the regular measurements needed for close monitoring of decarbonisation trajectories. To mitigate the problem, several organisations – including Solidarités International – chose to work on the basis of extrapolated data, even though this entails significant uncertainty and thus restricts the scope for accurately following decarbonisation trajectories.

<sup>21</sup> See the box on Gret's reduction objectives in the [monitoring report on the Statement three years on \(+3\)](#), p. 24.

<sup>22</sup> See the [Monitoring report on the Statement, four years on \(+4\)](#).

Solidarités International has therefore developed an innovative approach which aims at local teams autonomous in defining, implementing and monitoring their decarbonisation strategy, without the need for a full carbon footprint calculation being carried out beforehand. A manual designed for field teams proposes a methodology for defining and prioritising objectives, as well as identifying and implementing decarbonisation activities that are adapted to local needs, constraints and characteristics country-by-country. Thus, monitoring carbon trajectories is done at team level, thanks to simplified carbon calculators developed by Solidarités International.

As well as facilitating the monitoring of each country team's decarbonisation trajectory, these calculators will – in due course – also make it possible to include reliable data in the tool used for extrapolating to calculate the carbon footprint of the organisation as a whole. This will improve the reliability of the carbon footprint calculation based on extrapolated data, and facilitate monitoring of the decarbonisation trajectory at organisational level.

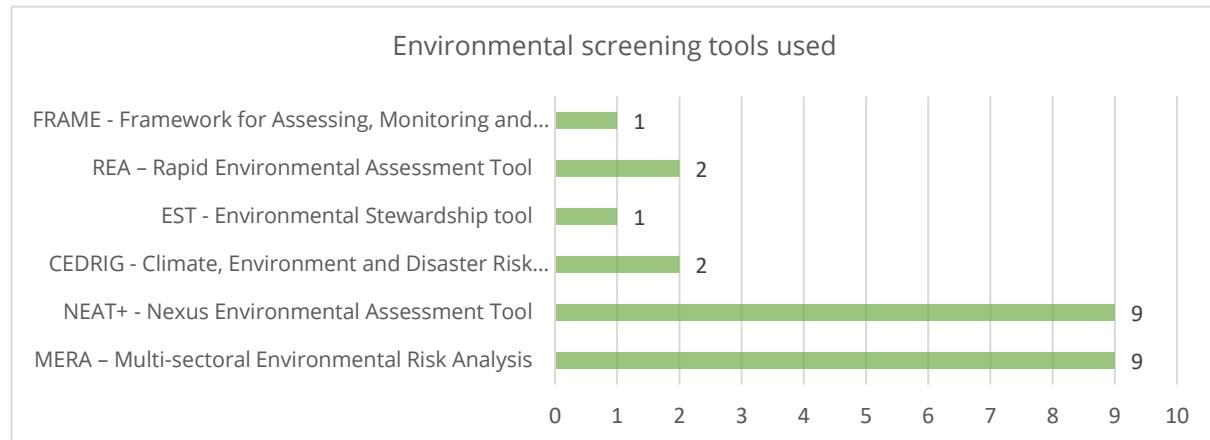
**Box 2. Monitoring carbon trajectories in a way that is both simple and appropriate in the field:**  
Solidarités International's simplified carbon calculators.

In general, **NGOs referred to major difficulties in carrying out these monitoring exercises:** data collection problems, and the reliability of the data gathered, reorganisation of their own structures and the lack of HR. Several NGOs also wonder 'what they will learn' from future carbon footprint calculations, and how far it will really be possible to compare them with prior calculations. **In the end, several NGOs emphasise that what counts is not monitoring but the activities implemented.**

*'Measuring our [carbon] footprint is not a priority.'*

## ENVIRONMENTAL SCREENING

**A majority of the NGOs state that they used environmental screening tools.**<sup>23</sup> [NEAT+](#) and [MERA](#)<sup>24</sup> are the two tools most often cited (9 NGOs) but several NGOs also mention [EST](#) (1), [CEDRIG](#), REA (2) and FRAME (1). By contrast, the tools [Tearfund](#), [VEHA](#), [OIE](#) et [FEAT](#) do not appear to be used.



**Figure 3.** Responses to 'do you use environmental screening tools to measure the environmental footprint of your projects? (n = 15)

<sup>23</sup> For more information on tools, see the cartography of environmental screening tools, developed by REH's Environmental Evaluations Working Group, [Mapping evaluation tools and environmental screening tools, Environmental Evaluation Working Group, February 2025 - REH](#).

<sup>24</sup> Although it is proposed in the questionnaire and often cited by respondents, it may be useful to recall that MERA is not an environmental screening tool. In fact, this tool does not enable context to be fully taken into account, and, as a result, it is intrinsically blind to existing environmental vulnerabilities.

**6 NGOs indicate that they do not use environmental screening tools**, either because their sector (health) is not covered (1 NGO), or because they find the tools are not suitable for their work and are too generic (2 NGOs), or because they use their own tools (2 NGOs), or because the organisation does not itself engage in project activity. One NGO added that environmental screening is not considered a priority.

On in-house tools developed by NGOs, used to replace or to complement other tools, respondents say they use the following:

- A tool specific to the sector of professional training, based on the analysis of value chains, replicable in other economic sectors – this tool was developed by a signatory NGO that is a member of the organisation Groupe Formation Insertion Professionnelle (FIP)<sup>25</sup> (Professional Training and Employment) and has been tested by two other (non-signatory) NGOs.
- A checklist (1 NGO).
- A marker (2 NGOs), in particular, [CARE's climate resistance marker](#), recently updated;
- A matrix (1 NGO);
- Another unspecified tool (1 NGO).

**6 NGOs speak of progress** with environmental screening over the course of the past 12 months. Examples given are awareness-raising sessions, training sessions, and the deployment of tools in a growing number of regions where they intervene. One organisation was unable to respond to the question, because the person in charge of the subject had recently left post.

The use of environmental screening tools **varies according to in-house procedures, donor constraints** (e.g., DG ECHO encourages the use of NEAT+<sup>26</sup>) **and sectors of activity**. Thus, environmental screenings are basically conducted for water-hygiene and sanitation projects, and for food security projects. One NGO also mentions environmental screenings for agro-alimentary transformation projects and for initiatives on training and employment.

**The share of projects covered by environmental screenings differs greatly between NGOs:** 3 NGOs indicate that about half of their projects are covered; 1 NGO indicates that a third of projects are covered; 7 NGOs indicate that only a few projects are covered. 1 NGO more specifically speaks of coverage of its *country offices*, with this NGO having chosen a country- rather than project-based approach to environmental screenings. Finally, 2 NGOs **aim eventually at systematic coverage of all projects**.

***Given the limitations of available tools, try a more ad hoc or flexible approach to the use of environmental screening methods: ACF's challenge.***

ACF adopted in 2024 a different approach to environmental screening. It recommends carrying out a biannual NEAT+ evaluation in each country office which should result in an initial list of recommendations that are applicable to all activities. It then recommends applying the MERA matrix approach at programme or activity level, drawing up a list of potential risks and identifying reduction measures that have sufficient impact. In practice, teams carrying out environmental screenings are given a certain latitude, so NEAT+ exercises may sometimes be carried out at project level. With this approach, ACF sets aside conventional wisdom, instead innovating and trying out new ways of imagining and conducting environmental screening. This runs counter to the 'official' notion that NEAT+ should be systematically applied to all projects: ACF works out the most effective and relevant way of identifying measures to implement at project level. By

<sup>25</sup> <https://groupe-fip-ong.org/>

<sup>26</sup> In its 'minimum environmental requirements', DG ECHO asks its partners to conduct rapid environmental evaluations or screening for water, health and sanitation projects 'using NEAT+, or a similar tool' (see the [guidance note](#), p. 55. DG ECHO also suggests NEAT+ training to its partners. (See the [DG Echo WebSite](#))

taking this ad hoc<sup>27</sup> and flexible approach, ACF shows proof of a critical sense in its use of tools, and of impressive adaptability.

**Box 3.** Given the limitations of available tools, try a more ad hoc or flexible approach to the use of environmental screening methods: ACF's challenge.

### Commitment 1: Measuring our impact - Analysis

The work entailed in measuring impact has unquestionably been **a considerable challenge in recent years for NGOs** attempting to take environmental issues more fully into account.

First, on the carbon footprint calculation: NGOs have worked on methodologies and on data collection, whether collectively (including in REH's Carbon Working Group) or individually. With time, methodologies and the scope of data collection have been expanded, thereby becoming more thorough, or – in a recent, creative development – they have done the opposite and been reduced, thereby becoming simpler and therefore easier to replicate. **The diversity of approaches raises a major difficulty: how may the data collected be used to monitor decarbonisation trajectories?** This is not a new question – we have seen it coming for several years now – but this year's REH report brings it clearly to the fore, via the details provided by the signatory NGOs. Confronted with the difficulty of measurement, it might be asked: **is it even reasonable to carry out annual carbon footprint calculations?** To alleviate the burden of this task – which in any case is unlikely to be considered a priority in the current difficult situation – should calculations not be carried out at longer intervals? Should they not be simpler? While a number of NGOs have gained considerable experience in measuring emissions and calculating trajectories, now seems the right moment to **imagine simpler methodologies, both for measuring and for monitoring, which should, if possible, be coordinated.**

NGOs are also making progress in measuring the environmental impact of their projects. In addition to the growing take-up of **NEAT+**, a new tool – the **MERA** matrix – was launched in 2024 and developed by REH's Environmental Evaluations Working Group and **appears to have had a degree of success** in the humanitarian sector. Furthermore, several NGOs, unable to use standard tools because of the nature of their projects, are attempting to make use of other types of resource and are even developing bespoke tools. Unfortunately, other NGOs remain under-resourced. Thus, while several donors have made environmental screening a number one priority,<sup>28</sup> and while guidance has been issued<sup>29</sup> to help NGOs do the work of environmental screening, **it appears that NGOs do not all have the same means of responding.** Obviously there is no single tool that is adapted to every project, in every situation, or in every country, or to all the different ways NGOs operate, but we are nonetheless seeing the emergence of an **increasingly normative approach** – as we know, a somewhat classic trap in the humanitarian world,<sup>30</sup> – which aims to encourage NGOs to take fuller account of environmental impacts.

### COMMITMENT 2: REDUCE OUR CARBON FOOTPRINT

Signatories to the Statement made a commitment: **Reduce our carbon footprint by setting reduction targets in line with IPCC recommendations to halve emissions by 2030 and by at least 30% by 2025.**

<sup>27</sup> Lévi-Strauss suggests that the 'ad hoc' approach uses the D.I.Y. concept of reusing or reassembling material that is already available.

<sup>28</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/environment/common-donor-greening-priority-actions-2025\\_fr.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/environment/common-donor-greening-priority-actions-2025_fr.pdf)

<sup>29</sup> REH's Environmental Evaluations Working Group has produced a [standard operating model](#) and a [map of current tools](#).

<sup>30</sup> See, for example, Sphere Standards assessment: Glasman, J. (2021). Are humanitarian standards scientific? What sociology of science can teach us about the Sphere standards. *Humanitarian Alternatives*, (18), 184–197; et Heath, C. J. (2011). *Humanitarian Standards analysis: the sphere standards, the keys to accountability or the death of creative disaster response?* Oxford.

[https://www.academia.edu/587871/Humanitarian\\_Standards\\_Analysis\\_The\\_Sphere\\_Standards\\_The\\_Keys\\_to\\_Accountability\\_or\\_the\\_Death\\_of\\_Creative\\_Disaster\\_Response](https://www.academia.edu/587871/Humanitarian_Standards_Analysis_The_Sphere_Standards_The_Keys_to_Accountability_or_the_Death_of_Creative_Disaster_Response)

## REDUCTION OBJECTIVES

**This objective is formulated without precise quantification:** the NGOs must each determine a baseline year as well as the nature of their commitment: absolute or relative in relation to their activities as a whole; and, if relative, which exact indicator is to be used.

Baseline year	Number of NGOs in 2024	Number of NGOs in 2025
2019	6	3
2020	0	1
2021	4	3
2022	2	3
2023	1	3
<b>Not defined</b>		2
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>15</b>

This year's results on baseline years show several changes in comparison with results in the last (2024) report. **4 NGOs have in fact chosen to modify their baseline year.** The outcome is that **the baseline year varies between 2019 and 2023.** The 2 NGOs that have signed the Statement since 2024 have yet to define their baseline years.

**Table 2.** Baseline year of commitment by NGOs and changes in responses to questioning about this issue between 2024 and 2025 (n=15)

On the type of reduction, we note that **the great majority of NGOs (11) specify their commitment as a relative value.** 2 NGOs have opted for absolute value (minus 62% in value relative to the baseline year, and minus 50% in absolute value). 1 NGO – one of the new signatories since 2024 – has not yet defined its position on this. These results show changes in comparison with last year: first, **the 4 NGOs that had not at that time chosen a type of reduction have all, this year, opted to define their commitment in terms of relative value.** Another change: 1 NGO that had defined its commitment in terms of relative value has changed its position to absolute value, its responses on this point in previous years having been made in error.

Type of reduction	Number of NGOs 2024	Number of NGOs 2025	
<b>Relative value</b>	7	<b>11</b>	4 in relation to total financial turnover
			3 in relation to the number of full-time equivalents (FTE)
			4 have not yet selected an indicator
<b>Absolute value</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	
<b>Both relative and absolute</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	
<b>Not defined</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>15</b>	

**Table 3.** Type of commitment by NGOs and changes in responses between 2024 and 2025 (n=15)

For NGOs that have specified their commitment is in terms of relative value – that is, relative to their volume of activity – **an indicator also needs to be defined to enable evolution of the trajectory towards the objective to be monitored.** 4 NGOs have still not defined that indicator, however. Of the others, 4 have defined it as total turnover and 3 have defined it as the number of full-time equivalents (FTE).

## TRENDS IN DECARBONISATION TRAJECTORIES

Thanks to quantified data provided this year by respondents, we **attempted to evaluate, for each NGO, trends in decarbonisation trajectories, in line with their specific commitments** (baseline year and type of reduction). Obviously, trajectories are not necessarily linear. They may vary between upward trends and

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downward trends. For the present exercise, we only considered variations between the baseline year and the most recent greenhouse gas emissions reduction assessment to have been carried out.

Upward trend	Downward trend	Impossible to determine
<b>2 NGOs :</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+6% in 2024 by comparison with 2021, in absolute value.</li> <li>+14% in 2024 by comparison with 2021, in absolute value.</li> </ul>	<b>3 NGOs :</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-17% in 2022 by comparison with 2019, relative to business turnover figures.</li> <li>-13% in 2023 by comparison with 2019, relative to the number of FTE.</li> <li>-7% in 2024 by comparison with 2020, in absolute value.</li> </ul>	<b>10 NGOs</b>

**Table 4.** Changes in GHG emissions of signatory NGOs (n=15)

This work on trends yields a preliminary, obvious conclusion: **it is impossible to determine a trend for three-quarters of signatory NGOs (10)**, even though 7 of them signed up to the Statement as long ago as 2020! In fact, the evaluation we were attempting may indeed be impossible for several reasons: **either commitments are still not yet fully defined**, that is a baseline year is missing or the type of commitment (absolute or relative) has not been selected; or the indicator in the case of a relative commitment has not been defined (4 NGOs), **or there is no sufficiently consolidated monitoring report on carbon footprint calculations** (5 NGOs) **or even no properly consolidated baseline carbon footprint calculation** (5 NGOs).<sup>31</sup> More than one of these reasons may apply.

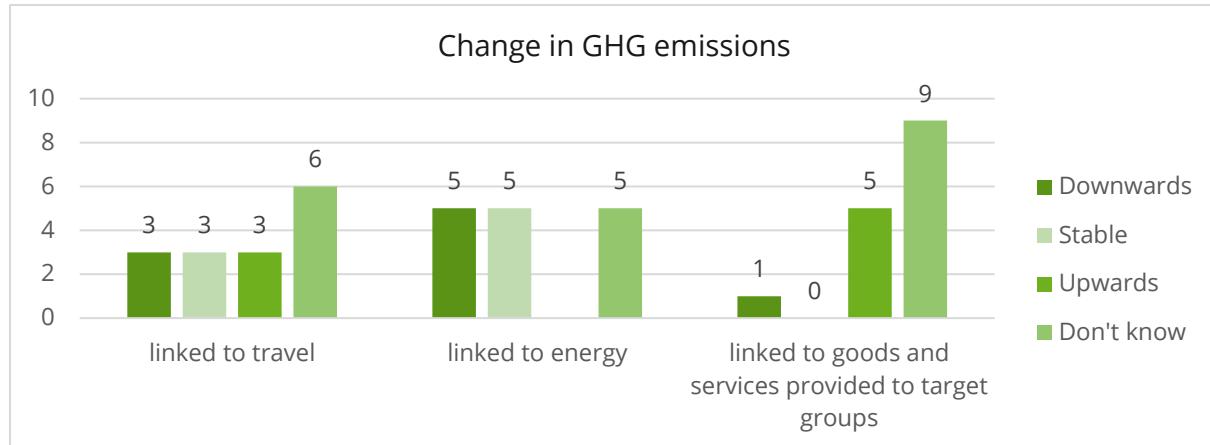
The second observation to be made from this table is that the NGOs for whom we have been able to determine a trend in their carbon trajectories are not all on a downward trend. **2 NGOs are seeing their emissions increasing, while emissions are decreasing for just 3 NGOs.**

As in previous years, and consistent with the content of their reduction strategies, **the signatory NGOs in general identify procurement of goods and services** (which can represent up to 75% of their overall carbon footprint), **travel** (especially air travel) **and energy consumption as their principal sources of emissions**, followed by purchases of capital goods<sup>32</sup> and – more marginally - freight, construction and waste.

Without attempting to gather quantified data – too complex – we therefore asked respondents to assess the change, in absolute values, of several sources of greenhouse gas emissions, recognising that this will inevitably be a somewhat subjective assessment. This results first of all in the inference that **NGOs are for the most part unable to assess trends**, particularly in emissions linked to goods and services provided to 'beneficiaries' or in-country target groups. That said, the area where the most NGOs mentioned a downward trend is energy. Upward trends are, however, observed for emissions linked to travel (3 NGOs) and to goods and services provided to 'beneficiaries' or in-country target groups (5 NGOs).

<sup>31</sup> That is, beyond the methodological choices, and the difficulties, that need to be dealt with, these carbon footprint calculations can be considered as representing the organisation's carbon footprint for a given year. In reality, few calculations appear to be in a state where they can be considered as representing the carbon footprint as required (see Table 1 and the asterisks \* that have been added).

<sup>32</sup> The capital goods referred to here include items such as buildings, IT equipment and installations, vehicles, etc.



**Figure 4.** Cross-analysis of the following: 'how have operational emissions changed in the specific areas of travel, energy and goods and services provided to target groups? (n=15)

**Travel:** respondents explain the downwards trend – when such a trend is observed – by the adoption of a strategy limiting air travel (1 NGO), the continuation of post-Covid conditions (1 NGO) or simply by a fall in the number of FTEs. When emissions have gone up, the explanation is that they are linked to an increased number of flights with changes, or short flights, for security reasons (1 NGO), or simply an increase in the number of field visits (2 NGOs).

**Energy:** the installation of solar energy systems (6 NGOs) has contributed to a downward trend in emissions, although 2 NGOs that installed solar energy in their offices report that emissions remained stable. In this area, too, a fall in the volume of activity (3 NGOs) logically caused a fall in emissions. Another NGO (1 NGO) reports an increase in the volume of activity, which could explain the fact that emissions remained stable despite efforts to reduce them. In addition, one NGO (1 NGO) explains a fall in emissions by an increasing use of hybrid vehicles, while three others emphasise a fall in gas and electricity consumption, including because of reduction in aeraulic pressure or the restrictions in some countries on air conditioning. Finally, one NGO notes that its margin for manoeuvre is limited because it is housed in accommodation belonging to other organisations.

**Goods and services provided to target groups:** the only reason given for a fall in emissions in this area is a fall in the volume of activity (1 NGO). Conversely, an increase in emissions in this area is correlated to an increase in purchases – and thus in the volume of activities. Another NGO refers to an increase in monetary transfers, associated with very high emissions, to explain an observed increase. It may be noted that several organisations referred to the limits of carbon accounting, by way of drawing attention to the difficulties of drawing comparisons. In addition, one NGO indicates that because of a lack of data it does not know whether its emissions have fallen, but believes that they should have done so, in line with a significant decline in its volume of activity. Finally, another NGO notes that it does not provide goods or services to in-country groups, while another indicates that it does not monitor emissions in that area.

## DEVELOPING DECARBONISATION STRATEGIES

**13 NGOs state that they have a carbon emissions reduction strategy**, which has been developed from measuring their footprint.

For 11 NGOs, the situation has not changed since last year. These NGOs simply carry on with their strategy as developed or, alternatively, are still hampered in developing a strategy because of a lack of dedicated resources. For the 4 others, changes noted are as follows:

- Development of a road map and a decarbonisation trajectory (1 NGO);
- Development of in-country action plans, based on the overall framework of the road map (2 NGOs);
- Updating of an annual action plan (1 NGO).

One respondent also highlighted the suggestion that **developing action plans at country level is an interesting way of operationalising an overall institutional framework**, which otherwise often seems too abstract. However, the lack of means to develop and implement plans severely limits the prospect of making appropriate use of them.

Among the different carbon reduction strategies, we observe numerous themes and initiatives that are common to the NGOs as a group. In particular, and as in previous years, **three themes emerge as priorities: travel, procurement and energy**. We list below the themes and initiatives described:

Themes	Activities and initiatives cited
<b>Travel (10 NGOs)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Limitation and optimisation of travel (especially air travel).</li> <li>- Travel policy under development or already in place.</li> <li>- Shared (with team members) in-country travel.</li> <li>- Priority given to direct flights.</li> <li>- Encouragement of low-carbon public travel for journeys under 6 hours.</li> <li>- Halving of the amount of time spent in in-person meetings.</li> </ul>
<b>Procurement (10 NGOs)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Criteria agreed for ecological/sustainable purchases when tenders are put out.</li> <li>- Alternatives sought for items that emit heavily (food allowances, hygiene kits, cement, cattle and other herding animals).</li> </ul>
<b>Energy (8 NGO)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reduction of energy consumption.</li> <li>- Use of solar energy to power infrastructure.</li> <li>- Promotion of renewable energy types.</li> <li>- Vehicle fleet changed to hybrid or electric.</li> <li>- Insulation of offices.</li> </ul>
<b>Waste management (5 NGOs)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promotion and setting up of a management structure responsible for waste.</li> <li>- Promotion and setting up of specific arrangements for managing medical waste.</li> <li>- Research strategies for local recycling (especially for e-waste)</li> </ul>
<b>IT (4 NGOs)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Management of IT department/section</li> <li>- Development of a policy of responsible purchasing.</li> <li>- Promotion of reconditioned objects for sale.</li> <li>- Systematic renewal of IT hardware.</li> <li>- Policy of automatic suppression of data (e.g., Teams).</li> </ul>
<b>Construction and buildings (2 NGOs)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 'Bio-climatic' conceptualisation of buildings.</li> <li>- Research and buy materials with low carbon content, or recycled materials.</li> </ul>
<b>Freight (2 NGOs)</b>	<i>No specific action indicated.</i>

**Table 5.** Actions taken to reduce carbon footprint, by theme. (n=14 ; the number of NGOs referring to each theme is noted in brackets).

Beyond these themes and action points, several respondents indicate that **initiatives relating to apprenticeship or to management structures** are an integral part of their strategy, and could be built on to help guide respondents, or their organisations, towards a more collective appropriation of environmental issues.

Two NGOs draw attention to initiatives on **team training** and **raising awareness of best practice**, both considered vital in the sustainable inculcation of eco-responsible behaviour and in improving the implementation of environmental policies. In addition, one NGO stresses the need to allow and encourage **local autonomy in prioritising decarbonisation activities**. This approach allows organisation-wide strategies to be adapted to operational realities and to ensure a more pragmatic and relevant transition.

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*'Each local or field office will have autonomy over prioritising its decarbonisation activities, taking into account the local situation, needs and constraints.'*

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## DEVELOPING PARTNERSHIPS FOR DECARBONISATION

**7 out of 15 NGOs state that they have benefited in the last twelve months from partnerships** in working on reducing their carbon footprint.

2 NGOs mention support from external organisations – often skills or technical advice provided at no charge – for measuring their greenhouse gas emissions and carrying out reduction assessments (GCI and Wavestone). One NGO indicates that it has partnered since 2021 with Climate Action Accelerator. Another specifies that 'several programmes have requested support from specialised organisations in their approach to reducing their carbon footprint', without giving more details.

A more obviously operational initiative: one NGO describes a partnership with a **transport company which supplies mobile storage containers for its pharmaceutical operations**, since its previous storage space was poorly insulated. Another NGO describes implementing an **energy transition project and a waste management project** alongside partners (Hulo, Électriciens sans Frontières and Véolia). Finally, another NGO describes the establishment – still at a preliminary stage – of a network of partner consultants, which should, in due course, contribute to reducing air travel.

## THE CHALLENGES OF DECARBONISATION AND HOW TO OVERCOME THEM

In their efforts at decarbonisation, the Statement signatory NGOs are encountering numerous challenges and difficulties, some of which were already noticed in the previous monitoring report:

- Most of the NGOs (10) draw attention to a **lack of resources, whether financial resources, human resources or technical knowledge**, which limits their capacity to monitor their emissions, put teams together or implement structured organisational change;
- Almost half draw attention to difficulties with securing buy-in from others within the organisation, and difficulties with in-house behaviours relating to change, whether competing operational priorities, or resistance to change which may be personal or more broadly cultural (in the context of the culture of the organisation as a whole). Several NGOs try to overcome this type of difficulty by aiming to be **flexible and creative and encouraging dialogue and working together to build new approaches**;
- Two NGOs indicate also that **some of the demands from financing partners** are responsible for significant emissions which might in fact be avoided: examples given are requests to fund travel, and requests for assistance with livestock breeding programmes. To respond to such requests, the NGOs try to establish processes of the 'go/no go' type, or seek to negotiate with the partners concerned;
- One NGO describes in some detail the difficulties of **changing to maritime freight**, because of the lengthy procedures for procurement of particular items or material, (e.g., medicines and medical supplies) and also because of the problem of trying to secure the necessary advances of funds from donors;
- The **decarbonisation of procurement is a major challenge** for the NGOs, not to mention the fact that they have very little influence on how this is achieved. One NGO does, however, mention China's efforts to decarbonise through a hybrid mix of energy sources, which offers the prospect of a fall in some emission factors which might lead to lower emissions being associated with particular products, especially solar panels;
- Unusually, one NGO spoke of distance working as a potential brake on emissions reduction. Because of distance working, **colleagues live further from the office** and, since their jobs entail only part-time

distance working, the result is an increase in emissions on the occasions when they travel to and from their regular offices;

- Finally, given the challenges of carbon calculation, one NGO indicates that it has chosen **a pragmatic approach, with the emissions calculation phase accorded less priority, to enable implementation to proceed.**

Several new directions, or adjustments to present arrangements, are envisaged by the NGOs **to enable continued progress towards decarbonisation.** First of all, road maps and action plans (6 NGOs) are to be updated, e.g., so that purchases that emit more carbon are more clearly identified; and planning will take account of changes in HR. There are other ideas, too: remobilising teams by revising the decarbonisation targets of the Statement (See "The environmental dynamics of international aid" page 6) (1 NGO); the development of projects specifically focused on environmental issues (1 NGO); the integration of mitigation measures in adaptation projects (1 NGO); finding ways of sharing travel arrangements and visits to the field (1 NGO); efforts at advocacy, to try to get funding partners to agree to restrict air travel (1 NGO); and, finally, the consolidation of a network of local partners (1 NGO).

***Look for ways of enabling mitigation measures via adaptation projects. Example: good practice in CRESH projects supported by ALIMA in Chad, or by Terre des Hommes in Bangladesh.***

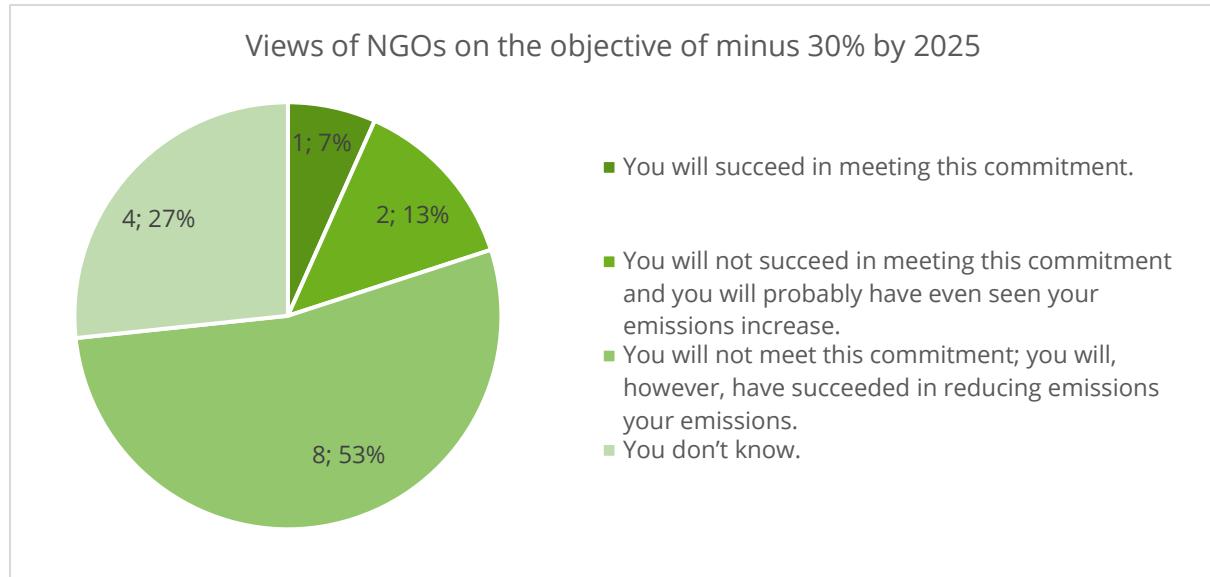
We know that given the inevitability of climate change, the world will have to adapt, and soon. Well aware of this, the NGOs are developing increasing numbers of projects focused on adaptation or resilience. However, projects focused specifically on mitigation measures are rare: this is because in countries of the Global South, the operational priority is – legitimately – adaptation. To address this difficulty, CRESH (Climate Resilient and Environmentally Sustainable Healthcare) projects, supported by ALIMA in Chad, or by Terre des hommes in Bangladesh, backed by Climate Action Accelerator, attempt to systematically integrate attenuation measures in health systems. Starting from a Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Analysis (CVCA), carried out at a primary or secondary health care centre, project teams identify both adaptation and mitigation measures, with some measures falling in both categories. Thus, projects provide for the installation of solar energy systems, the adoption of energy management plans to reduce consumption, the improvement of waste-management infrastructure, the assessment of recycling options, or staff training in responsible water, energy and waste management.

At a time when NGOs are going through an existential crisis, with many calling for a renewed focus on operational issues, this way of thinking and of implementing projects so as to include – as far as possible – environmental footprint reduction measures, is highly relevant. If this concept could be applied to all international aid projects, aiming specifically at adaptation projects has the advantage of bringing together adaptation and mitigation issues in an integrated vision of environmental and climate concerns.

**Box 4. Look for ways of enabling mitigation measures via adaptation projects. Example: good practice in CRESH projects supported by ALIMA in Chad, or by Terre des Hommes in Bangladesh.**

### **VIEWS ON ACHIEVING THE 2025 DECARBONISATION OBJECTIVE**

The NGOs who signed the Statement were asked to share, for the present report, their views on progress towards the 2025 decarbonisation objective – a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions of minus 30% - even though 2025 was already well under way when the questionnaire was circulated and even though the NGOs obviously do not yet have consolidated figures or data for the year.



**Figure 5.** Responses to the question: 'Therefore, regarding the commitment made to the first phase of decarbonisation (-30% by 2025), you consider that ...' (n = 15)

The results show that **just one NGO estimates that it will meet this commitment**, even specifying that it had already achieved in 2024 a 39% reduction in the carbon intensity of its turnover figure. **8 other NGOs think that between the date of the questionnaire's being circulated and the end of 2025, they will have succeeded in reducing their emissions, even though to a lesser extent than expected**, thanks to various decarbonisation measures already adopted, or because of a reduction in the 'Chinese' hybrid energy mix, which affects – in practice, reduces – the carbon levels of goods procured from China. One of the eight nonetheless stresses that the issue has been particularly difficult in 2025, because of budgetary cuts. **2 NGOs, however, believe that they will not have succeeded in reducing their emissions, or even that their emissions will have increased, which they explain by an increase in the volume of their activities**: they note that otherwise emissions might have been reduced given their efforts at decarbonisation. Finally, **4 NGOs prefer to say that they do not know** because of the absence at present of figures for 2025. One of these four NGOs estimates that it will likely be able to report a fall in emissions in absolute value terms because of the reduction in the volume of its activities in 2025, and perhaps even a fall in emissions in relative value terms, because of a freeze on international travel as a result of budgetary cuts. Another of these four NGOs indicates that efforts have been made on energy consumption and transport but cannot say for certain if these will have been enough to offset possibly increased emissions in other domains.

#### Commitment 2: Reduce our carbon footprint: Analysis

This quantified reduction target is what, exactly? The Statement and its central commitment 2 on decarbonisation targets might be seen as no more than a **call to rally** around carbon issues. Or is it genuinely a contract that the NGOs have willingly entered into?

It is clear that the **complexities of carbon calculations are a major constraint** which the NGOs may not have fully foreseen when they signed the Statement. While some things may be relatively easily monitored (e.g., travel or energy consumption), others are considerably more complicated and measuring them can only be done very imperfectly (e.g., the procurement of goods and services in particular). Is measuring an NGO's carbon footprint simply an impossibility? And how best may this commitment be monitored and evaluated? It may be noted also that international aid is presently at a very tough pass, likely to become worse, making it **increasingly difficult to invest resources in carbon footprint calculations**. In the end, is the calculation really a priority compared with taking action?

These difficulties and the lack of visibility that results may explain why **several NGOs struggle to clarify their commitments definitively** (baseline year, type of reduction, indicators for relative terms reduction). This lack of precision may in reality be the sign of a lack of interest on the part of governance structures in making the necessary commitment, or – worse – a way of avoiding risk by not entering into a commitment that is too tightly specified. It should nonetheless be stressed that several NGOs have defined their commitments more exactly since the previous report – committing themselves for the most part in terms of relative values – and there are only 4 NGOs that have yet to define their commitment fully.

What conclusions may we draw about decarbonisation trajectories? At present, **it is only possible to recognise trends for 5 NGOs**, no more. Contrary to what might have been expected, not all these NGOs are on a downward trajectory. **In two cases, emissions have clearly increased**. It should be noted that these are trajectories in terms of absolute values, as chosen by these NGOs when defining their commitments. These increases may simply be due to increases in these NGOs' volume of activity, and do not therefore imply that their decarbonisation efforts have not produced results. However, without complementary information, **these changes in terms of absolute values are impossible to interpret**. Similarly, the fall in an NGO's emissions in absolute value terms does not provide the scope to ascertain whether this is the outcome of decarbonisation efforts or if it more likely reflects a fall in the volume of activity. It is, nonetheless, satisfying to observe that **downward trajectories are recorded for 3 NGOs** and it must be hoped that NGOs that are unable to provide data may turn out to be going in the same direction.

Even though not backed up by quantified data, downward decarbonisation trajectories are possibly also happening in other NGOs **since the majority have adopted decarbonisation strategies** – basically covering travel, procurement and energy consumption. These strategies ensure that environmental issues more generally – going beyond issues purely related to carbon – are being taken into account, indicating that NGOs are keen **not to get trapped in a 'carbon tunnel'**. In addition, several NGOs appear to pay **special attention to the autonomy of their field offices**, allowing them to prioritise and test measures that seem to them appropriate. It is also noticeable that in order to achieve their targets, **the NGOs are exploring partnerships**, whether within the domain of international aid and cooperation, or with the private sector.

However, the **difficulties are still considerable, and they have not greatly changed**: lack of resources, resistance to change, lack of alternatives – especially in procurement –, contradictory expectations on the part of their funding partners, etc. These difficulties show how impossible it is for the NGOs to make the necessary changes on their own, **depending as these changes clearly do on factors outside the NGOs' control**. For this reason, the reduction of NGOs' carbon footprint **can only be a collective undertaking**, as part of which they can make use of their collective strength to influence and modify these external factors (e.g., put pressure on suppliers to take environmental and climate issues into account). This issue, of the difficulty of resisting external factors and pressures, undoubtedly **explains why accountability** i.e., the NGOs' accountability in respect of their commitments as signatories of the Statement, is a problem. How can they be held accountable for results which do not depend on them alone?

Despite everything, the great majority of the Statement signatory NGOs remain resolutely optimistic, taking the view that by the end of 2025 – the target date for the first commitment of minus 30% of emissions – a reduction in emissions will have been achieved. This is a surprising view given the figures, but it seems above all to be an expression of the **NGOs' that carbon footprint reduction programmes or actions have indeed been adopted** and if the ambitious results aimed at have not been achieved, the NGOs have nonetheless not 'done nothing'. Finally, given the dates for the next carbon footprint calculations, we already know for certain that **it will not be possible next year to produce a quantified report on whether the decarbonisation target of minus 30% by 2025 was achieved**. This limit does not appear to be a major problem for the NGOs who believe, in the end, that the issue is not so much the achievement of quantified targets as the progressive integration of the environment and climate as cross-cutting issues for their organisations and the projects they undertake.

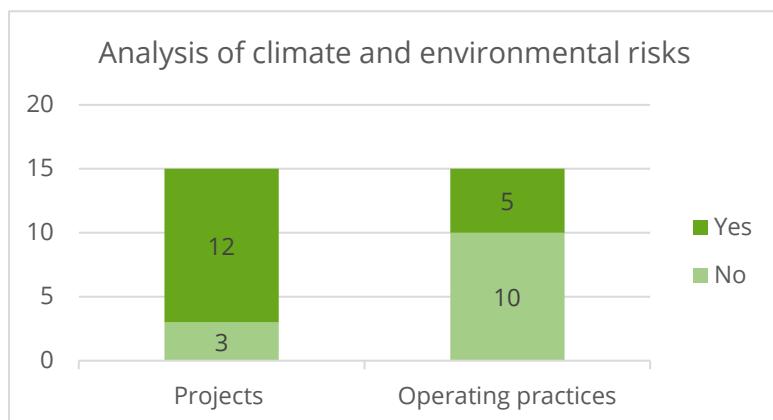
### COMMITMENT 3: ADAPT HUMANITARIAN ACTION TO NEW ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHALLENGES

The signatories to the Statement committed to:

- *Include the analysis of climate and environmental risks into all actions and encourage the implementation of prevention, mitigation and adaptation measures where appropriate.*
- *Reduce negative impacts and promote humanitarian and development actions that have a positive impact on the environment and climate.*
- *Develop and call on local expertise in line with the Grand Bargain's commitments on localisation.*

### INTEGRATE ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE RISK ANALYSIS IN ALL ACTIVITIES

A total of **12 NGOs** state that **they analyse climate and environmental risks in the context of their projects**, which is 4 more than the previous year. NGOs say that they use for their analysis the environmental screening tools already described in the section on Commitment 1: Measure our impact (above, page 14), particularly NEAT+ (4 NGOs), MERA (3 NGOs) or in-house tools. This year – a consequence of the Croix Rouge Française (French Red Cross) becoming a signatory to the Statement – EVCA ([Enhanced Vulnerability And Capacity Assessment](#)) is also mentioned: it is a method of evaluating environmental vulnerabilities and capacities developed by the Croix Rouge and applied to about half of its projects. In addition, two NGOs indicate that they use CVCA ([Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Analysis](#)), developed by CARE: they combine it in an *ad hoc* fashion with in-house tools. One of these NGOs added that **training in the above analysis and use of the tools is provided to several in-country teams**. Finally, while several NGOs (3) point to **an increasing use of this type of risk analysis, nowhere is it systematic**.



**Figure 6.** Responses to questions 'do you analyse the climate and environmental risks to your projects?' and 'do you analyse climate and environmental risks to your operating practices (offices, supply chains, transport, etc.)? (n=15)

**Beyond projects, do the signatory NGOs consider climate and environmental risks to their own operating practices?** In the same way that the Covid-19 pandemic significantly undermined the way NGOs worked, are not phenomena such as temperature rise, floods or other climate or environmental changes highly likely to throw off course NGOs' capacities for action? **10 NGOs say they do not think about this.** Of the 5 others, only two NGOs refer to tools: a self-evaluation tool that is not specific to this issue; and a checklist that sets out all the stages needed when reviewing requests for supplies sent by partner countries for approval by the headquarters logistics department. Part of this checklist – last updated over three years ago – entails an evaluation of environmental risks and proposals for mitigating them. Finally, the 3 other NGOs state that they carry out this type of analysis without relying on tools or procedures.

### REDUCE ANY NEGATIVE IMPACT AND PROMOTE HUMANITARIAN AND DEVELOPMENT AID INTERVENTIONS THAT HAVE A POSITIVE IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE

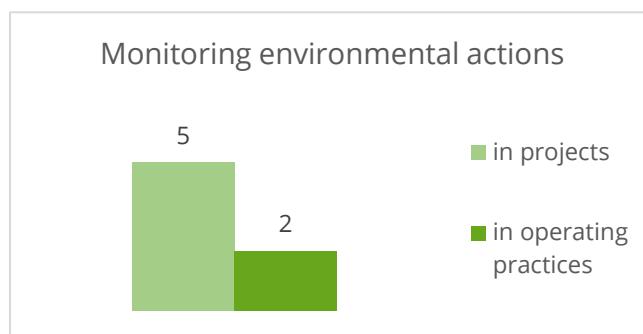
**For projects, certain specific procedures are adopted, corresponding to risks identified** but, for most of the NGOs, this is not done systematically. Only one NGO indicates that climate resilience must be integrated

as a cross-cutting issue in all its projects. This may be via agro-ecological practices, by carrying out climate vulnerability analysis of food security projects, or by integrating 'crisis modifiers'<sup>33</sup> in project budget lines to be able to respond to any unpredictable climate events. Another NGO gives an example to illustrate how its practices have recently changed in order to properly include adaptation measures to counter climate change: 'for our WASH project, built or restored infrastructure will be built on raised foundations or otherwise constructed so as to resist floods'. **5 NGOs nonetheless indicate that they have not identified or adopted specific measures for projects.**

Beyond the principle of 'do no harm', **the majority of the NGOs (10) are also looking to implement activities with a positive impact on the environment.** This may even entail entire projects, whose principal objective may be to strengthen the resilience of groups of actors. Thus, several NGOs work increasingly on restoring land that has become degraded, reforestation, 'greening' buildings, carbon sequestration in the ground, water resource management, improved agricultural practices or governance arrangements for natural resources. However, as one NGO points out, **there is often a risk of maladaptation.**

**On operating practices, few examples are given in the responses.** One NGO indicates that it protects its electricity generators and raises them above ground level, and insulates more thoroughly the places where medicines are stocked, in very hot regions or areas.

**Monitoring of initiatives adopted as part of projects seems to be underdeveloped** (5 NGOs), *a fortiori* for those concerning operating methods (2 NGOs). One NGO has developed a specific in-house tool – the 'Green Reduction and Adaptation Plan' (GRASP) – which it uses for all its projects. Three other NGOs say that they attempt to make use of the monitoring-evaluation requirement for each project, adding new indicators related to mitigation or adaptation. However, this affects only a limited number of projects.



**Figure 7.** Monitoring environmental actions in projects and in operating practices (n=15, several responses possible).

*'[There is] no organised system of monitoring, but the small number of our initiatives makes it possible for us to monitor them 'manually' for the time being. However, we are going to need to reflect on a more robust system.'*

## DEVELOP AND MAKE USE OF LOCAL EXPERTISE, IN LINE WITH GRAND BARGAIN COMMITMENTS ON LOCALISATION

In the past twelve months, **7 NGOs say that they have had recourse to local expertise** to adapt their projects or operating practices. This expertise may be available **in an NGO's local teams** (2) which gives them direct access to technical competencies on climate and the environment. Experts may often be specifically

<sup>33</sup> *This is a classic humanitarian assistance programming tool that allows an organisation already active in a region or area to rapidly adapt projects in the event of a sudden crisis.*

recruited to work on projects. One NGO indicates that it strengthens its local teams by providing training. NGOs may also rely on **external expertise from local organisations or research bodies**. Thus, one NGO works with a local organisation that protects wetlands in Iraq, and with the University of Maroua in Cameroon on an agro-ecology project. Partnerships may also be **established with international partners that are present in-country and have specific competencies**, for example in flood prevention or in integrating products from local fauna and flora into nutrition strategies. Finally, as one NGO points out, **work done on the environment and climate can be usefully coordinated with work on localisation and equitable partnerships**.

#### **Commitment 3: Adapt humanitarian assistance to new environmental and climate risks – Analysis**

**While analysis of climate and environmental risks in projects appears to be improving**, particularly through environmental screening, **risks are rarely analysed for NGOs' operating practices**. Indeed, NGOs have few tools or methodologies available for this. Work in this area is never systematic, which indicates that there is a potential margin for progress to be made. NGOs try to adopt certain approaches to be better prepared for risks. These may take the form of **specific project activities, response protocols that are more risk-sensitive, or budgetary arrangements that allow funds to be released when risks become reality**. These approaches are not yet, however, the usual way of operating, and monitoring seems to be very limited.

The NGOs additionally try to rely on local expertise, primarily among their own staff (or HR), and also sometimes among local organisations or institutions. As the Statement's Commitment 3 suggests, **implementing environmental actions is part and parcel of the localisation agenda** that the international aid community is aiming to realise. Recommended both for reasons of effectiveness and for ethical reasons because it tends towards a fairer balance of power, **localisation makes it possible to recontextualise environmental issues and ways of responding to them**. Very different from generic approaches – which are in any case often thought up in the Global North on behalf of the Global South – approaches that take account of the local situation and local people are a necessary condition for operationalising the environment agenda. Efforts begun in this direction should be continued.

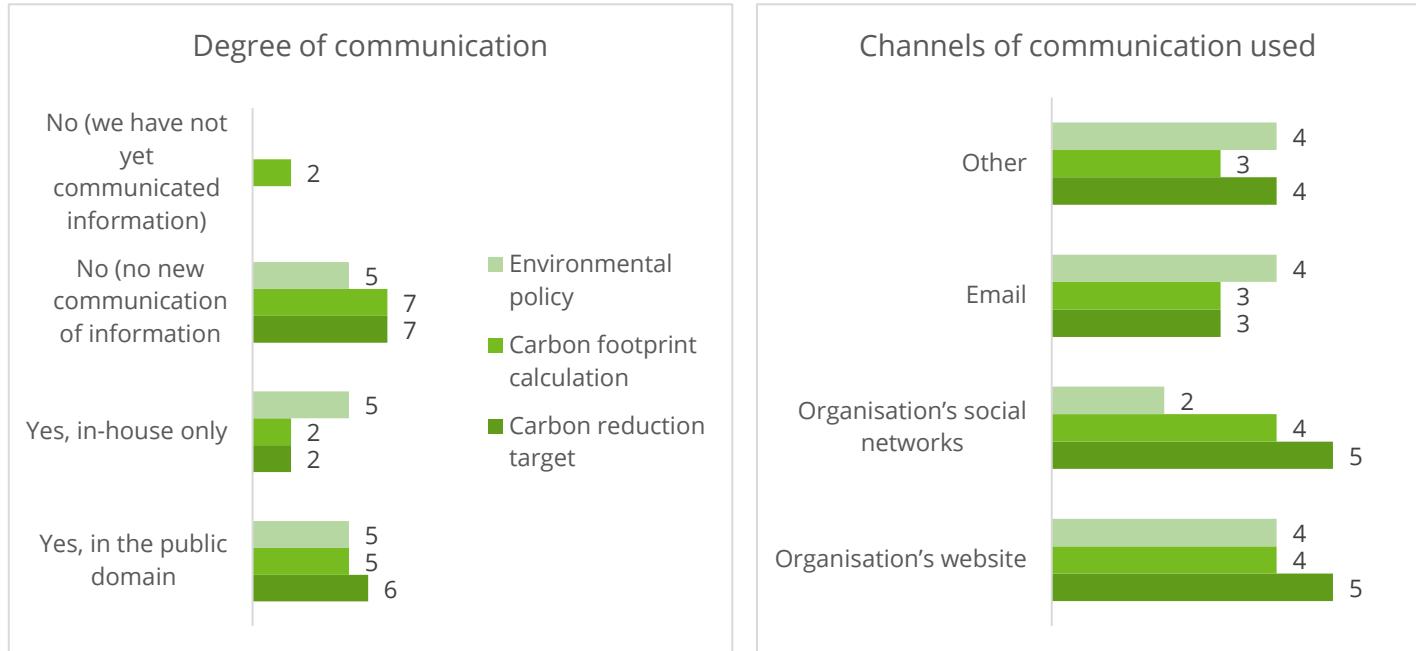
#### **COMMITMENT 4: COMMUNICATE**

The signatories to the Statement committed to: **Make public any information on progress as soon as it is available, and on an annual basis.**

This year's survey shows that **several NGOs continue to communicate and give out information about their environmental policies, their carbon footprint calculations or their reduction targets** while others indicate that they have not issued new information in the course of the past twelve months.<sup>34</sup> The communication of information may in some cases be kept within the organisation itself, particularly information on environmental policies. It may also be noted that **two NGOs, despite having duly completed carbon footprint calculations, have so far chosen not to communicate information about them**, whether in-house or externally.

**The NGOs use different channels of communication.** While websites and social networks are the classic communication channels, several NGOs also indicate that they use other modalities: events such as lectures and webinars (in-house or open to the public), organisations' intranet in addition to REH's working groups.

<sup>34</sup> It is likely that several of the NGOs that responded 'no' (no new communication of information) might actually have responded 'no (and we have not communicated any information as yet)'. This is certainly the case, for example, of one NGO that does not have a completed greenhouse gas emissions reduction assessment.



**Figure 8.** Combined analysis of the responses to 'In the course of the last 12 months, have you communicated information about your reduction targets; your greenhouse gas emissions reduction assessment; your environmental policy?' (n=15)

**Figure 9.** Responses to questions 'What methods or communication channels have you used to communicate information about your reduction targets; your greenhouse gas emissions reduction assessment; your environmental policy?' (n=15)

Looking at the websites of different NGOs, it may be noted that **only 4 NGOs have a page dedicated to their ecological transition** easily accessible on their site.<sup>35</sup> Among those four, only one refers to the Statement of Commitment.

We also looked at the NGOs' websites and environmental policies to see if they refer to the Statement of Commitment, decarbonisation objectives or REH.

The results indicate a relatively low level of communication on these issues. Some are referred to on 'news' pages – which are sometimes as much as four years old –, or in environmental policy statements. While referring to REH may be considered supererogatory, **the low level of references to the Statement and its five commitments does raise questions about the degree to which these commitments have been appropriated by the NGOs, and about their willingness to be fully involved in a collective endeavour of this kind.**<sup>36</sup>

Finally, even the decarbonisation targets on which the most attention is concentrated are referred to in the environmental policies of only 7 of the Statement signatory NGOs. Even more surprising, one NGO gives different decarbonisation targets at different places on its website.

Thus, **just 4 NGOs have communicated information in the public domain, in detail** – that is giving a clear account of the methodology used – **the outcome of their carbon footprint calculations**. Among these, just **3 NGOs specifically refer to monitoring of their decarbonisation trajectories** (one on its website and in its annual report; one in an online report on the issue; one only in its annual report).

<sup>35</sup> That is, clearly visible on the menu.

<sup>36</sup> It is all the more surprising considering that the signatory NGOs have been involved in revising the Statement and have, several times, stressed the importance of 'remaining united around a shared target' (see [REH's position paper on the targets of the Statement of Commitment on the Environment by Humanitarian Organisations](#)).

	News	Environmental policy <sup>37</sup>
<b>Statement of commitment</b>	7 NGOs	4 NGOs
<b>arbon targets</b>	8 NGOs	7 NGOs
<b>REH</b>	4 NGOs	5 NGOs

**Table 6.** Reference in communications in the public domain to the statement of commitment, decarbonisation targets, REH

#### Commitment 4: Communicate – Analysis

The commitment in the Statement to communicate and inform goes into no detail about the type of information that should be put into the public domain on an annual basis. This commitment addresses **both NGOs' accountability** in respect of all 5 of the commitments entered into **and also their role in encouraging others** in the humanitarian assistance sector to follow their lead, it would be reasonable to expect the NGOs to communicate plenty of information in the public domain, about their environmental policies, measures adopted and arrangements made to monitor their progress in meeting the commitments. The survey shows that the reality is more or less the opposite.

First, despite the work done on measuring carbon footprints, **few carbon footprint calculations are publicly shared**. It is also the case that the results of carbon footprint calculations are presented publicly but with no explanation of the methodology, which is clearly a problem given the differences between the methodologies available and/or used. **Very few NGOs provide information in the public domain on their decarbonisation trajectories**. The difficulties of carbon calculations have already been discussed above as a reason for the failure to communicate information about decarbonisation trajectories but there are other ways of approaching the decarbonisation issue, and of communicating information about it, without necessarily adopting highly complicated quantitative methods. At the very least, an account of the effort made or the approach taken could be described in NGOs' public communications in order to make others aware of the difficulties encountered.

Then we see that the Statement of Commitment, and even decarbonisation targets, are very often absent from NGOs' published environmental policies. While this might just be an accidental omission, or related to the timing or reports on activities, this deafening silence (in the cases where we come across it) implies that there is only a **minimal sense of accountability for these commitments**. Several NGOs that signed the Statement in 2020 have since evidently made progress on their own, and have in some sense 'freed' themselves from the initial collective commitment.

It may be that the low level of information provided publicly is due simply to a **low level of dialogue within the NGOs** between those in charge of environmental issues and those responsible for communications policy. The publication of the revised version of the Statement should provide a good opportunity to reconsider the communications issue.

Finally, we should recall that **this present monitoring report**, prepared by the REH secretariat, with the active participation of all the signatory NGOs and with contributions from all of them, **aims to provide a collective response to Commitment 4**. In this same spirit, REH plans to continue producing such a report in future years. However, if it to have a real impact, it should be widely disseminated, not only by the REH secretariat but also by all the NGOs who are signatories to the Statement.

<sup>37</sup> We may note that for 4 NGOs we have not found an environmental policy on their website.

## COMMITMENT 5: GET OTHER PLAYERS ON BOARD TO RAISE THE BAR

The signatories to the Statement committed to:

- *Raise awareness among as many employees as possible about the major impact of climate and environmental crises on the most vulnerable, using the means available.*
- *Contribute to the development of an environmental and climate charter for the entire sector.*

### CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT CHARTER

Of the 15 respondents, **13 organisations have signed the Climate and Environment Charter** of the Red Cross movement. One of the 13 signed in the past 12 months.

### IN-HOUSE AWARENESS-RAISING

This last year, **13 NGOs organised awareness-raising events in-house**. On the tools used, on the themes and on the groups targeted, we find much that was already cited in previous reports. A point of interest, however: **country office directors appear to be among those specifically targeted, which is a change from previous years**.

Tools	Themes	Groups targeted
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Workshops and 'fresks':</b> climate fresk (5), a '2 tonnes' workshop (1), themed workshops (flights, water, etc.) (4)</li> <li>• <b>Training and different types of learning modules:</b> online training or e-learning (6), MOOC (1), in-house training series (1), specific training (logistics, carbon, NEAT+, etc.) (4)</li> <li>• <b>Webinars and presentations:</b> Webinars, sometimes held regularly (5), refresher session on road map or commitments (2), annual debriefing on carbon situation (1)</li> <li>• <b>In-house mobilisation:</b> via 'Green Teams' (4), awareness raising at in-house events (staff community days, general meetings, team seminars ...) (5)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>General awareness raising</b> (10)</li> <li>• <b>Ecoresponsibility</b> (3)</li> <li>• <b>Decarbonisation</b> (1)</li> <li>• <b>Travel</b> (2)</li> <li>• <b>Waste</b> (2)</li> <li>• <b>Environmental evaluation and screening tools</b> (2)</li> <li>• <b>Nature-based solutions</b> (1)</li> <li>• <b>Water</b> (1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>All employees</b> (11)</li> <li>• <b>New employees</b> (1)</li> <li>• <b>Country office directors</b> (3)</li> <li>• <b>Project leaders</b> (1)</li> <li>• <b>Specialist departments:</b> logistics (1) operational teams (1); an unspecified specialist department (1)</li> <li>• <b>Volunteers</b> (1)</li> </ul>

**Table 7.** Awareness raising in-house: tools, themes, groups.

### EXTERNAL AWARENESS RAISING

**5 NGOs also describe awareness-raising events outside the organisation itself:** 3 NGOs say they contribute actively to **working groups, networks or sectoral platforms**. 1 of these 3 indicates that it shares its experience with carbon footprint calculations. Another says that external awareness raising is an integral part of its mission. The third says it is engaged in various climate networks and takes place in advocacy initiatives. 2 NGOs organise **media and popularisation spaces**, regularly making contributions via various media – especially podcasts – to share experiences and lessons learned, or setting up webinars and training packages – e.g., those developed in the framework of Coordination Sud's Climate and Development

Committee. Participation in these events - aimed at attracting members of the public in significant numbers – is a means of raising awareness. One NGO organised a quiz on water and climate during the Fabrique de la Diplomatie<sup>38</sup> and also during the Fête de l'Humanité.<sup>39</sup> Finally, one NGO reports developing initiatives focused on **climate justice and environmental rights**, giving a voice to young people from Bangladesh and Peru, providing an opportunity to record some of the obstacles faced by the latter.

This year, we asked the NGOS for **suggestions on ways of encouraging others to sign the Statement**. There were some interesting ideas:

- **Develop a joint communications plan for the NGOs**, linking it to the revised version of the Statement of Commitment (1 NGO);
- **Work in a more focused way with national partners (3 NGOs)**: 1 NGO suggests developing a specific awareness-raising tool; another NGO indicates that it succeeded in bringing on board 6 partner NGOs in Niger, Chad, Mali, Burkina Faso and Cameroon, thanks to its partnership model, and suggests that other NGOs might wish to take inspiration from it; a third NGO points out the importance of coordinating work on the environment with work on aid localisation and sketches out an idea about networks for exchanges and capacity-strengthening at regional level, although recognising that this would need a fair amount of coordination and input from a secretariat.

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*'A closer relationship with local protagonists would be beneficial and would also be in line with localisation principles. Ideally, mini-REHs, at regional level, would set up 'hubs', arrange exchanges of ideas and information and help strengthen capacity. Local partners appear to me to be keen on such an arrangement.'*

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#### Commitment 5: Get other players on board to raise the bar – Analysis

The drastic transformation needed to confront the climate and environmental emergencies can only work if everyone mobilises in support. This is why this commitment is intended to encourage NGOs to raise awareness among their employees and volunteers, and also among their partners and suppliers.

The results of this latest survey (for 2025) show that **work is going ahead on this commitment, with numerous in-house awareness-raising initiatives, on different themes and targeting different groups of people**. While playing a part in change concerns every level of each organisation, we infer, from the work **on awareness raising that is addressed specifically to directors of country offices**, that several NGOs pay special – welcome – attention to involving those in key decision-making roles. Because of their authority, their role in determining priorities and their own awareness of the issues, these are people capable of inculcating in-country the necessary impulsion towards ecological transition.

Several NGOs are also trying to advocate, beyond their own organisations, for the environmental agenda. They make use of working groups or existing networks within the international aid and cooperation community, or they advocate more generally in the media spaces that are open to everyone. Their messaging enables **better understanding of environmental issues and the initiatives being pursued** and is also a means of advocacy intended to reach governing bodies, donors, or even national governments. These awareness-raising initiatives outside their own organisations are also, for the NGOs involved, a way of marking

<sup>38</sup> An open event for the general public by France's ministers for Europe and Foreign Affairs

<sup>39</sup> The Festival of Humanity is a large annual cultural and political festival organized by the newspaper L'Humanité, combining concerts, debates, and social activism with a strong left-wing tradition.

a distinction between themselves and others, in a sector – international aid and cooperation – that is still unfortunately very competitive.

Finally, a few NGOs point to the importance of **working specifically with national partners**. Environmental issues may seem complex – even somewhat disconnected from the everyday realities of life for people in the Global South, at least as far as carbon footprints go – and working on these issues in-country, or in the field, entails surmounting many obstacles, social, political and security-related. Thus, following the example of what REH makes possible among international NGOs,<sup>40</sup> creating or **enhancing spaces for exchange at regional level** could enable environmental and climate issues to be more fully addressed, in a properly contextualised and decentralised way. Of course, resources are needed for this, and at present they are in short supply.

## THE CHALLENGE AND THE IMPACT OF THE PRESENT CRISIS

Unfortunately, there are several of the same challenges and difficulties facing the REH members as in previous years, described in prior reports:

- A **persistent shortage of human resources and technical competencies** in the domain of the environment;
- **Resistance to change among teams**, making it more difficult for new practices to be adopted, especially when they entail organisational or strategic changes;
- **Structural problems linked to operations**: e.g., it is still difficult to procure carbon-free materials, since the market remains underdeveloped and costly, especially in countries where humanitarian assistance tends to be provided;
- **Cutting back on air travel** is not easy to do, assuming as it does a major change in the way NGOs operate, which the NGOs themselves are not yet ready to contemplate, or so it seems.

**As well as the problems already familiar from previous years, there are now further problems.** In the course of the last year, the NGOs have seen **the funding situation grow exceedingly tough**, which greatly inhibits their efforts to reduce their environmental footprint. Cuts in the budgets of key donors like USAID, but also the more general downturn in official development assistance, have led to staff lay-offs, the inability to recruit dedicated staff and the shutdown of programmes and projects. 6 NGOs stressed that **given this situation, 'environment' initiatives have been relegated below operational imperatives and urgent humanitarian interventions.**

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*'We have to get by on a shoestring.'*

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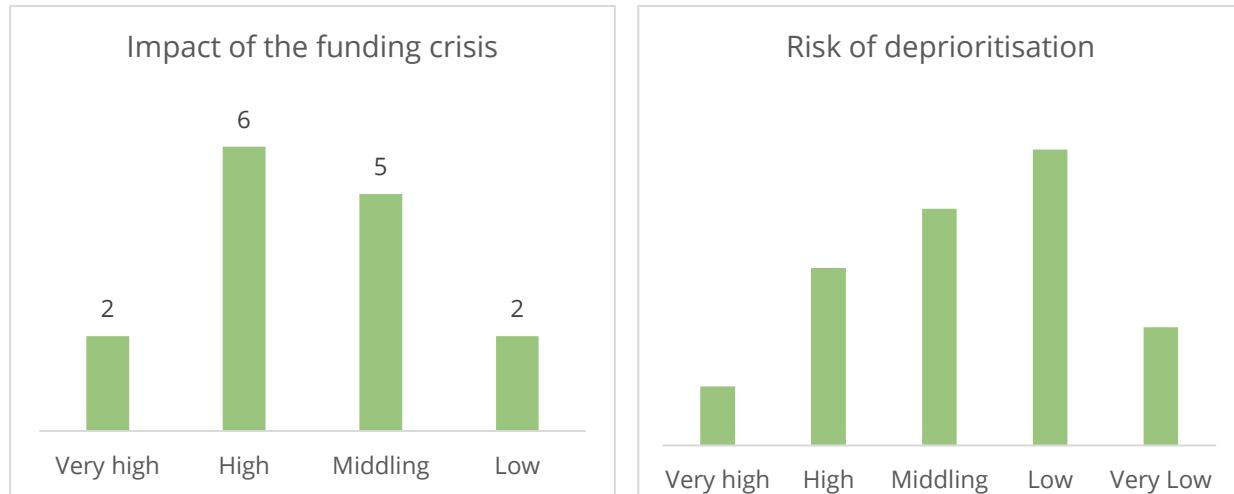
To deal with the obstacles, several NGOs concentrate on **in-house awareness raising, sharing of resources or making teams more autonomous** – using simple tools or e-learning opportunities – in order to reduce their dependence on dedicated staff. **Flexibility, dialogue and building together** are also mentioned as key to overcoming resistance in-house.

Taken as a whole, the challenges and problems represent the **undermining of the environmental pillar in the international aid and cooperation sector**, particularly because of the funding crisis that has hit the NGOs. **Responses are primarily designed to maintain NGOs' commitment** despite their lack of financial means, by focusing on raising awareness, arrangements for sharing resources, and making the most of in-house tools.

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<sup>40</sup> Even if REH does not intend to involve only international NGOs, the most active members of REH, and members of the working groups, are almost exclusively representatives of international NGOs

In view of the massive budget cuts of the past twelve months, we asked the NGOs to say how the funding crisis is impacting their environmental agenda, what the scale of the impact is, and how they perceive the risk of the environmental agenda slipping down the list of priorities in their organisations.



**Figure 12.** Responses to 'what impact does the current funding crisis in the international aid sector have on your environmental agenda? How much of an impact does it have? (n = 15)

**Figure 13.** Responses to 'how do you perceive the risk of the environmental agenda being deprioritised in your organisation?' (n=15)

Once again, the NGOs state that the present funding crisis provokes **major tension between the imperatives of the survival of their organisations and their environmental ambitions**. Several respondents referred to the automatic instinct to '**recentre on the essence of humanitarian work**', seen as vital in a period of instability. It seems clear, therefore, that the environmental agenda risks being something 'nice to have', rather than a priority strategic imperative.

While the impact of the funding crisis on the environmental agenda is judged by most NGOs (6) to be severe or even very severe (2 NGOs), **only 4 NGOs in total judged that there was a high risk of deprioritisation** (3 NGOs) **or a very high risk** (1 NGO). In their comments, the NGOs expressed **nuanced views on how far there was a risk of the environmental agenda being relegated into the background**:

- One NGO imagines a **temporary deprioritisation**, because of the funding crisis, but judges that the environment will soon become a central issue once the wider situation stabilises, since the environment and the climate constitute existential issues for humankind;
- On a similar tack, another NGO judges that there will be more of a contrast, with mitigation issues likely to be deprioritised while adaptation and resilience issues will continue to make progress and to be integrated into assistance programmes;
- **5 other NGOs consider that the environment is sufficiently embedded in their DNA** and that it will not be called into question because it is already at the heart of their organisational strategies;
- One NGO feared an **internal division: environmental ambitions might well survive, but only at headquarters** while failing to cascade operationally to country offices or to the field, because of the lack of financial means.

Two NGOs believe that there might even be **an effect of acceleration** since budgetary constraints mean that they are **calling into question costly practices** - such as the excessive use of air freight - and **adopting instead economy measures, some of which are also in reality ecologically sound**. Ironically, these measures sometimes go further than those that the environmental focal points had dared to propose - e.g., a total ban, for a given period, on air travel.

Finally, as one NGO reminds us, **several donors – particularly DG ECHO – continue to recommend more advanced integration of environmental and climate issues**, which sends a strong signal. Responses taken together show that organisations are struggling to maintain some kind of coherence between the strategic aims and ambitions they have adopted and even, in many cases, reaffirmed despite the funding crisis and their real capacity to implement them, limited as it is by the erosion of both HR and financial support. This tension carries a risk: that **discourse will not lead to action**.

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*'The present problems in the sector require us to completely rethink the system. There are too many organisations, some will go under, others will merge, but in any case, this electric shock must force us to reflect on our value added in implementing projects, and to redirect resources to a more local level. [...] In my view, we need to be ready to anticipate environmental sustainability issues 'sliding' away from the major international organisations [...] in favour of local structures.'*

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### **The challenge and the impact of the present crisis - Analysis**

Unfortunately, and unsurprisingly, **the challenges described in last year's report are the same this time around**. Some of them are broadly external to the NGOs themselves. Thus, **only donors can really make additional resources available to the NGOs** to respond to environmental needs – but this seems increasingly unlikely at the present time. In addition, **obstacles in-country or in the field are structural** and beyond the capacities of the NGOs to solve: lack of infrastructure or services for waste management, for sanitation, for the production and distribution of renewable electric power, the lack of 'ecological' (i.e., with less negative environmental impact) goods and services and the difficulty of determining the quality of the latter if they are available, lack of decarbonised transport, etc. **Indeed, what is at stake here is the entire territorial development of the regions where the NGOs are active**, but where their role will often be only minor. For this reason, it is important to stay humble about the ambitions that have been adopted.

By contrast, other problems arise internally within the NGOs. E.g., **resistance to change** is a psychological, emotional and organisational phenomenon that the NGOs need to try to conjure away. This demands time and patience, of course – the problem will likely be referred to in successive monitoring reports for several more years yet! – and, challenging as the task is, it relies solely on the capacity of the NGOs to work on their own in-house practices, independently of partners, external donors or stakeholders. As for **reducing air travel**, it may seem simple – the Covid-19 crisis or more recently the USAID crisis showed that NGOs could, when obliged to do so, give up flying from one day to the next – but at the same time it is complicated, entailing the NGOs **profoundly transforming their organisational model, notably in the direction of greater localisation**.

And indeed, the present crisis is an invitation to the NGOs to rethink the basics: what should they keep? What should be changed? Each NGO needs to find its own answers to these questions – which of course go wider in scope than just the environment – but, in the light of the results of this year's survey, there are some grounds for hope. **Despite the serious, even very serious, impact of the present crisis, it may be that environmental ambitions will not be fatally threatened by it.** Is that naivety? Or wishful thinking? Or simply a strong conviction? The last annual meeting of the REH directors general demonstrated, in any case, that **the environment may still be on the agenda of strategically well-placed bodies**.

## CONCLUSION

Five years after the signature of the Statement of Commitment on the Climate by Humanitarian Organisations, this monitoring report indicates an ongoing **process that is resilient while also at risk of being undermined**. Resilient, because the signatory NGOs are pursuing, in an exceptionally difficult context, their efforts to structure, to measure, to calculate, to integrate and to reduce their environmental impact. Being undermined, because the funding crisis that has shaken the sector since early 2025 accentuates tensions, often already existing, over human, technical and strategic capacity to go forward with an ecological transition that is both ambitious and sustainable.

This year's analysis confirms a trend observed in previous monitoring exercises: **the ecological transition is gradually taking root in these organisations**. Internal politics are firming up, procedures are in place, calculation methodologies are evolving and being refined, and concrete initiatives that will contribute to the transition are being adopted. In many cases, teams have continued to mobilise, despite cuts in human resources. There is no doubt that what we see is both **cultural and structural change happening at the same time**: the environment is increasingly considered as a constituent part of high quality, relevant humanitarian assistance.

However, the **process runs up against operational constraintsts**, whether those of the NGOs (lack of resources, relatively inflexible organisational models, etc.) or those of the countries where humanitarian assistance is provided (dilapidated infrastructure, goods and services hard to get hold of, etc.). In addition, **the integration of adaptation issues remains too variable** when, as the IPCC insists: 'the window of opportunity for resilience is rapidly closing'.<sup>41</sup> To put it differently, adaptation is a major issue, and it is urgent, for projects as much as for implementation measures, and the NGOs should be getting to grips with it.

**The environmental agenda is still insufficiently coordinated with the agenda for the localisation of aid.** As noted, this report indicates that several NGOs have started to rely more on local expertise, but this process is still incipient and marginal, and often no more than opportunistic. The ecological transition of the humanitarian sector cannot be successfully managed without a profound transformation of its organisational models or without decentralising: fewer overseas trips, more expertise drawn from local sources, more equitable partnerships that will be able to provide sustainable, long-term answers in-country. This move is clearly not only needed from the environmental point of view; it is also an ethical, strategic and operational requirement.

This monitoring report also highlights a troubling paradox: while NGOs give considerable time and energy to designing environmental approaches, **reporting on how far commitments are met is still astonishingly thin**. The issue of accountability, already noticeable in previous reports, is this year very clearly illustrated in terms of decarbonisation trajectories. Indeed, while several years have now elapsed since the Statement was signed, the majority of signatories still lack the consolidated data and the well-defined methodologies needed to properly evaluate progress. Carbon calculation is technically, logically and financially costly, because it relies on exhaustive measurement and data collection. As a result, in many cases, it is still impossible to determine whether emissions are really going up or down. This difficulty sheds light on a **growing imbalance between collective aims and ambitions represented by quantitative targets and the operational realities needed to ensure that these targets are monitored**. While the new version of the Statement of Commitment also includes quantified decarbonisation targets, the tension just referred to raises the question of whether it is useful to maintain a strictly quantitative approach. The new Statement also calls for a **collective review of monitoring arrangements, using a realistic – thus simplified – methodology**.

<sup>41</sup> [AR6 Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability — IPCC](#)

The report illustrates a new key issue: communication of information in the public domain. While it is accepted that the NGOs do not all have the same means at their disposal, nor do they all get the same results, nonetheless the absence of detailed published material on monitoring the five commitments, and the lack of references to the Statement in environmental policies, tend to **undermine the collective outreach that the Statement was intended to promote**. If initiatives, progress and difficulties were more visible, the Statement and its commitments would have greater credibility, and useful lessons could be learnt by other protagonists of the humanitarian aid sector.

Analysis of the survey results indicates another possible **major risk: an ecological transition in several different gears**. Since the NGOs do not all have the same human, financial or technical resources, some are likely to go faster than others. Variations in speed could be valuable, if they meant that NGOs making slower progress could draw on the experience of others that were more advanced. To ensure this happens, it is important **that mechanisms for mutual aid and for peer learning are in place and function well**. This is an area where REH, especially its secretariat, clearly has a major role to play. To add to the problems of weakened cohesion among the NGOs and structural inequalities between them, **a multi-speed transition might hold the ecological transition back**. Indeed, some environmental issues are beyond the capacities of any one NGO to deal with and therefore require a group effort. This is particularly true of procurement and waste management.

In the present situation, the Statement could provide a shared framework and a supportive point of reference for signatory NGOs. However, **that dynamic would only be beneficial if it is truly viewed as a joint endeavour**. Otherwise, the Statement might be reduced simply to a set of isolated commitments, which would gradually be forgotten. In the end, the real issue of the years ahead is not only the reduction of emissions by a given percentage, but the capacity of NGOs to guard against any weakening of their shared ambition. This entails agreeing on the complex details of measurement and calculation, sharing tools, coordinating – at the very least – methodologies, and building up spaces for exchanges and mutual help so that the weakest organisations do not fall away. The signatory NGOs will also need to openly acknowledge missed targets, if necessary, not in order to sanction failure, but to help make adjustments, and provide support to learn together.

Analysis of the results also seems to indicate that while the funding crisis is putting unprecedented pressure on the NGOs, **their environmental agenda is not necessarily deprioritised**. Indeed, for several organisations, it is still a major strategic axis. With emergencies and crises becoming ever more numerous, several NGOs have realised that taking environmental issues into account need not be considered just one more adjustment variable, but, on the contrary, is a pre-condition for sustainability, effectiveness and ethical action on the part of the international aid community.

To conclude, from this report emerges a striking conclusion: **the ecological transition in international aid will not be credible, nor equitable, nor sustainable without a strong common framework, built on a foundation of continuous transparent accountability and cooperation**. The new version of the Statement and the potential arrival of new signatory organisations provide a moment when we can reaffirm our shared vision - realistic, fair, demanding – of the ecological transition.



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*The REH's activities are funded as part of the 'Learning and innovating to improve crisis response' project, with the support of:*

