



ShelterBox

Disaster relief

Environmental Policy

Version 1.0



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1. Policy Statement

Our purpose is to provide emergency shelter to families who have lost their home to disaster, enabling them to rebuild their lives. We recognise that in conducting our work, we have an impact on the environment, either directly or indirectly. For example: local sourcing of timber could lead to increased risk of landslides from deforestation; our use of air freight and our choice of energy to power our offices contributes to climate change; the waste we produce contributes to landfill, and the single-use plastics involved in our work will stay on the planet for many lifetimes.

If not properly managed our impact could contribute to increasing the vulnerability of people to disaster. As a humanitarian organisation we have a duty to uphold the principle of Do No Harm, as well as respecting humanitarian standards set out in Sphere and the Core Humanitarian Standards. We have a responsibility to understand our impact on the environment and take steps to avoid or reduce these effects.

However, whilst there is room for significant improvements in how we manage our impact on the world, we also note the essential nature of our work, and recognise that in some cases we may not be able to avoid or reasonably reduce our environmental impact without compromising our ability to support disaster-affected communities. In order to achieve our aims, we rely on an international transport system which is dependent on fossil-fuels. At present there are no practical alternatives to fossil-fuel based transport, limiting our ability to reduce greenhouse gas emissions whilst continuing our vital humanitarian assistance. For these reasons, we must explore all options and viable alternatives, such as carbon-offsetting.

2. Associated Policies

Ethical Procurement Policy

Travel Policy

3. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all staff and volunteers of ShelterBox Trust and applies to both response and non-response travel.

It does not yet cover third parties such as partners and suppliers, nor ShelterBox Operations Philippines or our affiliate network.

We will always work within the laws and regulations of the countries we work in.

4. Environmental Commitments

Climate Change

1. **We will optimise our aid prepositioning strategy to reduce Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions from excessive international freight.** This means not using air freight to replenish goods unless absolutely necessary and working towards reducing the use of air freight for responses. It also means reviewing our prepositioning hubs to ensure they are in the right locations for best serving those countries we respond to most and to optimise lower-impact freight options.

2. **We will reduce GHG emissions within our freight use** by optimising shipping containers wherever possible, selecting sea or road freight over air freight where we can and working with logistics suppliers to problem solve the issue.
3. **We will reduce GHG emissions created by personnel travel.** This means no domestic air travel without a clear business case. We will choose to travel by lower-impact modes of transport for all business travel and promote and enable cycle to work schemes for HQ staff.
4. **We will reduce GHG emissions associated with events and training** which means optimising public transport and selecting well-connected locations for training and events, wherever possible.

Waste and Materials

1. **We will reduce landfill waste** across all business activities. This means consideration of the consumption and disposal of materials, such as having an effective office recycling scheme for domestic and electronic waste, reducing reliance on single-use plastic in our offices and facilities.
2. **We will eliminate non-essential single use plastics in core aid items by the end of 2020.**
3. **We will eliminate non-essential single use plastics in fundraising materials by the end of 2020.**

Wood and Forest Products

1. **We will ensure all paper products are FSC-certified, or 100% recycled.** This includes all products used at UK sites, and fundraising materials.
2. **We will ensure all forest products are legal.** This means ensuring items such as timber and bamboo are purchased to the minimum legal requirements of source-country, making every effort to understand the supply chain and associated risks of such products before purchase and evidencing all due diligence.

Life Cycle Assessment Approach

1. **We will consider a product's whole life cycle** when evaluating value for money and impact on the environment. This includes IT equipment, aid items where practicable and assets.

Energy

1. **We will power our UK offices with renewable energy.** This means selecting an energy supplier which uses at least 50% renewables to supply electricity to our HQ office, working towards 100% renewables.
2. **We will work to reduce our energy consumption across our UK sites.** This means understanding our energy consumption and building a plan for making energy savings where we can.

5. What's Next?

Our commitments reflect where we are now as an organisation and what we can reasonably achieve immediately in order to reduce our impact on the environment. In addition to these commitments we may wish to work towards implementing the following:

Environmental Impact Assessments as part of every response. This means we will better understand how to mitigate our impact on the environment whilst providing quality emergency shelter. This must extend to the sourcing of materials, construction techniques, waste disposal and occupation of ecologically sensitive sites.

Reducing flights for responses by considering longer deployments per person to reduce the number of personnel required to travel and using personnel closer to the area of response to reduce travel distance.

Incentives to reduce personal car use. This will mean working with local authorities to enable staff and volunteers to use public transport over personal cars in the UK. This could mean promoting a car-pool scheme, discount train and bus tickets and optimising homeworking.

Carbon offsetting. Further research is needed to establish whether carbon offsetting is a viable option to balance our impact on the environment. Once we have investigated this further, we will make a decision on whether to move forward with an offsetting scheme.

Extending this policy. This means creating versions for ShelterBox Operations Philippines and our affiliate network and holding suppliers and partners to the same values.