WREC Baseline Survey

Sustainable Supply Chains

Participants
108 individual respondents took part to the survey from 60 different organizations. The survey has been shared with the Global Logistics Cluster network and field colleagues of the WREC Coalition partners (Save the Children, IFRC, the Danish Refugee Council, WFP).

65% Males
35% Females

Duty stations and roles
The respondents are working in 36 different countries. 13% of them occupy the role of Logistics Manager in Headquarters, while 11% are Logistics Managers in field offices. The remaining respondents occupy logistics roles and other positions.

Priorities Areas of Interest
44% of the respondents (47) indicated that Green Procurement represents the most relevant area to focus on to improve the environmental performance and reduce the environmental impacts associated with their operations.

Awareness of Sustainability Topics
27% of the respondents indicated that they aren’t informed on Reverse Logistics and 30% on Circular Economy. At the same time, Greenhouse Gas Emissions (19%) and Waste Management (21%) have been identified by most respondents as the most familiar areas.

Legend Figure 2: on a scale from 1 to 4, Red = Not informed on the subject, Orange = Have a basic understanding, Yellow = Have a basic understanding but need further guidance, Green = Fully aware

The survey was launched in September 2022 and shared with a network of over 300 humanitarian partners.

Figure 1
Figure 2
RESULTS BY THEMATIC AREA

The survey captured the level of awareness of humanitarian partners in the domains of: Reverse Logistics, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Circular Economy, Sustainable Procurement and Waste management.

Reverse Logistics

Critical factors influencing the introduction of reverse logistics processes in an organization

65% of the respondents indicated that the identification of suppliers with relevant capacity is the most critical factor to introduce reverse logistics processes in supply chain structures. The lack of supporting policies and regulations represents the second most critical factor, selected by 34% of respondents.

Organizations having in place a system to return products to suppliers for reusing or recycling

Only 24% of respondents indicated that their organization has a system to return products to suppliers, with 76% respondents indicating that their organization doesn’t have such a system. This represents a huge area for improvement, the WREC project could contribute to raise awareness on the success stories by humanitarian partners in this field and encourage the adoption of take-back schemes. Simultaneously, 72% of the respondents aren’t aware of local systems to return products to suppliers, while 28% of the respondents provided a positive answer.

Organizations having a Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions accounting mechanism in place

35% of the respondents confirmed that their organization developed an emission reduction strategy, however the majority (41%) hasn’t done it yet.

Waste Management

Organization with a solid waste management planning framework in place

Only 26% of the respondents indicated that their organization has a solid waste management planning framework in place. 43% responded ‘no’ while 31% are not aware of any solid management planning frameworks in their organization. However, 69% of the organizations not having a framework at present is planning to implement one in the near future.

Organizations having in place a mechanism to measure waste volumes

91% of the organizations don’t have a mechanism to measure waste volumes.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Organizations having a Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions accounting mechanism in place to measure emissions (including Scope 1, Scope 2 and Scope 3)

Most of the respondents don’t know or indicated ‘no’ to this question (respectively 31% and 41%). A carbon accounting mechanism allows to define a baseline and measure progress as a pre-requisite to define a carbon reduction strategy/roadmap. The general lack of awareness on the subject makes this topic a priority area to address.

Organizations having an emission reduction strategy in place

35% of the respondents confirmed that their organization developed an emission reduction strategy, however the majority (41%) hasn’t done it yet.

Most frequent materials returned to suppliers

Of the 24% of respondents who return products to suppliers, damaged products, followed by waste and by-products, make up 54% of the items returned.
RESULTS BY THEMATIC AREA

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Sustainable Procurement

Organizations having measures in place to move towards a greater percentage of local procurement

65% of the respondents indicated that their organization is trying to increase the amount of goods and services procured locally as a measure to increase sustainability, however a number of product LCA indicate that local procurement isn’t necessarily the most sustainable solution. Therefore, additional training and guidance would be needed in the area.

Products procured from environmentally sustainable sources

58% of the respondents indicated that their organizations don’t have a mechanism in place to verify if the products procured come from environmentally sustainable sources, while only 12% provided a positive answer. 30% of respondents aren’t aware if such mechanisms are in place.

Barriers to a circular economy transition for the humanitarian sector

According to most of respondents, the greatest barriers to a circular economy transition are technological - e.g. limited attention for end-of-life phase in current product designs, limited availability of recycling material and recycling infrastructure - and financial (56%) - including major up-front investment costs, governance issues concerning responsibilities, liabilities and ownership, short terms vision in budget allocation for CE initiatives -, followed shortly by infrastructural barriers (55%). The respondents could select multiple answers.

Organizations having conducted a product life cycle assessment (LCA) related to plastics, packaging, or humanitarian aid

Most of the respondents aren’t aware or indicated ‘no’ to this question (respectively 48% and 41%), with only 11% of positive responses.

Considering that 59 organizations took part in the survey, this means that only about 6 organizations conducted a similar exercise.

The WREC: support and next steps

According to the survey, so far the WREC project supported 19% of respondents in the adoption of waste management practices to reduce waste volumes and 16% of respondents with the provision of useful guidance in the reduction of emissions. Throughout 2023, the WREC project will support the humanitarian community with the development and consolidation of targeted guidance, training materials, and resources to support the reduction of environmental impacts of humanitarian supply chains.

89% OF THE RESPONDENTS AREN’T AWARE OF ANY LIFE CYCLE ASSESSMENTS (LCA) CONDUCTED BY THEIR ORGANIZATIONS ON PLASTICS, PACKAGING AND ITEMS RELATED TO HUMANITARIAN AID.