The WREC Project
Environmental Sustainability in Humanitarian Logistics
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Who we are

The Global Logistics Cluster, with the support of a coalition of humanitarian partner organizations - Danish Refugee Council (DRC), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), Save the Children International (SCI), and the World Food Programme (WFP), have come together to develop the Waste Management Measuring, Reverse Logistics, Environmentally Sustainable Procurement and Transport, and Circular Economy (WREC) Project to produce harmonized guidance on waste management and greenhouse gas emissions, increase knowledge and awareness in the humanitarian community about green logistics, and support practitioners in environmental impact reduction, with a special focus on sustained field-based solutions.

The WREC Project is bringing together humanitarian partners, private sector stakeholders, and academia to make sure that today’s life-saving activities don’t have unintended environmental impacts that need cleaning up tomorrow. As part of this, the Global Logistics Cluster plays an active role in coordinating and collaborating with those leading complementary initiatives to ensure that this information is both available and contextualized for field-level practitioners’ use.

The project goals:

- **Focus** on waste & greenhouse gas emissions
- **Increase** knowledge and awareness across the community
- **Support** practitioners in impact reduction
- **Reach** hundreds of Logistics Cluster and project partners
The Project Activities

You can find below a summary of the main activities carried out in the framework of the WREC Project.

1. Gather and share data on the impact of logistics on the environment, raising awareness and presenting practical solutions to allow organisations to prioritise environmental sustainability.

2. Compile, collate and share guidance on how to mitigate environmental harm, using a single information portal accessible to all.

3. Focus on waste and greenhouse gas, amplifying good practice case studies and identifying local, affordable, and scalable solutions. Map and share complimentary initiatives.

4. Provide expert knowledge and guidance, through a dedicated help desk accessible to the entire humanitarian community.
What we work to achieve

Targeted Outcomes

- Sustained adoption of best environmental practice across the humanitarian supply chain community
- Safer, less polluted environments for crisis-affected communities
- The environmental footprint of humanitarian action is well understood by logisticians & stakeholders

Targeted Beneficiaries

Practitioners
Humanitarian logistics professionals in the Global Logistics Cluster and partner organizations will benefit from the practical guidance, training and access to environmental know-how.

Local Communities
Local communities will benefit from improved environmental conditions and identification of affordable environmental solutions.

Donors and Partners
Donors and partners will benefit from streamlined and common environmental criteria.
What we're proud of so far

Workshops and coordination

So far, the WREC coordinated over 15 information sessions on environmental sustainability in humanitarian supply chains, both live and online, publishing over 100 resources on the WREC portal. You can learn more here. Future webinars will be based on the WREC thematic areas and feedback from partners on identified gaps however include: circular economy, reverse logistics, waste management, greenhouse gas emissions.

Baseline Survey on Sustainable Supply Chains

In September 2022, the WREC launched a baseline survey to collect feedback from humanitarian partners about their level of awareness on sustainable supply chains. The results are being used to guide the WREC activities in support of logistics practitioners in the field.

108 participants from more than 50 organizations responded to the survey: 44% of the participants indicated that the priority environmental area of interest is sustainable procurement, with circular economy and reverse logistics being the least understood concepts. Interestingly, 91% of respondents said that their organization does not have any mechanisms in place to measure waste volumes and 72% were unaware of any measurements of GHG emissions (41% no, 31% unsure). An infographics with the results is available here.

Waste management and recycling assessments

The WREC is mapping waste management and recycling capacity in countries where humanitarian operations take place, with the support of the Joint Initiative. A dedicated LogILE map is available on the WREC platform, to access key information on local companies offering waste management and/or recycling services.
Partnering with Academia

In a move to identity future pathways of waste management and reverse logistics in the humanitarian context, the WREC Project has partnered with the Hanken School of Economics' HUMLOG Institute to conduct a qualitative research study on "Waste management and reverse logistics in the humanitarian context".

The research questions addressed in this study were:
- What is the current state of research and practice on waste management and reverse logistics in the humanitarian context?
- What are the gaps in waste management and reverse logistics in the humanitarian context?

The WREC project is also partnering with the Kuhne Logistics University (KLU) to begin a PhD quantitative research on both the existing methodologies used to measure waste creation and greenhouse gas emissions as well as the most effective solutions to manage and reduce them in the humanitarian supply chain context.
Training and resources

Training is a critical component in the adoption of sustainable practices. The WREC project team has provided information and linkages to external sustainability trainings via the WREC information portal and monthly newsletters to humanitarian practitioners.

The WREC is developing an environmental sustainability in humanitarian logistics e-learning module which will be incorporated into the GLC’s extensive training portfolio. The WREC module will provide users with a basic understanding of key environmental sustainability topics and will be a mandatory pre-requisite course for other trainings, such as the LRT, Gear.UP, and LCI.

On February 16th 2023, the WREC launched the first episode of its LinkedIn audio series. During a discussion between professionals, these monthly events aim at shedding light on practical initiatives launched to reduce the environmental impacts of humanitarian supply chains. Two episodes about reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adopting an ESG strategy are now out.

WREC LinkedIn Audio Series

SAVE THE DATE! 16 February 2023
What role do humanitarian organizations have to reducing our greenhouse gas emissions?

Speakers: Katherine Ely (Global Logistics Cluster WREC project), Juan Galvez (IFRC)
Online tools

In the framework of the work done by the Global Logistics Cluster and the WREC, the following online tools have been made available to the humanitarian community.

The WREC Information Portal

- Launched in Jan 2022, the WREC information portal currently hosts over 100 links and documents (including tools, guidance, reports, and standards) as a compendium of best practices and information to support humanitarian logistics partners with environmentally sustainable approaches

- In March 2023, the information portal has been re-categorized into five topics: Corporate Sustainability, Decarbonisation, Sustainable procurement, Sustainable humanitarian supply chains, and Waste management to be more user-friendly

- Development of additional tools and guidance are forthcoming and will be separated by thematic areas related to the WREC (waste management, procurement, greenhouse gas emissions, and circular economy)

- Updated Waste Management and Recycling infrastructure by country available for the humanitarian partners on WREC and on the Logistics Cluster's digital Logistics Capacity Assessment (LCA) platform

LCA Platform

- The Logistics Capacity Assessment (LCA) tool contains information about the logistics capacity of countries relevant for humanitarian emergency preparedness and response. The tool is hosted by WFP for the global humanitarian community. The WREC project team has developed a waste management and recycling infrastructure mapping template and country waste management data collection tool, embedding a LogIE map on the WREC website.
LogIE for the WREC

- The WREC uses LogIE, a technology that improves coordination, sharing, and quality of information flow before and during emergencies. The interest of the platform is that it transcribes the collected and analyzed information in a map, bringing together several layers of information.

- As part of the WREC project, this tool was used to map waste management facilities. Detailed information is available, among others, the name of the waste company, the waste characteristics, the waste type, or the disposable method used, enabling logisticians to have an overview of the recycling capabilities of the country of intervention.

- 17 countries' waste management and recycling information have now been assessed and included on LogIE.
What next?

Mid-term Survey on Sustainable Supply Chains:
- Baseline survey findings available [here](#).
- Mid-term survey launched in April 2023 to inform level of awareness on WREC topics, and request feedback from partner community on gaps and needs, to inform future targeted activities.

Project team recruitment and on-boarding:
- The WREC project team has grown! We have recently welcomed on board two Environmental Specialists (Circular Economy and Waste Management), who join the existing team of Project Manager, Information Management Officer, and Research Intern. Recruitment for Environmental Specialists dedicated to green procurement and green house gas emissions are ongoing.

Coordination & Stakeholder Mappings:
- The WREC Project Team will be holding a series of coordination meetings with thought leaders and stakeholders from partner organizations in an effort to harmonize activities and objectives and avoid overlap on issues related to green procurement, greenhouse gas emissions, circular economy, and waste management.

Workshops & Information Sessions:
- Based on feedback from partners (linked with survey to identify gaps) the WREC team will be holding a number of workshops targeted to partner needs.
- Public events at international fora such as HNPW and AidEX.
For enquiries, contact us!

The WREC project looks to learn from partners and share best practices with the entire humanitarian community to reduce our collective impact and we need you to share your initiatives with us! You can reach out to the WREC project at Global.WREC@wfp.org.