

ActionAid UK

Environmental Policy

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Policy Statement

ActionAid UK (AAUK) is a member of a Global Federation with the primary mission to end poverty through increasing equality and the resilience of vulnerable populations, specifically addressing the needs of women and girls.

Climate change and environmental degradation represent major challenges to human development and there is strong evidence that these challenges disproportionately affect the lives and well-being of women and girls.¹

ActionAid UK acknowledges that our own operations, especially the use of renewable and non-renewable resources, the use of goods and services and our international and domestic travel, directly and indirectly impact the environment. We are committed to being an environmentally responsible organisation and to becoming environmentally sustainable in our operations. We measure our carbon footprint annually and dedicate staff resource to develop and implement actions in line with our reduction targets. ActionAid UK is committed to reaching net zero by 2040.

We are committed to following the [Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability](#) (CHS) including the environmental elements contained in this and have signed the [Climate and Environmental Charter for Humanitarian Organisations](#) as part of ActionAid International.

¹ Seema Arora-Jonsson, 2011; United Nations Development Program, 2012; United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, 2019.

Purpose & Scope

This policy is applicable to all ActionAid UK staff members, volunteers and trustees. At present, the policy focuses largely on our UK operations only, as these are the elements over which we have direct control. Alongside this, ActionAid UK works with the wider ActionAid Federation to build the environmental sustainability of the organisation as a whole.

Roles & Responsibilities

The policy owner has delegated the responsibility of monitoring and reporting on the policy's commitments to the People Team & Facilities, Travel and Security Team with the support of the Green Task Force. All ActionAid UK staff are responsible for adhering to the policy's commitments and the implementation plan issued by the People & Culture team.

The Executive Leadership Team (ELT) sets and agrees the direction and ambition for the organisation's Environmental Policy commitments. The commitments inform a more granular implementation and monitoring plan. The Environmental Policy is ratified by ActionAid UK's Board of Trustees.

Policy Commitments

As a member of the global ActionAid Federation, ActionAid UK's environmental commitments are informed by ActionAid International's environmental policy and guidance. They fall into the recommended focus areas of Ownership, Strategy and Planning; Green Workspace; Green Procurement & Supply Chains; Green Travel; and Green Programming.

Within these broad focus areas, at ActionAid UK we:

1. Commit to being transparent about progress made in our environmental work, including publishing our carbon footprint annually.
2. Commit to being a green workplace and continue developing practices in making our day-to-day operations more sustainable. This includes seeking alternatives to single-use plastics, opting for vegetarian/plant-based catering whenever possible at company events, and following the 4Rs approach (Refuse, Reduce, Reuse/Repurpose, Recycle).
3. Embed environmental considerations guidance in all team planning and new activity and product development throughout the organisation. Guidance is available, and staff are encouraged to contact the Green Taskforce for support and discussion on environmental considerations when planning activities.
4. Continue to regularly monitor and mitigate environmental and climate change risks in the organisational risk register.
5. Support and champion the cross-organisational staff group Green Task Force to identify ways to improve the sustainability of ActionAid UK's practices and propose green initiatives to pilot and roll out to the organisation.
6. Consider the environmental impact of goods and services procured, promoting purchasing goods and services derived from sustainable sources, and work with our suppliers to minimise the environmental impact of our supply chains.
7. Identify and implement measures to minimise the use of natural resources and resource-intensive practices in our operations, including supporter communications and products.
8. Review our due diligence and screening processes for partnerships to ensure those partners we accept funding from, or collaborate with, meet high environmental standards.

9. Explore the environmental impact of core business activities and products such as IT systems and equipment, our pension suppliers and partner financial institutions and improve where necessary and feasible.
10. Minimise the environmental impact of our operations involving travel and shipping, including all staff following guidance on sustainable travel.
11. Communicate with and involve all staff and volunteers in the implementation of this policy and engage them in the organisation's environmental sustainability initiatives.
12. Work with partners and programme countries to ensure the environmental impacts of programme work and operations are well-considered and embedded from early stages of project design.

Policy Implementation & Monitoring

This policy is rolled out to all ActionAid UK staff following its ratification by the Board of Trustees. The policy implementation and monitoring will be carried out by the People & Culture team, with the support of the Green Task Force. This includes regular flight data monitoring per department and annual carbon footprint measurement for the organisation. All ActionAid UK staff members must take an active role in considering the environmental impact of their activities in the workplace and follow the guidance that is provided.