

UNDERSTANDING AND ACTING ON THE CLIMATE CRISIS AND CHILDREN'S RIGHTS: Kindernothilfe's Targets (December 2024)

Introduction

Kindernothilfe (KNH) is committed to making a meaningful difference in the lives and rights of children. Recognising the impact of the climate crisis on children, KNH developed a Global Programme Strategy on children's rights and climate justice (GPS CR&CJ) in 2023, a comprehensive framework to respond to the critical connection between climate change and the rights of children.

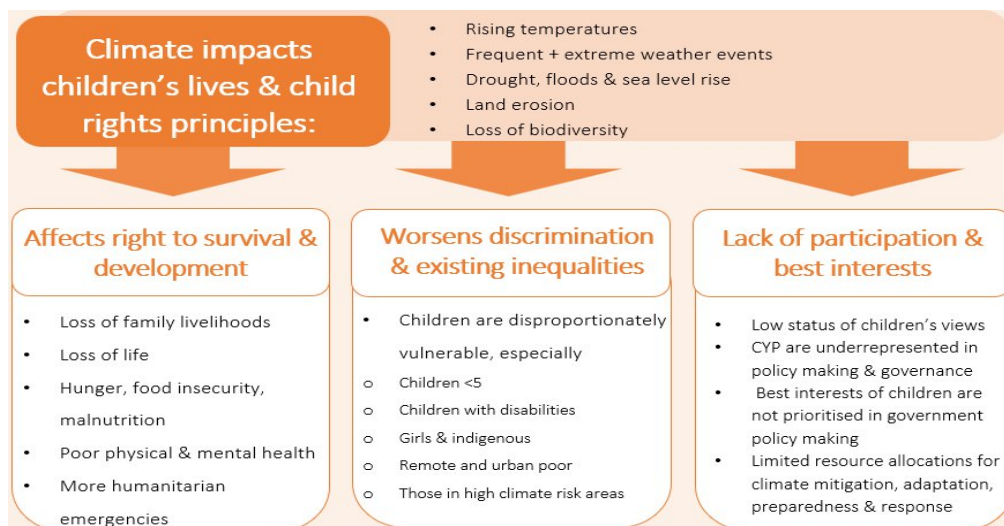
Key aspects of KNH's global program strategy on children's rights and climate justice

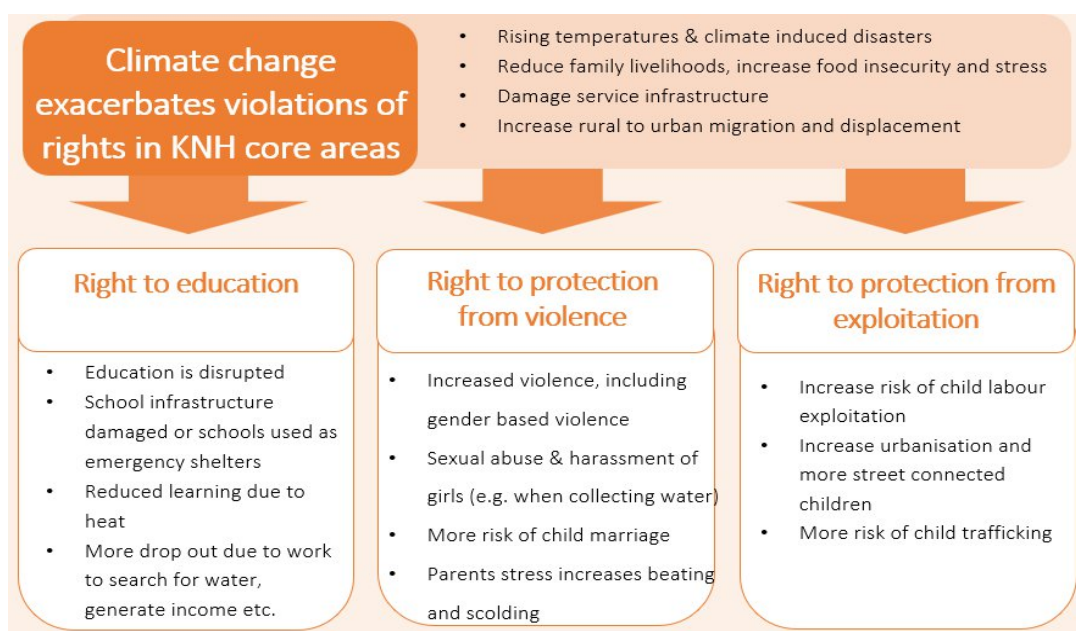
1. The Global Programme Strategy builds upon KNH and partners' experience in child rights-based and community-based work.
2. KNH and partners can apply a child rights-based approach, strengthen partnerships, and build capacity to empower children, youth, communities, and civil society to motivate and hold duty bearers accountable for climate action, child rights, and climate justice
(Foundational building block of interventions in the strategy, see annex)
3. KNH and partners can embed climate sensitive interventions in KNH's four core areas on children's rights to be heard, educated, protected from violence, and protected from exploitation, and/or more broadly expand climate actions.
(Modular building block of interventions in the strategy, see annex)

Efforts by KNH to understand and act on the climate crisis

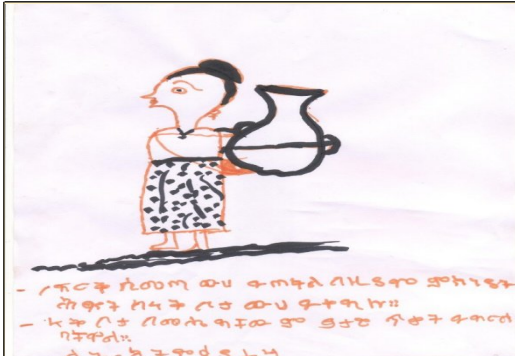
With its GPS on CR&CJ, KNH pursues the **overall goal** that “**children's rights are protected, respected, and fulfilled in the context of the climate crisis and climate justice is secured**”.

Efforts to achieve this goal are based on understanding climate impacts on child rights principles (best interest, non-discrimination, participation, survival and development) as well as on KNH's focal child rights: education, participation, protection from violence and exploitation (see brief analysis below).





Example how climate change negatively impacts children's rights to education and to protection from violence and exploitation:



Draw and write (14 year old girl from Ethiopia):
 During drought there will be a shortage of water so children's are ordered to fetch water from long distances. Children, especially girls, faced different sexual and other abuses while they went to long distance to fetch water. Also girls are absent from school in order to find water from a river far from their vicinity. This causes girls to either repeat classes or to dropout. It also leads to child marriage because she is dropout from school or is sent to child labour.

Commitments by 2030

As part of the GPS, action plans with suggested interventions for different departments and teams were developed. Apart from the set targets below, the annual assessment of those plans is intended.

Targets Program Units

Country level

- At least 90% of all country strategy papers mention connections between analysed child rights situations and climate change
- At least 60% of all country strategy papers have an explicit objective or sub-objective and or (sub-)strategy on improving child right situations in direct connection to the climate crisis

Partner level (implementing organisations)

- Each country has at least one or two partners with explicit expertise in climate change adaptation, mitigation and/or climate justice included in their vision and/or mission statements

Project level

- At least 60% of all projects include child-rights based climate-sensitive project component(s)
- In at least 30% of self-help group programmes climate actions have been discussed, identified and taken forwards (through at least one of the following groups: child groups, self-help groups, cluster level associations, federations)

Capacity / learning for staff and partners

- All staff internationally (including those working within the self-help group approach programmes) have been offered onboarding with an introduction to connections between climate change and child rights and/or given access learning materials
- At least 80% of all KNH staff have participated in a learning activity regarding children's rights and climate change
- At least 50% of partners have taken part in capacity building on climate justice and children's rights activities

Targets Communication, fundraising, advocacy

- Regular external communication (at least quarterly) focused on sensitizing about inter-linkages between the climate crisis and children's rights to mobilize action for climate justice

Fundraising Measures

The effects of the climate crisis on the situation of children and their families are regularly addressed in our fundraising measures. In order to raise awareness among a wide audience about the existing conditions, we employ various fundraising actions:

- Direct-Mailings & newsletters
- Digital marketing campaigns in the areas of: search engine advertising, programmatic digital advertising, affiliate newsletter-marketing campaigns, paid social advertising (LinkedIn, Instagram, Facebook, Pinterest), influencer cooperations
- Additional use of Reddit as a result of demonstrably highly affine target group for sustainability is planned for 2025
- Inserts in print media
- Face to Face conversation/promotions that also draw attention to the effects of the climate crisis

Targets Humanitarian Assistance

By the end of 2025

- Accompaniment of the ongoing WHH Anticipatory Humanitarian Action Facility (WAHAFA)-project with the local partner WACRAD in Malawi with a Before and After Action Review of lessons learnt (Commitment 3)
- Include greening and anticipatory humanitarian action with a child rights focus as a standard query in the internal application format for humanitarian assistance (Commitment 1)
- Assessment of application options for the Environment screening Tools in humanitarian cooperation with local partners (Commitment 4)
- Include climate-humanitarian nexus, greening and anticipatory humanitarian action with a child rights focus explicitly in humanitarian focus topics in the conceptual framework for humanitarian assistance (Commitment 1)

- Facilitating experience exchange between local partners and KNH staff through presentation of the WAHAFA project together with WACRAD and the KNH funded AHA project of PKPA during a Community Day (Commitment 3)
- Facilitate new WAHAFA applications from KNH partners, subject to continued funding; preparatory discussion with Country Teams Zimbabwe, Zambia and Kenya (Commitment 3)

By the end of 2026

- Organise four capacity development events for KNH colleagues and partners on the following topics: Climate-Humanitarian Nexus, Greening and Anticipatory Humanitarian Assistance with Child Rights Relevance (Speaker's Corner, Community Day, Workshops) (Commitment 4)

By the end of 2027

- Assessment of all humanitarian projects funded from 2025-2027 with KNH's own funds on their climate sensitivity and environmental compatibility in a corresponding assessment and sharing lessons learnt with KNH partners (Commitment 5)
- Fuel Money eligibility for partners is a given at KNH. In 2025, hold a round table with all relevant KNH units on the administrative and operational provision of fuel money; process finalised by the end of 2026 (milestone 1), piloting in FY 2027 (milestone 2). (Commitment 1)

By the end of 2028

- Establish periodic review (tbd. quarterly, semi-annually, annually) of KNH humanitarian projects to evaluate their climate responsiveness, environmental impact, and adherence to child rights and compile a report based on these reviews. (Commitment 4)
- Leverage the findings and lessons from these reviews by integrating climate resilience as a core component in all KNH humanitarian and Development programs, in cooperation with the coordinating KNH Green Team. (Commitment 4)

KNH aims at monitoring the achievement of these commitments annually and recognizes that some adjustments might need to be made in line with strategic developments.

Every 4-5 years KNH will additionally report on its emissions, resource use and efficiency through the German Sustainability Codex.

Annex 1: Components of Kindernothilfe's Global Program Strategy on children's rights and climate justice

The GPS has two strategic building blocks:



Examples of practical interventions (building block one) by KNH and partners

- Increase communication on the links between the climate crisis, child rights and climate justice among a range of key actors to mobilise action
- Make sure KNH country strategies include a clear focus on climate change, child rights, and climate justice, and budgets for relevant project work
- Expand partnerships and strengthening capacity of KNH and partner staff and volunteers on climate change adaptation, mitigation, preparedness, child rights and climate justice
- Strengthen the capacity of children, youth, Self Help Groups and civil society on climate protection, child rights and climate justice, including support for child and youth led climate action initiatives
- Advocate with and strengthen the capacity of governments and other actors (e.g. Businesses) to be responsible for climate protection, children's rights and climate justice.

Examples of practical interventions (building block two) by KNH and partners

- Support community based and school based child-focused disaster risk reduction (DRR), early warning systems and response, including support for child/youth led prevention and mitigation activities such as tree planting, water harvesting, and promotion of indigenous wisdom for environmental protection.
- Advocate for climate change, DRR and climate relevant skill-based learning to be integrated in school curriculum, with budget allocations to ensure teacher training and quality implementation integrating a strong focus on psycho-social wellbeing to reduce eco-anxiety
- Improve capacity and organisational procedures to prepare for and to deliver child-focused humanitarian response in communities adversely affected by climate change
- Use child rights monitoring and reporting mechanisms, such as CRC monitoring reports, to monitor, document and advocate on climate crisis, child rights, and climate justice
- Support child-focused climate litigation to protect the rights and interests of current and future generations
- Strengthen internal organisational efforts to promote climate protection (e.g. KNH staff flying less for meetings, using public transport or electric vehicles).

Theory of Change

KNH's Global Programme Strategy on climate change and children's rights

Theory of Change (Narrative) – *for graphic see below*

Introduction: Kindernothilfe implements a **child rights approach** to enhance realisation of children's rights. KNH draws on significant evidence that the climate crisis exacerbates existing child rights violations and worsens vulnerabilities and inequities. It threatens survival and worsens violations of children's rights for current and future generations. Yet governments and other concerned actors are not taking children and young people's views and rights seriously to prioritise climate actions and climate justice.

Key barriers preventing action on the climate crisis and fulfilment of children's rights include:

- Insufficient climate-related information and capacity (e.g. on climate adaptation, mitigation, climate justice, child focused humanitarian action), lack of funds, insufficient platforms for dialogue, power and influence of children and youth
- Low motivation of duty bearers to prioritise and invest in climate action and children's best interests, and lack of sufficient policies
- Weak accountability mechanisms for climate action and children's rights

In the Theory of Change, **building on KNH and partners' existing work and child rights-based analysis, there are two strategic building blocks:**

The **foundational building block**, recognises that Kindernothilfe and their civil society partners have expertise in applying a child rights approach, with a clear emphasis on empowering children and young people as right-holders, holding governments and other duty bearers to account to increase realisation of children's rights. Existing community based work, including collaborations with women's Self Help Groups and child groups can be built upon to prevent and address violations of children's rights and gaps in provision that are exacerbated by the climate crisis, with particular efforts to reach the most vulnerable children. Building upon existing KNH and NGO partners' strengths and expertise, the GPS CC endorses and promotes a child rights approach to the climate crisis to improve realisation of rights for current and future generations of children. Recognising the inequities contributing to the climate crisis and the indivisibility of children's rights, a child rights approach should also ensure an integral focus on climate justice and decision-making guided by the best interests.

In the second **modular building block**, departments and partners implement climate sensitive and child rights-based interventions that are most relevant to them, either integrating climate sensitive actions into existing KNH core thematic work and/or expanding existing work to be more responsive to the specific challenges created by the climate crisis. To enhance efficient, effective and sustainable efforts to scale-up child-focused climate relevant interventions, KNH and partners are encouraged to **embed climate sensitive interventions in its existing four core thematic areas** on 1) children's right to be heard, 2) children's right to quality education, 3) children's right to protection from violence and 4) children's right to protection from exploitation. For example, community-based and school-based child-focused disaster risk reduction, mitigation, adaptation and resilience building activities can be supported through existing thematic work. However, **some climate mitigation, adaptation, resilience building and child-focused humanitarian response interventions also require technical expertise in broader areas** such as water management, Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), forestry, agriculture, food security, livelihoods, nutrition, and early warning systems. With increased intensity of climate induced emergencies, it is also essential for KNH and their partners **strengthen organisational preparedness, budgets and capacity to deliver timely and relevant child-focused humanitarian responses.**

Roles: KNH has a key role to play to more effectively communicate the links between the climate crisis, children's rights and climate justice among a range of key actors. KNH also has a key role to play to link CSO partners, child and youth organisation and coalitions working on child rights, climate action, and climate justice, to funds, capacity building, advocacy opportunities, and participation platforms. The strategic building blocks, and most of the sub-strategies require programming and advocacy by KNH's civil society partners.

To enhance effective and sustainable outcomes, a socio-ecological model is adopted recognising children and young people as key social actors, who both influence and are influenced by their context. This necessitates the need to work across a range of **spheres of influence** including work with: children, youth and their groups and networks; caregivers, Self-Help Groups and communities; NGO partners, civil society organisations and coalitions; governments (local to national), other key actors, such as businesses, and with international human rights and climate related mechanisms.

If KNH departments and partners apply a child rights approach and collectively contribute to pathways of change that are most relevant to them in relation to the modular building block, then **positive outcomes can be achieved across a range of spheres of influence:**

- Children and youth are knowledgeable, organised and heard on climate change and child rights policy and practice, and they are more prepared, resilient, and protected from climate-related risks

- Caregivers, Self Help Groups and communities are aware and skilled in CC & CR mitigation, and preparedness, and are more ready to listen to children & protect children's rights (including during and after climate related emergencies)
- NGOs and coalitions are knowledgeable on climate change and child rights, support child/youth participation, promote climate justice, and hold duty bearers accountable on CC, CR & CJ
- Governments prioritise and invest in climate action, embed CC&CR in the school curricula and support child-focused CC mitigation, preparedness, adaptation, response and climate justice
- Other key actors (e.g. business) are more aware on CC&CR and invest in actions to reduce climate change and to protect CR
- International human rights and climate policies and mechanisms are used by children, youth, and CSOs to promote climate justice and hold duty bearers accountable

These combined outcomes lead to the **goal** that “**children's rights are protected, respected, and fulfilled in the context of the climate crisis and climate justice is secured**”.

Goal **Children's rights are protected, respected, and fulfilled in the context of the climate crisis and climate justice is secured**

Outcomes	Children and youth are knowledgeable, organised & heard on CC & CR policy & practice, & are more prepared, resilient, & protected from climate related risks	NGOs & coalitions are knowledgeable on CC & CR, support child/youth participation, promote climate justice, & hold DB accountable on CC, CR & CJ	Caregivers, Self Help Groups & communities are aware & skilled in CC & CR mitigation & preparedness & are more ready to listen to children & protect CR (incl. during & after climate related emergencies)
	Governments (local to national) prioritise & invest in climate action, embed CC & CR in school curricula & support child-focused CC mitigation, preparedness, adaptation, response. & C.J	Other key actors (e.g. business, Ombuds) are more aware on CC&CR & invest in actions to reduce climate change, to protect CR & promote CJ	International human rights & climate policies & mechanisms are used by children, youth, & CSOs to promote climate justice & hold duty bearers accountable

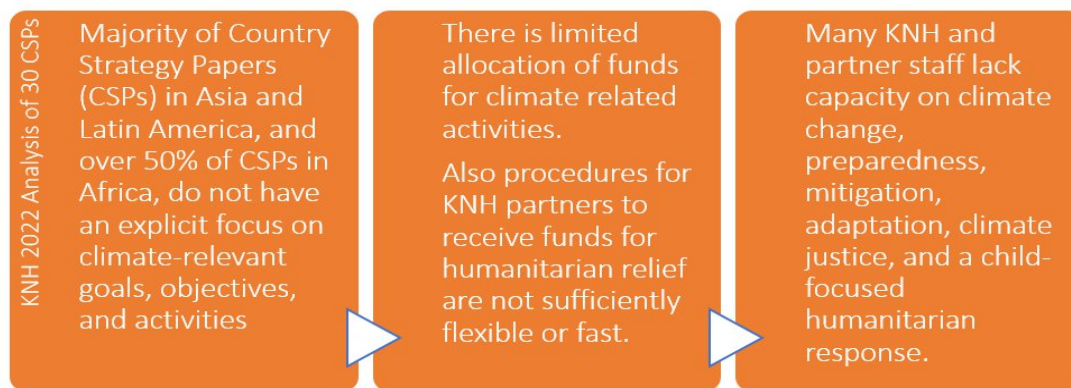
Strategic blocks, sub-strategies and suggested interventions (internal action plans)

Barriers	Insufficient climate-related information & capacity (e.g. on climate adaptation, mitigation, climate justice, child focused humanitarian action), lack of funds, insufficient platforms for dialogue, power & influence of children & youth
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Low motivation of duty bearers to prioritise & invest in climate action & children's best interests, & lack of sufficient policies	Weak accountability mechanisms for climate action, children's rights, & climate justice
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Problem **The climate crisis exacerbates existing child rights violations and worsens vulnerabilities and inequities. It threatens survival and worsens violations of children's rights for current and future generations. Yet governments and other concerned actors are not taking children and young people's views and rights seriously to prioritise climate actions and climate justice.**

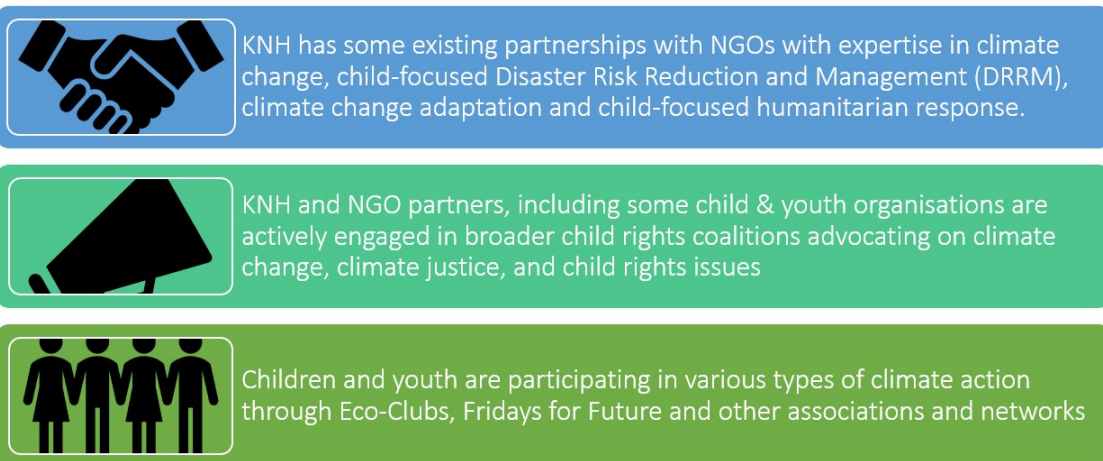
Key gaps (2023)



KNH's Global Programme Strategy on climate change and children's rights



Existing promising practice examples



Example:



Draw and write (17–18-year-old males, Nepal):
A youth is giving awareness sessions at a community to children, youths, and elderly on climate change and its effects.

Annex 2: Current measures on resource efficiency and emissions

Excerpts from [KNH's Sustainability Report 2022](#) (only available in German) on the use of natural resources, resource management and climate-relevant emissions :

Natural resources

- In the area of building energy management, Kindernothilfe tries to conserve resources and achieve savings through sensible technical modernisation.
- Geothermal energy is used for heating and cooling in the extension (built in 2013).
- Kindernothilfe's boiler is a model with an integrated control system.
- The possibility of a connection to the Duisburg district heating network was examined in 2022 and is given (final connection expected in 2024).
- The photovoltaic system generates an annual average of 3,320 kWh (2019-2022), which corresponds to around 1.6% of total consumption. An increase in the amount of electricity generated through more powerful modules is to be examined, but is proving difficult due to the current market situation.
- The office in Duisburg has been fully converted to LED lighting by 2022.
- Mondi's 'Biotop 3 extra' grade is used in-house for both letterhead and A4 copy paper. This is a wood-free, natural white multifunctional paper and has been awarded the 'Green Range', 'FSC' and 'EU Ecolabel'.
- The CO² emissions generated during the printing and production of print products (e.g. annual report, Kindernothilfe magazine) are offset.
- All letters and parcels are sent climate-neutrally with DHL GoGreen.
- Kindernothilfe generally applies the 'train before flight' rule. Employees who travel a lot receive a rail card. Public transport is preferred for local journeys.
- Until the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic in 2020, an annual cycling campaign was held to motivate employees to avoid travelling by car. The kilometres travelled were recorded in a table to determine the CO² compensation. It is planned to reactivate this campaign in 2023.
- The Management Board members do not have personal company cars.
- The CO² emissions caused by long-distance travelling are offset via the climate collection.
- Kindernothilfe is committed to offering and supporting sustainable mobility solutions for various needs. For this reason, a needs survey on the various mobility solutions (public transport, e-car, e-bike) was conducted among employees in spring 2022 (including a new interest survey on the Germany ticket at the beginning of 2023).

The following steps are to be taken as part of HR Green in 2023

- Promotion of the Deutschlandticket with 25 per cent of the costs.
- Installation of charging points for electric cars to be made available to employees on the company premises (implemented in 2023)
- Kindernothilfe developed a concept for leasing bicycles / company bicycles (implemented in 2024)

Resource management

In general, resource efficiency is not a major sustainability issue for Kindernothilfe due to the nature of the organisation and therefore poses no particular risk. The goal of switching completely to LED lighting was achieved in 2022. Apart from this topic, there are no other specific targets in this area. However, Kindernothilfe continuously reviews the sustainability criteria in building management, particularly with

regard to heating and cooling as well as electricity and gas supply. With regard to the use of renewable energies, the current status of photovoltaics is to be reviewed and, ideally, the amount of electricity generated is to be increased by using more powerful modules. The connection to the Duisburg district heating network has been applied for and is scheduled to take place in 2024. In addition, the extent to which business trips and, in particular, air travel are necessary is continuously reviewed. The CO² emissions are offset via the Klima-Kollekte. The compensation payments were also made for the period in which only very limited business trips took place due to the coronavirus pandemic in order to ensure planning security for the Klima-Kollekte projects. Kindernothilfe is aware that the pandemic-related avoidance of journeys to the office and business trips may not have saved CO² emissions, but that a shift has taken place (e.g. through the increased use of electronic devices for mobile working or video conferencing). Furthermore, the organisation is planning a temporary increase in business trips in 2023 and 2024, in particular due to catch-up travel and travel in connection with the strategic goal of internationalisation. This also includes the planned recruitment of an IT specialist with international responsibility in the Sri Lankan office, who will be organisationally linked to the head of the IT department at the Duisburg office. The HR department will also be given greater global responsibility, particularly in the further development of guidelines and management principles for international HR work.

Climate-relevant emissions

Due to the nature of the organisation, this aspect is not a key sustainability issue for Kindernothilfe and no specific reduction targets are set. However, most of the following measures ensure continuous monitoring of CO₂ emissions and contribute to a conscious approach to the issue.

- Kindernothilfe purchases electricity with the contractual provision that 100% of it comes from renewable energy sources (e.g. hydropower and wind). This is supplemented by electricity from the organisation's own photovoltaic system (annual average for 2019-2022 of 3,320 kWh = 1.6% of total consumption).
- When purchasing gas, a contractual agreement stipulates that the proportion of biogas must be at least 10 %. In the past, this proportion was as high as 20 %. Unfortunately, however, the supplier has made a reduction here, over which Kindernothilfe has no influence.
- Flights cannot be avoided when travelling to our partner countries. Since 2015, Kindernothilfe has been offsetting its CO₂ emissions from air travel via the Klimakollekte in Berlin.
- There is no comprehensive sustainability management at employee level.
- A 'mobile working' service agreement has been in place since 2022, which offers all Kindernothilfe employees whose type of work and workplace allow it the opportunity to work remotely for up to 60% of their weekly working hours. This creates the opportunity to save travelling time and emissions. However, Kindernothilfe is aware that this may also lead to a shift in CO₂ emissions (e.g. through the increased use of electronic devices for mobile working or video conferencing).
- CO₂ emissions from publications (e.g. annual report, Kindernothilfe magazine) are offset