

Climate action roadmap to 2035

Our pathway to net zero



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About Unitaid

Unitaid is a global health organization that saves lives by making new health products available and affordable for people in low- and middle-income countries. Unitaid works with partners to identify innovative treatments, tests and tools, help tackle the market barriers that are holding them back and get them to the people who need them most – fast. Since it was created in 2006, Unitaid has unlocked access to more than 100 groundbreaking health products to help address the world's greatest health challenges, including HIV, TB, and malaria; women's and children's health; and pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response. Every year, more than 300 million people benefit from the products Unitaid has helped roll out. Unitaid is hosted partnership by the World Health Organization.

About the Climate Action Accelerator

The Climate Action Accelerator is a non-profit organisation that aims to mobilise a critical mass of common good organisations to scale-up climate solutions, empowering them to radically transform their practices and contributing to tipping entire sectors of society towards low carbon, resilient and sustainable models.

1.

Foreword

Ten years ago, the world came together in Paris to recognise a simple truth: climate action is a shared responsibility.

The Paris Agreement was built on the conviction that only by mobilising all parts of society, including governments, businesses, finance, cities and citizens, could we meet the scale of the climate challenge. A decade later, that lesson is even clearer, and the health sector has a central role to play.

Climate impacts are already reshaping global health. Heatwaves, shifting disease patterns and increasingly fragile supply chains are lived realities for communities everywhere. They expose deep inequalities, as those who contribute least to the crisis are hit hardest, while many health systems struggle to absorb repeated shocks.

At the same time, the health sector carries a significant carbon footprint. Reducing these emissions will strengthen resilience, improve efficiency and help ensure that lifesaving health products remain accessible in a heating world. Decarbonising health systems is therefore essential to fulfilling the 'Spirit of Paris', where ambition goes hand in hand with fairness and solidarity.

Unitaid's climate roadmap arrives at an important moment. As an organisation working at the intersection of innovation, markets and public health, Unitaid can help demonstrate that climate responsibility and global health equity reinforce one another. By assessing its own footprint and committing to reduce it, Unitaid is setting an example for the wider global health community and showing that climate and health must be tackled together.

The years ahead will require deeper cooperation and more predictable, fair and innovative financing to protect communities from climate shocks and pandemics. **Unitaid has shown over the past twenty years that solidarity-based instruments like the air ticket levy can deliver real public benefit. Building on this experience, I have been advocating for similar approaches to help drive significant advances in climate action and sustainable development.** The investments we make today will determine whether we continue to chase crises or begin to prevent them.

The transformation ahead is demanding, but it is also an opportunity to protect lives and strengthen societies. If we sustain the spirit of shared responsibility that united us in Paris, we can build a future in which both people and the planet can thrive.



Laurence Tubiana
CEO of the European
Climate Foundation (ECF)

Laurence Tubiana is CEO of the European Climate Foundation (ECF) and a professor at Sciences Po, Paris. A key architect of the landmark Paris Agreement, she served as France's Climate Change Ambassador and Special Representative for COP21.

2.

Introduction

Climate change is one of the defining challenges of our time, and its impacts on global health are increasingly urgent.

Rising emissions, fragile health systems, and growing vulnerabilities demand decisive action from all actors in the global health community. For Unitaid, climate action is not an add-on, but a responsibility: to protect the effectiveness of lifesaving interventions, safeguard the populations they serve, and ensure that progress in global health is sustainable in a changing world.

This roadmap marks a clear and ambitious commitment. It outlines how Unitaid will act on climate change – reducing its own footprint and building resilience within its operations – while supporting implementing partners and stakeholders to advance their own climate journeys. This dual approach, “walking the talk” internally and catalysing transformation externally, reflects a recognition that health actors must lead by example, embedding sustainability into every facet of their work.

Unitaid's strategy is rooted in partnership. No single actor can drive this transformation alone, but by sending strong signals through its investments, operational practices, and collaborations, Unitaid can contribute to a broader shift across the ecosystem. The roadmap lays out a phased, flexible pathway that balances concrete early actions with a long-term vision, ensuring that ambition is matched by pragmatism and support.

By committing to learn, adapt, and grow with its partners, Unitaid positions itself at the forefront of a growing movement for climate action in health. This is not only about reducing emissions; it is about building more resilient, equitable, and effective health systems for the future. Together, through collective responsibility and shared effort, the global health community can rise to this challenge – and Unitaid is determined to play its part.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Philippe Duneton". The signature is stylized with a long horizontal line extending from the end.

Philippe Duneton

Unitaid Executive Director

3.

Why a climate action roadmap?

The climate crisis is among the greatest threats to humanity and global health in the 21st century.

Healthcare itself contributes nearly 5% of global emissions, creating a stark paradox: the very systems designed to protect health are simultaneously putting it at risk. On the current trajectory, climate change endangers livelihoods, forces mass displacement uprooting communities, and will claim millions of extra lives by 2050. It disproportionately harms vulnerable populations and undermines decades of progress in global health. Already, health systems – especially in low- and middle-income countries – are strained by resource scarcity, population growth, conflict, and shifting disease patterns, with little capacity left to manage extreme weather – further exposing gaps in access to essential care. **While adaptation strategies are crucial, the most effective way to safeguard health is for all actors to operate within planetary boundaries – reducing the emissions that drive climate change through science-based targets,** while anticipating needs and strengthening resilience to foreseeable shocks and constraints.

As a global health organization, Unitaid recognizes its dual responsibility in mitigating climate change.

First, to ensure that its health programs do no harm by minimizing their environmental impact; and second, to harness its unique catalytic roles as **Influencer, Pathfinder, and Investor** to drive systemic change toward a more sustainable and resilient global health ecosystem. **These responsibilities are embedded in Unitaid's Strategy on Climate & Health¹,** which aims to integrate climate considerations across all areas of work – from operations and investments to policy engagement, recognizing climate change as a new frontier for health access. **This direction also reflects international commitments:** alignment with the Paris Agreement²; adherence to the United Nations' Strategy for Sustainability Management 2020 – 2030³; engagement with the WHO-led Alliance for Transformative Action on Climate and Health (ATACH)⁴; Unitaid's initial climate commitment in 2021 for the COP26 in Glasgow⁵; the signature of the COP28 climate & health guiding principles⁶ and Unitaid's public commitment made in 2023 through its partnership with the Climate Action Accelerator⁷. Together, these frameworks reinforce the imperative for Unitaid to act decisively on climate and health.

1 <https://unitaid.org/uploads/Unitaid-Climate-and-Health-Strategy-2023-2027.pdf>

2 <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement>

3 System-wide framework for reducing environmental impact. See more at: <https://unsceb.org/strategy-sustainability-management-united-nations-system-2020-2030>

4 <https://www.who.int/initiatives/alliance-for-transformative-action-on-climate-and-health>

5 <https://unitaid.org/news-blog/climate-action-roadmap-nov2021/>

6 <https://www.cop28.com/en/guiding-principles>

7 <https://unitaid.org/news-blog/unitaid-partners-with-the-climate-action-accelerator/>

The publication of Unitaid's climate action roadmap marks a major step in advancing the Climate & Health Strategy launched in 2023.

The roadmap crystallizes the directions supporting the **“doing our part” pillar of Unitaid's strategy**, outlining how the Secretariat, funded grants, and implementing partners will reduce emissions and strengthen resilience. While integral to the overall strategy, the roadmap does not encompass all areas of action: in particular, the strategy also commits Unitaid to exploring and investing in climate-smart health products and to influencing the wider health product markets. These latter activities remain outside the scope of the roadmap, which focuses on emissions linked to Unitaid's operations, portfolio, and implementing partners.



The roadmap supports Unitaid's transition in a shifting landscape.

Unitaid sees this roadmap as a tool to build efficiencies, unlock co-benefits, and enhance the organizational approach to maximise the impact of every dollar spent. As the global health landscape evolves rapidly and climate considerations become increasingly central to funding and operational decisions and stakeholders' expectations at all levels, this roadmap aims to position Unitaid to stay ahead of the curve.

Through **consistent integration and efficiency measures under its climate mitigation agenda**, Unitaid aims to limit rising climate exposures at both organizational and systemic levels – such as heavy reliance on fossil fuels, which can drive inflationary pressures and disrupt continuity. In doing so, Unitaid enhances operational resilience and financial predictability. Climate action also enables Unitaid to attract and motivate staff, meet rising expectations from partners and donors, and demonstrate leadership in global health. In this way, **the roadmap not only protects Unitaid's mission of improving access to life-saving health products but also strengthens its long-term sustainability and credibility.**

By making these footprints and roadmap publicly available, Unitaid reinforces its commitment to transparency and accountability, while inviting others in the global health community to follow suit.

4.

Unitaid's emission reduction commitments and targets

Unitaid's commitment to climate action is grounded in alignment with international frameworks and the need to safeguard its long-term impact.

Its net-zero⁸ ambition is consistent with the Paris Agreement, IPCC guidance, and the UN Strategy for Sustainability Management (2020–2030), as well as Unitaid's own Strategy on Climate Change and Health.

Unitaid's pathway to Net Zero involves three levels of action targeting its Scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions.

- 1. Absolute emission reductions** in the Secretariat, mainly addressing emissions on travel, procurement, and office operations;
- 2. Emission intensity reductions** across the investment portfolio, through grant design, delivery choices, and collaboration with implementing partners to embed low-carbon practices;

- 3. Influencing health products and markets**, where Unitaid helps drive the development and uptake of climate-smart, resilient tools, contributing to the broader decarbonization of the global health sector.

Note: this level of action goes beyond the scope of this document, and includes a range of climate-related programmatic objectives that Unitaid is pursuing through its investments – as per the Unitaid's Climate & Health strategy. While the climate action roadmap focuses on emissions from Unitaid's operations, portfolio, and implementing partners.

⁸ The IPCC's 2023 AR6 Synthesis Report emphasizes that achieving net-zero CO₂ emissions by the early 2050s is essential to limit global warming

Unitaid's targets, compared to the 2019 footprint baseline:

- A **60% reduction in absolute emissions by 2035** and 50% by 2030 for the Secretariat;
- A **60% reduction in CO₂e per dollar spent** in the Portfolio by 2035.

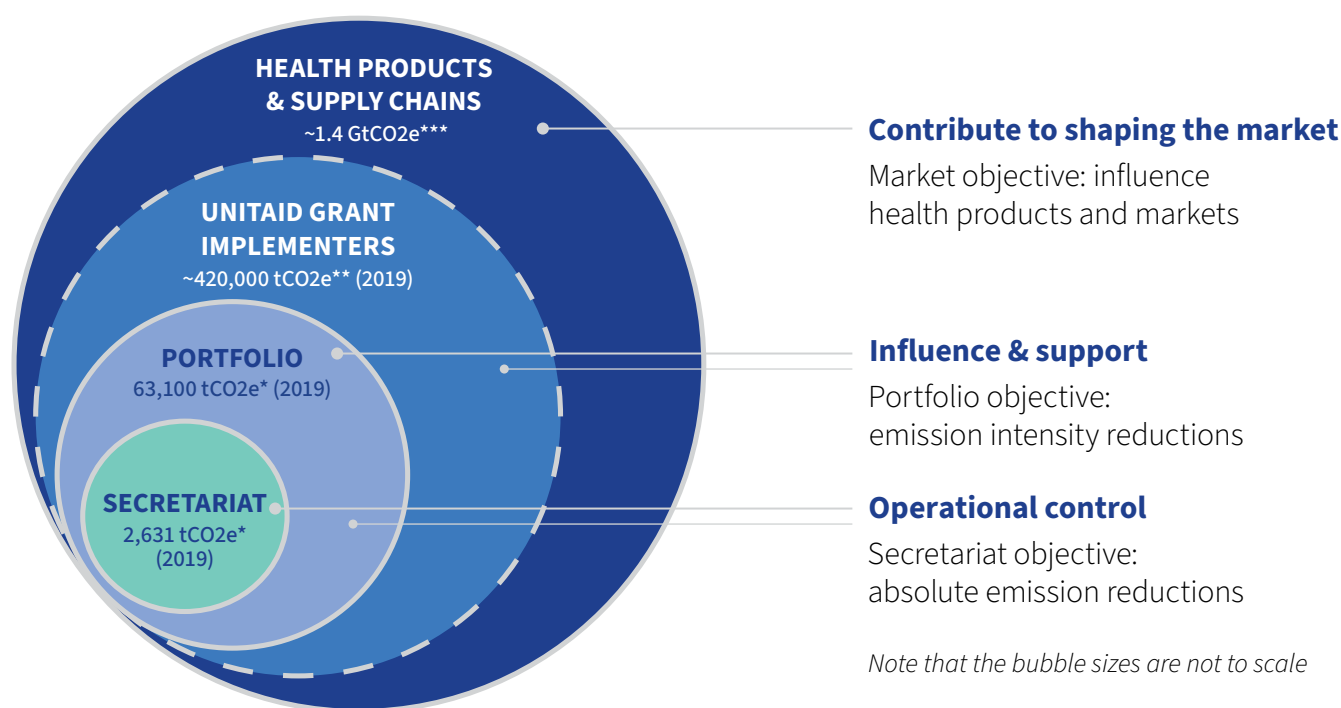
Net-zero and Unitaid's targets

Net-zero means reducing greenhouse gas emissions as close as possible to zero by 2050, with any remaining emissions balanced by removals from the atmosphere. This goal is widely recognized as essential to limiting the worst impacts of climate change. To stay on track, the global pathway includes an interim milestone of cutting emissions by about 50% by 2030, followed by deeper reductions in the years ahead. **Unitaid's targets are designed to align with this global net-zero trajectory.**

Unitaid's investment model and portfolio have evolved since 2019 (when the footprint was first calculated) and will continue to do so. The roadmap is designed to remain flexible, recognizing that the specific levers and solutions may evolve. What remains constant is the intention and direction of travel. Achieving this ambition will require a shared effort, with strong internal capacity, sustainable funding, and active collaboration across Unitaid's implementing partners and stakeholders.

In its pursuit of the highest climate impact potential, Unitaid recognises the catalytic chain reaction inherent in its operating and partnership models. By first addressing emissions within its own organization and reducing the footprint of its direct activities, Unitaid establishes the foundation for a ripple effect across its broader ecosystem of partners (illustrated in Figure 1 below). Working together, Unitaid and its partners can unlock far greater impact at scale – particularly in product introduction and market shaping – as illustrated in the Untold Story of Dolutegravir report⁹.

Figure 1: From operations to markets: three levels of climate action for Unitaid



* Unitaid's Secretariat and Portfolio footprints as calculated in 2019 (baseline year)

** Unitaid's implementers' emissions estimated based on the hypothesis that 10 to 50% of their funding is through Unitaid (leading to an estimated 140,000 to 700,000 tCO₂e, average 420,000 tCO₂e)

*** The healthcare sector represents about 5% of the estimated global emissions of >40 Gigatons of CO₂, or about 2 Gigatons of CO₂e. Health products supply chains are known to represent over 70% of healthcare's emissions. Romanello et al., Lancet Countdown, The 2023 report of the Lancet Countdown on health and climate change.

⁹ <https://unitaid.org/uploads/The-untold-story-of-dolutegravir-When-climate-impact-goes-hand-in-hand-with-access-to-better-treatments.pdf>

These guiding principles shape the implementation of the roadmap:

- **Science-based climate targets**
Unitaid follows the IPCC's recommended pathway to net zero by 2050 through clear footprint measurement and reduction targets, aiming for -60% by 2035 compared to the 2019 baseline.
- **Alignment with international standards**
Unitaid follows global GHG Protocol standards and applies responsibility across our Secretariat and third-party grants. Over the years, Unitaid has made several commitments to that regard, as detailed in the previous section of this document.
- **Carbon offsetting**
Unitaid does not rely on offsets or claim carbon neutrality at an organizational level but will explore optional contributions to global climate and nature projects.
- **Accountability**
Unitaid holds itself accountable and *expects the same from its partners, whether implementing partners, key suppliers, or other collaborators*, tracking progress on emissions and nature impact with transparency and rigor.
- **Learning & collaboration**
Adopting a learning mindset, Unitaid strengthens internal capacity, fosters collaboration with partners, and shares data and insights to continuously improve climate performance.



5.

Unitaid’s carbon footprint

Unitaid’s carbon footprint reflects the unique characteristics of its catalytic funding model, with emissions arising primarily from two sources:

the Unitaid **Secretariat**, responsible for internal operations and governance, and the **investment portfolio of Unitaid-funded programs**, which supports implementing partners to introduce health products, strengthen access conditions, and foster innovation and partnerships through external grants.

In both cases, the majority of emissions fall under Scope 3 (indirect emissions) – whether from suppliers supporting internal operations or from implementing partners delivering grants. As a result, many of the levers for reducing emissions depend on Unitaid’s ability to influence and collaborate across the broader ecosystem.

- **The Secretariat’s emissions are driven primarily by professional travel, procurement, and office-related energy use.**
- **For the portfolio, emissions primarily result from programme implementation and oversight activities carried out by implementing partners and their sub-implementers, including the procurement of commodities and external professional services, as well as emissions associated with project staff and travel.¹⁰**

Establishing a robust baseline has been essential to identify where the biggest impacts lie and to help prioritize effective, targeted actions across both Unitaid’s internal operations and portfolio investments. An updated footprint was produced in 2023, reinforcing the importance of these drivers.

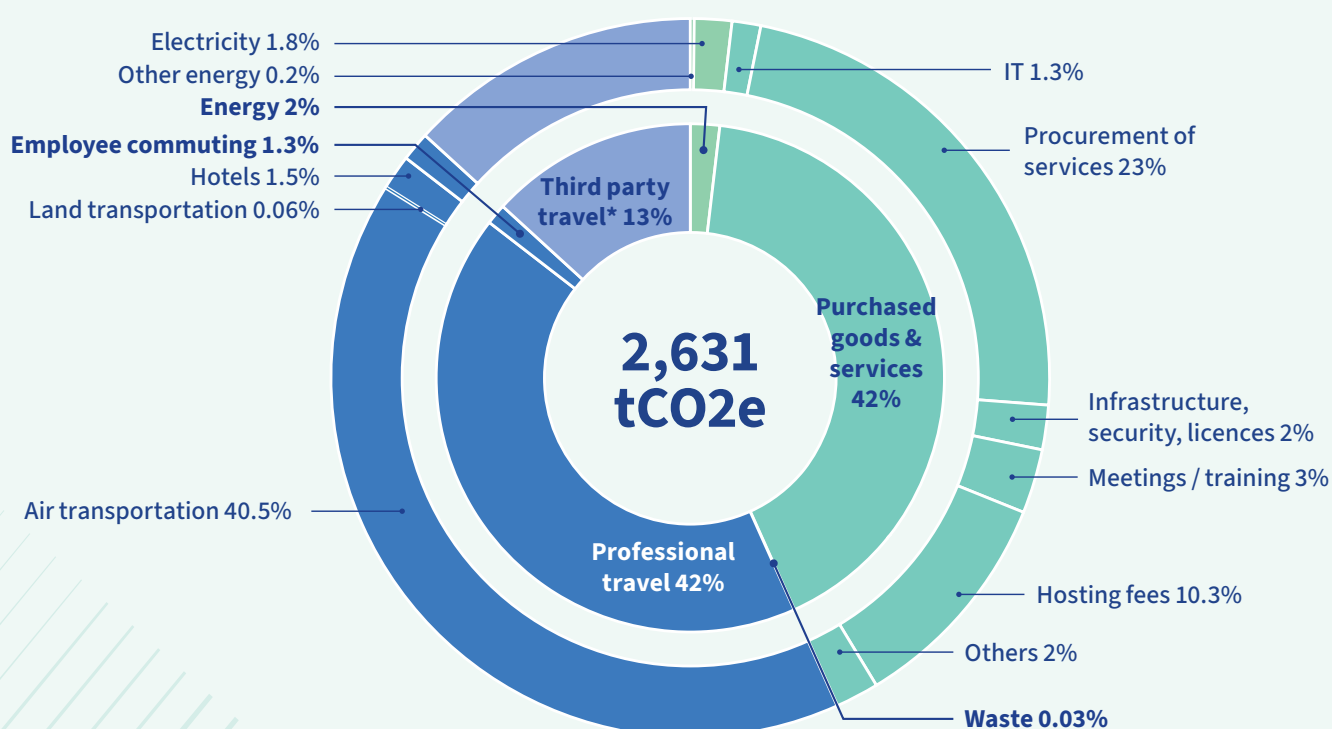
Baseline (2019)	
Overall footprint of Unitaid:	
65,731 tCO2e	
Secretariat	Portfolio
2,631 tCO2e	63,100 tCO2e

10 The Secretariat’s emissions were estimated using a hybrid approach that combines activity-based data (e.g., flight distances, energy use) with the monetary approach. For the Portfolio, only the monetary approach was applied, reflecting the scale and diversity of grant-funded activities. These estimates carry inherent uncertainty, and results should be interpreted as indicative ranges rather than precise figures. More information about the methodology detailed in the box "Approach to carbon accounting and boundary definition" in this section

In **2019, the Secretariat footprint** was estimated to be at **2,631t of CO₂e**, with 55% of its emissions coming from travel (including professional travels and third-party travels/ participants transportation) and 42% from procurement of goods and services.

Figure 2: Unitaid's Secretariat carbon footprint in 2019 and 2023

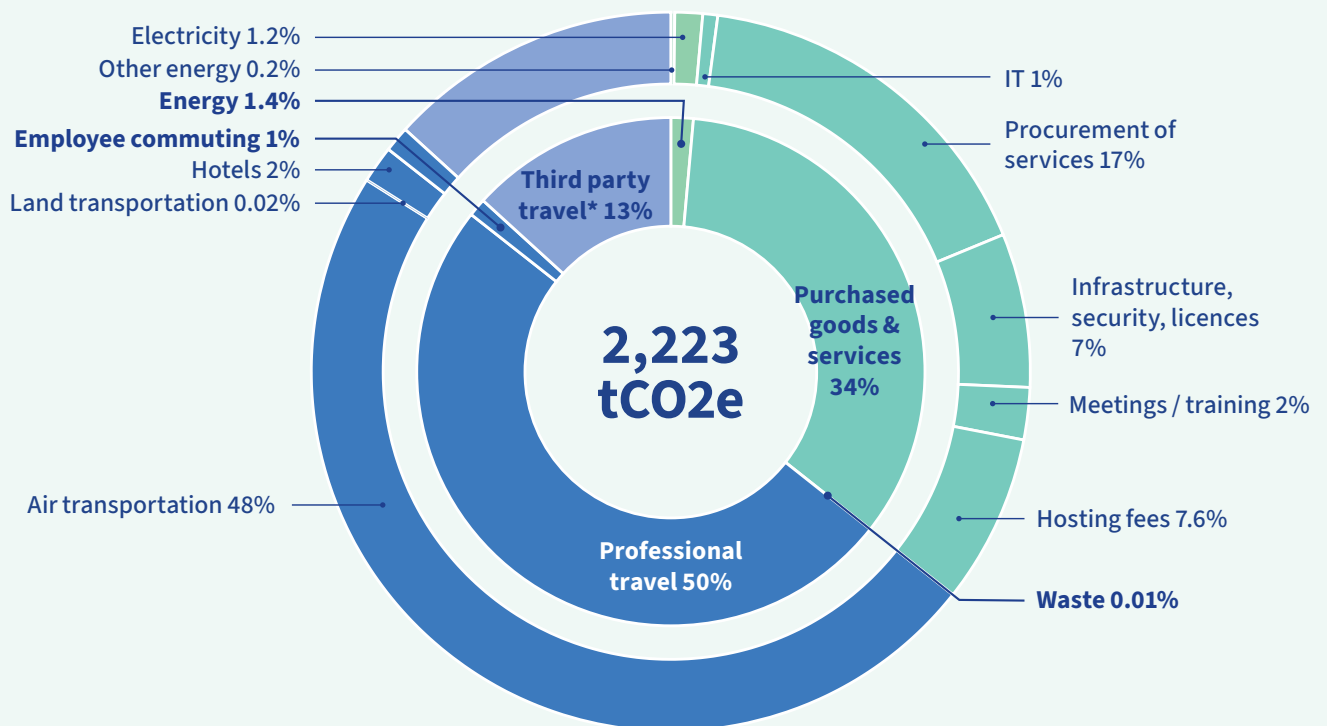
2019



* Third-party travel refers to non-Unitaid staff attending meetings or events organized by Unitaid (e.g., members of the Executive Board and other external stakeholders).

By **2023**, and after the COVID pandemic, which disrupted various ways of working, the footprint had decreased to **2,223 tCO₂e** (-16%), with an increase in the proportion of travel in the footprint (63% of the footprint relates to overall travel emissions). For the Secretariat, success will come from the ability of Unitaid to action levers to reduce emissions in the two highly emissive categories of procurement and travel.

2023



Approach to carbon accounting and boundary definition

Unitaid's carbon footprint has been assessed in accordance with the Greenhouse Gas Protocol (GHG-P), covering emissions across Scope 1, Scope 2, and Scope 3, and expressed in metric tonnes of CO₂ equivalent. The calculations presented in this report were carried out with the technical support of the Climate Action Accelerator, ensuring robustness, reliability, and compliance with GHG-P standards. Unitaid operates from a single office in Geneva and does not own any physical assets (office property or equipment). Organizational boundaries have been defined using the operational control approach, meaning Unitaid accounts for all emissions – direct and indirect – from operations over which it has full authority to implement policies and make decisions, even if it does not fully own them. As a result, the vast majority of emissions fall under Scope 3, spanning both the Secretariat and portfolio levels, which represent the organization's two main functional dimensions. The Secretariat includes Unitaid's staff, management, and operational resources, while the portfolio reflects its active grant investments, implemented by third-party partners. Consistent with this framework, the carbon footprint results presented in this section are organized by functional area rather than by scope to clearly illustrate where emissions originate. Additional methodological details are available upon request.

In 2019, the Portfolio footprint was estimated to be at **63,100 tCO₂e**, with 67% generated by the purchase of goods and services, including 41% for health commodities and supply chains. The remainder was linked to administrative & project expenses including staff (17%), and travel (15%).

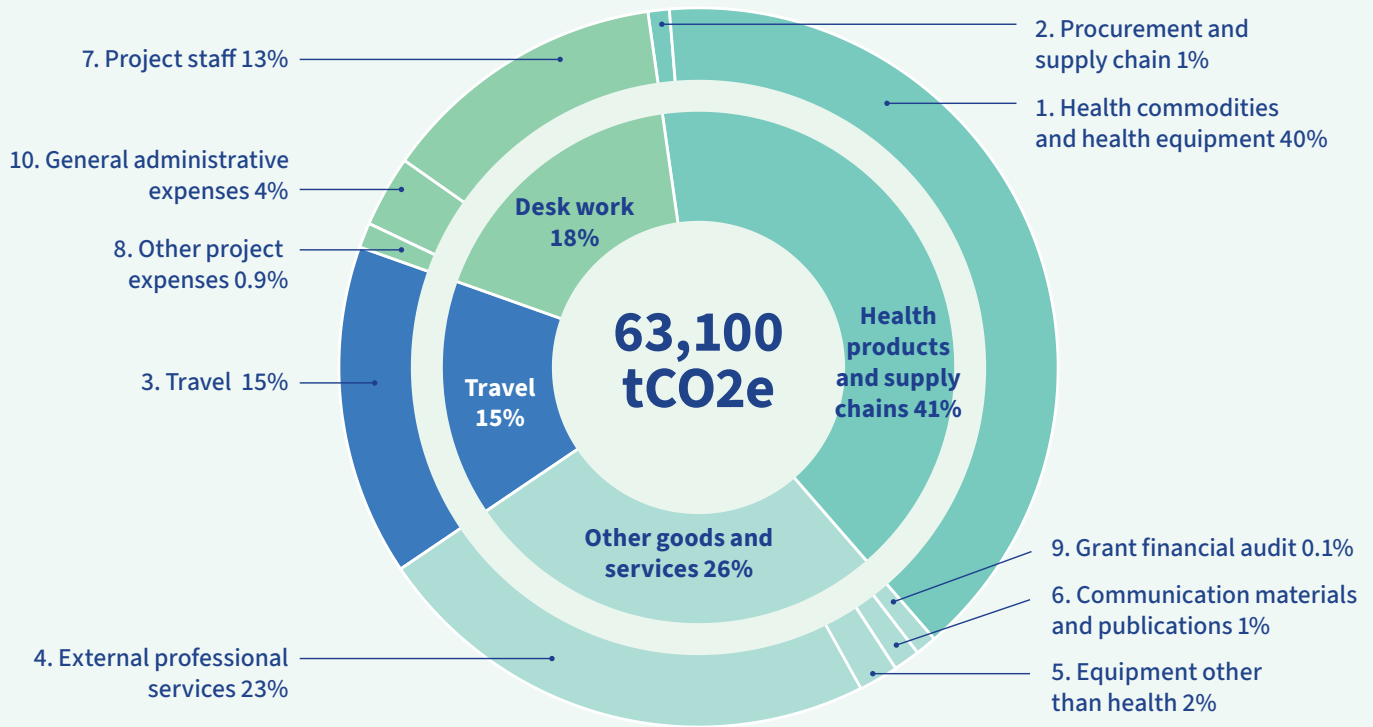
By 2023, Unitaid's portfolio had shifted towards less product-based investments, leading to a corresponding change in the emissions profile (with health commodities decreasing to 27% of the footprint). The Portfolio footprint for 2023 is estimated at **42,800 tCO₂e** (-37% in absolute terms).

As a result, **the carbon intensity of Unitaid's investments** has decreased from **0.30 kCO₂e/\$ spent in 2019** to **0.25 kCO₂e/\$ spent in 2023** (-18%).¹¹ This overall intensity reflects two factors: **the mix of projects in the portfolio and the carbon intensity of activities within them** (such as travel). While the portfolio's shape is primarily driven by public health needs, there is scope to optimize aspects of design and delivery to reduce emissions without compromising health objectives – and in some cases, even improving them. For this reason, a flexible approach will be required as the portfolio continues to evolve. Levers will therefore focus on using push-and-pull mechanisms to encourage, incentivize, and support implementing partners in integrating low-carbon practices into their projects.

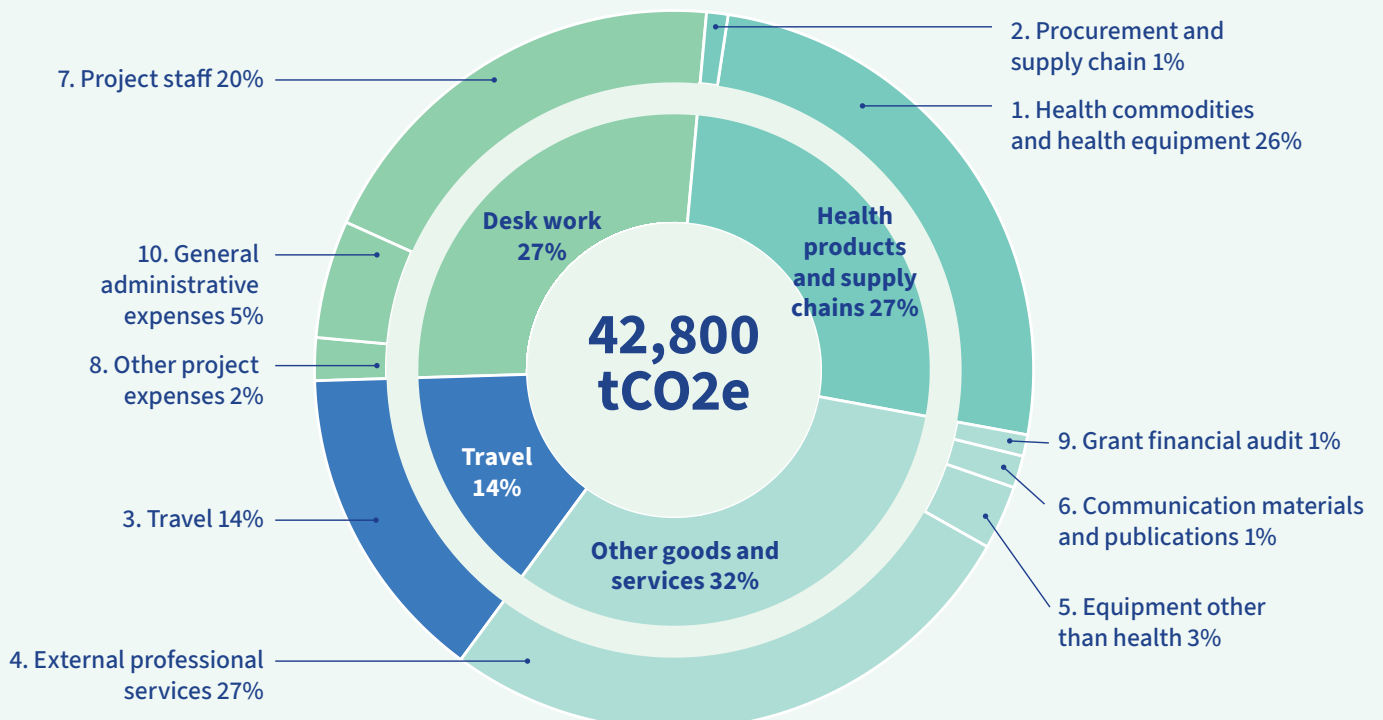
11 Based on Unitaid investments of USD 208 million in 2019 and USD 173million in 2023

Figure 3: Unitaid's Portfolio carbon footprint in 2019 and 2023

2019



2023



6.

Understanding the key levers for emission reductions

Decarbonization levers are practical opportunities for reducing emissions and driving meaningful climate action. **While each organization in global health has a unique footprint, many share common emission sources** – such as professional travel, office energy use, procurement, and program implementation (**Table 1**).








This shared ground creates opportunities for collective learning and coordinated action.

Levers can be grouped into two categories: **operational and financial efficiency levers** that help organisations “do more with the same or the same with less” (e.g. reduced travel, digital alternatives to travel, streamlined resource use, etc),

and **carbon-intensity levers** that focus on “doing the same with lower emissions” (e.g. sustainable travel policies, energy-efficient offices, low-carbon procurement, etc). By aligning on these actions and exchanging experiences, organisations can accelerate progress, avoid duplication, and scale innovations across the sector.



Table 1: Main emission sources and associated opportunities for emission reductions

Emission source	Examples of solutions	Particular relevance
 Fuel <i>Fuel use from owned fleet vehicles, heat management and generators</i>	Low-tech solutions for more energy-efficient heat/cold management, reduce fleet size and adapt choice of vehicles, use of renewable energy and other low-carbon sources	Field and national health organisations, research organisations
 Purchased energy use <i>Office, facility and lab energy source, heating/cooling systems, equipment</i>	Green building standards, switch to renewables, energy-efficient equipment in field offices/warehouses, green chemistry practices, green certified labs	All organisations
 Travel <i>International meetings, project visits, conferences, field research</i>	Promote virtual meetings, invest in hybrid collaboration, rationalize travel and reduce air travel (eg. sustainable travel policy), shift to local staffing and meetings	Donors, global and national health organisations, universities
 Procurement of medical products <i>Medicines, diagnostics, cold chains, packaging</i>	Fund, prioritise and procure greener medical supply chains, low carbon innovation, low-carbon health products, green packaging (eg. include green criteria in procurement policies)	Donors, global and national health organisations, R&D institutions and universities
 Digital infrastructure <i>Cloud tools, data storage, video conferencing</i>	Lifespan of hardware, reduce data stored volume, green data center and data storage in countries with a low-carbon energy mix, optimise tools and practices, assess digital carbon impact	All organisations
 Procurement Of non-medical products & equipment <i>IT, printing, event logistics, office supplies</i>	Adopt and influence green procurement standards and criteria, promote local procurement, develop green office & IT supply and laboratory consumables	Donors, global and national health organisations
 Waste management / End-of-life <i>Medical and hazardous waste disposal, packaging</i>	Improve medical waste handling and hazardous waste protocols, budget and manage product end of life, recycling	Donors, global, national and local health organisations, R&D institutions and laboratories

 Scope 1: Direct emissions (vehicles, on-site energy)

 Scope 2: Purchased energy

 Scope 3: Indirect value chain emissions

Building on these common decarbonisation levers, the climate action roadmap intends to translate these into practical actions within Unitaid's Secretariat and Portfolio to reduce emissions and foster climate-conscious practices among implementing partners.

7. Secretariat approach

The Secretariat's decarbonization approach outlines a set of levers and actions designed to reduce the organisation's institutional footprint.

It is anchored in Unitaid's organisational commitments to reduce emissions by 50% by 2030 compared to a 2019 baseline, and to set a further target of -60% reduction by 2035, supporting its pathway to net zero beyond 2030, in alignment with the Paris Agreement.

Unitaid's Secretariat's two main sources of greenhouse gas emissions are professional travel and the procurement of services, together accounting for 84% of the organization's carbon footprint (2019). To address these, the roadmap focuses on targeted actions in both areas:

- **Reducing professional travel emissions: Unitaid is taking a balanced approach by prioritizing essential travel while exploring lower-impact ways to stay engaged.** Unitaid's stakeholders – including governments, partners, funders, and communities – are globally dispersed. Face-to-face engagement strengthens relationships, builds trust, and provides insights into country-specific contexts, supporting strategic conversations, international forums, and complex negotiations. While essential for maintaining influence and effective partnerships, international travel contributes to emissions. To balance in-person engagement with reducing its carbon footprint, Unitaid aims to make strategic

trade-offs and prioritize travel, while adopting alternative engagement approaches, that align with rising domestic financing priorities and support collaboration with countries from the Global South, a cornerstone of its access mission.

- **Towards low-emission procurement: Unitaid is working to reduce supplier emissions by integrating low carbon and environmental criteria and promoting more sustainable procurement practices.** Unitaid procures services and goods from a diverse range of suppliers and service providers. As a hosted partnership of the World Health Organization, it also benefits from various administrative services provided by the WHO. To reduce emissions associated with these services, Unitaid aims to engage actively with all its service providers and progressively integrate low-carbon and environmental criteria into its procurement processes. Special attention will be given to consultancies – particularly those involving international travel – to encourage them to reduce their own emissions. Unitaid will also collaborate closely with the WHO to align efforts under the shared net-zero agenda.

Beyond these two priority areas, Unitaid is also implementing a set of measures that, while having a more limited carbon impact, are essential for supporting longer-term transformation and global public goods. These include improving environmental office practices and conducting awareness-raising and communication activities that enhance understanding of climate and environmental challenges.

The following tables outline the key Secretariat levers and proposed solutions that underpin the Secretariat's approach for the first period of the roadmap until 2030. Some of the targets in the table are for 2027, as they align with Unitaid strategic cycle. Additional interim targets and actions will be introduced along the way – and beyond 2030 – to ensure steady progress toward the overarching 2035 goal.

1. Reducing professional travel emissions (42% of the Secretariat's 2019 footprint)

Solutions	Actions & targets	Potential of avoided emissions in 2030
Minimize travel-related emissions by reducing overall travel distances and using lower-carbon transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce Professional travel related emissions by 30% by 2027 and 55% by 2030 By mid-2026, update Unitaid Secretariat travel policy aligned with its 2027 climate target By end 2027, develop an updated travel policy to reach 2030 target 	800 tCO ₂ e

2. Reducing procurement emissions (42% of the Secretariat's 2019 footprint)

Solutions	Actions & targets	Potential of avoided emissions in 2030
Use lower-carbon alternatives in procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce the carbon intensity of purchased goods and services by 15% by 2027 and 35% by 2030, by focusing on top purchased goods and services, including external professional services By January 2026, limit consultants' travel in contracts, replace short-haul flights with trains, and prioritize regional recruitment 	390 tCO ₂ e
Engage suppliers on climate action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By end 2026 define a supplier engagement strategy (create baseline through a survey, strengthen low-carbon procurement criteria, updated terms of reference and scoring, ...) 	Not modelled
Reduce emissions linked to WHO hosted partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unitaid will benefit from any WHO net zero plans and actions 	Not modelled

3. Promoting other low-carbon practices (16% of the Secretariat's 2019 footprint)

Solutions	Actions & targets	Potential of avoided emissions in 2030
Promote low carbon commuting and soft mobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teleworking policy in place to reduce commuting, reduce commuting trips made by car and increase the use of soft mobility (e.g. walking, cycling) 	21 tCO ₂ e
Make digital equipment and data services more sustainable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase IT equipment lifespan, purchase refurbished devices, and use data storage hosted in green data centres 	4 tCO ₂ e
Promote low carbon office practices and ways of working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a "sustainable office practices" guide, eliminate single-use plastics in the office 	Not modelled
Support the organisation of low carbon events and raise awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Switch meetings to hybrid or online formats to minimise third-party travel, propose environmentally conscious catering at events, include Unitaid's climate commitments in communication and participant materials, track event emissions 	102 tCO ₂ e

Leading by example: reducing emissions through action, learning and course adjustments

The Secretariat's approach reflects Unitaid's commitment to translating ambition into action and leading by example. These measures position the organization to halve emissions by 2030 and progress toward net zero by 2050. Implementation will be guided by humility and a commitment to continuous learning from initial outcomes, enabling Unitaid to adapt and improve over time.

8. Portfolio approach

Climate objectives and Unitaid's portfolio approach

For its portfolio of investments, Unitaid will aim to reduce carbon emissions per dollar invested by approximately two-thirds by 2035, setting an intensity target of a 60% reduction. As part of this trajectory, Unitaid is already beginning to embed low-carbon approaches into its grant-making processes and will continue to gradually expand these efforts in support of the global net-zero transformation.

While Unitaid has limited direct control over emissions from funded activities and health products, it plays a critical role in shaping investments and influencing its ecosystem – using its grant-making power to drive low-carbon practices and reduce the carbon intensity of its portfolio.



The portfolio's main sources of emissions include the procurement of health commodities (41% of the 2019 footprint), the procurement of goods and services and particularly external professional services (26%), the implementation of activities (with 15% for travel and 17% for staff and administrative expenses). Decarbonisation approaches must prioritise these areas.

To support the transition, Unitaid is using its grant-making processes to deploy two primary pathways, presented in **figure 4**.

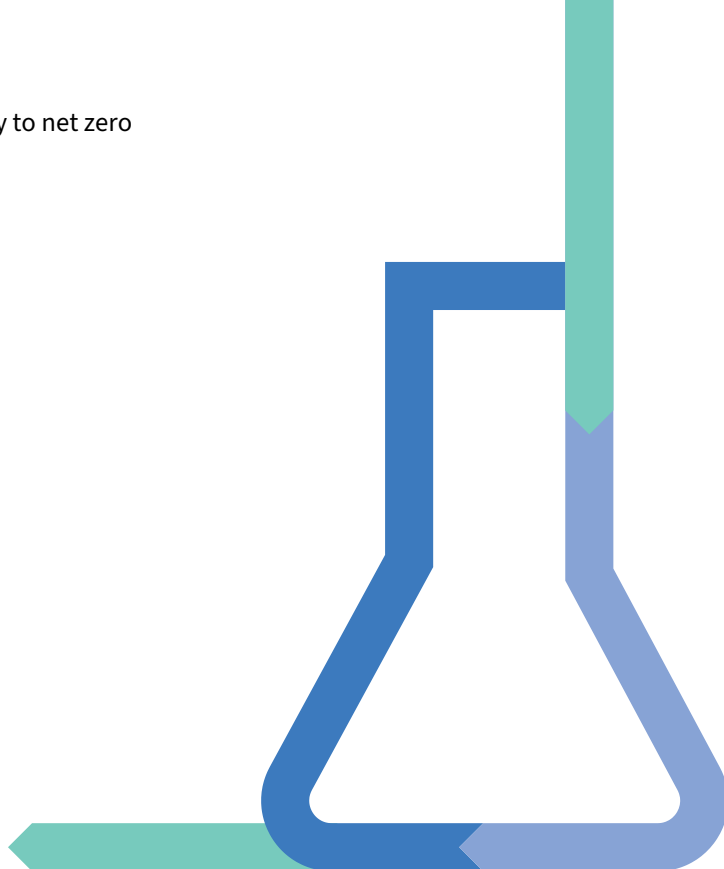


Figure 4: The alignment of decarbonization approaches with Unitaid's grant-making model

Grant-making process main phases:



Pathways:

1. Integrating climate considerations in investment scope and design

2. Promoting low-carbon practices through grant development and management

Supporting the introduction of climate smart health products (NB: this part goes beyond the scope of this roadmap, and is defined in Unitaid's broader Climate and Health strategy)

Key pathways for decarbonising Unitaid's portfolio

1. Integrating climate considerations in investment scope and design

Early-stage decisions shape long-term outcomes: the more low-carbon principles are embedded in the scope and design of investments, as well as in the selection of implementing partners, the easier it becomes to drive decarbonization. Integrating climate considerations into investment scoping, design, and planning, along with project and implementing partner selection, is a key approach to advance the decarbonization of the investment portfolio. There are three areas of action:

a) Low-carbon investment focus: Include emission-reduction goals and considerations when conducting landscape analyses and other early-stage preparatory activities.

b) Implementing partner alignment on climate: Favour proposals from implementers who are already engaged in or committed to science-based decarbonisation, while encouraging and supporting others to strengthen their climate efforts. This approach will not undermine diversification; Unitaid is committed to ensuring that climate criteria do not create barriers for South-based implementers, providing targeted support where needed to enable their participation.

c) Updated scoring and selection tools: Integrate climate criteria into scoring frameworks for both projects and implementers to encourage strong climate performance.

Examples of solutions are illustrated in **figure 5**.

Figure 5: Initial actions under pathway 1, "integrating climate considerations into investments scope and design"

a) Low-carbon investment focus

- In calls for proposals, provide clear Climate & Health direction and expectations, referencing global frameworks (e.g., SBTi).
- Encourage project design that maximizes efficiency and sustainability from the outset.
- Encourage regionalized project design.
- Support the use of climate-smart health solutions with lower environmental impact (supported through the Climate & Health Strategy).

b) Implementer alignment on climate

- Provide catalytic support to help implementers adopt low-carbon practices.
- Support and promote partners with existing science-based climate commitments or active emission-reduction efforts.

c) Updated scoring & selection tools

- Integrate climate into proposal scoring tools and frameworks.
- Include climate questions into proposal form.
- Screen proposals for carbon intensity, mitigation potential, and environmental risk.

Status in 2025:

- Implemented
- In progress
- To develop

2. Promoting low-carbon practices through grant development and management

Implementation methods matter: carbon emissions, their sources, and drivers are closely linked to how projects are designed from the outset and managed throughout implementation. This pathway focuses on embedding climate-aware approaches in both the development and ongoing management of grants to enable low-carbon outcomes and enhance climate resilience. There are three areas of action:

a) Climate-aware grant design: During grant development, build out climate considerations pre-identified in the scoping and selection phases.

b) Low-carbon grant management: Actively manage grants to identify, monitor and reduce emissions throughout implementation.

c) Ongoing climate accountability: Monitor and track progress on climate-related commitments over the grant lifecycle.

Examples of solutions are illustrated in **figure 6**.

Figure 6: Initial actions under pathway 2, "promoting low-carbon practices through grant development and management"

a) Climate-aware grant design

- Assess implementer's climate performance as part of the initial capacity assessment.
- Update procurement guidelines to prioritize low-carbon solutions (e.g., local consultants, waste management, climate-smart products, sustainable events).
- Integrate climate risks, mitigation, and adaptation into grant design (e.g., country/site selection, number of events, team structure).
- Encourage preliminary carbon assessments during project design.
- Link sustainability with project efficiency; develop guidance to promote good practices.

b) Low-carbon grant management

- Promote use of climate-friendly procurement practices during grant execution.
- Monitor and reduce emissions linked to implementation where feasible.
- Encourage climate-conscious choices in logistics, staffing, and operations throughout the grant lifecycle.

c) Ongoing climate accountability

- Add a climate section in routine progress reporting (eg annual reports), to track progress and capture lessons learnt.
- Incorporate standard climate indicators into performance frameworks and reporting to the Board.
- Update external evaluation templates to assess climate impact and gather lessons learned.

Status in 2025:

- Implemented
- In progress
- To develop

Promoting low-carbon practices through grant development and management addresses major emission sources by embedding climate criteria into grant design and operations, reducing reliance on carbon-intensive commodities and external services. Active grant management and monitoring further support lower-emission travel and implementation practices, while climate accountability mechanisms help minimize ongoing

administrative and operational emissions. While some individual actions may appear small, together they contribute to a shift in norms and expectations – encouraging a broader transition across the global health ecosystem.

The following section will expand on how Unitaid intends to work with partners and the broader ecosystem to support this transformation.





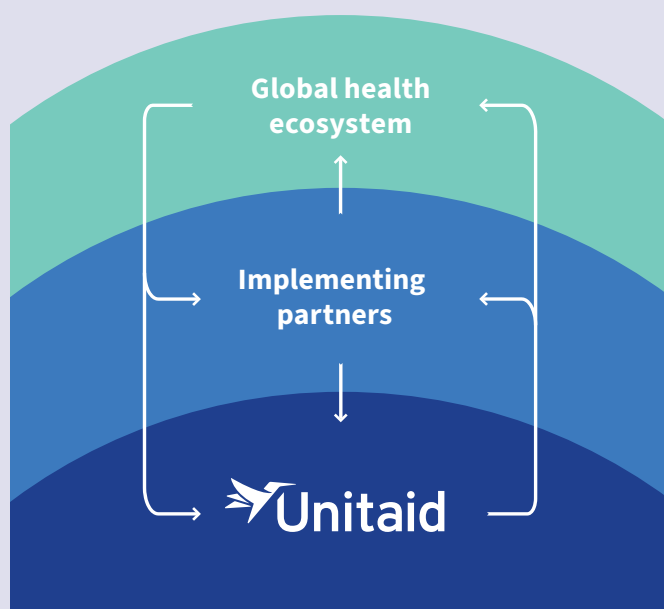
9. Supporting the transformation of the global health ecosystem

Unitaid recognizes that climate action cannot be achieved in isolation or instantly.

As a catalytic funder embedded in a wider global health ecosystem, Unitaid's success depends on the ability of the broader system -including partner countries and their national programmes, implementing partners, and peer financing institutions - to transform alongside the organisation. That is why the approach to decarbonization goes beyond internal action:

it extends to enabling, supporting, and influencing change across the ecosystem, and fostering sustained collaboration and integration with global and country priorities and health programs to ensure lasting impact over the long term.

To drive systemic transformation, Unitaid acts across three interconnected levels, presented in **figure 7**.

Figure 7 – The three levels of intervention to support transition**1. Internal transformation**

Ensuring Unitaid's own governance, teams, and processes are aligned and equipped to lead by example

2. Partner support

Providing tailored support and tools to implementing partners, so they can reduce emissions, strengthen resilience, build capacity over time, and be ready to respond to climate-related health needs and shocks

3. Ecosystem-wide influence

Engaging countries (incl. national programmes) and broader health and climate actors to send signals, build momentum, and support a global shift towards low-carbon health systems

1. Internally: creating the conditions for success

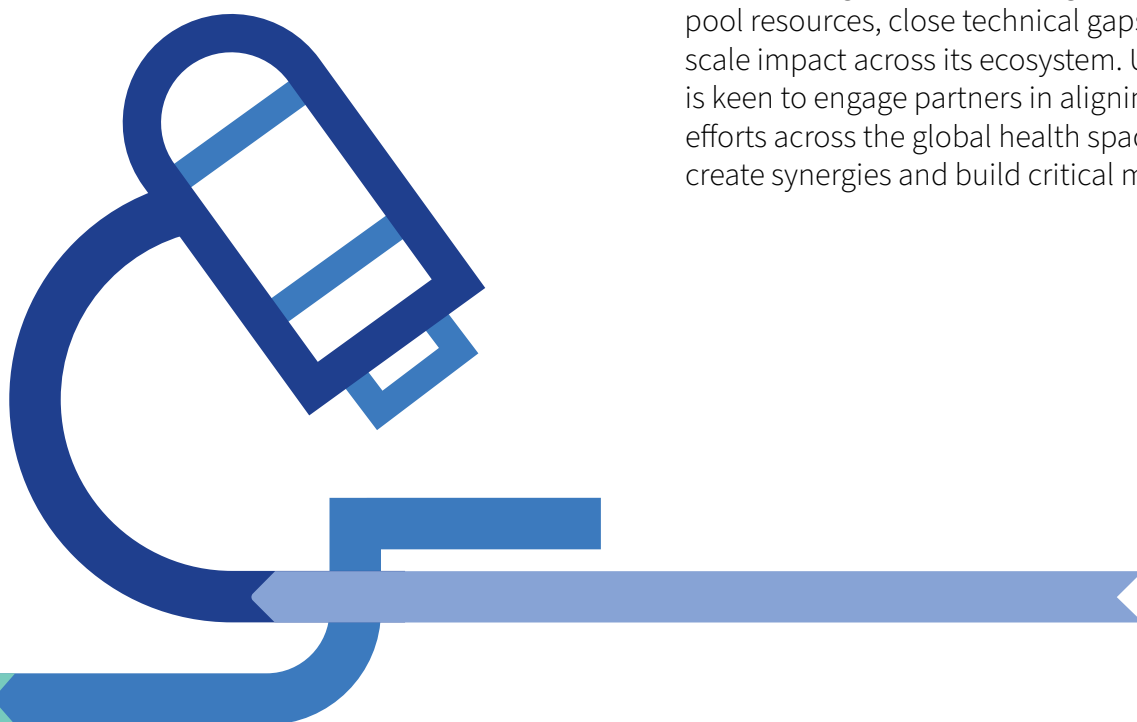
Unitaid is investing in internal structures, capacity, and practices to ensure climate action is systematically embedded across its operations and governance. This includes strengthening policies and processes, building staff awareness and skills through training and learning opportunities, and fostering a culture of accountability that supports continuous improvement.

2. With implementing partners: tailored support to enable action

Supporting implementing partners is essential to achieving sustainable, climate-conscious impact. Unitaid recognizes that implementing partners differ in readiness and capacity, and will therefore provide flexible, need-based support. At the same time, Unitaid expects partners to make clear commitments to climate action and to invest in their own institutional journeys toward sustainability.

The focus is on practical actions that build ownership, foster shared learning, and help translate ambition into tangible implementation. Unitaid supports partners primarily by facilitating access to technical assistance and capacity building, including targeted seed funding such as the Climate Action Pilot mechanism, and by exploring opportunities for shared platforms. In return, partners are encouraged to embed climate practices at the institutional level, beyond individual Unitaid-funded projects, ensuring that progress is realistic, sustainable, and co-owned.

- Climate action pilot mechanism:** Since 2023, Unitaid has funded climate action pilots and training for implementing partners. Initially voluntary, this support is now systematically offered to all new implementers, based on selection assessments. The pilot primarily aims to provide seed funding to build climate awareness and capacity across Unitaid's implementing partners, enable carbon footprint assessments, develop climate roadmaps, and strengthen organizational commitments. This mechanism may evolve in the future, as implementing partners advance on their climate agenda.
- Shared initiatives:** Since 2023, Unitaid has partnered with the Climate Action Accelerator to cost-consciously mutualize resources and efforts and access tailored technical support, peer learning, and shared tools. To further drive efficient collective climate action, Unitaid plans to explore broader shared platforms (eg. accelerator programme) that pool resources, close technical gaps, and scale impact across its ecosystem. Unitaid is keen to engage partners in aligning these efforts across the global health space to create synergies and build critical mass.



The Climate Action Pilots in practice

The Climate Action Pilots aim to catalyze the reduction of carbon emissions in Unitaid projects by providing financial and technical support for initiatives such as carbon footprint assessment, development of climate roadmaps, implementation of concrete reduction actions, monitoring and management of emissions, and capacity building, to accelerate the transition towards a more sustainable future.

Initial findings from the Pilots: The Climate Action Pilots have sparked meaningful change by helping organizations understand and address their carbon footprints, especially in areas like business travel. Through hands-on experience, partners have discovered the value of setting clear climate targets, engaging staff, and weaving sustainability into daily operations. The pilots have fostered collaboration, encouraged innovative solutions, and built lasting commitment to climate action. As a result, organizations are not only reducing emissions but also building the capacity and culture needed for long-term environmental impact.

7

finished or ongoing pilots

36%

of implementing partners say that the partnership with Unitaid has helped accelerate their climate and environmental efforts
(2025 Implementers Survey)

“ITPC’s commitment to sustainability reflects our vision for a more resilient, responsible, and environmentally conscious future. The climate action pilot is important to us because it offers a practical framework to implement and evaluate sustainable initiatives on a manageable scale, enabling us to identify effective strategies for reducing our environmental footprint. Ultimately, this supports our 3P Strategy – our core framework for prioritizing People, Planet, and Policy as we pursue our mission.”

– Charlene Omrawo, Strategy and Organizational Effectiveness Lead, ITPC

“As a global health organization, CHAI recognizes that our work can have unintended environmental impacts, which in turn affect the very health challenges we aim to address. Through Unitaid’s Climate Action Pilot, we conducted an in-depth assessment of our carbon footprint and are now developing a Climate Action Roadmap to guide emission reductions. We remain committed to minimizing our environmental impact and are grateful to Unitaid for supporting this important effort.”

– Benvy Caldwell, HIV Programme Manager, CHAI

“Aurum is very excited to participate in the Unitaid Climate Action Pilot Program. As an African organisation, we are acutely aware of the urgent need to address climate change as a critical threat to public health and well-being on the continent. We are committed to play our part in the reduction of carbon emissions and make public healthcare more climate resilient. The Climate Action Pilot Program gives us the necessary impetus to develop our own Climate Action Roadmap and to integrate climate considerations into all our programs. We hope to meaningfully contribute to climate awareness and promote sustainable practices, at an organisational level as well as within the health infrastructure and communities we serve.”

– Daphne van der Wind, International business development & grants manager, The Aurum Institute

3. At ecosystem level: catalysing broader change

Unitaid recognises that advancing low-carbon, resilient global health is a shared challenge that no single global health actor can tackle alone. Unitaid is committed to using its position to catalyse meaningful change: by learning through action, sharing insights, and standing alongside partners and stakeholders across the ecosystem.

Key areas of Unitaid's engagement include:



Strategic climate & health platforms:

Actively engaging in global and country-led initiatives, including the Conference of the Parties (COP) and the Alliance for Transformative Action on Climate and Health (ATACH), to advance sustainable, resilient health systems and accelerate collective climate action.



Common principles and influence:

Partnering with donors and health actors (e.g., Global Fund) on joint initiatives to drive alignment, shared ownership, and collective momentum for climate action.

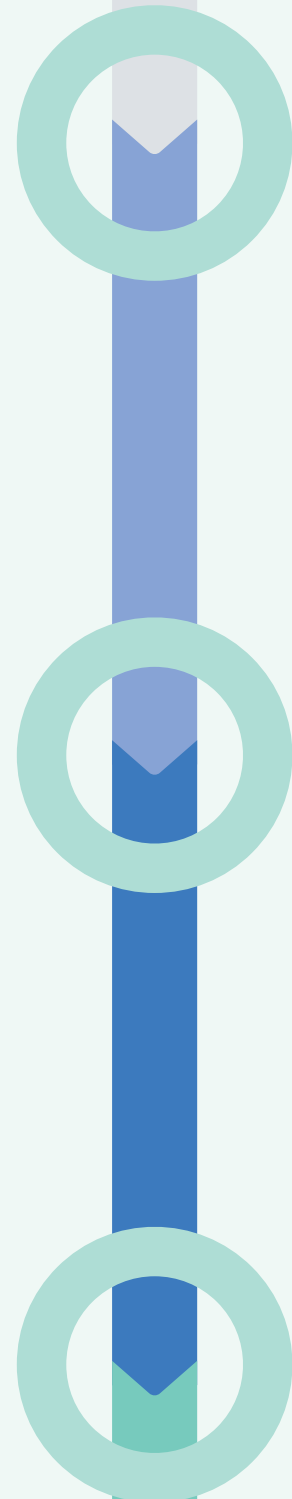


Knowledge sharing: Creating and disseminating practical tools, operational guidance, and expert reports (such as *From Milligrams to Megatons*) to accelerate learning, inform decision-making, and promote adoption of low-carbon practices across the health sector.



Contributing to sector-wide transformations:

Using investment decisions and strategic communications to set ambitious climate expectations, establish low-carbon norms, and position Unitaid at the forefront of the global health response to climate change.



10.

Timeline for implementation

Building on three years of scoping and piloting work, Unitaid is now ready to implement its climate action roadmap. Structured around three main phases, the roadmap will guide Unitaid and its implementing partners through a progressive pathway toward stronger climate action.

1. The first years will focus on signalling and creating momentum through a push and pull approach. The **first phase “2025-2027: Building capacity and fostering voluntary adoption”**, will prioritize informing, training, and incentivizing implementing partners by developing charters, recommendations, financial support mechanisms, and building capacity, while encouraging voluntary adoption of climate-smart practices within a community of partners.
2. In the **second phase “2027-2030: Strengthening expectations and embedding climate accountability”**, Unitaid will aim to drive transformation by introducing clear guidelines and stronger expectations for emission reductions, requiring climate considerations in all grants and investments, and mandating climate roadmaps for lead implementers, alongside more rigorous funding criteria to favour climate-aligned partners.
3. Moving into the **third phase “2030-2035: Driving accountability for climate commitments”**, the emphasis will shift to compliance and accountability, increasing oversight and driving higher adherence among implementing partners who do not meet climate commitments, while expanding requirements to secondary implementing partners. This phased approach balances ambition with practical support, enabling sustained progress toward Unitaid's climate goals.

This phased timeline provides a clear pathway from awareness and capacity-building to concrete action and accountability, reflecting Unitaid's commitment to fostering lasting change while supporting implementing partners throughout their climate journey. The early phases focus on practical and tangible steps, while the later phases are designed with built-in flexibility to adapt to the evolving global health landscape and the uncertainties ahead. Extending beyond the current 2024-2027 strategy, this timeline signals a long-term dedication to guiding sustained progress in climate action.



11.

Monitoring, evaluation and learning

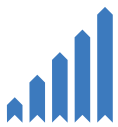
Unitaid is committed to tracking implementation of the roadmap, with a strong focus on driving tangible impact. A comprehensive monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) plan will be developed in the first half of 2026, detailing milestone and indicator definitions, data sources and collection methods, baseline values and annual targets, as well as a learning agenda.

Unitaid will implement the roadmap through a dedicated MEL framework covering both internal actions and partner support. Focused on impact, learning, and transparency, the framework tracks emissions-reduction outcomes, phased milestones, and key insights - guiding adjustments and informing the wider global health community toward low-carbon, resilient, and equitable health systems.

General overview



Accountability and learning: Built on Unitaid's performance framework, the MEL system will ensure accountability, enable course corrections, and share lessons to inform the wider global health community.



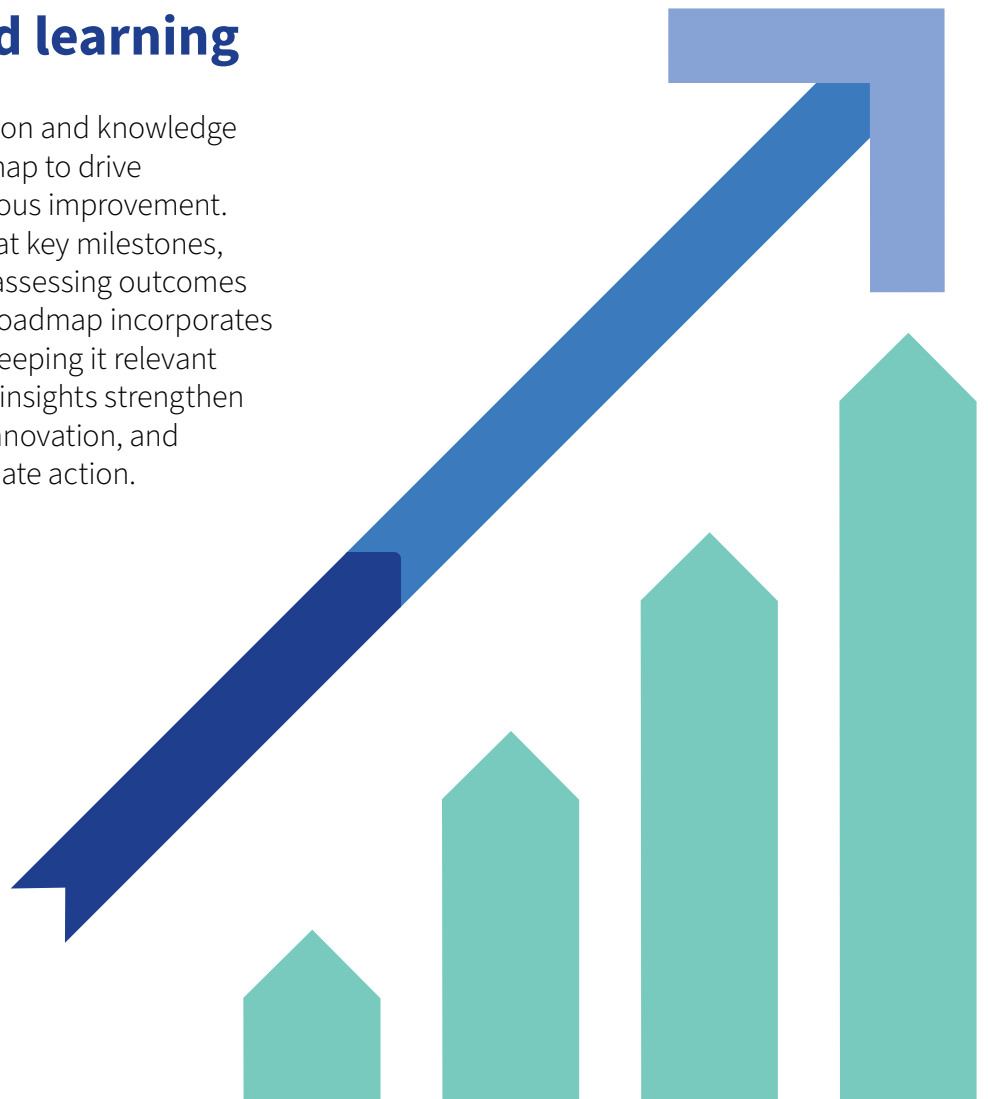
Outcome-focused: Progress will be measured against a 2019 baseline, with milestones aligned to roadmap phases and impacts on carbon intensity estimated for 2030 and 2035.



Practical and adaptive: Existing tools (e.g., implementer surveys, annual reports, capacity assessments) will be leveraged, with flexibility to add or adjust indicators as needs evolve.

Evaluation and learning

Unitaid will embed evaluation and knowledge sharing in its climate roadmap to drive accountability and continuous improvement. Progress will be measured at key milestones, with independent reviews assessing outcomes and impact. The adaptive roadmap incorporates lessons from each phase, keeping it relevant and effective, while shared insights strengthen collective learning, foster innovation, and accelerate sector-wide climate action.



12.

Conclusion

Unitaid's roadmap aims to provide a clear, ambitious commitment to act decisively on climate change – both within its own operations and across the broader global health ecosystem. Recognizing the urgent need to reduce emissions and build resilience, Unitaid is determined to lead by example, harnessing the full range of tools at its disposal to minimize its own carbon footprint. At the same time, it will provide tailored support to implementing partners and stakeholders, enabling them to embark on their own climate journeys with capacity-building, technical assistance, and catalytic funding.

This dual approach – “walking the talk” internally while fostering transformation externally – reflects an understanding that climate action in global health is not optional, but an imperative. As health actors, Unitaid and its implementing partners have a duty to “do no harm.” Reducing emissions and integrating climate resilience into health systems is essential to protect vulnerable populations and ensure that lifesaving interventions remain effective in a changing climate.

Unitaid is conscious that it cannot drive this transformation alone. The organisation embraces humility, recognising the evolving nature of the global health landscape and the need for collective action. By sending clear signals through its investments, operational practices, stakeholder engagements and partnerships, Unitaid aims to catalyse systemic change and encourage a shift.

This roadmap lays out a phased, flexible path forward, balancing concrete early actions with a long-term vision. It embodies Unitaid's commitment to learning, adapting, and growing alongside its partners and the wider ecosystem.

In a world where climate change increasingly threatens global health progress, Unitaid recognizes its responsibility to be among the early actors driving this urgent agenda. While still learning and evolving, Unitaid's commitment and actions contribute to a growing movement within the global health community. Together, through shared effort and collective responsibility, partners can build a sustainable future – one where health systems are better prepared to meet today's challenges and tomorrow's uncertainties.







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