

The Big Response Project

Report to the Baring Foundation
January 2010



| Contents | Page |
|--|-------------|
| Executive summary | 3 |
| 1. Project rationale: | 4 |
| 1.1 Introduction | |
| 1.2 Project aims and context | |
| 2. What we did: | 7 |
| 2.1 Summary of activities | |
| 2.2 Outputs achieved | |
| 3. What progress we made on achieving the desired outcomes: | 11 |
| 3.1 The participating organisations | |
| 3.2 The wider non-environmental voluntary and community sector | |
| 3.3 Policy makers | |
| 4. What we learnt | 15 |
| 4.1 Approaching and engaging organisations | |
| 4.2 Nature of the support | |
| 4.3 Other issues | |
| 5. Recommendations | 23 |
| Appendices: The case studies: | |
| 1. British Red Cross | 25 |
| 2. Equinox Care | 32 |
| 3. Friends of the Elderly | 38 |
| 4. The Royal National Institute of Blind People | 43 |

Executive summary

Climate change is not just an 'environmental' issue. It is a human issue: one that could have catastrophic effects on societies throughout the world.

Everyone has a role to play in responding to this urgent threat. The voluntary and community sector's size, reach into people's lives, independence and influence, and its status as a role model, combine to make it a potentially critical component in the global response to climate change. But to date, many non-environmental voluntary and community organisations (VCOs) have been unconvinced that climate change is of any significance to them.

The Baring Foundation set up its *Special Initiative on Climate Change and the Third Sector* to respond to this challenge. Its aim was to look at how best to engage this enormous sector on climate change and, through four pilot programmes, to explore in particular, the link between climate change and non-environmental organisations' primary charitable purposes.

NCVO, Green Alliance and Global Action Plan have jointly delivered one of these pilot programmes, under the name of *The Big Response*. The project worked with VCOs whose work is focused on assisting vulnerable communities. The four pilot organisations were Friends of the Elderly, Royal National Institute of Blind People, the British Red Cross and Equinox Care.

This report constitutes the final report of The Big Response project to the Baring Foundation and is also a useful tool for other organisations seeking to engage VCOs with the issue of climate change. Although the focus of our project was on organisations that work with vulnerable communities, much of the learning has a wider application for many other VCOs.

Our experience of The Big Response project has shown that a guided process examining the impact of climate change with individual VCOs can galvanise them into action. Our evaluation shows that this happens best when **key experts** deliver **tailored support** engaging directly with **trustees and senior-management**; those responsible for **organisational strategy**. This must come at an **appropriate time** when the organisation is considering strategic issues. The organisation should be encouraged to **make its own informed decisions** about how to respond to climate change and to **share this understanding across the organisation** to enable ownership and action at all levels.

This process generated a range of recommendations with three headline messages:

1. A changing climate is likely to have a huge impact on the beneficiaries that many VCOs seek to help. Members of vulnerable communities are likely to be hardest hit. Equally it will have a significant impact on VCOs' operations and service delivery. For some VCOs, climate change will threaten the very ability of the organisation to deliver its core mission. VCOs of all kinds need to work out what these s will mean for them, so that they can continue to achieve the most for their cause in the future.

2. Organisations can be galvanised to address this issue in a strategic way by taking senior staff and trustees through a guided process with experts to examine the impacts of climate change on their beneficiaries and operations. Ideally this should be three-fold:

- exploring options to prepare and adapt for the degree of change already coming
- looking at how to reduce each organisation's own greenhouse gas emissions and impact
- considering advocating government and others to do more on both mitigating climate change and adapting to it.

3. Organisations will need external support to start engagement on this process, whether this is from central and local government through direction; from funders through financial support to look at the issue; or from sector bodies to provide information, advice and support. This will help provide the conditions necessary for VCOs to address the issue effectively and to make informed responses.

1. Project rationale

1.1 Introduction

Climate change is everyone's problem and we all need to be part of the solution

Climate change is not just an 'environmental' issue. It is a human issue: one that could have catastrophic effects on societies throughout the world. It has the potential to roll back progress that has been made on many other areas, such as poverty, housing, health and security.

It is profoundly in the interest of those concerned with social justice to offer their particular contributions to the struggle against climate change. To date, the environmental community has been responsible for almost all of the effort to raise awareness and influence governments on this threat.

As Stephen Hale argued in *The new politics of climate change*¹, concern from the environmental community is not enough. We will only succeed in creating the condition for far-reaching government action on this issue if we establish awareness throughout the voluntary sector of the links between climate change and a myriad of social and economic issues.

The voluntary and community sector's size, reach into people's lives, independence and influence, and its status as a role model, combine to make it a critical component in the global response to climate change. It is potentially a massive force for change: with thousands of different organisations² covering a myriad of areas, providing a space for collective action and experienced in campaigning for a shared vision for society. It is a diverse group, but this diversity provides strength.

The rapid growth of action by particular sections of civil society such as faith and development groups, trade unions and community initiatives such as transition towns, are evidence that this is beginning to happen, but far more is needed.

Voluntary and community organisations (VCOs) need to understand the impact climate change could have on their beneficiaries or cause, explore options for how to respond and take an informed decision about what role they can play to help ensure a sustainable future.

1.2 Project aims and context

The Baring Foundation's *Special Initiative on Climate Change and the Third Sector*

The stark conclusion of the Stern Report published in October 2006, that 'climate change presents very serious global risks and it demands an urgent global response,' prompted the trustees of the Baring Foundation to explore what the Foundation could contribute to this response.

Its *Special Initiative on Climate Change and the Third Sector* first offered free environmental audits to a group of grantees in 2007. The audits generated some useful ideas for reducing VCOs' carbon footprints. However, the Foundation was aware that many VCOs remained unconvinced that climate change should be a priority for them when set against the

¹ Stephen Hale (2008) *The new politics of climate change: why we are failing and how we will succeed*, Green Alliance

² Oliver Reichardt, David Kane, Belinda Pratten, Karl Wilding, 2008, *The UK Civil Society Almanac 2008* (NCVO)

immediate needs of their beneficiaries and saw no role for themselves in engaging with the issue.

This had two consequences: most VCOs were not considering how climate change will affect the nature and scale of their work; secondly, those fighting to achieve the necessary urgent global response were doing so without the help of organisations with valuable skills and resources to add to the effort.

The Baring Foundation decided to focus the next phase of the *Special Initiative* on supporting non-environmental VCOs to understand how the impacts of climate change will affect their charitable purposes.

It has funded four projects working with different parts of the non-environmental voluntary and community sector – refugee organisations, children and youth organisations, community anchors and organisations working with vulnerable people. It hoped that the four projects would also bring about a wider understanding of climate change impacts across the sector.

The results of this initiative will be shared with practitioners and policy makers as part of the effort to encourage a more urgent response to the serious risks of climate change.

The Big Response project

The Big Response project was run by the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO), the national umbrella body for VCOs; Global Action Plan (GAP), a charity which helps deliver practical environmental solutions and Green Alliance, an environmental thinktank that helps make environment a political issue.

The three partners each brought a different contribution to the project. NCVO is a sector leader in strategy development and mission delivery for VCOs. GAP is an expert in communicating climate change in a way that can inspire practical action, and through its SmartWorks team it also has a well-honed practice in environmental auditing. Green Alliance is the foremost environmental charity focused on high-level advocacy and political engagement.

The project also received support from the UK Climate Impacts Programme which provided speakers for two events and whose free online resources were invaluable in providing reputable information to support the module activities.

Focusing on vulnerable communities

Each of the Baring Foundation funded pilot programmes selected a section of the voluntary and community sector to focus on. We chose the theme of *vulnerable communities* because:

- Vulnerable and low income communities are most likely to be exposed to climate change impacts and least likely to have the adaptive capacity to cope³
- There has been very little research on the effects of climate change impacts in the UK on the basis of social and economic class⁴;
- Links to climate change are not immediately obvious or a current priority for vulnerable communities, whose concerns tend to focus on more immediate issues of meeting basic economic needs, health and their immediate environment⁵
- There is a wide existing donor base for these causes which could potentially help these organisations prepare for climate change: around 29% of donors choose to support social welfare causes, whereas environmental causes are supported by only 16% of donors⁶.

³ Simms, A. and Johnson, V. (2007) *Climate change and people in poverty in the UK: a scoping study of key issues for Oxfam GB*.

⁴ Burkeman, S. (2008) *Responding to the Rooftops: A report for the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust*.

⁵ Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2001) *The environmental concerns of disadvantaged groups*.
<http://www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/housing/911.asp>

Project aims

The Big Response project provided tailored direct support to help several non-environmental VCOs working with vulnerable communities to:

- better appreciate the relevance of climate change to their work, and the urgency of responding
- develop their policies and behaviours to protect their beneficiaries' long-term interests in a changing world
- influence other stakeholders, especially policy-makers, about the relevance of climate change and the urgency of responding.

We developed more specific planned outcomes with each participating organisation. These are detailed in each case study in the appendix.

⁶ Office of the Third Sector (2007) *Helping Out: A national survey of volunteering and charitable giving*. http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/~media/assets/www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/third_sector/helping_out_national_survey_2007%20pdf.ashx

2. What we did

The Big Response project worked with four organisations over an eight month period in 2009, from initial recruitment to a final project learning workshop. During this time each organisation received a tailored package of support modules and a final recommended action plan to take forward after the project's completion.

This section looks at: pilot selection; support module design; development of action plans and other final outputs.

2.1 Summary of activities

A brief overview of the activities and timeline of the project can be seen in the table below.

Overview of project timeline

| Timings | |
|-----------------|---|
| Dec 08 | Partner learning day: discussion of aims and expectations of the project; what would constitute success |
| Dec 08-Jan 09 | Selection of pilots |
| Feb 09 | Pilot launch seminar: overview on climate impacts; what to expect from the project |
| Mar 09-April 09 | Individual inception interviews with each partner: background on pilot and discussion of support modules. |
| May 09-Oct 09 | Project delivery: support modules, action plans and final presentations |
| Sept 09 | Pilot learning seminar: outcomes, learning and reflections |
| Sept-Dec 09 | Film and web guidance output creation |
| Sept-Nov 09 | Evaluation interviews with pilots |
| Sept-Dec 09 | Bringing together learning for final report |

Partner learning day

This project was an innovative process on several levels, bringing together a range of expertise and disciplines. A new partnership between NCVO, Global Action Plan and Green Alliance was set up for the initiative. A project learning day was held at the beginning of the process to clarify each partner's aims and expectations for the work and to finalise some key initial questions, such as the selection process of pilots, and what success would constitute.

Pilot organisation selection process

During December 08 and January 09 we sought to find relevant VCOs within the 'vulnerable communities' category. We wanted a mixture of both sizes and focus within our final group of pilot organisations to enable maximum learning. We wanted to find organisations within the following categories: housing; disability; social care; older or younger people (although we did not want to focus too much on younger people as this was the focus of one of the other Baring pilot programmes).

Our selection process mainly focused on organisations with which we had previous engagement or personal contacts. But with several organisations turning down the offer, we also broadened our approach to include 'cold' contacts.

Our final five pilot organisations: the British Red Cross, Equinox Care, Friends of the Elderly, Hanover Housing Association and Royal National Institute of Blind People. All were medium large or very large organisations.

The Big Response 'offer'

Each participant pilot organisation was offered the following:

- Nine days of free, tailored in-depth support
- A free environmental audit
- An opportunity to contribute to a leading national project exploring climate change impacts
- Expenses covered if needed.

"This project will help you to explore how climate change will impact upon your mission, your beneficiaries and your operations – and it will help you to prepare an appropriate response to protect the people and communities you already work hard to help."

Extract from introductory project invitation

Each organisation was asked to commit:

- To engage in two workshops with the other four pilot organisations, one at the start and one at the end of the project;
- Up to nine days for key personnel to explore the impact of climate change on their organisation and to start designing its strategic response, with our support;
- Other relevant trustees and senior staff to attend two meetings to actively engage with the project.

We had our final pilot organisations on board by late January and held the **initial introductory project workshop** in February 2009.

Introductory project workshop

The purpose of this workshop was to introduce pilots to each other and make them feel part of a bigger project; give a broad overview on current climate science and explain to the pilot organisations the detailed plans for the project and the broader initiative it was part of.

Following this workshop Hanover Housing Association chose to withdraw from The Big Response project because it did not feel the project would meet its needs. Given the concentrated timing of the project and to avoid further delay, the partners decided not to recruit a replacement organisation.

Inception meetings

Following the introductory workshop, the key contact(s) for each pilot partner had an **initial inception and assessment interview** with The Big Response team. At this meeting the following issues were discussed:

- Background to each pilot organisation, its operations, beneficiaries and culture
- Where the organisation now is, in relation to environmental issues
- Where they would like to get to as a result of the support
- The details of the support package they might be interested in.

Following the meeting, each key contact recruited people for the project workshops and the final support package was confirmed. This was formalised with a **memorandum of understanding**.

Support package

The support package offered was a flexible menu of modules, described in the table below. Each organisation had the option of choosing some or all four modules and, in addition, an environmental audit, should they require one.

Description of the support modules

| Module | Details |
|--|--|
| Module 1: Beneficiaries (1 day) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Your beneficiaries and the issues they face• Expectations of UK climate impacts• Implications for your beneficiaries and demand for your services. |
| Module 2: Strategy | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider the implications of the findings from the beneficiaries module (and operations module if chosen) for your mission and |

| | |
|---|--|
| (two half days) | purpose <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider other players • Consider future options. |
| Module 3: Operations (0.5 to 1day) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impacts of past weather events • Expectations for future weather events and indirect impacts • Implications for planning to maintain services • Signposting to further tools. |
| Module 4: Engaging stakeholders (one half day) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicating climate change, consulting and engaging • Choose a focus stakeholder group, e.g. beneficiaries, staff or policy makers • Map out a plan of engagement. |
| Module 5: Environmental audit | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment of head office or alternative premises • Energy, waste, water, purchasing, etc. |

Action plans

Each pilot was provided with a final action plan at the end of the support modules. This was either in the form of a report, a presentation to the senior management team or trustees or both.

Final learning workshop

At the end of the support module process a learning workshop was held with all the pilot partners. David Cutler and Matthew Smerdon from the Baring Foundation, representatives from UKCIP and other organisations leading the *Special Initiative* projects on children and refugees also attended.

The purpose of this event was:

- to share experiences and ideas from the project
- to explore the distance each pilot organisation has travelled
- to inspire each other and hear about other similar work
- to begin to identify key learning and practical tips to share with the wider voluntary and community sector, funders and policy makers.

2.2 Outputs delivered

The tailored direct support

The elements of the support package received by the four organisations participating in The Big Response project are listed in the table below. The sessions were tailored to each organisation's needs. Some were run as interactive workshops involving a range of internal stakeholders. Others were in the form of facilitated, reflective discussions or one-to-one interviews with key players .

Take up of support package offered to pilot organisations

| Module | Which organisation took this up |
|--|---|
| Module 1: Beneficiaries (up to one day) | British Red Cross Equinox Care Friends of the Elderly RNIB |
| Module 2: Strategy (up to two half days) | British Red Cross Equinox Care RNIB |

| | |
|--|--|
| Module 3: Operations (up to one day) | Equinox Care Friends of the Elderly RNIB |
| Module 4: Engaging stakeholders (one half day) | British Red Cross |
| Module 5: Environmental audit | Friends of the Elderly |
| Action plans/feedback | All |

The tailored nature of each support package and the project experiences of the participating organisations are described in detail in the case studies in the Appendix.

Other outputs

The project partners also produced:

- **a film** to encourage other non-environmental VCOs to explore the impact climate change will have on their work. This will be hosted on all three project partners' websites and showcased at sector events.
- **online guidance**: 20 web pages of information, advice and support to help VCOs consider what climate change will mean for them, the strategic options they could take in response, the importance of acting sustainably and sources of further assistance. The guidance is available at: www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/climatechange
- **a workshop**, featuring the experiences of the participating organisations as well as practical interactive exercises drawing on the project methodology. This session will be delivered in the first instance at the NCVO Annual Conference, February 2010. We will look for other opportunities to run sessions at appropriate sector events in conjunction with the delivery agencies of the three other *Special Initiative* pilot projects.

Our plan to run a **House of Commons event on implications for policy-making** and to **share the project results with targeted policy-makers** has been put on hold to enable all four *Special Initiative* pilot projects to work collectively to engage this particular audience once the learning from each is available.

3. What progress we made on achieving the desired outcomes of the *Special Initiative*

3.1 Outcome A: The group of non-environmental voluntary organisations funded to participate in the project have a greater understanding of the link between climate change and their primary charitable purpose.

Here, we look at the impact of The Big Response programme as a whole and how successful we were in getting the four participating organisations to engage with the issue of climate change. A more detailed assessment of the achievements against each of the individual pilots' aims is included in the case studies in the appendix.

The original aims of the project were to enable our pilot organisations to:

- better appreciate the relevance of climate change to their work, and the urgency of responding
- develop their policies and behaviours to protect their beneficiaries' long-term interests in a changing world
- influence other stakeholders, especially policy-makers, about the relevance of climate change and the urgency of responding.

Below we look at each of these aims in turn.

The Big Response Aim 1. Better appreciate the relevance of climate change to their work, and the urgency of responding.

The Big Response programme has helped all four participating organisations to find the time and space to focus their minds on climate change. Whilst engagement on the issue might well have happened anyway, it would not have been on the scale or with the speed that The Big Response enabled.

Each of our pilot organisations, despite their different focus and sizes, found that climate change will impact on their beneficiaries in wide-ranging ways.

Certainly our pilot organisations have understood the need to engage on this issue. The 'urgency' question is harder to answer. Whilst the organisations have appreciated the need to address this topic, they already have a number of competing pressures, so it is unlikely that any of them will proceed with an 'urgent' timescale. However, they will take the time to really incorporate the issue into their organisation.

Contacts from all four participating organisations have stated in project workshops, evaluation interviews and the project film, that their organisation now better appreciates the link between their work and climate change (Special Initiative outcome A, indicator i⁷).

"The project has definitely made us think about the greater impact climate change will have on our beneficiaries, compared with the general sighted public. We're feeding this in alongside other issues so our directors and trustees can have an overview of all the opportunities and threats out there". Nicholas Johnston, Head of Business Planning and Performance

"We are definitely further along the road towards this... We've got a much higher awareness of the big issues... We need to embed climate change within the business... I don't think that a charity that has a key mission can then take on environmental things as a separate key mission; it's got to be part of who we are." Richard Furze, Friends of the Elderly (FOTE)

⁷ Public statements by these organisations making the link between their work and climate change.

"This process has been a learning curve for me and I would imagine for other people in my organisation too in terms of learning about new ways we could engage with the issue of climate change... There were pockets of good work going on [within the organisation] but without this project I don't think we would have had the space or support to make the links between them and to access options and opportunities going forward." Liz Hendry, Senior Strategy Officer, British Red Cross

"We know we have to do something in relation to sustainability to continue to deliver the work we do. There's no doubt about it. We have to start doing work with our service users to [help them] understand the issues and develop coping strategies." Brian Watts, Chief Executive, Equinox Care

The Big Response Aim 2. Develop their policies and behaviours to protect their beneficiaries' long-term interests in a changing world.

While we have definitely provoked all of the participating organisations to consider the impact of climate change on their work, these considerations need time to be implemented into organisational strategies, future plans and business continuity procedures.

However, the pilot organisations have already made some substantial commitments.

Equinox intends to:

- include climate change as a topic in its life skills programme for service users, to help protect them against related risks but also to enable them to play their part as active citizens in reducing carbon emissions
- include understanding of climate change in staff competences to help embed the topic across the organisation
- explore how it can work with local authorities and other agencies in local contingency planning to help ensure beneficiaries are protected in emergencies.

RNIB is:

- looking at climate change trends as part of its ongoing analysis of its operating environment
- building the delivery issues identified during The Big Response project into the implementation of the organisation's new strategy
- adopting triple bottom line reporting in its annual report.

Friends of the Elderly:

- intends to incorporate climate change factors into its next strategy
- is embedding its new knowledge into its ongoing work such as contingency planning and property management
- is making sure that understanding of the topic is shared across the organisation.

British Red Cross has:

- in its new strategy for 2010-15, identified climate change as one of the most likely factors for increasing its service users in the future
- forged important new relationships with other agencies to help it to keep learning about climate change impacts and stay vigilant.

It would be interesting to revisit each organisation in a year's time to see how they have got on with these priorities and the recommendations in the end-of-project action plan prepared for them.

The Big Response Aim 3. Influence other stakeholders, especially policy-makers, about the relevance of climate change and the urgency of responding.

All four of our pilot organisations explored options for advocating on climate change. Two would like to do specific work in this area.

Equinox has already decided that it will engage others in its sector on this issue and plans to run sessions at sector conferences and events to share their experiences of the project and to

encourage their peer organisations to take this issue seriously (Special Initiative outcome A, indicator ii⁸).

Friends of the Elderly (FOTE) is also willing to engage in advocacy, but it is unlikely it would do so on its own; it has told us it would need support to be able to do so.

RNIB's sub-sectoral support role for organisations providing services to blind and partially sighted people was briefly identified as a potential advocacy option (and formed one of the recommendations from the project). Meanwhile the British Red Cross, after careful consideration, has opted not to advocate on climate change at this stage, partly due to its important history of neutrality.

However, all of the participating organisations said they were willing to speak at events or contribute to broader advocacy on this agenda (Special Initiative outcome A, indicator iii⁹).

"I would love to think that with help we could lobby more for some of these things that we really need to get changed." Richard Furze, FOTE

A range of lessons about tools and approaches for engaging non-environmental organisations in action on climate change (Special Initiative outcome A, indicator iv) are identified in the 'What we learnt' section of this report.

3.2 Outcome B: Other organisations have a greater awareness of the link between climate change and their primary charitable purpose.

Although this project engaged with a small number of organisations working with vulnerable people, their experiences of supporting and responding to the needs of specific user groups are likely to be familiar to many other VCOs.

The pilot organisations' particular experiences of The Big Response project, featured in the film and web guidance, should resonate with this wider audience and encourage them to explore the implications of climate change for their own organisation.

The project methodology also has the potential to be used to support any organisation with a social mission. The structure of the support package – its focus on beneficiary need and exploring strategic responses – provides a suitable model which can be tailored to the specific circumstances of an organisation, as The Big Response project demonstrated.

The approach taken by this project therefore has potential to contribute significantly to Outcome B, enabling any VCO to appreciate the threat climate change could pose to its core purpose and to identify the most appropriate ways to respond.

As one of our pilot organisations commented in our final learning workshop:

"Climate change will affect the people we are set up to help; if we didn't believe that, we wouldn't be engaging with it at all. So if we believe it, you lot [other VCOs] ought to believe it too. If the implications for your beneficiaries doesn't turn you on, then why are you a charity, social enterprise or social group?"

In the coming months, we aim to continue to work towards Outcome B by:

- promoting the online guidance and film extensively across the voluntary and community sector

⁸ Practical involvement of these groups in efforts to share this message more widely with other non-environmental voluntary organisations.

⁹ Practical involvement of these groups in efforts to influence policy makers.

- identifying other opportunities to run the workshop.

There is also considerable scope to work with other sector infrastructure agencies to enable them to adapt The Big Response support package and guidance for use with their own network members (Special Initiative outcome B, indicator iii¹⁰). However, any initiative along these lines would require funding.

3.3 Outcome C: Policy makers respond to the project conclusions

As explained above in section 3.1, progress on this outcome is still to be made, in conjunction with the three other *Special Initiative* projects.

¹⁰ Increased involvement of sector infrastructure bodies in climate change issues.

4. What we learnt

4.1 Approaching and engaging organisations

This section looks at how we approached and engaged our pilot organisations in The Big Response project, and lessons we can learn from this.

A number of external and internal issues make it easier for organisations to engage with a process such as this

We approached 14 organisations to get an initial shortlist of five pilot organisations. Those that did engage did so for a number of different reasons: an internal champion (Equinox); a perception of not being open enough to external projects of this type (British Red Cross); a wish to use the project to support an existing team's interests (RNIB); or a genuine desire to give it a try and find out more (Friends of the Elderly).

There was much more correlation about why other organisations didn't get involved: almost all said that they had other priorities and didn't have the time to dedicate to this issue. The final learning workshop identified additional reasons for why non-environmental VCOs might not engage with climate change:

- There are other issues that are more closely linked to mission;
- There are other more urgent or immediate priorities, or ones with the 'stamp' of government;
- They lack the capacity for such long-term thinking;
- Lack of resources for staff training;
- Lack of ownership within the organisation;
- Entrenched behaviours working against new actions;
- Shortage of quick wins on engaging with this topic.

This has implications for engagement with the wider sector. If it takes time to get an organisation thinking about how climate change might affect them, how do you get them to sign up to examine the issue in the first place?

Our learning workshop identified a number of factors that makes it easier for organisations to engage. These include:

- External pressure: from commissioners; local authorities; funders and broader public expectation;
- Internal pressure: from service users; senior level ie trustees; broad acceptance and willingness for action;
- External events: 2009 snowfall and swine flu have made organisations more aware of risks and have developed business continuity plans, which means they are likely to take climate change risks more seriously; increased visible effects of climate change make it more tangible;
- Help with wider objectives eg testing out a model for action within the organisation, such as beneficiary engagement; enabling wider community engagement; enabling cross-organisational engagement (eg the environment team working with the communications team);
- Increased focus: more schemes on climate change around; more engagement among the third sector creating peer pressure; opportunities to share experiences and make connections with others; more institutional knowledge through Defra's adaptation team;
- Diversity: the third sector is a diverse and innovative group with lots of skills and resources. There is an opportunity to respond in an equally diverse way.

Fundamentally though **there needs to be a mission or business case for engagement**, or a belief that there might be, and so an interest in exploring the issue further.

"...you have to find ways of saying, "good environment is good for your business". There has to be messages that are not from the environmental lobby..." Richard Furze, FOTE

The size of the organisation seems to determine how the approach must be made

For larger organisations to get engagement at a senior level, a peer-to-peer approach is needed. It is likely then that day-to-day engagement with a project like this will then be passed down to a department. For medium-sized organisations senior staff and trustees can be approached directly.

Timing of support approach

It appears to be crucial where an organisation is in its internal planning cycle, as to whether it a) takes up the offer of support and b) to what extent that support will have any effect.

Both the British Red Cross (BRC) and Equinox were keen to be part of the pilot as they were already considering that sustainability might play a role in their new corporate strategies. They both benefited from time to think through the issues and were open to the idea of change. It meant that the work had additional resonance, it fed into BRC's and Equinox's internal processes, and there was scope for it to have a fundamental effect.

"... when you're in the middle of a big change process, looking ahead to the next five years, it is a great opportunity to re-evaluate what you're doing in relation to issues like climate change, and give consideration to new opportunities." Liz Hendry, BRC

Friends of the Elderly was already part way through its strategy, so some of its learning will have to wait until their next strategy process at the end of 2010 to feed into the organisation's strategic plan, although in the meantime, it is also addressing some key operational issues.

RNIB has just finished its strategy for 2009-14, after a two-year process, so was in a good position to consider climate change as an input into the implementation of the strategy through its new programme management system, but not as a central part of its strategy.

The lead department or individual appears to be crucial

This appears to depend on size:

- Medium-sized organisations – it is relatively easy to get engagement at chief executive level (both FOTE and Equinox's chief executives were our lead contacts). We also benefited in Equinox's case by having a very keen trustee involved
- Larger organisations – it is likely that there will be a sponsoring or lead department for the issue. Which department this is appears to determine significantly the organisation's wider response to the topic.

At BRC we were working with the Strategy Team which provided an easy route into its strategic senior management level. At RNIB we were engaging with those in the Health , Safety and Environment Team. This made it harder, but not impossible, for climate change to be perceived as more than an environmental concern. Both organisations said the work would have reached different places, and would have had different immediate impacts, if the key department had been elsewhere.

" I think if it (coordination of this pilot) had sat with our research team you might have had something more focused...but I don't think you'd have had the opportunity to look at the overview of the organisation and I don't think we'd have had the opportunity to make recommendations on a whole range of different strategic opportunities for British Red Cross." Liz Hendry, BRC

4.2 Nature of the support

This section looks at the actual support we gave to the four pilot organisations, how it could have been improved and what key lessons we can draw from it.

A link person from the support side is necessary for project continuity

The intention was to appoint one link person from the project team for each pilot organisation who could respond to questions and issues about the programme. This proved hard to achieve in practice with different partner organisations delivering different modules. For the organisation delivering a module, direct contact with the pilot organisation, while planning the module, was imperative. This led to a number of parallel conversations happening.

An internal champion is needed in the recipient organisation

This champion should ideally have the authority to be responsible for the project delivery and be able to help ensure momentum during and after the support period.

Who else should be involved?

Staff and volunteers

Involvement across the organisation was limited in our pilot organisations due to time constraints (which is discussed further later on). This had two effects:

1. Engagement with the project was mostly at a senior level as there was insufficient time to get broader staff and volunteer teams or service users involved, although as discussed later, Equinox was the exception to this.
2. Some key members of staff and trustees were unable to attend sessions. This meant therefore that sometimes, discussion wasn't as informed or rounded as it could have been.

To some degree the limited attendance was useful. Some of our key contacts told us that sessions would have been too 'broad' and 'high-level' for some staff and it enabled discussion to move at quite a fast pace and to look at strategic issues. Indeed, some of the best interactions that the project partners had with the pilot organisations were with small groups of people in focused discussions.

"...the other thing that you can never underestimate the value of is [that] there was a group within Equinox involved, so we sort of generated a little momentum." Brian Watts, Equinox

However, the involvement of staff and volunteers at different levels can ensure that engagement is broad and cross-cutting, and that understanding of the topic is shared and 'owned' throughout the organisation and that a level of momentum is generated. Dissemination of the learning from this type of project throughout the organisation could also happen outside the formal engagement period - through an existing internal process or using a designed toolkit perhaps. However, this would require the organisation to have the dedication and impetus to carry this through, as both Equinox and Friends of the Elderly are keen to do.

With our four organisations we had initially suggested that the key working group should include a trustee. However for some organisations this could be inappropriate, eg the British Red Cross's trustees are only really involved in high-level financial monitoring.

Organisations themselves often know who to involve, so any process should not be too prescriptive. In the future it may be best for support to be offered at the highest level, and for the client organisation to decide who to involve, though perhaps with some guidance.

Beneficiaries

Beneficiary engagement can be useful but needs to be thought through and planned appropriately. Only one of our pilot organisations, Equinox, opted to involve beneficiaries in the workshops; a reflection of the organisation's strong emphasis on user involvement, which is built into all its key processes. The involvement of beneficiaries proved time consuming for Equinox staff, as each Big Response workshop required a similar length session with the beneficiaries to prepare them beforehand. However, the service users' insights brought another valuable perspective into the workshops, and will help to ensure engagement throughout the organisation on the issues raised.

Meanwhile, Friends of the Elderly took the view that engaging beneficiaries in the project could have been beneficial but would have limited the scope of the workshops.

"We made it very clear that we needed to move at a slowish pace to keep service users onboard and we didn't know how they'd respond to it, and pick it up..." Brian Watts, Equinox

Timescale of support

Organisations need enough time to process the information they are receiving in between support sessions.

At around seven months from first contact until the learning workshop, it was felt, almost universally, that the timescale was too condensed for the nature of the project, and didn't allow enough time for internal processing and digesting between sessions.

Some participating organisations suggested a period of 12 months would be better, others that a shorter period was fine, but dates needed to be set up immediately to get them in the diary and be evenly spaced throughout the period.

"... We had to respond pretty quickly after the first seminar and it wasn't until then that we really understood what we were trying to respond to!...there was no way I could engage lots of people in the charity within a few months because their diaries are all just choc-a-bloc!" Richard Furze, FOTE

Once the support period is over, organisations would appreciate periodic follow up contact. All of the pilot organisations seemed to feel daunted at the prospect of support ending once The Big Response project was over. They would have liked ongoing follow up support, even if minimal, to ensure their continuing engagement, help them troubleshoot and keep them on track. This could be in the form of visits, phone calls or reviewing of plans.

"You can't just leave charities with the good ideas and expect that it's just all going to happen unless you've got a really enthused leadership." Richard Furze, FOTE

"It would be helpful if there was someone that we could come to, any time in the next year who is familiar with what we've done. They could encourage you to just keep pushing it along. Maybe you'd phone up once or twice to ask; 'How are you getting on with it?' ... In a year's time or so, you could also get everyone together again and say 'well what have you done in the year?'" Brian Watts, Equinox

Organisations found the relationships developed through the projects invaluable

Many of the pilot organisations found the relationships that they had developed really useful – both with other pilots, the project partners and others, such as UKCIP - and want to maintain them once the pilot period is over. This broader engagement shows the extra benefits of direct support, and highlights the bonuses of bringing a range of organisations and people together.

"The other big plus for us...it gives us a way into specialist organisations like yourself...we know of you now. We've met some of you. We know what you do." Brian Watts, Equinox

"I think one of the most useful things about being involved with this plot has been building relationships. It's been particularly good to work with Green Alliance and UKCIP and to link up some of our teams.... it's been great that I've been able to come to some of the events at Green Alliance...and it's great the sort of stuff that you send to me and say, 'have you seen this?' Or pointing out the adaptation committee and that there isn't an organisation like the British Red Cross in there...I think that sort of stuff is just great." Liz Hendry, BRC

Amount of support

The pilot organisations all said that the level of contact we had with them felt 'about right' although one organisation would have liked written material to be more focused and

directional. The amount of support needed seems to depend on the internal capacity to be able to digest information that comes out of workshops. For smaller organisations this might need to be translated into something more directional and prioritised, as they may not have the capacity to do this themselves. This is an argument for ensuring that the needs of the organisation are understood prior to any output creation.

Support needs to be flexible

It became apparent from delivering our support package that 'one size *does not* fit all' clients. Each pilot organisation chose a different combination of support modules and it was clear that more tailoring could have taken place to best suit each organisation's needs.

The project partners discovered that content that might be suitable for one audience was not necessarily relevant or in-depth enough for another one. Different nuances were needed to make an argument compelling for each audience, reflecting different organisational and personal values and experiences. We noted that sometimes, who delivers the message is as important as what the message is. When planning the delivery of certain aspects of the support package we asked ourselves: who is the organisation most likely to trust?

All the pilot organisations told us that when the workshops were tailored, they got maximum effect. Although an 'off the shelf' toolkit was thought to be potentially useful as a starting point, the pilots felt that without personal support, engagement with climate change would not progress as far as it could, as new knowledge needs to be brought into organisations in many cases.

The project partners identified a range of key areas for how we could improve the tailored nature of our support:

- Allow more flexibility for timing and scheduling sessions to ensure that the right attendees were able to come along to each session.
- Further tailoring of each module, to suit the size and type of the organisation
- Take time initially to really understand where the organisation is at and to ensure the process is as suitable as possible. For example, there might be other projects to link up with or existing internal processes or knowledge that an initial conversation doesn't uncover
- Allow for flexibility during the programme for changes to the schedule, and for the organisations to re-examine their needs once they know more about the project. As Liz from British Red Cross remarked, they ended up taking in a different direction to the one they had expected, but that '*was really good because I think it is more likely to be embedded in what we do*'.

Reflections on specific programme content

Introductory and learning workshops, inception meetings and evaluation interviews

It was really useful to bring the pilots together at the beginning of the process:

It gave them an opportunity to meet with the other organisations taking part, to have a general discussion about what they were hoping to achieve with the project and to know the expectations for involvement.

Inception meetings were invaluable in getting a really good understanding of the organisation that we were working with and what kind of support would be really valuable for them. It may have been useful to have another meeting half-way through the support process to ensure that everything was going well, and to see if any changes needed to be made to the schedule.

The final learning workshop was valuable for getting collective feedback from the pilot organisations, and provided an opportunity for them to engage with each other about their action so far. In some cases, that was quite inspiring and created peer contacts that may last beyond the project.

The final evaluation interviews presented an opportunity for a one-on-one discussion about any remaining questions or issues. It was useful that they were carried out by someone who had involvement in the project, but wasn't doing most of the actual delivery, so that questions could be answered but also the interviewees could speak candidly.

Start with impact on users or cause

The first workshop of the support package focused on beneficiaries and how they might be affected by a changing climate. By starting engagement this way, organisations can begin to build a picture of what they may need to do to deliver their mission in the future. This can then trigger interest in mitigating climate change, as the organisation begins to realise how difficult its mission might be to deliver if severe climate change becomes a reality.

Don't assume knowledge of climate change

Prior to any engagement, we assessed each organisation's knowledge of climate change to help us identify the level of detail appropriate before we started talking about the issue.

The feedback from pilot organisations was also about making it simple and easy to understand.

"... I think the aspects of the workshops that were most useful were the ones where you explained - in very simple terms - what these climate change issues might mean for the UK and the impact it is likely to have on the role we play. The message that without action, the British Red Cross is likely to be overwhelmed by increasing climate related disasters and higher levels of migration over the next decade was a sobering one." Liz Hendry, BRC

Make it real

We found that tangible examples were much easier for people to grasp and relate to than figures and graphs. Some diagrams however proved very powerful. Friends of the Elderly trustees were shocked by the extent of the rise in greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere and said that government needs to get its communications in order!

When discussion got less tangible, pilots found it harder to engage and said they needed issues to be 'grounded' to really hit home.

Build on organisations' experiences

Our workshops on operations looked at a broad range of factors that already affected the pilot organisation's work. We did this in a very broad way, such as reflecting on the chaos caused by recent extreme weather like the snow in February 2009, and the knock effects it had for staff trying to get to work. Climate change impacts were then superimposed onto this picture, to give a clear overview of the relevant connections. This was a useful process because we were able to open people's minds as to the types of issues that affected operations.

The pilot organisations identified that having past experiences to reflect on, particularly situations in which they may have been caught out, meant they were willing to take this kind of event more seriously. This is an interesting point, as it appears that any recent severe event can encourage organisations to consider future events, whether or not the recent event was related to climate change.

However, it is important that the purpose of this type of session is explained fully. In some workshops attendees questioned the relevance of spending time on such an exercise. The focus on adaptation needs to be put into context and given clear reasoning and expectation. Operational adaptation does not feel like a logical starting point for many organisations: it can seem very long-term.

"The adaptation stuff, I think we agree that it's important but of course it's much more long term; it's not something that we can do quickly." Richard Furze, FOTE

Learning from peers

Those involved in the project felt that it could be particularly helpful to have examples from other organisations that had been through a similar process to compare themselves to, and to suggest how things could be done. Establishing a number of good 'case studies', sector exemplars, baselines for organisations to measure themselves against, a peer mentoring

scheme and benchmarking opportunities were amongst the suggestions put forward during the project.

“ If I'd had another chief executive to talk to about what the organisation had done, what had been the issues for them; that could have been helpful.” Richard Furze, FOTE

Knowledge of peer action can also have a useful normalising effect. In its advocacy session, British Red Cross was shown which other non-environmental organisations were already engaged in climate advocacy. The session participants were unaware of this existing practice and were interested in the scope available for an organisation like theirs.

Support prioritising

Our beneficiaries and operations sessions identified a myriad of areas for further investigation where there are uncertainties about the distribution, nature and severity of the impact of climate change. In hindsight we could have been more directive about which areas were likely to be the most useful to follow up, in what way, and with which sources of information. And whilst acknowledging the benefits of discussing a broad set of impacts, all the pilots felt that it would have been useful to have supported time to focus down on three or four areas that they should really prioritise.

“ we seemed to have too many issues to cover in a sense....and many of them were business issues that we've already thought of in other contexts...I think we need time to focus a bit...and in a sense the process is finishing a bit early to get that thinking done.” Richard Furze, FOTE

4.3 Other issues to note

In this section we note other learning points that have come from The Big Response project.

Engaging with climate change can also help organisations achieve broader objectives that they might have

For example, it could help the organisation identify new ways of working with others, such as inviting the local community in to work in onsite gardens or supporting beneficiaries to become climate advocates in schools and other settings; it could also enable cross-organisational engagement (eg an in-house environment team working with the communications team on this issue).

Key sector leadership bodies could have an important role in disseminating the learning and in helping organisations to engage with the issue further.

Our pilot organisations identified a number of important support mechanisms that infrastructure organisations, both specialist and generic, could provide in relation to climate change, such as enabling those initiatives listed in the 'Learning from peers' section above or providing specialist sub-sectoral guidance..

“If you're a charity with loads of property you've got one set of issues, if you're a charity with hardly any property and lots of people delivering services to people, or if you're an advocacy charity, it's another set of issues.” Richard Furze, FOTE

Sector bodies also play an important leadership role through their actions and advocacy. Further thoughts on the role of infrastructure are included in our recommendations.

Funding remains a potential barrier for VCOs

It should be noted that each pilot organisation was offered up to £2,000 to pay for their involvement with The Big Response project, which made it easier for them to commit to the programme. Three of the four organisations took this offer up.

This has implications for funding requirements. Whilst a 'tick box' on environmental issues does create useful pressure on organisations to examine this agenda (and was definitely useful in persuading Equinox and Friends of the Elderly to be involved), without properly funded support, this may just become another exercise in fulfilling funder requirements which fails to result in any meaningful change..

There was definitely a feeling amongst the project participants that VCOs require support from local and national government to do the 'right thing' by facilitating ways for organisations to address the impacts of climate change. As Richard Furze, Friends of the Elderly, put it "How do we as leaders enthuse people to do the stuff that actually they would like to do, when there's so little help out there for them to do it?"

5. Recommendations

Here are a range of recommendations drawn from the experiences of The Big Response delivery partners.

1. VCOs of all kinds need to work out what climate change will mean for them. The project has demonstrated that a changing climate is likely to have a huge impact on the beneficiaries that many VCOs seek to help. Those in vulnerable communities are likely to be hardest hit. Equally, these trends will have a significant impact on operations and service delivery. For some, climate change will threaten the very ability of the organisation to deliver its core mission. All organisations with a social mission, working towards a better world, will need to consider the implications for their service users or cause, to help prepare for a sustainable future.

“Be open-minded about where addressing this issue might lead and the opportunities you may discover,” Liz Hendry, British Red Cross

2. Organisations need to address this issue in a strategic way. Senior members of staff and trustees should be taken through a guided process with experts to examine the impacts of climate change on beneficiaries and operations. Ideally this should be three-fold:

- exploring options to prepare and adapt for the degree of change already coming
- looking at how to reduce the organisation’s own greenhouse gas emissions
- considering advocating government and/or others to do more on both mitigation of climate change and adaption to it.

Not only will this help organisations to engage with the issue of climate change, it might also help them deliver other priorities and help ensure their future success.

3. Organisations will need external support to start engagement on this process, whether this is from central and local government through direction; from funders through financial support to look at the issue; or from sector bodies to provide support such as one-to-one assistance, benchmarking opportunities, examples of best practice and peer networks. This will help provide the conditions necessary for effective engagement with the issue.

4. Support needs to be tailored to meet the needs and existing strategy process of client organisations. See the ‘What we learnt’ section of this report for in depth pointers.

5. Central and local government should give clear direction that this is an issue that organisations will need, and ultimately, will be expected to consider. This needs to be given with enough lead-in time to encourage VCOs to start considering the implications and prioritise action on this issue. Our pilot organisations identified that a stronger delivery framework is needed to help encourage organisations to engage with the issue, and want to send a message back to government that “*Your messages on climate change aren’t getting through to the right people.*”

6. Funders and commissioners can send a similar message through their selection criteria. However funders should not just require action; they should facilitate it too. Organisations need funding to enable them to look at this issue with the degree of attention it deserves, rather than just doing the minimum to satisfy a funder’s demands.

7. Sector infrastructure organisations could play a key role in providing tailored information, advice and support for their networks. These bodies should be a strategic focus for receiving guided support themselves, enabling them in turn, to roll out effective and appropriate services across the sector.

Summary

It is clear from The Big Response project that VCOs can, and will, when supported, engage with the issue of climate change. Once they are made aware of the potential impact it will have on their beneficiaries, the links between climate change and an organisation's core purpose become irrefutable. As one of our pilots commented "You can't afford not to be involved, simple as that."

The key is how to scale up the support we provided into a manageable programme that could be rolled out across the sector. Initial support will at some point develop a momentum of its own, norms will be established and internal and external demand will be so great that it will ensure that further engagement is delivered. But funding must not disappear and the support must not come within a vacuum: government, funders and key sector bodies need to be made aware of the role that they can play in ensuring a sustainable future for everyone.

The Big Response project team

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| NCVO | Richard Piper, Head of Strategy and Impact Kate Damiral, Projects and Communications Manager, Strategy and Impact |
| Green Alliance | Stephen Hale, Director Rebekah Phillips, Senior Policy Advisor |
| Global Action Plan | Trewin Restorick, Chief Executive Officer Chris Large, Head of Research and Development Ruth Cole, Fundraising Officer |

Case study 1: British Red Cross

Background

The British Red Cross (BRC) is a volunteer-led humanitarian organisation that helps people in crisis. BRC enables vulnerable people at home and overseas to prepare for and respond to emergencies in their own communities. And when the crisis is over, it helps people recover and move on with their lives.

The British Red Cross is part of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, the world's largest independent humanitarian organisation. The Movement is impartial and neutral. This neutrality means that it can reach and offer unconditional help to people in need wherever and wherever they are.

In practice in the UK this means they engage in emergency response, first aid training, health and social care during difficult periods in people's lives and helping new arrivals to the UK and work to reunite families separated by conflicts and disasters. Abroad they engage in emergency response and disaster preparedness, giving communities the skills and tools to survive.

The British Red Cross is an organisation with over 2,700 staff, 27,000 volunteers and a £239.8m expenditure in 2008, which includes eight overseas branches in the British Overseas Territories. It is a member of the International Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, which encompasses 186 national societies and over 97 million volunteers. Income comes from emergency appeals, fundraising, regular giving, cash donations, legacies, corporate partners and trading income.

British Red Cross's previous engagement on environmental issues

Prior to The Big Response project, the British Red Cross had taken an organic, relatively slow moving approach to engaging with climate change. A Carbon Reduction Group was set up, and in March 2009 the senior management team agreed a carbon reduction policy. This focuses on a targeted and monitored carbon reduction in 2010 / 2011 and includes:

- Preparing data and systems to allow CO₂ allocation by property;
- Setting CO₂ Key Performance Indicators and targets;
- Producing CO₂ reduction "tool kits" and top tips;
- Ethical behaviour in contracting;
- Travel - central booking, car sharing, trains not planes where possible.

However, the BRC recognised that there is still a lot to do especially around HR policies, general facility management and international programme business opportunities. Culturally there was felt to be real appetite at the UK head office to become a more 'carbon friendly' organisation although knowledge was limited in terms of detail.

At the start of the project, there had been no process yet to examine climate change at an inter-disciplinary or strategic level and climate change was not yet been considered at an operations or public policy level. There was felt to be a hesitance to act on climate change more comprehensively, with the broad belief that further knowledge and research was necessary before action, and nervousness regarding the BRC's credibility as a result of its own practice.

There has been an increasing focus on response to extreme weather conditions in recent years in the UK, the response to the 2007 floods was the BRC's largest peacetime operation in the UK. A great deal of learning came out from these evaluations and has helped BRC to develop new ways of working.

The BRC is currently developing a five year plan to underpin their new strategy for 2010-2015: *Saving Lives, Changing Lives*, which will be agreed by the Board of Trustees at the end of October 2009. In this new corporate strategy, climate change is identified as one of the key factors in increasing the number of vulnerable people across the world and in the UK. The

strategy contains at least two elements of particular resonance with The Big Response project:

1. A new strategic focus on building the resilience of communities, both in the UK and overseas by providing people with the skills and information they need to help themselves and others and to prepare and withstand a range of disasters;
2. A new strategic focus on advocacy. "We will make better use of the power of the Red Cross name to advocate on behalf of our humanitarian issues."

There is an *International Red Cross Centre on Climate Change* based in the Netherlands which supports the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and its partners in reducing the impacts of climate change and extreme weather events on vulnerable people.

What did the British Red Cross want from the project?

The Big Response project developed a support package with the BRC with the aim of delivering four outcomes for British Red Cross by the end of October 2009. These were to create:

1. Fresh insight, knowledge and awareness within British Red Cross about the likely impacts of climate change, focusing specifically on extreme weather, and its effect on community resilience;
2. New and practical thinking about the strategic links between climate change and resilience;
3. Advice and support on how British Red Cross might develop and deliver effective advocacy on the impact of climate change on extreme weather patterns and related national campaign messaging;
4. A recommended plan for taking forwards work on climate change, once The Big Response support ends.

Working Group

The following individuals were identified as potentially being involved in the project:

- Kate Lee, Director of Strategy and Corporate Performance;
- Liz Hendry, Senior Strategy Officer;
- George McNamara, Head of UK Public Policy;
- Leigh Daines, Head of PR and Public Affairs;
- Vanessa Spiller, Head of Emergency Response and Planning;
- Faye Callaghan, Internal Comms Manager (and Comms lead on communicating the strategy);
- Femi Nzegwu, Head of Research and Learning Organisation;
- Kate Stokes, Head of Planning, Monitoring, Analysis and Reporting (and lead of developing the new five year plan).

Support package

The support package included the following:

British Red Cross support package intended and actual

| Intended | Actual |
|---|---|
| <p><i>Beneficiaries module</i> To focus on people who struggle to live independently, needing care in the home, e.g., domestic support such as help with shopping after coming out of hospital. It will also identify possible knowledge gaps, with a view to proposing possible future research to be undertaken</p> | <p>Whilst BRC had originally chosen to focus on research topics for people living independently, there was some misunderstanding prior to this workshop about the nature of support that the project team was able to provide. BRC subsequently agreed to broaden the scope of the workshop to look at the impact on all beneficiaries that BRC works with. The workshop ran similarly to other beneficiaries workshops, encouraging BRC to think broadly about the primary and secondary</p> |

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| <p>by BRC.</p> | <p>factors affecting their work. Participants then went on to explore different potential impacts of climate change using a card exercise. Additionally UKCIP were asked to present on some of the research going on around climate change impacts, to assist the research team in identifying potential future areas for research. As a result of the workshop UKCIP and BRC have now developed a working relationship, and have explored some of these ideas further.</p> <p>This was less successful than our other modules for a number of reasons. First, the attendees were largely from strategy and research backgrounds and took a very internal approach to the exercises highlighted. As a result the written outcomes of this workshop did not end up being an accurate reflection of the relevance of climate impacts to BRC's work. Second, whilst UKCIP's involvement was key to establishing their relationship with BRC, the actual presentations they provided were overly technical and not focused on the correct area for the audience.</p> |
| <p><i>Strategy module</i> To test the hypothesis that compared with less vulnerable people, those who struggle to live independently are more likely to be negatively affected by an extreme weather event, affected more badly, and take longer to recover. It also aimed to develop BRC's understanding of the resilience theme by firstly identifying and then assessing possible strategic responses to the likely impact of climate change on this group, creating useful learning and ideas to be incorporated into <i>Saving Lives, Changing Lives</i>.</p> | <p>Richard Piper, NCVO and Rebekah Phillips, Green Alliance held a two-hour discussion on strategy with Kate Lee, Director of Strategy and Corporate Performance and Liz Hendry. As BRC had been very open in sharing their draft strategy document, and in this meeting were very open about sharing their thinking around how they might incorporate climate change, this was a very productive meeting. Following on from the meeting The Big Response team prepared a recommended plan of action for how to incorporate climate change into their strategy. This plan is covered at the bottom of this table.</p> |
| <p><i>Stakeholders module</i> To develop campaigning and advocacy capacity in relation to climate change impacts. It will produce practical ideas for developing a British Red Cross advocacy programme on climate change, including potential key messages.</p> | <p>The advocacy workshop BRC received was very tailored to them, based on detailed discussions with Liz Hendry and Leigh Daines, Head of Public Affairs. There were two presentations, one from Stephen Hale, director of Green Alliance, on where the debate was about climate change mitigation and who were big players in this debate, including overview of a number of other third sector organisations and their action on climate change. Chris Hewett, Green Alliance associate, who has a lot of experience from his career at the Environment Agency on adaptation policy, then gave an overview of the landscape on adaptation policies the key issues. We then discussed some key barriers and opportunities for BRC to get involved in this debate. Following the workshop a suggested advocacy route for BRC on climate change was prepared for an organisational wide discussion on the issue.</p> <p>BRC is in the process of establishing a new role on</p> |

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| | <p>advocacy for the organisation and working out how advocacy action might fit within its key emphasis on neutrality. Advocacy on climate change would need to come within these boundaries.</p> <p>The suggested headlines of the advocacy route were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. British Red Cross could play a vital role in presenting climate change as a human issue. This would allow the issue to reach new audiences, both in government and with the public and could help provide reinforcement for the need to act. This would involve raising awareness of climate change and the need for mitigation. 2. British Red Cross's primary public affairs role could be on engaging with the debate on adaptation in the UK, which is the key area of concern and experience for the organisation. British Red Cross could be the champion for vulnerable people and ensure that adaptation plans address social issues adequately. <p>In addition, since this contact was made, Green Alliance made the British Red Cross aware of the <i>Ministerial Taskforce on Climate Change and the Third Sector</i>, which they provide the secretariat for. BRC applied and were selected to be on the task force. Green Alliance also invited them to a number of events on climate change and the third sector and have been keeping them broadly up to date with key adaptation advocacy opportunities.</p> |
| <p><i>Recommended action plan</i> The output of the support package was to be a Recommended Action Plan. This would contain recommendations for what British Red Cross might do next:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ in terms of possible future research into beneficiaries and climate; ▪ in terms of strategic responses around resilience; and ▪ in terms of developing an advocacy programme based on the humanitarian consequences of climate change. | <p>The action plan, developed by The Big Response team as a result of the above modules, was presented to the Senior Management Team board in October. It proposed three organisational changes and five changes to delivery programmes. Headline recommendations are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Changes to the earth's climate both within and beyond the UK will lead to persistent, significant, and increasing pressure on British Red Cross's overall mission and resources over the 5, 10, and 20 year timescales. Without action the British Red Cross is likely to be overwhelmed by increasing climate-related disasters and significantly higher levels of immigration. ▪ The British Red Cross has an opportunity to be an influential advocate on the human impacts of climate change, both to ensure adequate adaptation plans and to push for stronger mitigation efforts. The next 5 years, the period of the British Red Cross's new corporate strategy, <i>Saving Lives, Changing Lives</i> are crucial in the mitigation of climate change and British Red Cross should consider playing a role. ▪ To continue to deliver your mission in the face of |

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| | <p>this threat, British Red Cross needs to develop ongoing vigilance at senior levels so that it can identify potential threats and opportunities and develop meaningful responses.</p> |
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Outcome of The Big Response programme for British Red Cross: Liz Hendry, Senior Strategy Officer

“This process has been a learning curve for me, and I would imagine for other people at British Red Cross too, both in terms of trying out this new model of working and learning about new ways we could engage with the issue of climate change. It’s also been valuable to learn about climate change thinking and policy, and the world that you (as environmental agencies) operate within.

I think there were pockets of good work going on in the organisation with regards to climate change, but without this project I don’t think we would have had the space or support to make the links between them and access options and opportunities going forward. As we are in the middle of a change process - looking ahead to the next five years for the development of our new corporate strategy - this work has been very timely and has really helped us to focus our minds at a point of pivotal change for the organization. I think it probably wouldn’t have had the same resonance if it (the pilot) had come at another time.

Also, with the main contact (for the pilot) being based within the British Red Cross strategy team, we were able to engage the pilot with our current strategy development process and table The Big Response action plan at a senior management team meeting for discussion. Engagement stayed at a pretty strategic level throughout the whole project. We probably had about fifteen people engaged in total in the various workshops, mostly heads of department.

One of the key things for us has been about building relationships; it’s been really good to link up our advocacy and public affairs staff with Green Alliance and the research team with UKCIP. Hopefully these are relationships we’ll be able to build on in the future. I also don’t think we would have joined the Ministerial Taskforce on Climate Change and the Third Sector if it hadn’t been for The Big Response project.

The Big Response project has been a valuable opportunity to think about our new corporate strategy through a ‘climate lens’ and to be presented with very practical, realistic recommendations on how we could build on and adapt the way we work in relation to climate change. I think we’ve ended up going in a different direction to where we thought we’d end up with this pilot. We initially thought we might focus these discussions on a specific area of our resilience work. However, we’ve actually had much broader discussions, really linking in to the strategy, which has been really good, because I think that these recommendations will have more impact if they are implemented.”

Evaluation against key desired outcomes

| Desired outcome | Actual achievements |
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| <p>Fresh insight, knowledge and awareness within British Red Cross about the likely impacts of climate change, focusing specifically on extreme weather, and its effect on community resilience;</p> | <p>- Yes, I do think this was achieved, because we were lucky enough to bring in knowledgeable organisations. The suggestion to engage with UKCIP was a really good one and it’s a relationship we’ll be able to build on in the future.</p> <p>- I think a lot of the overview presentations that were given were really useful in giving a wider picture of what’s going on at the moment with climate change. A recommendation for what could be better next time is a more tailored beneficiaries workshop.</p> |

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| | - <i>It's been a big learning curve for me and it has given some of the other attendees opportunities to challenge some of their preconceptions.</i> |
| New and practical thinking about the strategic links between climate change and resilience; | - <i>Resilience has now slightly fallen out of our strategy, so that link is now less applicable, and I think our learning was broader than the objective set out, which has been really good as we've looked more widely at our strategy.</i> |
| Advice and support on how British Red Cross might develop and deliver effective advocacy on the impact of climate change on extreme weather patterns and related national campaign messaging; | - <i>It was great advice and support. It was exactly right, practical, showing where the gaps are at the moment, who's advocating what in the sector, and some very practical recommendations about how we may take forward these messages.</i> - <i>What actually happens will be very dependent on what happens with our advocacy agenda more broadly, which is very new at the moment.</i> |
| A recommended plan for taking forwards work on climate change, once The Big Response support ends. | - <i>"I think the report includes some very realistic, practical set of recommendations. Our hope is that it will be used more widely as well".</i> In its new strategy for 2010-15, climate change is identified as one of the most likely factors for increasing the British Red Cross's service users in the future. It has opted not to advocate on climate change at this stage, partly due to its important history of neutrality, but is forging important new relationships with other agencies to help it to keep learning about climate change impacts and stay vigilant. |

Key learning for The Big Response project

The whole engagement process with the British Red Cross made crystal clear **how important timing is**. They are in the middle of a large strategy process, setting out their first five-year corporate plan, and The Big Response project began during the last nine months of this process. This has meant that we were able to have strategic discussions at a point of influence and a time when the organisation was thinking about change.

Another learning highlighted by this work is the **importance of the team you engage with**, within an organisation in determining its response. Being based within the strategy team naturally lent itself to discussions about strategic approaches to mission and purpose that might not have been so obvious within the operations department for example, where we might have ended up discussing more practical impacts around service delivery. Whilst this would have been important in its own right, it would then have been a further step to get that learning into the new strategy being developed.

The importance of **timing** and engaging with **the right people within an organisation for the support modules** was highlighted through the beneficiaries workshop. If we had had a longer lead-in time we might have got a broader mix of people along to this, which might have enabled a better discussion.

Getting a good understanding of the organisation you are working with and where their knowledge gaps were on this issue was key to the success of the advocacy workshop. It appears that often on climate change, there is no point just running a facilitated process as this is not about unlocking knowledge, but about providing new knowledge and relationships. Having real experts on the issues, whose judgement BRC could trust was invaluable, as was having processes that were really tailored to where the organisation was. Whilst the beneficiaries workshop was well prepared and resourced and helped BRC to take a broader, more inclusive view of climate change impacts, misunderstandings between the project partners and with BRC about expectations of the module meant that the audience, activities and UKCIP presentations were not ideally suited. This might have been dealt with better if the module delivery staff had been involved directly in earlier discussions with BRC; this could

have reduced confusion around expectations of the workshop. It would also have been beneficial if UKCIP had been asked to discuss their contribution with BRC directly to ensure that it matched BRC's requirements. This module highlighted the difficulty in finding the right balance between providing a consistent point of contact and ensuring that there is clear consensus on realistic expectations and requirements across all project partners.

The issue of relationships is also one to note. Through this process BRC has developed a good working relationship with Green Alliance and has started a relationship with UKCIP. These will carry on once The Big Response project has ended and again reinforce trust in findings and recommendations.

The facts alone don't sell an issue, it is the way that something is 'framed' or talked about. This became clear when engaging with BRC on their mission point. Whilst the impact on their mission was discussed many times, it was only at a certain point, and with certain phrases that BRC started listening and making the connections themselves.

Case study 2: Equinox Care

Background

Equinox Care is a specialist care organisation, who have provided residential and community based care across London for almost 20 years. Equinox provides four main divisions of services: alcohol and drug treatment, hostels and supported housing, community services and mental health. They offer rehabilitation centres, accommodation and support services for homeless and vulnerable women and men with alcohol, drug and mental health problems. Many have criminal records, are homeless or are fleeing domestic violence and require complex support.

Equinox Care is led by a voluntary board of trustees, employ over 300 staff and manage 343 bed spaces. 6,000 people per year use the services. They have an annual budget of £15m and receive funding from central government, local authorities, primary care trusts, probation, regeneration initiatives and charitable trusts. They have recently expanded to be a regional provider across South East England.

Equinox Care's previous engagement on environmental issues

The organisation's current approach to climate change is mainly focused on reducing its carbon footprint, but initiatives are 'patchy'. These include:

- some office policies about recycling paper and ink cartridges but there isn't a comprehensive approach to this;
- a travel policy (but the main driver for this was employee safety during unsociable work hours rather than environmental concerns).

Some staff have begun engaging service users in discussions about reducing their carbon footprint as a way of reducing the cost of living and as part of their 'support with life' skills. However this is something that individual staff members are doing because of personal interest rather than an organisational directive.

Recently the board has begun to engage with climate change, driven by the personal interest of the trustees, and has created a statement on a 'sustainability approach' for the organisation. They are working towards developing an environmental action plan within their new strategy process, which is due to be in place by January 2010.

Much of Equinox's funding is from public sector service contracts, so in considering what commissioners are asking for, a stronger environmental suit might give them some competitive advantage. Equally they are facing important questions about personalisation with regard to their beneficiaries and see climate change as giving them a distinctive edge.

But while the political will exists within the organisation to move forward, the organisation feels that reality of costs may be the key barrier. They don't want tokenistic audits: if they're going to tackle environmental issues, they want to do it properly and strategically and be able to demonstrate this to commissioners.

What did Equinox Care want from the project?

The organisation was looking for increased knowledge and awareness across their stakeholders; more information about the likely impact of climate change on the organisation and its users, and ideas for how to respond. They have a 'service-user' representative group and wanted them involved from the outset in The Big Response project. The six key outcomes were to create as follows:

1. Insight, knowledge and awareness amongst a range of trustees, staff and users about the likely impacts of climate change on the organisation and its work;
2. Ideas for how to respond to these impacts;

3. Options for ways to fit climate change issues into the new corporate strategy (commencing January 2010);
4. Persuasive communications for public sector commissioners about Equinox’s position and practice on climate change;
5. Practical environmental improvements at two locations and ideas for possible improvements elsewhere;
6. A plan for ways to stay engaged with climate change, once The Big Response support ends.

Working group

Brian Watts, CEO;
 Sharon Bye, Operations Manager;
 Osei Agyeman, Service Manager;
 Catherine Max, Trustee, Chair Sustainability Working Group;
 Wendy Love, Trustee;
 Emily Kessler, Trustee;
 Ellen Clifford, User Involvement Manager.

Support package

Equinox Care chose to go for every module on offer: the modules on beneficiaries, strategy, operations, stakeholders and two environmental audits. However, time restraints and other commitments meant that some elements of the support package were not taken up:

Equinox Care support package intended and actual

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| <p><i>Beneficiaries module</i> Held with a group including a number of substance abuse and mental health service users</p> | <p>Equinox involved 13 staff and users in the session, which was our largest group of the project. Participants worked in smaller groups to explore the primary and secondary factors affecting Equinox’s work, including demand for services, contact points and services delivered. They then used a card exercise giving examples of potential climate change impacts and rated the importance of these on Equinox’s work.</p> <p>Key impacts identified for Equinox included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Weather, such as extreme heat and storms; ▪ Changes to natural systems, such as drought and sea level rise; ▪ Secondary impacts on people and society, including energy supply, increased cost of living, funding availability, impacts on housing and increased pressure on mental health and through migration. |
| <p><i>Operations and adaptation module</i> Using the learning generated in the beneficiaries workshop to look at operational risks that may be faced by as a result of changing weather patterns and social impacts caused by global climate change.</p> | <p>This session was based on the medium and high relevance climate change impacts identified in the beneficiaries module: extreme events and emergencies; migration; housing; mental and physical health; transport; legislation; natural resources; human rights; funding and costs.</p> <p>Participants reflected on their past experiences of challenges in these areas and related these to the climate change impacts they had prioritised. They brainstormed potential action points focusing on gathering information, proactive actions and reactive actions which would help them cope with changes.</p> <p>Key actions identified include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Contingency planning for emergencies both organisationally and informing clients, and lobbying of local authorities so that clients and service centres are considered key for support |

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| | <p>during disasters or extreme events;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Keeping watch on current trends in migration, ensuring vetting processes are robust, making links with refugee organisations and looking at other cultural services that might be of use;▪ Raise priority of housing in local areas;▪ Examine hot weather plans, break out spaces, staffing levels, education for service users, visiting service users at home and training with police;▪ Contingency plans if transport is disrupted; forge strong links with other service providers so can work together; plans for outreach and increase storage facilities for food etc;▪ Educate staff and clients in basic first aid; plan staffing cover and keep well abreast of Dept of Health guidance;▪ Build reserves to respond to legislation changes and ensure keep an eye on incoming regulations;▪ Improve budget planning and lobby funders so see benefit of being sustainable. |
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| <p><i>Strategy module</i> Focused on the question “to what extent should climate change impacts play a part in the new corporate strategy?” Including facilitated discussions and exercises on implications of climate change for (i) mission and values, (ii) success and growth, (iii) relationships and change, (iv) priorities and themes.</p> | <p>The workshop participants identified a range of potential strategic responses that Equinox could make to climate change impacts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Delivering services outside buildings ▪ Lobbying and Influencing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Staff should be seen as key workers in emergency situations ○ In communities, eg, with commissioners on alternatives to methadone ▪ Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Staff and users ○ Project team, staying up to date ▪ Contingency planning eg stockpiling drugs, new detox services without medication ▪ Being part of the bigger picture - being proactive to the Government’s plans: eg involvement in language services for immigrants with other languages through ICT or colleges, eg2, agreed plans with hospitals. ▪ Increase pressure on local government, including on financing improvements, eg, air conditioning and encouraging collaboration across government agencies. ▪ Changes to measuring energy as units not just as £. ▪ Possibly “sell” some solutions to others, eg, advice ▪ Green jobs idea – eco stimulus training – is there a role for Equinox, maybe in partnership? <p>The workshop also considered ways for inputting climate change into the new Corporate Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The strategy needs to be aware of what service users are thinking of doing re: the climate change effects, eg, “Let’s go up to the hills!” ▪ Use existing structures and processes to emergency plan now, in relation to services users’ own plans. ▪ Be aware of staff’s existing plans, and be supportive of those. ▪ Communication matters: increase awareness for users and be responsive by asking new questions about their needs in relation to possible climate change effects. ▪ We need honest discussions, especially about competitive pressures. ▪ Develop greater flexibility in service delivery models. ▪ Develop a proper sustainability strategy and make real progress on staff awareness, training, etc. Build climate change impacts into programme planning. ▪ Undertake a risk analysis for each building, centre and service against a number of different scenarios, feeding into existing risk frameworks. |
| <p><i>Stakeholder module</i> To be focused on engaging commissioners</p> | <p>Because of lack of availability for key participants due to time restraints Equinox elected not to take up the offer of this module.</p> |

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| <p><i>Environmental Audits</i> one at Head Office, and one at another London-based location, probably Aspen Wood, which is a centre for drinkers.</p> | <p>Again, this element of the support package was not taken up.</p> |
| <p>A <i>final presentation</i> will be made to trustees.</p> | <p>Because of the delay in arranging the stakeholder module and the recent decision to cancel it, a final presentation has not been given to Equinox. In his recent communications with The Big Response delivery team, the chief executive talked of losing momentum: <i>“I am beginning to think that we have missed the Big Response momentum and we [will] pick up the issues separately.”</i></p> |

Outcome of The Big Response programme for Equinox: Brian Watts, Chief Executive

“The Big Response project has helped bring a greater awareness of the issue of climate change among some of our staff, service users and trustee board. Through the project we now have the feeling of momentum on this issue. We were already considering how to develop our sustainability strategy, which was being driven by a committed board member and pressure from commissioners, but now there are more people round the table contributing to those plans.

As a medium-sized organisation, with many priorities, we could have benefited from more direction from the project to really drive us to prioritise actions following the support modules, and I think ongoing support from the project for the next year would be helpful, checking in on us every so often and helping drive action.

Funding is an issue. We now have two lottery applications in train: one with the Wildlife Trust to landscape and regenerate communal areas and an Eco Mind one for service users with mental health problems. We’re also trying to get an allotment. We’d be prepared to invest as well in improvements if it gave us a pay-back.

Taking this forward, we want to start mainstreaming environmental and broader sustainability, action. We’ll start training staff on sustainability, and we anticipate this issue will end up in staff’s competencies and they’ll be assessed on it in their appraisals. Climate change will be in life skills programmes for service users. And we’ll develop contingency plans for extreme weather events etc. We are also planning to promote action on sustainability amongst organisations in our sector and will try and run events at sector conferences etc. We would welcome support on that.”

Evaluation against key desired outcomes

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| <p>Insight, knowledge and awareness amongst a range of trustees, staff and users about the likely impacts of climate change on the organisation and its work;</p> | <p><i>- The project has helped promote awareness, especially for the 12 people that were involved and they will feed back to their teams. We had service users, frontline staff, a couple of managers and a couple of board members involved.</i> <i>- I sat through the workshops and learnt a little, but I think some of the others probably learnt quite a lot, and know there feels as if there is momentum on this issue.</i></p> |
| <p>Ideas for how to respond to these impacts;</p> | <p><i>- We know we have to do something in relation to sustainability to continue to deliver the work we do. There’s no doubt about it. And our service users, we have to start doing work with them as individuals to understand the issues and develop coping strategies.</i> <i>- What we need now is some kind of report, or prioritisation of emerging actions that can get fed into the board, service user council and across the organisation.</i></p> |

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| Options for ways to fit climate change issues into the new corporate strategy (commencing January 2010); | - <i>This is happening, but it would have happened anyway. Remember we have a champion on the board. But now it will be a more inclusive process and there are more people around the table doing the corporate plan, thinking 'how will we get it in?' The challenge is that our plan has to stand for five years.</i> |
| Persuasive communications for public sector commissioners about Equinox's position and practice on climate change; | - <i>This [desired outcome] became about how we will communicate the issue more broadly.</i> - <i>In some of the seminars we go to for the sector we're going to be suggesting they start talking about sustainability and that they look at The Big Response stuff. And we'll say 'you've got to squeeze it into your busy programme'</i> |
| Practical environmental improvements at two locations and ideas for possible improvements elsewhere; | N/A – see above |
| A plan for ways to stay engaged with climate change, once The Big Response support ends. | Although a final set of recommendations have not been presented to Equinox, the organisation has itself identified a range of priorities for responding to climate change (see above). |

Key learning for The Big Response project

Equinox was the only one of the organisations to truly have **engagement from all levels** within the organisation: from the trustees, to operations, to individual location managers to service users. They were also the only pilot organisation to **involve service users** in the modules. This is partly as a result of Equinox's culture, which is one of openness and engagement with service-users on a regular basis.

This broad involvement had an interesting impact on the project. Whilst it brought a useful added perspective to the discussion, ideas did not progress as quickly as within the other organisations. In addition it placed a huge additional burden on Equinox who had to hold a workshop with the service users, prior to each workshop with The Big Response project, to ensure that the clients were up speed and enable to engage with the issues.

The module design for the beneficiaries and operations workshops was ideal for this kind of mixed audience which was not able to go into a huge degree of depth.

Equinox was ambitious about what they could achieve out of the project and wanted to take all the support on offer. However as a medium-sized organisation, with the chief executive as the main contact, they are under a number of other pressures, without the structure to enable easy engagement of this kind. This resulted in a number of sessions being postponed and ultimately, some were abandoned.

Case study 3: Friends of the Elderly

Background

Friends of the Elderly (FOTE) was established in 1905 and helps the elderly with accommodation and care, providing support in both residential settings and in people's own homes. It also addresses financial need through the provision of grants.

FOTE owns 14 care homes, some with dementia units, with a total of 475 bed spaces and plenty of surrounding land. They also support older people to stay in their own homes through a range of community services, including welfare and grant giving, day clubs, home support, home visiting and tele-befriending.

The demography of its clients is changing: Just ten years ago the average admission age was 75, now its 83, dementia is a huge growth area. It is unknown how government policy will affect the organisation going forward, with a number of big questions over 'centre-based' versus 'home-based' care.

FOTE generated an income of over £14 million in 2007 of which over £1 million was through donations and legacies. Other funding is generated through fees, investments and contracts for services from local authorities. They employ 294 full time and 254 part time staff supplemented by 101 agency staff.

Friends of the Elderly's previous engagement on environmental issues

Prior to The Big Response project, FOTE already were engaging with environmental issues, although it wasn't a central part of their current strategy. They have an environmental policy and statements on energy and conservation. A 'Green Team' at their head office looks at energy and water use and recycling. They've audited all their care homes on how much they recycle and barriers to this. On energy, they have SMART metering; an asset replacement programme; a >10% renewables target; quarterly reviews of energy use and are aiming for lower transport use, although this is proving hard to achieve. They are planning construction of an environmentally friendly new build.

Part of this engagement is due to the public sector service commissioning processes, which requires them to demonstrate a limited degree of environmental compliance, usually at the 'pre-qualification stage'.

FOTE was also involved in another pilot at the same time as The Big Response project. This was with Kingston University, looking at people aged 75 and over and their understanding of energy use.

The organisation was part-way through a five-year organisational strategy.

What did Friends of the Elderly want from the project?

Prior to the project starting FOTE were keen to use the process to find out what climate changes in the UK might mean for them and to decide how to prioritise any necessary responses. They wanted to thoroughly road test the idea of climate change impacts and have better knowledge about it. They were also interested in being able to offer competitive advantage in public sector service procurement competitions. The four key outcomes that FOTE identified were:

1. To develop its own, clear view about whether the idea of climate change impacts is relevant and important to the organisation;
2. Better knowledge about the likely impact of climate change on the older people it supports, on its operations, and on its strategy;
3. Practical environmental improvements at one location and ideas for possible improvements elsewhere;

4. A plan for ways to stay engaged with climate change, once The Big Response support ends.

Working group

This consisted of:

- Richard Furze, Chief Executive;
- Peter Cottrell, Property Director;
- Jo O'Boyle, Fundraising Director;

Support package

FOTE's chosen support package had four elements: the Beneficiaries module; the Operations module; an Environmental Audit and a presentation to the trustee board. Friends of the Elderly wanted to consider the possible impact of climate change on their strategy but felt confident doing this without the support of The Big Response team. Full details of the support that FOTE received, and the discussions had during these sessions, can be seen in Annex E.

FOTE support package, intended and actual

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| <p><i>Beneficiaries module:</i> Exploring the likely impact of climate change on the older people who are supported by Friends of the Elderly.</p> | <p>Friends of the Elderly responded well to the module, beginning by exploring broad primary and secondary impacts on their work before focusing on the card exercise examples of climate change impacts. This high-level group clearly understood the exercises easily and completed them confidently and more quickly than the other pilot groups.</p> <p>Key impacts identified for FOTE were principally from the secondary effects of climate change. These included: physical and mental health impacts; emergencies including flooding; cost of living (particularly in relation to energy and fuel poverty); future legislation; future availability of funding.</p> |
| <p><i>Operations and adaptation module</i> Using the new learning that was generated in the Beneficiaries module with detailed information about operational risks that may be faced by as a result of changing weather patterns and social impacts caused by global climate change.</p> | <p>This session was based on the high relevance climate change impacts identified in the beneficiaries module: housing; energy; cost of living; physical and mental health; public, voluntary and emergency services; flooding; heat waves; physical and mental health.</p> <p>Participants reflected on their past experiences of challenges in these areas and related these to the climate change impacts they had prioritised. They brainstormed potential action points focusing on gathering information, avoiding risks, reducing risks and spreading risks.</p> <p>Key actions identified included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Contingency planning for emergencies and assessment of risks; ▪ Improvement of buildings and grounds; better design, ventilation, and planning re location; ▪ Improving energy management; ▪ Looking after staff and clients; ▪ Supporting older people in coping with change; ▪ Addressing implications for fundraising. |
| <p><i>Environmental audit</i> at Bernard Sunley in Woking.</p> | <p>Bernard Sunley Nursing Home is based in Woking with 70 members of staff and around 60 resident's rooms. The building itself is only two years old and as a result is very energy efficient in many areas, for example, the boilers and pipework are well lagged and maintained and there is motion sensor lighting in communal and some personal toilets. There are, however, still some areas – regarding energy and other impacts - that can be improved through small behavioral</p> |

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| | change initiatives which will be discussed in the following report. Global Action Plan conducted an on-site environmental audit to highlight these areas and help further mitigate the care home's environmental impact. The audit showed that waste is the biggest impact the care home has to overcome and that without recycling the charity will not mitigate its impact fully. |
| <i>Presentation to trustees</i> | This covered the implications of climate change for elderly people and potential responses, drawn from the workshop outputs. Directors Richard, Jo and Philip spoke enthusiastically about the project. Trustees were not aware of the scale of the climate change problems and reacted positively but conservatively to the messages regarding mitigation and adaptation. |

Outcome of The Big Response programme for Friends of the Elderly: Richard Furze, Chief Executive, Friends of the Elderly

“One of the key outcomes of The Big Response support for FOTE was raising awareness at a senior level in the charity on the wider issues related to climate change. We wouldn't have had this awareness without the programme as we just wouldn't have had time to engage with it. There is now a desire, at this senior level, to move forward action.

We will now incorporate environmental outputs in our next strategic plan, which we haven't had in any previous versions. But that is not likely to be actioned until next year because we are currently in the middle of a five-year plan. I think we would have thought before that just having an environmental policy was enough rather than incorporate it strategically. And we will do more to live out our environmental policy in the meanwhile.

We hadn't realised what energy and commitment this would take. We still need to do more to embed climate change within our business. It needs to become part of who we are, not as an adjunct to our core work.

And a key issue for us going forward will be funding.

Specific actions that we will be taking forward include:

- *We will be pushing forward on the property side, and involving the Property Director in The Big Response process was really useful for this, as it has increased his expertise and it will be easier for him to talk about environmental needs as we do new builds.*
- *We have disseminated the knowledge from the workshops up to trustee level and now are trying to get it down to care home managers. This will need a good communications plan, about why we are doing certain things, and why particular actions are really important. We want this to become part of their normal ways, not just an 'add-on'. We would also like to get residents more involved.*
- *We will try to live out the environmental policy more, which may have 'sat on the shelf' more without this project. This year we are going to focus on energy use. We have signed up to a scheme with British Gas, to establish baselines around all of our homes and projects, and then to look at how to reduce that energy use.*
- *We will make sure all environmental impacts shine through our risk management processes. Issues like flood plains will get looked at over time.*
- *We will be implementing the 'home mitigation plans' across the charity's care homes one by one.*
- *We are also wanting to do more stuff with our gardens, so will probably do more on that, which may also allow good engagement with the community.*
- *Travel is very difficult, as we need to be visiting clients face-to-face. We're doing something towards it, but not sure if it will have much of an impact.*
- *Will be doing more about signposting support for those who are living at home, and making sure their homes are better adapted.*

- We will continue to look at things like boiler replacements, and are putting generators around our homes for emergency support.
- We may do some research on how care homes in warmer climates cope with hotter weather.

Many of these we might well have done anyway, but they probably would have been on a slower timescale.

Evaluation against key desired outcomes

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| <p>To develop FOTE's own, clear view about whether the idea of climate change impacts is relevant and important to the organisation;</p> | <p>-Yes, we are definitely further along the road towards this. I don't think we've fully achieved it, because what we need to do is to embed within the business the issue of climate change. I don't think that a charity that has a key mission can then take on environmental things as a separate key mission; it's got to be part of who we are.</p> <p>-We've got a much higher awareness of the big issues out there, which we probably wouldn't have had without this process, just because we wouldn't have had the time to engage on it.</p> |
| <p>Better knowledge about the likely impact of climate change on the older people it supports, on its operations, and on its strategy;</p> | <p>- Yes we've definitely got better knowledge on our operations and the potential changes to our strategy.</p> <p>- On older people it is a bit more nebulous, as a lot of the climate impacts are issues that are core to our business anyway, ie older people's health, so we would be assessing that risk anyway.</p> |
| <p>Practical environmental improvements at one location and ideas for possible improvements elsewhere;</p> | <p>- Yes, we had this. I went with the manager of the home during this process, which was very interesting as I heard the frustrations they had as they kept on coming against bureaucracy whilst trying to carry out environmental actions. Although we are people's home, we are treated as a business, so have to pay for recycling etc. This is an issue we'd like to lobby more on.</p> |
| <p>A plan for ways to stay engaged with climate change, once The Big Response support ends.</p> | <p>- We have had an action plan, but need to take time to prioritise the recommendations.</p> <p>- We would have benefited from ongoing support, in helping to access funding, in digesting what is essential to know for our sector on these issues and periodic reviews of how we are doing.</p> <p>I would love to think that with help we could lobby more for some of these [policies] that we really need to get changed</p> |

Key learning for The Big Response project

Friends of the Elderly were in many ways the ideal pilot for the programme we had designed. Due to its size we were able to engage directly with the Chief Executive and management who had responsibility for strategic oversight of the organisation which meant that the issue was never going to get stuck at an operational level. In addition it meant that ideas were grasped and processed quickly.

FOTE's position with regards to its strategy development was not ideal, but not disastrous. Having already established a five year plan there is no scope for amending that until the end of 2010, however the organisation seems keen to mainstream climate change action as a core part of this plan, rather than a bolt on. It will be interesting to see if this commitment remains once the support programme has ended.

It is also interesting to note that the project team felt that The Big Response project did not offer much new insight into the potential impact of climate change on their service users. The

organisation feels confident that it is already well attuned to the needs of its beneficiaries and will be able to respond to new climate-related needs as they appear. In the meantime, FOTE has chosen to focus on operational adaptation issues, to make sure that business continuity can be maintained.

FOTE now has the **task of disseminating the information** learnt throughout the organisation. Whilst, as discussed above, senior management team involvement was very useful, due to the tight timescales of the project it was not possible to have any more of the operational staff involved, which will make the process harder than it could have been.

The **ending of the support** was another key issue highlighted by FOTE. As it takes time for new issues to be mainstreamed and implemented they were one of the organisations most keen for some kind of follow-up review work. This is discussed further in chapters eight and nine.

Case study 4: The Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB)

Background

The Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) is a longstanding UK charity established to help and empower the blind and the partially sighted. RNIB has a broad remit and offers various services to people suffering from eye-sight problems. The organisation runs specialist schools for children with complex needs and homes to support blind and partially sighted adults live in the community. It provides support, advice and information to over two million people annually with sight problems. In addition it supports research into the causes and latest treatments of eye disease. Its helpline takes more than 370,000 calls per year.

It advocates for a world where the partially sighted and blind enjoy the same rights, freedom, responsibilities and quality of life as people who are fully sighted. Its constitution ensures that the majority of the Trustee Board, Assembly and wider membership must be blind or partially sighted.

The RNIB has nine regional centres and branches across England, Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland. Its turnover is approximately £100m annually. The charity recently became a membership organisation, enabling members to become more involved in RNIB's activities.

At least 50% of income is fundraised. There is some contracting of public sector services. Most public sector service contracts come under the Direct Services Group. RNIB is about to form an association with Action for Blind People on some contracts, providing education services amongst other things.

RNIB's previous engagement on environmental issues

RNIB currently integrates environmental issues into its health and safety function, so responsibility for the issue falls to its Health, Safety and Environment team.

The organisation collects a significant amount of environmental data, for example on waste, water, and energy use for its 35 sites. And there are corporate targets on energy usage, for example:

- to cut energy use by 10% between May 2007 and April 2008 through Carbon Trust surveys, an internal energy reduction awareness campaign, and hardware improvements. This was exceeded with a reduction of 13%.
- to reduce fuel use and CO₂ emissions through encouraging phone calls/conferences, public transport use, car shares, hire cars, lower emission fleet vehicles, and fewer fleet vehicles.

The Health, Safety and Environment Group (HSEG) performs a management review function with regards to these targets, and the Strategic Management Team is then asked to agree and support the objectives.

RNIB has a range of environmentally focused action plans for a variety of impacts, but these usually contain only actions that the HSEG function will itself take and there is no broader rolling out of these plans across the organisation, with no shared sense of responsibility.

RNIB has recently established a working group on carbon reduction, with members from the HSEG, estates management, IT, procurement and chaired by the Chief Operating Officer.

The organisation complies with ISO 14001.

Prior to engagement with The Big Response project RNIB had recently agreed a new strategy for the period 2009-2014 with three priority outcomes:

- stopping people losing their sight unnecessarily;
- supporting independent living;

- creating an inclusive society.

Below the strategy sits a big business plan. Health, Safety and Environmental issues rarely appear in the business plan.

What did RNIB want from the project?

The main aim was for RNIB to have a stronger environmental strategy and policy, with objectives spread throughout the organisation. More detailed aims are to create:

1. Fresh insight, knowledge and awareness within the HSE team about the likely impacts of climate change on blind people and people at risk of blindness;
2. Detailed and useful data about the likely risk and impact of floods and other extreme weather events on RNIB's operations;
3. Greater appreciation amongst senior management of the need for an organisation-wide environmental and/or climate change policy;
4. A plan for ways of staying engaged with climate change, once The Big Response support ends.

Working group

This consisted of:

- Joe Rodriguez, Health and Safety Adviser
- Philip Fejer, Health and Safety Adviser
- Hannah Robinson
- Jayne Frampton, Administrative Manager
- Ian Greenow

Support package

RNIB chose modules on beneficiaries, operations and strategy.

Support package intended and actual

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| <p><i>Beneficiaries module</i> Exploring the likely impact of climate change on the users of RNIB services, including the ways in which blind people and those at risk of blindness may be disproportionately affected by climate change.</p> | <p>RNIB involved staff from a variety of practical departments involved in the Health, Safety & Environment division and other areas such as products. Participants began by exploring the primary and secondary factors affecting RNIB's work, including demand for services, contact points and services delivered. They then used the card exercise giving examples of potential climate change impacts and rated the importance of these on RNIB's work.</p> <p>Key impacts identified for RNIB by participants largely focused on the delivery of services to beneficiaries rather than service demand. These included: rising costs of energy; legislation; funding availability; flooding and storm impacts on premises and transport; heat waves affecting older customers, eg in care homes.</p> |
| <p><i>Operations and adaptation module</i> Looking at the operational risks that may be faced by RNIB as a result of changing weather patterns and social impacts caused by global climate change.</p> | <p>This session was based on the high relevance climate change impacts identified in the beneficiaries module: housing; energy; cost of living; physical and mental health; public, voluntary and emergency services; flooding; and heat waves.</p> <p>Participants reflected on their past experiences of challenges in these areas and related these to the climate change impacts they had prioritised. They brainstormed potential action points focusing on gathering information, avoiding risks, reducing risks and spreading risks.</p> |

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| | <p>Key actions identified included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improving energy management; ▪ Planning for a changing funding climate; ▪ Planning for legislation changes; ▪ Improving building design for climate change impacts; ▪ Risk assessment and preparedness for extreme events, e.g. storms, floods and heat waves; ▪ Helping staff and service users to cope with climate change impacts. |
| <p><i>Strategy/stakeholder module</i> Exploring the role of environmental issues within RNIB's overall strategy based on the findings that emerge in the earlier modules. Consisting of one-to-one interviews with the Chief Operating Officer and up to two other key stakeholders.</p> | <p>Two senior managers were interviewed by telephone: Kevin Gleeson, Chief Operating Officer, and Nicholas Johnston, Head of Business Planning and Performance. Findings from the interviews included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Although the organisation's current strategy included assessments of RNIB's external environment, climate change was not included. ▪ The offer to participate in The Big Response was passed from Business Planning and Performance to Operations to the Health and Safety Team because it was that team which has had the 'environment' remit for the past two years. ▪ Feedback from the other sessions has highlighted that climate change does have a strategic element for RNIB, as well as business continuity implications, and potential opportunities for feeding these issues into the current organisational strategy were identified during the phone calls. ▪ Feeding specific findings from the project into the organisation's risk register would be helpful. |
| <p>A short report and presentation to the new Carbon Working Group covering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the general context of UK climate change impact; ▪ the possible impacts of climate change on blind people; ▪ areas where there may be opportunities for carbon reduction; ▪ the benefits of incorporating thinking about climate change impacts into RNIB's strategic decision-making; ▪ the benefits of a robust organisation-wide environmental policy. | <p>The report was scheduled to be presented to the Carbon Working Group in July but there were internal delays leading to the cancellation of the presentation and the group is still yet to meet.</p> <p>The report contains a range of recommendations for RNIB:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review services to meet new user needs 2. Improve energy management 3. Plan for changed funding climate 4. Plan for legislative change 5. Improve buildings to respond to climate events 6. Risk assess and prepare for extreme events <p>It also proposed a sub-sectoral leadership role for RNIB on this issue, in partnership with V2020.</p> <p>The prepared presentation was sent to the Head of Business Planning and Performance and Joe Rodriguez, the lead contact for The Big Response project.</p> |

Outcome of The Big Response program for RNIB: drawn from the interviews with Kevin Gleeson, Chief Operating Officer, and Nicholas Johnston, Head of Business Planning and Performance, RNIB

Evaluation against key desired outcomes

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| <p>Fresh insight, knowledge and awareness within the HSE team about the likely impacts of climate change on blind people and people at risk of blindness;</p> | <p>["The project has definitely made us think about the greater impact climate change will have on our beneficiaries, compared with the general sighted public".</p> |
| <p>Detailed and useful data about the likely risk and impact of floods and other extreme weather events on RNIB's operations;</p> | <p>RNIB is keen to incorporate climate change impacts into its existing risk register which records likelihood, mitigation options and predictive indicators. It would find more specific information on climate-related trends helpful for completing full entries in the register.</p> |
| <p>Greater appreciation amongst senior management of the need for an organisation-wide environmental and/or climate change policy;</p> | <p>Although the project had initially been passed over by two senior managers, the findings from the workshops had been fed back to them and this, along with the phone interviews and final report with recommendations, helped to convince senior managers to build climate change into the organisation's ongoing strategic analysis of its operating environment. It is also planning to adopt triple bottom line reporting in its annual report which, as Joe Rodriguez reflects, "should but the environment and in particular, our CO2, firmly on the strategic agenda." This development is backed by the organisation's new Chief Operating Officer.</p> |
| <p>A plan for ways of staying engaged with climate change, once The Big Response support ends.</p> | <p>"We're feeding this in alongside other issues so our directors and trustees can have an overview of all the opportunities and threats out there".</p> |

Key learning for The Big Response project

Where **responsibility for environment fits (or is positioned) within an organisation inevitably affects** how it is dealt with as an issue, especially with a large-sized organisation such as RNIB.

Within RNIB, environment is covered by the Health Safety and Environment Group (HS&E Group). It was this group that was the main contact for The Big Response programme, and that brought a risk analysis to the work, that might not have been there if we were located in another department.

In addition conversations with senior management **were built into the programme and turned out to be a particularly useful element. These people were able to influence RNIB's broader strategic response to climate change – beyond risk management and business continuity – and to imagine RNIB's possible role in galvanising action over climate change, as a key player within its sector.** Kevin Gleeson, Chief Operating Officer, and The Big Response's most senior contact, left the organisation in the autumn, so the project had to reengage with his successor, Keith Hickey.

Clearly, **where only a few people within an organisation understand the issues, there is a greater risk that understanding and momentum is lost when key personnel move on.**

This illustrates the importance of embedding understanding of climate change into an organisation's regular processes, for example job descriptions, working groups, planning processes, etc.

The **timing of the strategy process was helpful, but not ideal, for this project.** The high level goals had already been set, but implementation had yet to happen. This meant that addressing climate change had the potential to help with some key delivery issues but could not be taken up as a key strategic priority.

The main implications of climate change for RNIB that came out of the project workshops were to do with service delivery rather than any change in service demand or focus on their beneficiaries. This may have reflected the particular focus and expertise of the members of the project group on risk management and business continuity. The mission case for why RNIB should engage with climate change was explored in the telephone interviews with the Chief Operating Officer and Head of Business Planning and Performance.