



Guidance note for the Humanitarian Workplan Preparation 2013

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This document is provided to UN Agencies and NGOs from UNEP for the preparation of the 2013 Humanitarian Workplan regarding environment as a cross cutting issue. For advice from UNEP please contact: Altan Butt, altan.butt@unep.org

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1. Why address environment in a humanitarian context?

In Sudan environmental resources in Sudan are often scarce and unevenly distributed. This makes many livelihoods vulnerable to shocks such as drought or conflict over resources. In order to build resilience in communities, natural resources need to be well managed. There are well documented examples of crisis leading to the adoption of coping strategies that undermine a community's resource base, thereby exacerbating the challenge of recovery after the crisis is over. By using a livelihoods perspective on natural resources the importance of avoiding environmental damage, as far as possible, during humanitarian responses to crisis becomes clear.

When assessing the negative environmental impacts of a project, understanding the specific context is critical. In Sudan the annual rate of deforestation is now 2.6% (it was 0.7% before South Sudan seceded). This backdrop makes excessive use of timber in humanitarian projects a critical issue – that would be less significant if Sudan was not facing such a major crisis in its forestry sector.

The context is also important in designing the response – where there are key needs for progress in environment in the project area these may be able to be built into the project. An example here is that in order to reduce deforestation Sudan needs to switch away from fired bricks to alternative construction methods such as stabilised soil blocks or concrete blocks. This is particularly important in Darfur where these technologies need to be scaled up now, so that there is widespread capacity amongst the Darfuri population to enable the rebuilding of villages to be undertaken in a way that causes little harm to the environment.

A straight forward approach to environment has the following three steps:

1. **Contextualize** projects given the environmental vulnerabilities of areas they are located in;
2. **Assess** projects for potential negative environmental impacts, given this context;
3. **Mitigate** those impacts by modifying the project design (such as using less timber), or compensating for negative impacts (such as supporting woodlots to bring timber supply back into balance);
4. **Enhance** environmental benefits in the project (for example by extending the mitigation measures to bring net positive benefits – by increasing work on woodlots, or introduction of environmental technologies etc.).

These steps are built in to the approach in the humanitarian work plan – the Environment Marker is based on an assessment of potential impacts on the environment, and based on this a response to mitigate impacts and enhance benefits can be made.

2. Key issues regarding the environment for humanitarian actors in Sudan

Some sectors need to be more mindful of ensuring environmental protection than others even though issues such as climate change are cross-cutting and should be considered across the board. The key environmental issues per sector are as follows:

- **Protection:** Shelter and cooking;
- **Basic Infrastructure:** Livelihoods, pastoralism and construction materials;
- **Mine Action:** Waste management;
- **Camp Coordination Services:** Water and sanitation and shelter;
- **Health:** Medical waste management;
- **Non Food Items:** Shelter material, waste management and water and sanitation;
- **Water and Sanitation:** Community drought management, sustainable water resource management and sustainable sanitation;
- **Education:** Environmental education, cooking techniques and school construction;
- **Nutrition:** Water and firewood;
- **Food security and Livelihoods:** Agriculture, sustainable water resource management, livestock, forest management and irrigation practices.

These issues derive from the two main environmental challenges witnessed in Sudan:

- **Deforestation and desertification:** North central states in Sudan have lost some 70% of their forest cover since independence. Woodfuel is brought into these areas over long distances – Khartoum brings in woodfuel from as far away as South Kordofan and Blue Nile states. Control of the charcoal trade in these areas, as in Darfur, has become a dimension in conflict over natural resources – the control of the bush. Therefore issues around forest management, household energy, poverty alleviation, livelihoods and conflict mitigation need to be addressed together. Losing forest cover exposes soil to the breakdown of organic matter from sunlight and exposure to wind-blown erosion. Therefore the quality of soil deteriorates and the area may become desert.
- **Water resources:** There is evidence that some IDP camps are facing significant depletion of groundwater already. Water resources in Dereig camp ran dry after a drop in the water resources of 7m in 18 months. Therefore groundwater monitoring is essential. There may be a need for capping the amount of wells drilled in an area if the demand outstrips available resources. Information is available on best practice from WES, UNICEF, Groundwater and Wadis or UNEP. The Ground Water and Wadis Department at the Ministry of Irrigation and Water Resources maintains a matrix with the groundwater levels in IDP camps vulnerable to groundwater depletion. A particular risk exists that a year or two years of low rainfall could undermine water supplies in the new larger settlements that have been created as a result of the displacement during the crisis. Nyala is particularly vulnerable given its huge increase in population and the scarce water resources.

In addition to these key challenges, further environmental issues exist:

- The excavation of soil for brick making has a significant environmental impact – it is a health risk when pits become flooded (bilharzia, drowning) and there are places where it is being excavated from around tree roots destroying established mango orchards.
- The accumulation of solid waste in towns is a significant health risk. It is also a risk for livestock that eat plastic bags. Solid waste management should be seen as a priority for implementation.
- The value of natural vegetation should not be underestimated as a contributor to livelihood security – particularly in times of stress, such as conflicts and droughts. Thus, future restoration measures should include the protection of natural vegetation to provide famine foods, medicines, and other goods needed by local people.
- Civil society organisation including Universities, and local NGOs (such as the Sudanese Environmental Conservation Society) should be promoted and their capacities enhanced. People in these organisations have invaluable knowledge and skill in the management of Darfur's environment, and will be responsible for building the systems for equitable sustainable management in future.
- Community consultation and participation is a key part of environmental management. Local communities know best the importance of the environment and will be able to advise on

priorities for environmental restoration and management. Essential traditional management systems and safeguards break down during periods of conflict and through consultation these, or new systems will need to be developed.

3. Inclusion of environment in the HWP 2013

The importance of the environment will be reflected in the humanitarian workplan accordingly. Agencies (and their responsible project officers) will need to indicate the impact of the project on the environment according to the summary table below. There are **four categories of projects**:

- A. Projects with **positive environmental impact (Marked as A)** that promote sustainability and are environmentally friendly. These projects have no negative environmental impact at all and accordingly no assessment and mitigation measure is necessary. Examples of such projects would include a project on sustainable forestry with the Forests National Corporation or a project promoting environmental education. Benefits of these projects should be enhanced.
- B. Projects with **no or low environmental impact (Marked as B)**. These projects can be considered as neutral – they have neither a negative, nor a positive impact and accordingly no assessment and mitigation measure is applicable. Assessment and database compilation in agencies' permanent offices would be an example of a project in this category.
- C. Projects with **medium negative environmental impact (Marked as C)**. These projects potentially harm the environment and further action is required. These projects should take action to mitigate the impacts according to the sector guidance provided.
- D. Projects with **major environmental impact (Marked D)** need to assess their environmental impact more profoundly and should develop appropriate and detailed mitigation measures. These projects should either complete an **Environment and Social Screening Assessment** or undertake a **Rapid Environmental Assessment (REA)** and develop a **Community Environmental Action Plan (CEAP)**. Guidance on how to conduct these activities is given in the references below.

Projects with negative environmental impact, where no assessment and mitigation measures have been followed should clearly indicate this in the project sheet. This note focuses on humanitarian programming. For major development projects a formal Environmental Impact Assessment may be required.

The UNEP workplan team will screen the projects during the prioritisation exercise by the sector peer review process, and will re-classify projects that have been assigned an incorrect environment marker or where no documentation has been submitted.

For further guidance please contact the Altan Butt (altan.butt@unep.org, 0912135692) on how to assess a project and develop mitigation measures.

An overview of how to categorise projects can be found in the table on the following page:

Environment marker	Description
Each humanitarian project should identify its potential impact on the environment following international guidelines, and address it in a manner which is tailored to Sudan.	
Environment marker A Positive environmental impact of project	Environmental conditions will be <u>actively improved</u> by the project. The project will <u>fully or significantly address and improve the environment</u> in Sudan. No negative impacts on the environment are expected from the project.
Environment marker B No or low environmental impact of project	The <u>environment will experience little or no impact</u> from the project. Neither a positive, nor a negative environmental impact is expected from the project.
Environment marker C Medium negative environmental impact is expected from the project Guidance note and sector guidance has been used for assessment and mitigation	The project contains environmentally detrimental components and will require <u>further assessment, mitigation and enhancement measures</u> . These projects should carry out a short assessment to determine their likely impact on the environment, and develop mitigation measures by using the <u>Guidance Note</u> and relevant <u>Sector Guidance</u> which has been provided by UNEP.
Environment marker D Major negative environmental impact is expected from the project An Environmental and Social Screening Assessment has been completed or a Community Environmental Action Plan (CEAP) has been undertaken based on the completion of a Rapid Environmental Assessment (REA).	The project <u>will have a major negative environmental impact</u> . For these projects either: (1) An <u>Environmental and Social Screening Assessment</u> will be completed, or; (2) A <u>Rapid Environmental Assessment (REA)</u> will be undertaken, followed by the development of <u>a Community Environmental Action Plan (CEAP)</u> with the affected community. Guidance on these tools may be found in the references below.
Mitigation Measure	Description
N / A	This is for <u>A and B projects</u> . Assessment and mitigation of impact is not needed for these projects.
Applies Sector Guidance	This is for <u>C projects</u> . C projects can mitigate their impact by using the sector guidance.
Environmental and Social Screening Assessment	This is for <u>D projects</u> . D projects can assess and mitigate their major impact using one (or more) of the three options <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental and Social Screening Assessment • Rapid Environmental Assessment • Community Environmental Action Plan (CEAP) CEAPs include follow up action planning.
Rapid Environmental Assessment (REA)	
Community Environmental Action Plan (CEAP)	
None	This is <u>possible for C and D projects</u> . These are projects with negative impacts that should be mitigate their environmental impacts, but for which no action is taken.

4. Implementation in project sheets

The environment marker will be included in the project sheets, in the Sudan specific section (page 3). There will be two additional drop-down menus in which to select the environment marker, and to indicate the applied assessment and mitigation method.

Sudan 2013 HWP	
Project Title:	
Organisation	
Implementing Partners	
Cluster objectives supported by this project	
<u>Cross Cutting Issues:</u>	
Environmental impact of project	C. Medium Negative Environmental Impact
	Environmental Mitigation Activity/ Positive Environmental Activity
	# List any measures being undertaken to mitigate against negative environmental impact due to the project activities.
	# Otherwise list the project activities that contribute to positive environmental impact.
List any HIV/AIDS activities	

5. Key resources and international guidelines

UNEP Sudan has developed Sector guidance specifically for the Sudanese context. This will be circulated along with this General Guidance Note.

Toolkits for conducting Rapid Environmental Assessments (REA) and Community Environmental Action Plans (CEAP), as well as general information on the environment are referenced below.

Title	Remarks	Link
General Information on the environment in Sudan		
Post Conflict Environmental Assessment of Sudan (UNEP)	Comprehensive database	http://postconflict.unep.ch/publications.php?prog=sudan
Relief in a vulnerable environment (Tearfund)	The environmental context in Darfur and identification of key responses	http://www.tearfund.org/darfurenvironment
Destitution, distortion and deforestation (UNEP)	Construction, urbanisation and deforestation	http://postconflict.unep.ch/publications/darfur_timber.pdf
The case for drought preparedness (UNEP)	Groundwater depletion risks in IDP camps	http://postconflict.unep.ch/publications/darfur_drought.pdf
International Guidelines and tools for assessment and mitigation of environmental impact in		

humanitarian action		
UNEP guidance on mainstreaming environment into humanitarian action	An extensive collection of guidance, toolkits and best practices for all sectors	http://postconflict.unep.ch/humanitarianaction/
FRAME toolkit (UNHCR)	Provides indicators for environment in refugee situations including information on Environmental Assessments (EIA), Rapid Environmental Assessments (REA) and Community Environmental Action Plans (CEAPs)	http://www.unhcr.org/4a97d1039.html
Tools to conduct an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and develop Community Environmental Action Plans (CEAP)		
Environmental needs assessment (UNEP)	Developed for post disaster environmental needs assessments	http://postconflict.unep.ch/humanitarianaction/documents/05_01-01.pdf
Guidelines for Rapid Environmental Assessments (CARE)	Guidance for Rapid Environmental Assessments (REA) in disasters	http://postconflict.unep.ch/humanitarianaction/documents/05_01-03.pdf
FRAME toolkit (UNHCR)	Provides indicators for environment in refugee situations including information on Environmental Assessments (EIA), Rapid Environmental Assessments (REA) and Community Environmental Action Plans (CEAPs)	http://www.unhcr.org/4a97d1039.html
Community Environment Action Planning: A Guide for Practitioners (IUCN)	Provides tools to develop a Community Environmental Action Plan (CEAP)	http://data.iucn.org/dbtw-wpd/edocs/2011-022.pdf