

Cross-Cutting Issues

*Key Things to Know
(KTK)*

**Gender in Emergencies
HIV/AIDS in Emergencies
Environment in Emergencies**

Prepared for the IASC Cluster/Sector Leadership Training

11 October 2007

Why do you need to be concerned about gender in emergencies?

In the words of John Holmes, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator:

“Effective humanitarian response addresses the needs and concerns of all groups in an affected population. This means understanding how conflicts and disasters affect women, men, boys and girls differently and basing programming on their differential needs and capacities. This is what gender equality programming is all about.”

In a letter to Humanitarian Coordinators, April 2007

Ignoring or being blind to these different needs can have serious implications for the protection and survival of people caught up in humanitarian crises.

What is expected of you in your role as Cluster/Sector lead in the field?¹

Sector [cluster] leads in the field have a particular responsibility for ensuring that humanitarian actors working in their sectors remain actively engaged in addressing cross cutting concerns such as gender equality. Experience of recent crises suggests that these important dimensions to ensuring appropriate responses have too frequently been ignored.

Sector/cluster leads at the country level are accountable to the Humanitarian Coordinator for facilitating a process aimed at ensuring the following:

Ensure integration of agreed priority cross-cutting issues in sectoral needs assessment, analysis, planning, monitoring and response (e.g. age, diversity, environment, **gender**, HIV/AIDS and human rights); contribute to the development of appropriate strategies to address these issues; ensure gender sensitive programming and promote gender equality; ensure that the needs, contributions and capacities of women and girls as well as men and boys are addressed;

Field challenges related to integrating gender in the clusters

Gender equality or equality between women and men refers to the equal enjoyment by females and males of all ages of rights, socially valued goods, opportunities and resources. Equality does not mean that women and men are the same but that their enjoyment of rights, opportunities and life chances are not governed or limited by whether they were born female or male. Protecting human rights and promoting gender equality must be seen as central to the humanitarian community's responsibility to protect and provide assistance to those affected by emergencies. As sector leaders the job is to make sure that the assistance and protection we provide meets the needs of **all the population equally, that their rights are protected** and that those most affected by a crisis receive the support they need.

Recurrent challenges in integrating gender concerns in clusters are:

- Data is not disaggregated by sex and age, thus impairing targeting assistance in accordance with the particular needs of each group of a given community.
- Needs assessments are seldom truly participatory in nature, meaning that many community members' concerns are not taken into consideration. A gender analysis is almost entirely dependent upon a participatory approach to needs assessments and planning and implementation of programmes, and needs to be an analysis of the needs and capabilities of women, girls, men and boys – not just women.
- Gender is perceived to be something that is not vital to take into consideration in the rush to provide immediate humanitarian relief, something that can wait until things calm down. Instead, gender, age, ethnicity and other diversities in the affected population should be recognised as the key to designing and

setting priorities for humanitarian response. Sector programming should not be based on assumptions about the needs and social structure of the community.

***What can you do to ensure gender equality programming in humanitarian action?
Tips, tool application and best practices.***

Conflict and disaster affects women, girls, boys and men differently, and that they have different coping strategies. To mainstream gender equality programming in emergencies, it is essential to understand the roles, capacities and constraints of women, girls, boys and men, and the power relations between them. Their differing needs and capabilities must be identified to make sure all have access to services and information, and can participate in the planning and implementation of relief programmes. Go through the **ADAPT** and **ACT** Collectively steps to ensure your sector is taking gender issues seriously.

Analyse: Analyse the impact of the humanitarian crisis on women, girls, boys and men. Be certain, for example, that all needs assessments include gender issues in the information gathering and analysis phases, and that women, girls, boys and men are consulted in assessment, monitoring and evaluation processes.

Design Services: Design services to meet the needs of women and men equally. Each sector should review the way they work and make sure women and men can benefit equally from the services, for example there are separate latrines for women and men; hours for trainings, food or non-food items distribution are set so that everyone can attend, etc.

Ensure access: Make sure that women and men can access services equally. Sectors should continuously monitor who is using the services and consult with the community to ensure all are accessing the service.

Ensure participation: Ensure women, girls, boys and men participate equally in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of humanitarian response, and that women are in decision-making positions. If it is problematic to have women in committees, put in place mechanisms to ensure their voices are brought to the committees

Train: Ensure that women and men benefit equally from training or other capacity-building initiatives offered by the sector actors. Make certain that women and men have equal opportunities for capacity building and training, including opportunities for work or employment.

Address gender-based violence: Make sure that all sectors take specific actions to prevent and/or respond to gender-based violence. The IASC Guidelines for Gender-based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Settings should be used by all as a tool for planning and coordination.

Disaggregate data by age and sex: Collect and analyse all data concerning the humanitarian response by age and sex breakdown, with differences analysed and used to develop a profile of at-risk populations and how their needs are being met by the assistance sector.

Targeted Actions: Based on the gender analysis, make sure that women, girls, boys and men are targeted with specific actions when appropriate. Where one group is more at-risk than others, special measures should be taken to protect that group. Examples would be safe spaces for women and measures to protect boys from forced recruitment.

Coordinate: Set up gender support networks to ensure coordination and gender mainstreaming in all areas of humanitarian work. Sector actors should be active in coordination mechanisms.

**Framework for Gender Equality
Programming**

Analyse gender differences.
Design services to meet needs of all.
Access ensured for all.
Participate equally.
Train women and men equally.
and
Address GBV in sector programmes.
**Collect, analyse and report sex/age
disaggregated data.**
**Target actions based on a gender
analysis.**
Coordinate actions with all partners.

**ADAPT and ACT
Collectively to ensure gender equality**

ADAPT and ACT Collectively to ensure gender equality

Section A in the **IASC Gender Handbook in Humanitarian Action** includes four chapters covering the basics of gender equality, including sample activities and indicators for the **ADAPT and ACT** framework represented above – as well as specific chapters on participation; coordination and protection.

Tips, checklists and case examples for integrating gender into the clusters can be found in Section B of the IASC Gender Handbook in Humanitarian Action. For each cluster, see the following pages in the handbook:

Gender and Camp Coordination and Camp Management in Emergencies	41
Gender and Education in Emergencies	49
Gender and Food Issues in Emergencies	57
a. Gender and Food Security in Emergencies	59
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Gender and Shelter in Emergencies	97
Gender and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in Emergencies.....	105

Some examples of best practice from the field

Integration of gender equality and GBV programming into the work planning process

"Gender was identified as one of 4 cross-cutting issues to be incorporated into sector priorities and objectives. The mainstreaming process was as consultative and inclusive as possible; the gender adviser collaborated not only with the sector leads in each of the states, but with many of their implementing partners. The structure of the mainstreaming methodology emphasized creating sector-specific reference worksheets itemizing tangible, realistic, practical strategies which could subsequently be incorporated into the Workplan project sheets, without creating any additional work or parallel workplan structures for the sectors. Though the development of the gender mainstreaming and GBV-prevention strategies proved to be most challenging for those sectors not traditionally associated with a protection mandate (particularly WASH and Food Security/Livelihoods), it was these sectors that were the most innovative in their approaches for gender mainstreaming and GBV-prevention. Actors' understanding of the strategies and activities increased with the provision of concrete and tangible examples (activities that mitigated violence against women seemed more comprehensible and practical than general strategies such as "creating a gender balance among sector staff.").

Food security assessment in the West Bank and Gaza Strip

In 2003, FAO and WFP undertook a comprehensive food security and nutrition assessment across all districts of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. A key objective was to understand the factors and conditions affecting livelihoods and food security and nutritional vulnerability of women, girls, boys and men. In addition to reviewing secondary data, the mission conducted a primary data collection and analysis exercise in urban, camp and remote/rural locations. This involved extensive field visits, focus group discussions, pairwise comparison ranking, household observations and interviews using a gender focus.

Participation in camp management, Sierra Leone

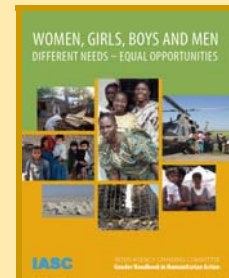
In Sierra Leone, UNHCR instituted a system of refugee participation in eight refugee camps to ensure that the views and concerns of all refugees were expressed to UNHCR, government and implementing partners. UNHCR invited its partners to solicit refugees' views on how they could best participate in

camp management. As a result, sub-committees on specific areas of concern were set up, increasing women's participation in camp administration and other sector activities increased to 45% in most camps.

Critical Resources for Gender in Emergencies:

The IASC Gender Handbook: *Women, Girls, Boys and Men – Different Needs Equal Opportunities* (IASC, 2006). The Handbook provides humanitarian field practitioners with a basic understanding of gender equality programming in humanitarian settings as well as specific activities for the different sectors of humanitarian response. It has been produced under the auspices of the Cluster Approach, the different clusters producing the chapters relevant to their work, making the final product an IASC-wide tool.

It will also be available in Arabic, French, Russian and Spanish on <http://humanitarianinfo.org/iasc/gender>



The IASC Guidelines on Gender-based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Settings - *with a focus on Prevention and Response to Sexual Violence* (IASC, 2005) is a field-friendly tool on how to set up a multi-sectoral GBV programme stressing the need for a coordinated approach. It has been rolled out with extensive capacity building support in Colombia and Uganda, and more capacity building/ roll-out efforts are planned. (Languages: Arabic, English, French, Spanish, Bahasa. It will also be available in Russian).

Available on <http://humanitarianinfo.org/iasc/gender>



Practical and strategic needs

Women, girls, boys and men have immediate, "practical" survival needs particularly in humanitarian crises. They also have longer-term "strategic" needs linked to changing the circumstances of their lives and realizing their human rights. **Practical needs** of women may include needs associated with their roles as caretakers, needs for food, shelter, water and safety. **Strategic needs**, however, are needs for more control over their lives, needs for property rights, for political participation to help shape public decisions and for a safe space for women outside the household, for example women's shelters offering protection from domestic violence. Practical needs focus on the immediate *condition* of women and men. Strategic needs concern their relative *position* in relation to each other; in effect strategic needs are about resolving gender-based inequalities.

HIV/AIDS in Emergencies

Key Things to Know

IASC CSLT

Why do you need to be concerned with HIV in emergencies?

In 2006, 2.9 million people died of HIV and another 4.3 million were newly infected. At least 70% of the world's 40 million people infected with HIV live in countries affected by acute and protracted crises. HIV programming needs to be systematically addressed in humanitarian action to avoid the spread of HIV infection, to maintain existing HIV prevention, care and treatment services and to help ensure that the vulnerability of those individuals already living with HIV is not unduly increased during a crisis. More systematic integration of HIV programming into humanitarian action will prevent HIV related morbidity and mortality that may occur as a result of the crisis. This means prioritizing humanitarian interventions that are designed to avert new HIV infections, and reduce the vulnerability of those already infected with HIV.

Currently, at least 22 countries with Humanitarian Coordinators have generalized HIV epidemics, which interact with other factors such as endemic poverty, conflict and mass displacement to exacerbate humanitarian crises. Although the result of new HIV infection will not be evident for many years, it is nevertheless fatal. Therefore HIV prevention is a life-saving intervention in humanitarian situations. Similarly, care and treatment provided to people with HIV in crisis settings are life-extending activities that have a long-term impact not only on the person living with HIV but also their families and communities. Clearly, the context of each humanitarian situation will determine the extent and level of engagement on HIV issues, however, even in low prevalence settings, appropriate HIV prevention, care and treatment remain a feature of the humanitarian response.

What is expected of you in your role as Cluster/Sector lead in the field?

Sector [cluster] leads in the field have a particular responsibility for ensuring that humanitarian actors working in their sectors remain actively engaged in addressing cross cutting concerns such as HIV/AIDS. Experience of recent crises suggests that these important dimensions to ensuring appropriate responses have too frequently been ignored. Sector/cluster leads at the country level are accountable to the Humanitarian Coordinator for facilitating a process aimed at ensuring:

...integration of agreed priority cross-cutting issues in sectoral needs assessment, analysis, planning, monitoring and response (e.g. age, diversity, environment, gender, HIV/AIDS and human rights); contribute to the development of appropriate strategies to address these issues...¹

Designated global lead

HIV is a multi-faceted, multi-sectoral issue that requires input from various UN and non-UN actors. Currently, a consortium of multiple agencies is providing input into HIV as a cross-cutting issue into Clusters.

Main partners at the global level

WHO, UNICEF, UNDP, UNHCR, IOM, OCHA, UNAIDS, UNFPA, WFP and IASC members including NGOs

Main partners in the field

Same as above, but also National AIDS Committees, and National Ministries of Health.

Support and tools that the IASC consortium partners can provide to the field:

- Technical guidelines: [IASC Guidelines on HIV/AIDS Interventions in Emergency Settings](#)
- Training package for cluster leads on integration of HIV into cluster work at country level (in development)
- Stakeholders workshop package for CAPs, Flash Appeals to identify HIV needs (in development)
- Monitoring and evaluation indicators, and appropriate tools to measure HIV interventions (in development)
- Technical support, if requested, can be sought from amongst the consortium partners, including for assessments, trainings, participation in joint needs assessment

¹ IASC Guidance Note on Using the Cluster Approach to Strengthen Humanitarian Response, 24 Nov. 2006.

- Technical guidance on specialized HIV issues, including ART, nutrition, PEP, etc.

Cluster leads should seek, as required, technical support from their own HIV focal points participating in the IASC Task Force on HIV and Humanitarian Action, or UNAIDS for support to integrate HIV into clusters and sectors.

Coordination in the field

At the field level, it is important that the following clusters/sectors coordinate their HIV/AIDS assessments and interventions: Health, Protection, Nutrition, Camp Management and Coordination, Shelter, Early Recovery, WASH, Education and other clusters depending on context.

HIV/AIDS as a cross-cutting issue requires that all clusters work together in a coordinated manner to make sure that HIV is integrated throughout the emergency response. The consortium is working towards the development of protocol whereby, where required, an HIV Humanitarian Advisor to the RC/HC will be named (if possible from within the country) to ensure HIV activities carried out within clusters are coordinated, and programming is designed to meet clearly defined needs that fall within the scope of the emergency or humanitarian situation.

How do you integrate HIV/AIDS interventions in emergency response?

HIV and AIDS are complex problems with impacts that extend far beyond the health sector. Therefore, a multi-sectoral and coordinated response is required to prevent HIV-related morbidity and mortality both during and after the crisis. In many humanitarian situations, HIV programming will already be operational prior to the crisis, and priority should be given to maintaining or restoring HIV prevention, care and treatment programs that may have been disrupted by the humanitarian situation. In complex emergencies, insecurity and mass displacement may prevent HIV interventions from reaching populations in need, and humanitarian action may be required to start relevant HIV prevention, care and treatment programs. Preparedness, planning and good coordination are essential for effective HIV interventions during emergencies.

The integration of HIV questions into humanitarian needs analysis is a critical step to assure HIV is addressed appropriately during emergencies. Clusters should ensure that HIV programming needs are considered while developing tools, policies and funding appeals.

The IASC [Guidelines on HIV Interventions in Emergency Settings](#) illustrate, for governments and cooperating agencies (including UN Agencies and NGOs), how to incorporate HIV/AIDS considerations in their response, and how to coordinate to assure the minimum multisectoral response during the early phase of an emergency. These guidelines include a matrix which provides guidance on early actions for responding to HIV/AIDS in emergencies. The Matrix is divided into three parts: Emergency preparedness, minimum response, and Comprehensive response. Each programmatic sector on the matrix provides guidance on responding appropriately to HIV/AIDS in emergency situations. Only the minimum response phase is presented in the Action sheets. The country's or region's situation and capacity assessment will help determine which additional HIV/AIDS responses should be undertaken. Detailed action points for each of the bullets of the Matrix are provided in the Action sheets included in the Guidelines. Annex 1 includes this matrix.

Sector objectives and priorities

The main reason to integrate HIV into humanitarian response is to prevent HIV related morbidity and mortality that may occur as a result of the crisis. This means prioritizing interventions that are designed to avert new HIV infections, and reduce the vulnerability of those already infected with HIV.

The key activities regarding HIV interventions in emergencies should focus on:

- Universal precautions – safe blood supply
- Condom distribution
- PMTCT (Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission)
- HIV awareness / education

- PEP
- Access to basic health care
- Access to care for opportunistic infections
- Access to antiretroviral therapy for those in need
- Targeted food assistance and livelihood support

Principles of HIV interventions in emergency settings

- HIV/AIDS activities should seek to build on and not duplicate or replace existing work.
- Interventions for HIV/AIDS in humanitarian crises must be multi-sectoral responses.
- Establish coordination and leadership mechanisms prior to an emergency, and leverage each organization's differential strengths, so that each can lead in its area of expertise.
- Local and national governments, institutions and target populations should be involved in planning, implementation and allocating human and financial resources
- Where non-state entities have control or where the government no longer has the capacity to act, activities may be undertaken in the absence of national policies or programmes.
- HIV/AIDS activities for displaced populations should also service host populations to the maximum extent possible.
- When planning an intervention, cultural sensitivities of the beneficiaries should be considered. Inappropriate services are more likely to cause negative reaction from the community rather than achieve the desired impact.

Key reference material

[IASC Guidelines on HIV/AIDS Interventions in Emergency Settings](#)

(See http://www.unfpa.org/upload/lib_pub_file/249_filename_guidelines-hiv-emer.pdf)

Annex 1 IASC Guidelines on HIV/AIDS Interventions in Emergency Settings – The Matrix

Sectoral Response	Emergency Preparedness	Minimum response (to be conducted in the midst of emergency)	Comprehensive response (Stabilized phase)
1. Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine coordination structures Identify and list partners Establish network of resource persons Raise funds Prepare contingency plans Include HIV/AIDS in humanitarian action plans and train accordingly relief workers 	1.1 Establish coordination mechanism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue fundraising Strengthen networks Enhance information sharing Build human capacity Link emergency to development HIV action Work with authorities Assist government and non-state entities to promote and protect human rights⁴
2. Assessment and monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct capacity and situation analysis Develop indicators and tools Involve local institutions and beneficiaries 	2.1 Assess baseline data 2.2 Set up and manage a shared database 2.3 Monitor activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain database Monitor and evaluate all programmes Assess data on prevalence, knowledge attitudes and practice, and impact of HIV/AIDS Draw lessons from evaluation
3. Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review existing protection laws and policies Promote human rights and best practices Ensure that humanitarian activities minimize the risk of sexual violence, and exploitation, and HIV-related discrimination Train uniformed forces and humanitarian workers on HIV/AIDS and sexual violence 	3.1 Prevent and respond to sexual violence and exploitation 3.2 Protect orphans and separated children 3.3 Ensure access to condoms for peacekeepers, military and humanitarian staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involve authorities to reduce HIV-related discrimination Expand prevention and response to sexual violence and exploitation Strengthen protection for orphans, separated children and young people Institutionalize training for uniformed forces on HIV/AIDS, sexual violence and exploitation, and non-discrimination Put in place HIV-related services for demobilized personnel Strengthen IDP/refugee response
4. Water and sanitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Train staff on HIV/AIDS, sexual violence, gender, and non-discrimination 	4.1 Include HIV considerations in water/sanitation planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish water/sanitation management committees Organize awareness campaigns on hygiene and sanitation, targeting people affected by HIV
5. Food security and nutrition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contingency planning/preposition supplies Train staff on special needs of HIV/AIDS affected populations Include information about nutritional care and support of PLWHA in community nutrition education programmes Support food security of HIV/AIDS-affected households 	5.1 Target food aid to affected and at-risk households and communities 5.2 Plan nutrition and food needs for population with high HIV prevalence 5.3 Promote appropriate care and feeding practices for PLWHA 5.4 Support and protect food security of HIV/AIDS affected & at risk households and communities 5.5 Distribute food aid to affected households and communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop strategy to protect long-term food security of HIV affected people Develop strategies and target vulnerable groups for agricultural extension programmes Collaborate with community and home based care programmes in providing nutritional support Assist the government in fulfilling its obligation to respect the human right to food

6. Shelter and site planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure safety of potential sites • Train staff on HIV/AIDS, gender and non-discrimination 	6.1 Establish safely designed sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan orderly movement of displaced
7. Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map current services and practices • Plan and stock medical and RH supplies • Adapt/develop protocols • Train health personnel • Plan quality assurance mechanisms • Train staff on the issue of SGBV and the link with HIV/AIDS • Determine prevalence of injecting drug use • Develop instruction leaflets on cleaning injecting materials • Map and support prevention and care initiatives • Train staff and peer educators • Train health staff on RH issues linked with emergencies and the use of RH kits • Assess current practices in the application of universal precautions 	<p>7.1 Ensure access to basic health care for the most vulnerable</p> <p>7.2 Ensure a safe blood supply</p> <p>7.3 Provide condoms</p> <p>7.4 Institute syndromic STI treatment</p> <p>7.5 Ensure IDU appropriate care</p> <p>7.6 Management of the consequences of SV</p> <p>7.7 Ensure safe deliveries</p> <p>7.8 Universal precautions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forecast longer-term needs; secure regular supplies; ensure appropriate training of the staff • Palliative care and home based care • Treatment of opportunistic infections and TB control programmes • Provision of ARV treatment • Safe blood transfusion services • Ensure regular supplies, include condoms with other RH activities • Reassess condoms based on demand • Management of STI, including condoms • Comprehensive sexual violence programmes • Control drug trafficking in camp settings • Use peer educators to provide counselling and education on risk reduction strategies • Voluntary counselling and testing • Reproductive health services for young people • Prevention of mother to child transmission • Enable/monitor/reinforce universal precautions in health care
8. Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine emergency education options for boys and girls • Train teachers on HIV/AIDS and sexual violence and exploitation 	8.1 Ensure children's access to education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate girls and boys (formal and non-formal) • Provide lifeskills-based HIV/AIDS education • Monitor and respond to sexual violence and exploitation in educational settings
9. Behaviour change communication and information education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare culturally appropriate messages in local languages • Prepare a basic BCC/IEC strategy • Involve key beneficiaries • Conduct awareness campaigns • Store key documents outside potential emergency areas 	9.1 Provide information on HIV/AIDS prevention and care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scale up BCC/IEC • Monitor and evaluate activities
10. HIV/AIDS in the workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review personnel policies regarding the management of PLWHA who work in humanitarian operations • Develop policies when there are none, aimed at minimising the potential for discrimination • Stock materials for post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) 	<p>10.1 Prevent discrimination by HIV status in staff management</p> <p>10.2 Provide post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) available for humanitarian staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build capacity of supporting groups for PLWHA and their families • Establish workplace policies to eliminate discrimination against PLWHA • Post-exposure prophylaxis for all humanitarian workers available on regular basis

Why do you need to be concerned about the environment in emergencies?

When a disaster strikes or a conflict unfolds, humanitarian actors have to move quickly to save lives, meet basic needs and protect survivors. In the rush to provide a rapid humanitarian response, addressing the environmental threats caused by the emergency may seem to be secondary. They are not. Conflicts and Disasters, as well as relief and recovery operations, impact the environment in ways that threaten human life, health, livelihoods and security. Failure to address these risks can undermine the relief process through additional loss of life, displacement, aid dependency and increased vulnerability.

There is a strong link between the environment and disasters. Environmental pre-conditions often contribute to disasters. Disasters can result in negative environmental impacts. Emergency response can have positive or negative environmental impact. The cost of ignoring these links include: 1. secondary environmental threats with real or potential negative impacts on human life, health, welfare, livelihoods, environment, 2. short-term responses that do not deal with longer-term environmental effects, 3. emergency solutions that unnecessarily add garbage and waste materials to the environment, 4. loss of important ecological resources.

What is expected of you in your role as Cluster/Sector lead in the field?!

Sector [cluster] leads in the field have a particular responsibility for ensuring that humanitarian actors working in their sectors remain actively engaged in addressing cross cutting concerns such as the environment. Experience of recent crises suggests that these important dimensions to ensuring appropriate responses have too frequently been ignored. Sector/cluster leads at the country level are accountable to the Humanitarian Coordinator for facilitating a process aimed at ensuring:

...integration of agreed priority cross-cutting issues in sectoral needs assessment, analysis, planning, monitoring and response (e.g. age, diversity, **environment**, gender, HIV/AIDS and human rights); contribute to the development of appropriate strategies to address these issues...

Global focal point for the environment

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Main partners at the global level

UN: OCHA, IASC CWGER, UNDG, PBC, UNDP BCPR, World Bank

NGO: CARE International, IUCN, IISD, ELI, PRIO

Main partners in the field

UN: OCHA, UNDP, UNOPS, HABITAT, FAO, UNICEF

NGO: CARE International, IUCN, WWF, FFI, Benfield Hazard Research Centre

National Governments: Ministries of Environment, Forestry, Planning

Support and tools that UNEP can provide to the field:

- Focal point for the environment within the PCNA/PDCA processes
- Detailed post-crisis environmental assessments

- Capacity building for environmental governance
- Environmental clean-up and risk reduction
- Environmental diplomacy for peace building

Environmental focal points in the field should be able to provide other cluster /sector groups with:

- Identification of the key environmental risks to the cluster
- Identification of the key environmental impacts from the cluster
- Options for risk and impact mitigation
- Mainstreaming environment with projects and programmes
- Advice on designing an environmental recovery programme

What are potential environmental impacts in an emergency?

As natural resources play a key role in meeting relief needs, six humanitarian response clusters can be directly affected by environmental impacts: health; water, sanitation and hygiene; shelter; camp management and coordination; logistics and early recovery. As these risks can undermine the effective delivery of humanitarian assistance and compound the crisis, they should be assessed and identified as early as possible. Activities supported or put in place by these clusters can also create unintended environmental impacts. These impacts can further compound or exacerbate the emergency situation or undermine long term recovery.

Cluster	Environmental impacts that can affect humanitarian activities	Humanitarian activities that can cause new environmental impacts
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contamination of air, soil and water from chemicals, hazardous wastes and weapons • Release of asbestos from collapsed buildings • Improper disposal of municipal waste, debris and carcasses • Unsafe chemicals management • Burning wastes and recovering materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management and disposal of healthcare waste and expired medicines • Management and disposal of chemicals required for health (water treatment, pesticides)
Water, Sanitation and Hygiene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contamination of water resources from chemicals, hazardous wastes, and weapons • Damage or destruction of water and sanitation infrastructure leading to cross-contamination • Improper disposal of municipal waste, debris and carcasses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over-pumping of groundwater aquifers • Rehabilitation and decommissioning of wells • Water contamination from improper sewage disposal • Selection of inappropriate or emergency intensive WASH systems (eg. Septic tanks, desalination plants, etc.
Shelter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contamination of land from chemicals, hazardous wastes and weapons • Environmental hazards including floods, landslides and volcanoes • Loss of forests reduces access to fuelwood and building materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unsustainable supply of shelter construction materials • Unsustainable use of timber and fuelwood in shelter construction • Deforestation and soil erosion • Development of unsustainable livelihoods based on locally accessible natural resources • Construction and packaging waste
Camp Coordination and Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contamination of land from chemicals, hazardous waste and weapons • Environmental hazards including floods, landslides and volcanoes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land degradation • Management and decommissioning of pit latrines • Unsustainable use of natural resources, particularly timber, fuelwood, aggregates and wildlife • Contamination caused by fuel spills and

		disposal of chemicals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decommissioning of camp or reuse of temporary shelter
Logistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contamination of transport routes by chemicals, hazardous waste and weapons Environmental hazards including floods, landslides and volcanoes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management and disposal of fuel, waste oil and tires Chemicals and wastes from logistics base operations

How can you rapidly assess environmental impacts in an emergency?

Those who respond to disasters have little time for in-depth environmental assessments, are not likely to be environmental specialist, and work in a situation where action must be taken quickly often without the benefit of “perfect” information. Therefore, being able to rapidly identify, evaluate and respond to critical environmental issues and their effects on lives and livelihoods during a disaster are key to effective disaster relief and recovery operations. Those conducting humanitarian assessments need a rapid, flexible and generalist tool for, such as the Rapid Environmental Impact Assessment Tool developed by CARE (See reference #2 at end of this document), which can scope or flag environmental issues resulting from the disaster or the humanitarian response and provide general guidance on what kind of experts may be needed and how to respond to environment-linked humanitarian issues that are identified.

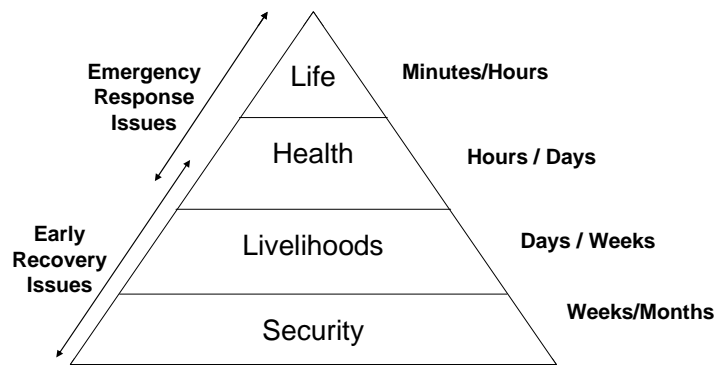
Rapid environmental impact assessments include questions to consider and analyze:

- the general context of the disaster and related environmental issues
- disaster related factors which may have an immediate impact on the environment
- possible immediate environmental impacts of disaster agents
- unmet basic needs of disaster survivors that could lead to adverse impact on the environment
- potential negative environmental consequences of relief operations
- opportunities for green procurement within the relief operation

Sector objectives and priorities

The environmental impacts caused by disasters and conflicts as well as by relief operations threaten people and communities in four main ways:

- **Life:** Acute threats to human life can be caused by the release off hazardous chemicals into the environment. Significant contamination of air, soil and water resources can cause severe sickness or death. Identifying these kinds of acute environmental risks is a critical priority in the minutes and hours following an emergency in order to protect the lives of local people and humanitarian actors.
- **Health:** Threats to human health are also caused by the release of hazardous substances and debris waste into the environment. While short term exposure may not be lethal, over the longer term it can threaten human health. Identifying environmental risks to health becomes a priority in the hours and days following an emergency.
- **Livelihoods:** Threats to human livelihoods are caused by damage to natural resources and ecosystems such as forests, pastures, soils, wetlands and coral reefs. The sudden loss of environmental goods and services often implies immediate loss of livelihoods and subsequent reliance on humanitarian aid. Often it is the poor and vulnerable members of communities that are the most affected. Identifying environmental impacts to human livelihoods is a priority during early recovery phase.
- **Security:** Threats to human security occur when critical natural resources or ecosystem services are damaged. In some cases, such damage increases vulnerability to natural hazards. In other cases, damage to scarce resources can exacerbate tensions over access and lead to conflict. Identifying environmental impacts to human security is a priority during the early recovery phase.



UNEP's approach for addressing environmental dimensions of conflicts and disasters are divided into three main pillars: 1. Emergency Response; 2. Recovery; 3. Risk reduction.

1. Emergency Response: In the days following a humanitarian emergency, the environmental response efforts focuses primarily on acute risks to life and public health from the release of chemicals, toxic substances and hazardous wastes. UNEP's response capacity in the emergency response phase is in the Joint UNEP/OCHA Environmental Unit, which assesses acute environmental risks and identifies and monitors secondary risks from industrial sites and infrastructure.

2. Recovery: Early recovery activities lay the foundation for rebuilding livelihoods and addressing the underlying risks that contributed to the crisis. Within UNEP, the Post-Conflict and Disaster Management Branch manages the assessment of environmental needs and its integration into early recovery plans. Technical assistance is provided to ensure relief and recovery operations "do no harm" and take the opportunity to "build back better" and in a sustainable manner.

3. Risk reduction: Environmental management can contribute to reducing vulnerabilities to disasters, preventing conflicts and minimizing the impact on humans of hazard events. Various divisions within UNEP conduct risk reduction activities, aiming to integrate risk reduction and prevention into environment, development and climate change adaptation programs. Projects are undertaken to build capacity and demonstrate how environmental management and rehabilitation can reduce risks associated with natural hazards, industrial accidents and conflicts.

Key reference material

1. IASC Guidance Note on Using the Cluster Approach to Strengthen Humanitarian Response, 24 Nov. 2006.
2. [Rapid Environmental Impact Assessment in Disasters](http://www.benfieldhrc.org/disaster_studies/rea/rea_guidelines.v4.4.pdf) (REA), developed by Charles Kelly for Benfield Hazard Research Centre, University College London and CARE International. The REA is a simple, qualitative joint-assessment tool to rapidly identify, define, characterise and prioritise potential environmental impacts in disaster situations which threaten human life and welfare. It uses easy to understand descriptions, rating tables and lists to identify and rank environmental issues and appropriate follow-up actions during a disaster. (See http://www.benfieldhrc.org/disaster_studies/rea/rea_guidelines.v4.4.pdf).
3. [UNHCR Framework for Assessing, Monitoring and Evaluating the Environment in Refugee-related Operations](http://postconflict.unep.ch/liberia/displacement/documents/UNHCR_CARE_FRAME_Toolkit.pdf) (FRAME), a joint UNHCR-CARE project. This toolkit is intended to ensure that environmental assessments, monitoring programmes and evaluations are carried out in a more systematic manner, along proven guidelines, through appropriate means and approaches, and that the information from each of these stages leads to improved environmental management and livelihood security of displaced persons and those who may be affected by their presence – the hosting community. (http://postconflict.unep.ch/liberia/displacement/documents/UNHCR_CARE_FRAME_Toolkit.pdf)

