

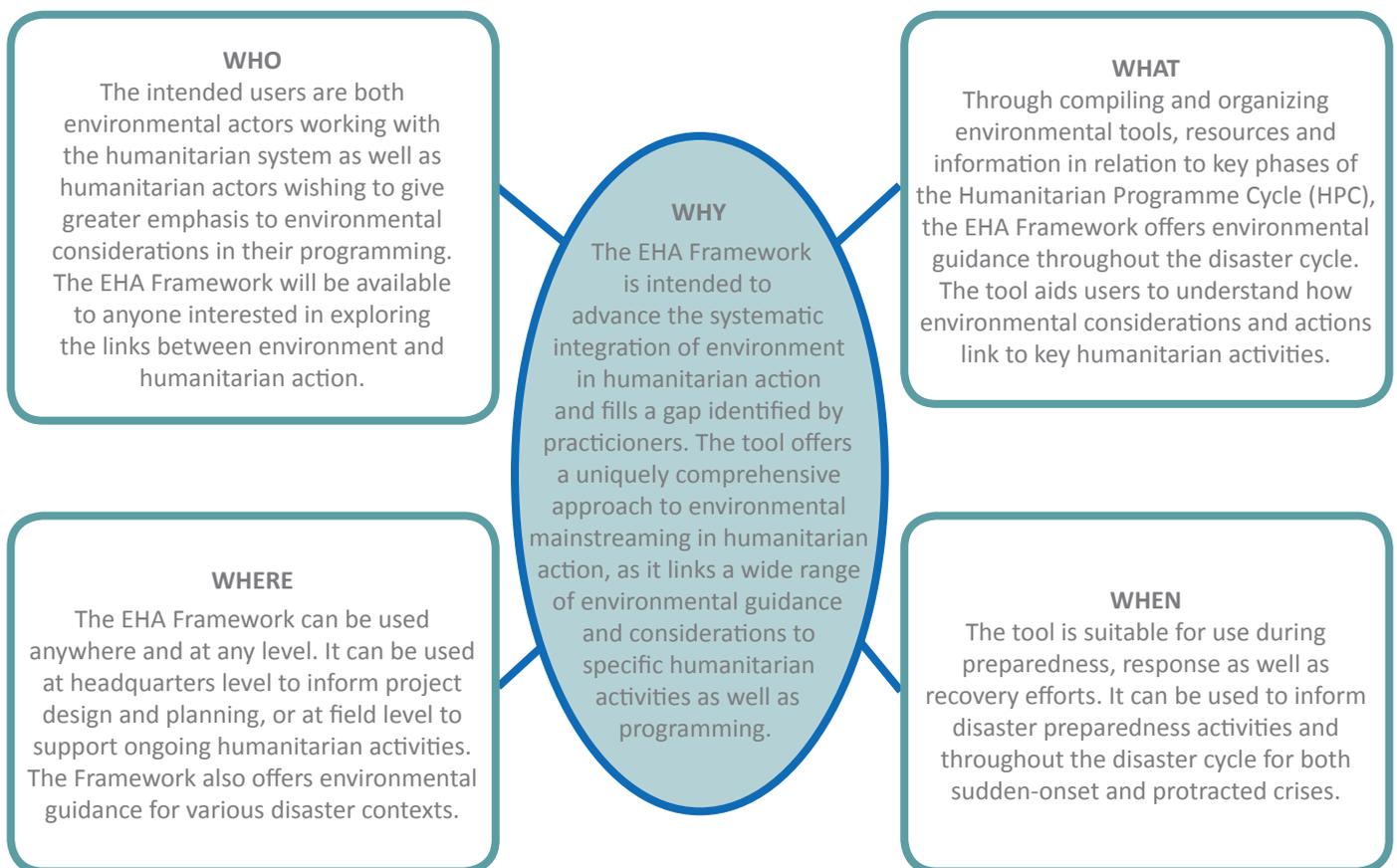
ENVIRONMENT IN HUMANITARIAN ACTION FRAMEWORK

The **Coordination of Assessments for Environment in Humanitarian Action: A Joint Initiative** (the Joint Initiative) is a collaborative effort among the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), World Wildlife Fund (WWF), the UN Environment/Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs Joint Unit (JEU), the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB), Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), with the goal of sustaining and improving lives as well as livelihoods of affected populations through the integration of environmental considerations in humanitarian relief operations.

Extensive stakeholder consultation during the first nine months of the project revealed a need for an integrated system that consolidates environmental considerations, assessments, and guidance within a cohesive framework that consistently links environment and humanitarian action. Subsequently, the Joint Initiative began developing the Framework for Environment in Humanitarian Action (EHA), which is conceptualized as an online, searchable resource for both environmental actors working with the humanitarian system as well as humanitarian actors wishing to give greater emphasis to environment-related issues in their programming.

Currently, no single approach to EHA is comprehensive or accepted as a standard operating procedure. Additionally, the extent to which environmental considerations and assessments are integrated into wider humanitarian preparedness, response and recovery activities can vary significantly. This patchwork of environmental tools and guidance can complicate when, where, and how to integrate environmental considerations into humanitarian projects and programmes.

The EHA Framework thus seeks to address these key issues constraining the integration of environment in humanitarian action, by collecting and organizing the specific environmental tools, guidance and information relevant to key humanitarian activities. This, in turn, will facilitate a coordinated approach for mainstreaming environmental considerations into humanitarian relief and response activities.



1. EHA FRAMEWORK STRUCTURE

The Framework is structured into three levels to ensure targeted environmental guidance throughout the disaster cycle: 1) Preparedness; 2) Sudden-onset Events; and 3) Protracted Crises (see Figure 1.). For each level, the Framework embeds a set of key humanitarian activities¹ (see Figure 2.). This enables the Framework to directly link the collected guidance and resources to existing humanitarian assistance activities. Under each key activity, the user can find descriptions of relevant environmental considerations, and tailored how-to guidance, best practices, and existing tools or resources (see Figure 3.).

While the sudden-onset and protracted crises levels contain the same subset of key activities, the preparedness level contains a slightly different subset to better reflect preparedness-specific activities. The EHA Framework distinguishes between sudden-onset events and protracted crises in acknowledgement of the typically distinct mechanisms in place for both types of crisis, and the potential for any corresponding environmental issues and their management to unfold over considerably different timeframes. At the same time, the Joint Initiative recognizes overlaps in activities across some or all of preparedness, sudden-onset events, and protracted crises. In recognition, the Framework's tagging and search functions are designed to specifically ensure that overlaps between the levels are reflected and that the user can find the desired information easily.

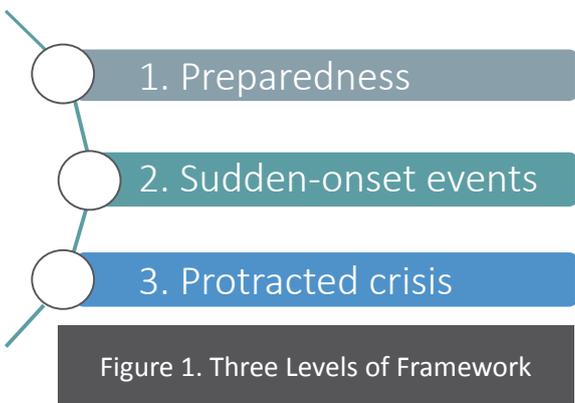
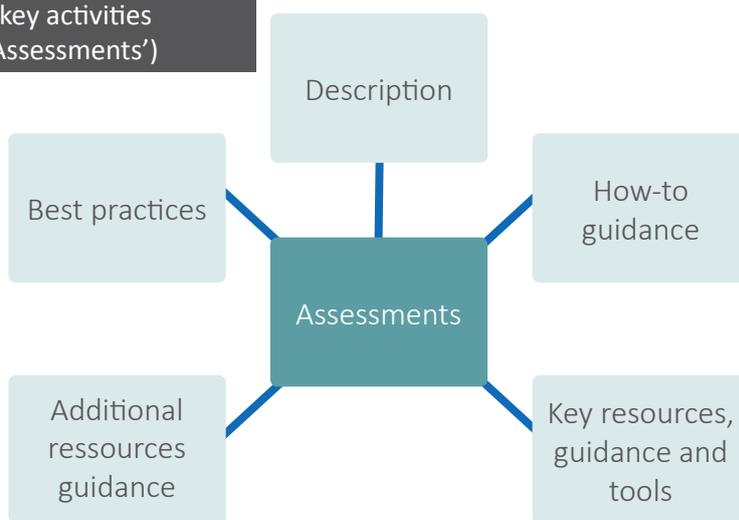


Figure 1. Three Levels of Framework



Figure 2. Key activities under the second level

Figure 3. Categories of information and guidance for key activities (example of 'Assessments')



1. For Preparedness, the activities are derived from the 9 Elements of Preparedness (Taken from Månsson, 2016. Based on IFRC, 2000 and UNISDR, 2008). For Sudden-onset Events and Protracted Crises, the activities map directly to the Humanitarian Programme Cycle.

2. EHA FRAMEWORK APPROACH & USABILITY

The EHA Framework relies on a unique, two-pronged approach to environmental mainstreaming. On one hand, the collaborative work under the Joint Initiative creates inter-organizational links that help generate and disseminate knowledge on environment in humanitarian action. On the other, the Framework's programmatic approach to mainstreaming, by directly linking humanitarian activities and tailored environmental guidance, offers the potential to considerably drive forward the practical integration of environment in humanitarian action.

The Framework is designed to be used in two ways:

- 1. Targeted Searches.** Each of the three levels' key activities and corresponding environmental guidance are specifically tagged with key terms to enable a direct search function for users. For instance, users can specifically look up guidance on environmental assessments to supplement humanitarian assessments.
- 2. Open-ended Navigation.** Within the interactive Framework platform, users can freely explore the environmental information, guidance, and tools under each level by going through the respective humanitarian activities. This way, the user can view environment in humanitarian action in the wider context of one of the levels, and see linkages between the various existing environmental tools.

3. VISUAL MOCK-UPS

The Framework platform is intended to be accessible as a website and an app or downloadable mobile version (see Figure 4 & 5 for example mock-ups²). The app or downloadable version will facilitate environmental mainstreaming in practice by ensuring that tools, guidance and information are also accessible in the field.

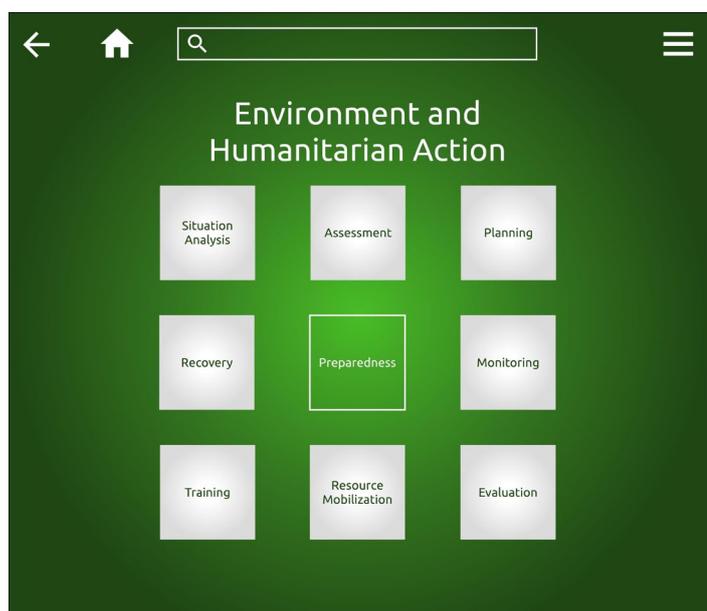


Figure 4. Mock-up of EHA Framework online platform



Figure 5. Mock-up of EHA Framework mobile version

2. Intended to give a sense of the structure, not the final design.