

Guidance Note

How to use the NEAT+ with Excel

The **Nexus Environmental Assessment Tool (NEAT+)** is a simple project-level environmental assessment/screening tool designed for humanitarian practitioners. The NEAT+ was developed under the *Coordination of Assessments for Environment in Humanitarian Action* ([Joint Initiative](#)). This guidance note details how organisations can use the NEAT+ using Microsoft Excel. NEAT+ is available for use in Excel in multiple languages (English, French and Spanish) - please choose the relevant file, available on the [NEAT+ webpage](#).

To use the NEAT+ with Microsoft Excel, you will need the following:

- **Microsoft Excel document Neat+ (Excel Data Entry)**, provided in the NEAT+ toolkit. (accessible and downloadable here: <https://www.eecentre.org/resources/neat/>)

Step-by-step process:

1. Open the Microsoft Excel document Neat+ (Excel Data Entry), provided in the NEAT+ toolkit. Begin on the *Sensitivity Introduction* tab of the Excel sheet, enter your project information and indicate which activity modules you would like to complete, if any: Shelter, WASH, and/or Food Security and Livelihoods (*Figure 1*).

Key project information	
Please enter a unique nickname for this project	Test project 3.0
Please enter the date	24-Dec-20
Please enter the name of your organization	OCHA
Please enter your name	Vathanya
Please enter your job title	Field Staff
Please enter the name of the location	Kabul
Please enter the country where this location is	Afghanistan

Which activity modules would you like to complete?	
Would you like to complete the Shelter/NFI module?	Yes
Would you like to complete the WASH module?	Yes
Would you like to complete the Food Security module?	Yes

Sensitivity Introduction		Sensitivity Questionnaire		Sensitivity Additional Info		Sensitivity Summary	

Figure 1: Example of Sensitivity introduction tab

2. Continue to the *Sensitivity Questionnaire* tab. You need to complete this first, as the **environmental sensitivity analysis** informs the subsequent sectoral level analysis (*Figure 2*). Consider the scenario at hand and/or a scenario that you are familiar with and complete this module accordingly. Some guidance on technical questions is available in the *Sensitivity Additional Info* tab (*Figure 3*).

NEAT +

Environmental Sensitivity Module Questionnaire

Please select the most appropriate answer from the light blue cell. Clarification is provided in pop up windows when clicking on the respective cell. When answering questions, consider the current state; however, if this will change in the immediate future (e.g. due to intervention), select the future option.

Profile of area	
What is the population of the area being assessed?	>25,000
What best describes the type of settlement(s) in the area being assessed?	Isolated camp or settlement
Are there displaced people in the area being assessed?	Yes
What is the distance to the nearest international border?	<20km

Conditions of the camp or camp-type settlement	
How is the camp structured?	Self-Settled Camp or Informal Settlement
How is the camp managed?	Informally Managed
What is the distance to the nearest host community settlement?	<2km

Profile of displaced population	
What proportion of the population in the area being assessed are displaced people?	30-60%
What is the distance of the displaced people from their origin?	
Do the displaced people and host community share similar cultures?	
How likely is it that the displaced people will remain in this location?	

Crisis event	
What best describes the crisis event?	
How much time has passed since the crisis began?	

Infrastructure and buildings	
What type of area is the location being assessed?	
What is the main building construction materials used for the majority of host communities?	
What is the main building construction materials used for the majority of displaced communities?	
What is the building density in the area being assessed?	
What type of access is there to the area being assessed?	
Are there any access restrictions?	

Hint

Consider how far away the usual place of residence is from the assessment location. In the likely case that people are not all from the same location, simply consider the place of origin of the majority group.

◀ ▶
Sensitivity Introduction
Sensitivity Questionnaire
Sensitivity Additional Info
Sensitivity Summary
Sh

Figure 2: Example of Sensitivity Questionnaire tab

Soil Texture

Soil texture may be rated from fine to coarse. A fine texture indicates a high proportion of finer particles such as silt and clay. A coarse texture indicates a high proportion of sand.

The main differentiation between soil types is their particle size: Sand particles are coarse, but still distinguishable to the naked eye (2mm-0.05mm) and generally loose and gritty. Silt particles are fine, but still distinguishable by touch (0.05mm-0.002mm) and crumbly.

Clay particles are very fine and invisible to the naked eye (<0.002mm) and generally form lumps and are malleable, holding their shape well.

Copy and paste the following link into your browser to explore the web map of "Topsoil Textural Class" dataset " (<https://bit.ly/3jqTLv>) in MapX to determine the average topsoil texture in your area.

Field test

A quick field test can be performed by picking up a handful of soil and adding a bit of water to form a ball. If you cannot make a ball, the soil is coarse. If the texture of the ball feels plastic, it likely has a high clay content, making it fine.

If you are still unsure, you can continue to work the ball until it is mud, and then throw it at a hard surface (such as a wall or a tree) and use the diagram below to determine the texture.

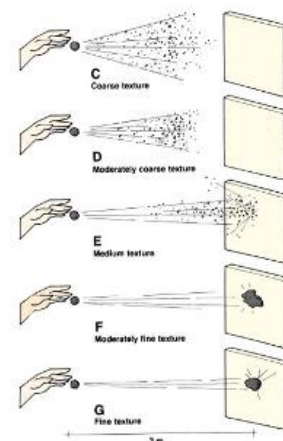


Figure 3: Example of additional info (soil types)

- You can view the results of the sensitivity analysis in the eighth tab entitled *Sensitivity Summary*. Based on the questions you have answered, this automatically generated analysis flags environmental issues of high, medium and lower concern, as seen in *Figure 4*. For each of these highlighted issues you will also find additional information and mitigation tips below. This narrative integrates cross-cutting issues of concern.

Environmental Sensitivity Analysis		NEAT + Nexus Environmental Assessment Tool
Assessment of: Test project Assessment completed by: Vathanya Organisation completing assessment: OCHA		Date of Assessment: 21-Dec-20 Location: Kabul Country: Afghanistan
Issues of High Concern	Issues of Medium Concern	Issues of Lower Concern
There is a high concentration and/or number of people. The potential environmental impact is greater.	There may be a weakened or poor governance system. There may be low capacity for environmental management.	The community may have low self-sufficiency. There may be a greater demand (and impact) on the local environment.
The community may not be socially cohesive. This can prevent collective action and lead to social conflict.	The environment has fragile ecosystems. Further assessment is required to determine if loss of biodiversity is accelerating.	The environment has a low regenerative capacity. The effects of land and soil degradation are more significant.
The environment has high biodiversity value. Vulnerable and/or rare flora and fauna may be at risk.	Rates of deforestation may exceed regeneration capabilities. Deforestation may be a risk.	
The community may be close to a protected/conservation area. There may be legal/social implications.	Indoor air pollution, caused by poor ventilation and cooking/heating, may be an issue.	
There are areas of high cultural significance. This can threaten social cohesion.	The area may have poor slope stability. Landslides or mudslides may be a risk.	
The community is close to an international border. Transboundary resource management and/or pollution may be a concern.	This area may be at risk of soil erosion from wind.	
There is a risk of air pollution from nearby activities.	This area may be at risk of flooding.	

Figure 4: Example of environmental sensitivity report, showing the potential environmental issues of concern in the assessed area

Affected Community	
Communities interact with the environment on multiple levels, with these interactions having environmental, as well as social and economic implications. Environmental impacts therefore also have socio-economic consequences. Vulnerable segments of society and the community are often disproportionately dependent and affected by the environment, and have unequal capacity for adaptation.	
The following has been identified as a potential concern:	
Large concentration and/or number of people.	
Additional Information	Mitigation Tips
A large and/or concentrated population can exceed the capacity of the local environment to absorb impact coming from the populations. This can lead to unsustainable pressure and potential permanent or long-term degradation of the surrounding environment and overconsumption of natural resources. Social issues are also created when there are high populations competing over limited resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore alternative settlements and/or consider relocation of part of the camp/settlement occupants to another location Plan for sustainable use of resources before setting up any temporary settlement, especially regarding shelter construction materials, water management and waste disposal Plan for introduction and dissemination of fuel-efficient stoves As soon as practical, establish resource user groups to promote sustainable and fair use of available natural resources Plan for community green spaces such as tree covered areas or gardens that provide shade and a sense of community Plan land use to reduce exposure to wild animals (e.g designate buffer zones or protected areas) If possible, keep camp populations below 20,000 and locate sites at least 15km from ecologically sensitive areas and neighboring camps

Figure 5: Example of NEAT+ sensitivity summary report and mitigation tips

- You can now proceed to the **activity modules** if relevant to your planned project activities. Ensure that the activity modules you would like to complete have been selected in the *Sensitivity Summary* tab. In case of discrepancies between provided answers in the sensitivity and activity modules, the automated assessment logic may be disrupted, leading to errors in the analysis. Repeat the below steps for each activity module you would like to complete.

- Begin on the *(Sector) Introduction* tab. Select which sub-modules you would like to complete. A descriptor of each sub-module is available as a pop-up hint. Based on the completed environmental sensitivity analysis, a set of sector-specific considerations will appear for review in this tab.
- Complete the questionnaire in the *(Sector) Questionnaire* tab. Commentary will pop up based on your answers to inform the user about potential environmental issues based on the selection of each response (Figure 6). A summary of this commentary will be reflected in the final report.

Question	Response	Commentary
Shelter General Questions		
How many shelters are to be constructed, reconstructed or upgraded?	50-100	A greater number of shelters inherently presents a larger potential environmental impact due to the scale of intervention.
Is this a new or existing settlement?	New settlement	Programming in new settlements involve more activities and materials, when compared to programming in existing settle
What type/phase of shelters would be constructed, reconstructed or upgraded?	New transitional shelter	Constructing brand new shelters requires larger quantities of materials, leading to greater environmental impacts. A sudden local natural resources. Pay additional attention to minimizing environmental impacts from material selection and usage.
Are other organizations engaged in shelter and settlements programming nearby?	Yes	The cumulative effects of various projects can present a larger potential environmental impact. Coordinate with other stakeholders collaboratively to minimize potential environmental impacts.
Have national regulations for shelter and settlements activities been reviewed?	No	Responding organizations have a responsibility to ensure that any host country regulations are adhered to, even in the interim is available from local authorities.

Figure 6: Example of Activity Module (Shelter questionnaire)

- Finally, review the outputs of the final analysis in the *(Sector) Summary* tab. This tab will display the level of environmental sensitivity of the planned or ongoing activities, the potential activity impact, and then calculate the overall potential environmental risk of these activities. Mitigation tips and additional resources are also displayed. (Figure 7 and 8).

Shelter Module Summary Report		NEAT+ Nexus Environmental Assessment Tool	
Assessment of: Test Act module		Date of Assessment: 21-Dec-20	
Assessment completed by: Vathanys		Location: Kabul	
Organisation completing assessment: ocha			
Shelter relevant environmental issues and considerations previously identified in the environmental sensitivity assessment.	Issue	Relevant sector	
This area has been identified as at risk of natural hazards such as landslides, erosions, flooding and/or storm surges. Additional risk assessments should be conducted. Minimize the exposure of the settlement and/or individual shelters to potential hazards. Disaster risk reduction infrastructure, systems or practices could also be considered.	Natural Hazards	Shelter (Siting)	
This area has been identified as being close to fragile/niche ecosystems, high value ecosystems or protected/cultural areas. Consider the feasibility of selecting another location. If alternative sites are not feasible, consider educating the community of the significance of these areas.	Fragile and/or Niche Ecosystems	Shelter (Siting)	
This area has been identified as being vulnerable to industrial- or conflict-related hazards or pollution. Assess the safety and security of the site from residue contamination or hazards. Consider if safe and sustainable access to necessary resources such as water or land for cultivation is possible.	Conflict or Industrial Hazards	Shelter (Siting)	
This area has been identified as having weakened governance structures which can exacerbate tenure rights and/or insecurity. Tenure rights should be established, ideally formally, prior to interventions.	Weak Governance	Shelter (Siting)	
Increased exposure to climate-related hazards (e.g. floods, storms, wildfires, droughts, sea level rises) has been identified as a concern. The siting of shelters and settlements should minimize vulnerability to these events, e.g. by avoiding sites near flood plains and rivers.	Climate Hazards	Shelter (Siting)	
This area has been identified as potentially having periods of heavy rainfall and storm activity. Consider having proper flood protection (e.g. raised areas) and drainage in the design of the shelter, as well as design features resistant to heavy winds.	Meteorological Hazards	Shelter (Design)	
Indoor air pollution has been identified as being a potential concern. The design of the shelter should take into consideration local customs and practices of energy usage (e.g. cooking), and provide a designated area with adequate ventilation to minimize exposure to air pollution.	Indoor Air Pollution	Shelter (Design)	
Increased exposure to climate-related hazards and variability has been identified as a concern. This can lead to temperature extremes, and increased frequency and severity of certain natural hazards. Specific climatic concern(s) should be identified, and appropriate mitigative/adaptive measures adopted in the design.	Climatic Hazards	Shelter (Design)	
Disaster waste has previously been identified as a potential issue. Disaster waste can be a source of construction materials. Using disaster waste reduces burdens on natural resources, relieves reconstruction efforts and minimizes environmental impacts of unmanaged disaster waste.	Disaster Waste	Shelter (Materials)	

Figure 7: Example of an activity module summary report (shelter module)

Shower design			
Environmental Concerns	Environmental Sensitivity	Potential Activity Impact	Potential Environmental
Key environmental concerns			
The water resources may have a low regenerative capacity. Water scarcity may be an issue.	High	High	High
Other environmental concerns			
The environment has a low regenerative capacity. The effects of land and soil degradation are more significant.	High	Medium	High
There is low capacity to manage wastewater. Environmental sanitation and disease transmission may be an issue	Low	Medium	Low
Mitigation Tips			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On-site wastewater reuse can reduce water consumption as well as the amount of wastewater generated. This also reduces risks of vector transmission through water stagnation. Household systems can be designed to collect water from showers and basins, and repurpose this for toilets or agricultural activities. Construction materials can consume non-renewable or low-regenerative capacity natural resources. Material lifecycle, from extraction to disposal, should be considered - the initial design should promote future recycling, reusing or repurposing. Materials selection could be diversified to minimize dependencies on a single source. 			
Additional Resources			
Sustainable Sanitation and Water Management (SSWM) Platform Link			
The SSWM Toolbox provides best practice guidance to humanitarian practitioners in planning, implementing and sustaining water, sanitation and hygiene promotion interventions in different humanitarian settings.			
Greywater Management in Low and Middle-Income Countries Link			
This document provides design and implementation strategies for technologically appropriate solutions for greywater management in low- and middle-income countries.			
Additional Details/Comments			

Figure 8: Example of NEAT+ activity module results with mitigation tips