

A warm welcome to the latest news bulletin from the Coordination of Assessments for Environment in Humanitarian Action (the Joint Initiative). For more updates, presentations, reports and other resources, please visit us at <http://www.eecentre.org/assessments> and share with your networks.

We are pleased to announce that this phase of the project has been extended until December 2018 and we are currently looking for opportunities to extend the Initiative into 2019 and 2020. Thank you to everyone who has shown interest in the Joint Initiative, participated in our workshops and working groups and continued to support this collaborative project.

We have been busy in the last couple of months working on the deliverables of the project that include:

- Building an Environment in Humanitarian Action (EHA) online toolkit “Framework”
- Updating a project level environmental assessment tool for humanitarian action (NEAT)
- Updating the Rapid Environmental Assessment (REA) tool



STEERING COMMITTEE ON THE NEXT PHASE

The Joint Initiative’s Steering Committee convened on 26 July to take stock of the progress achieved so far and discuss the next steps for the project, including fundraising opportunities to ensure the Initiative is supported into the next phase, as well as ideas for increased engagement with stakeholders and academic partners.

The Steering Committee members are keen for the next phase of the Initiative to focus on country level implementation, field testing and actual use of the tools. The Steering Committee also discussed ways in which the Initiative’s work could be embedded in academic curricula and promoted at resilience and disaster risk reduction events and platforms.

NEAT+ TOOL: THE LATEST UPDATES

Significant progress has been made to update the NEAT+ tool, an environmental screening tool for humanitarian projects. The objective of the [NEAT+ tool](#) is to provide a methodology that is fast and does not require environmental expertise, whilst still offering a technically sound and robust analysis that can influence project design.

The tool assesses the sensitivity of the receiving environment by identifying key vulnerabilities and potential issues of concern. By evaluating a number of criteria, including the natural environment, natural resources and climatic events in the affected area, the tool automatically calculates, categorises and reports on environmentally-related risk to people and the environment. The tool consists of several technical modules relating to environmental sensitivity, shelter, WASH and food security and livelihoods.

The tool has been through two revision and update processes with inputs from members of the NEAT+ working group that includes over 25 organisations. Main updates include technical content updates across all modules; an improved reporting function which now provides greater detail and categorises results; a substantial language edit to improve simplicity for non-native English speakers and non-environmental experts; improved commentary on mitigation ideas and areas of key concern mainstreamed into the tool.

There is a version of the NEAT+ tool in Excel and another one for testing in [Kobo toolbox](#). All of the modules have now been finalised and added to the Kobo version of the tool.

The next step will be to complete a field test of the tool in Zambia, which will provide an opportunity to assess and evaluate the tool’s robustness.

NEAT+ TOOL READY TO BE PILOTED IN ZAMBIA

Following widespread interest amongst humanitarian organizations in piloting the NEAT+ tool, we have settled on Zambia as a formal pilot setting. The tool will be piloted in partnership with UNHCR during the week of 10 September. The field test will be in Mantapala settlement near the border with Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) where there has been an influx of refugees from across the border. Main environmental issues facing the area include flooding and deforestation. The location can be viewed on this [map](#).

Findings from the pilot will be integrated into an updated version of the NEAT+ before the end of the year. Other organisations wishing to pilot the NEAT+ are encouraged to do so and share findings with the JI team so that they can be incorporated into the updated tool.

Anyone who is interested in desk testing or field testing the tool, please contact Joint Initiative Team Leader [Mandy George](#). In particular we are interested in hearing from other organisations working in Zambia.

FRAMEWORK FOR ENVIRONMENT IN HUMANITARIAN ACTION

The EHA Framework is an online, searchable resource on all things EHA. It is intended to be used by both environmental actors working with the humanitarian system and by humanitarian actors wishing to give greater emphasis to the environment. The Framework will map environmental assessment and data sharing tools and mechanisms at different levels with a focus on preparedness, sudden onset and protracted crises. You can read more about the Framework [here](#).

Building the online Framework website will begin in October and content is currently being produced. We are keen for volunteers to review the content of the Framework as well as ensuring all relevant EHA resources are reflected in the toolkit. Anyone wishing to review content and provide feedback and guidance, please contact Joint Initiative Team Leader [Mandy George](#).

REMOTE ANALYSIS WORKING GROUP

The Joint Initiative's [environmental data analysis working group](#) to strengthen humanitarian analysis by involving environmental actors, and ensuring environmental factors and data are included at an early stage, was activated for the first time in response to floods in Somalia.

Remote support for gathering environmental data and information relevant to the crisis and response on the Juba and Shabelle river basins was provided by OCHA, UN Environment (MapX), Urban Resilience Platform, IUCN, World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and the Global Shelter Cluster Environment Community of Practice.

PARTNERS NEWS

The Canadian Red Cross in partnership with the WWF provided Green Recovery and Reconstruction Toolkit (GRRT) training for the five Red Cross-National Societies of Dominican Republic, Honduras, Nicaragua, Jamaica and Haiti in July and August 2018, as part of a regional project "Capacity Building for Emergency Response in the Americas". The WWF GRRT trainers worked with Red Cross staff in country to craft training to advance local objectives related to integrating environmental issues in disaster management. Through a combination of lectures, group work and scenarios, the two-day training course covered topics such as shelter, water and sanitation, disaster risk reduction, livelihoods, assessments, project design and monitoring and evaluation.

In November, Egypt will host the 2018 U.N. Biodiversity Conference. Included on the agenda will be [voluntary guidelines for the design and effective implementation of Ecosystem-based approaches to climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction](#). This document includes a primer for policymakers, a list of relevant tools, and sectoral briefs on the use of ecosystem-based approaches to climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction - including for the humanitarian sector, for which the Joint Initiative provided insight and guidance.

The IUCN Global Ecosystem Management Programme has produced a two-page briefing on Eco-Disaster Risk Reduction, entitled "[From commitment to action: Transforming disaster risk reduction with ecosystem management](#)".

The [IUCN and The Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy \(CEESP\)](#) are in the process of setting up a task force on environmental change and migration. According to estimates by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), 50-700 million people will be displaced by land degradation and climate change by 2050. The task force aims to identify gaps in understanding of the specificities and scale of these dynamics linked to environmental change, migration and conflict.

Best wishes,

The Coordination of Assessments for Environment in Humanitarian Action team



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



Swedish Civil
Contingencies
Agency



NORWEGIAN
REFUGEE COUNCIL