Environmental Impact Scoping: the environmental impact of humanitarian action

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Frances Crowley

Humanitarian assistance, by its very definition focuses its attention on people affected by conflict and disasters, looking in particular at their needs related to health, food, shelter and education (JEU, 2014). Subsequently, impacts to the environment - either related to the disaster itself, or to the ensuing humanitarian activity – are often viewed as secondary to the humanitarian imperative. This has led to the repeated occurrence of environmental degradation and destruction, which can impede the recovery of affected and vulnerable populations and have negative and long-term impacts on their lives and ecological systems as a whole (JEU, 2014).

In response, there has been growing recognition of the importance of addressing the environmental impacts of humanitarian aid, as well as the need for environmental protection to be considered in humanitarian responses. This is reflected in the inclusion of the environment in humanitarian standards such as the CHS (Commitment 3) and in the Sphere Handbook, plus a profusion of studies, guidelines and tools in recent years which aim at bringing a consideration of the environment into the core of humanitarian response.

Key issues and barriers

There are two principle ways in which humanitarian work is fundamentally linked to the environment (JEU, 2014). Firstly, as highlighted through disaster risk reduction (DRR) endeavours, environmental issues are often the causes or contributors to humanitarian disasters, such as cyclones, flooding and drought or in the case of conflict over natural resources. Working to reduce the likelihood of these impacting on people is at the heart of DRR and resilience building projects that have their place in humanitarian work. Secondly, humanitarian action can have short and long term negative impacts on the environment through procurement, transport, choice of materials, or land and natural resource use (Sphere, 2018). Such impacts can exacerbate the risk and vulnerability of the people humanitarian actors are trying to help, effecting not only the physical environment but the lives, health, livelihoods and security of affected or host communities and increasing the risk for secondary or future disasters (JEU, 2014).

There are many examples to illustrate this second facet of humanitarian impact on the environment:

- unmilled maize distributed to Rwandan refugees in Tanzania led to deforestation, since greater quantities of wood was needed for cooking the hard maize (Pottier, 1996)
- the destruction of livelihoods and deforestation as a result of brick production for humanitarian operations in Darfur (UNEP, 2008)
- dried up wells due to excessive drilling for water by humanitarian organisations in Afghanistan (Weinthal et al. 2014);
- ruined livelihoods from an over-provision of fishing boats and consequent fishing stock depletion in humanitarian recovery operations in post-tsunami Sri Lanka (Alexander, 2006);

- failure to meet waste treatment standards leading to environmental contamination in Haiti and the largest outbreak of cholera in recent history (Cravioto et al.2011)

Other potential risks include:

- pollution of ground water reservoirs and/or surface water bodies due to inappropriate disposal of accumulated solid and liquid waste;
- excessive and/or inappropriate use or disposal of chemicals such as those used for vector control or in water treatment;
- opening up remote areas by all-weather roads can attract businesses with negative environmental consequences;
- pressure on natural resources (often of host communities) due to increases in population drawn to the sites of humanitarian assistance (JEU, 2014);
- rebuilding houses in areas exposed to increasing climate-related risks;
- providing seeds that are inappropriate to future climate change.

Barriers to environmental consideration

It therefore seems evident that protection of the environment should be considered fundamental to effective humanitarian action. Nevertheless, there exists a number of challenges in very conceptualisation of humanitarian action which inhibit both awareness and action relating to the environment. As mentioned above, humanitarian emergencies are times when saving human lives becomes unquestioningly the foregone priority for aid actors (JEU, 2014). However, whilst this may appear unproblematic, the anthropocentric framing evident in humanitarian action can sometimes act as a block to a more systems-based analysis of a context, leading to activities that fail to give weight to wider ecological considerations (with some of the consequences highlighted above). In other words, by choosing to focus primarily on human life (and livelihoods), the whole ecosystem that supports that life may be considered as secondary, to be addressed only once emergency needs have first been attended to (JEU, 2014).

In contrast, a Social Ecological Systems analysis would see humans inextricably linked to their environment, with the two seen as interdependent, each a function of the other, with changes in one aspect effecting changes in another (Berkes, 2017). This more holistic view also considers the interconnectedness of environmental, social, cultural, economic and political factors, which can combine to form the root causes of poverty and vulnerability, causes that humanitarian interventions have sometimes overlooked (Marin & Naess, 2017). Attempts to operationalise such concepts of interdependent ecology and society are coming to the fore in development and climate related programmes and even being applied in the humanitarian domain through the notions of resilience and complexity (i.e. complex emergencies) (ibid.). Despite this, the need for a shift in perspective still remains. Saving lives and considering environmental impacts are still treated by many humanitarian actors as being mutually exclusive, and most organisational mandates reflect this to some extent, with no mention of environmental issues, making it unlikely that these emerge in their operational agendas (Blanco Ochoa et al, 2018).

Another barrier has been identified in the way in which the humanitarian Cluster system functions, and in the way aid is subsequently conceptualised in sectors. With the creation of 11 Clusters representing key sectors for humanitarian assistance (health, WASH, food security etc.), considerations such as gender and the environment are recognised as 'cross-cutting' issues, integral across all sectors. However, there is evidence drawn from evaluations showing that cross-cutting

issues, including the environment, are not sufficiently taken into account in humanitarian response (GPPI/Groupe URD, 2010). In addition, competing pressures at proposal writing stage mean that practitioners find it difficult to give the same attention to the integration of cross-cutting issues as they do core relief efforts (JEU, 2014). Further to this, the tendency for clusters to operate in siloes (OCHA GCCG, 2017) - despite efforts for inter-cluster coordination – results in little consistency between clusters in the treatment of cross-cutting issues (Calvi-Parisetti, 2013).

So how is environmental impact being addressed?

Despite the barriers highlighted, there has been a growing recognition of the need for the environment to be consistently and appropriately addressed in humanitarian preparedness and response. Efforts to do this have produced a host of quality initiatives, standards and guidelines (JEU, 2014) which aim to address the multiple areas, sectors and modalities pertinent to environmental consideration. Two studies, one DFID-funded, undertaken by *Evidence on Demand* (Kelly, 2013) and one by the *Joint UNEP/OCHA Environment Unit*, (JEU, 2014) have usefully documented the key actors and initiatives spearheading work at the humanitarian-environment nexus. Key standards and initiatives have been highlighted below, including those identified in other studies and more recent initiatives discovered through this scoping. Notable subsequent (post 2014), pieces of work have also been included. The aim in detailing these here is to provide an overview of resources available and highlight the breadth of initiatives taking place.

Policy agendas as entry points for collaborative action

Policy reform agendas including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Climate Agreement, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Agenda for Humanity represent an entry point for collaborative action between environmental and humanitarian actors. Whilst wishing to mention these here, this scoping exercise did not permit the necessary time to examine further how this opportunity is being seized.

Standards and the rise of awareness in environmental issues

The Rwandan genocide acted as a wake-up call for the humanitarian sector, with the Joint Evaluation (1994) highlighting the need for the adoption of minimum standards of aid delivery to increase accountability to affected populations (JEU, 2014). The evaluation also picked up on the negative impacts to the environment linked to rapid fuelwood depletion surrounding refugee camps (Shepherd, 1995), leading to the following recommendation:

"*Standard operating policies and procedures should be prepared for donor organisations, UN agencies and NGOs that will help to minimise and mitigate adverse impacts of relief operations (whether refugee or internally displaced person (IDP)) on surrounding populations and their environment*" (ODI 1996).

In 1995, wide adoption of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement's code of conduct (drawn up in 1992) took place, which recognised the need to consider the environment in humanitarian responses in Principle 8 of the code ("*We will pay particular attention to environmental concerns in the design and management of relief programmes*", ICRC, 1995). The Code of Conduct was one of the key elements on which the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response was based (Kelly, 2013), which was then further developed into the Sphere Standard.

Building on Principle 8, the Sphere Handbook included the notion of environmental sustainability in the standard on Shelter and Settlement, recommending key actions on environmental assessment, use of sustainable materials and energy, safe solid waste management and ecological protection of sites used for settlement. However, no standard operating procedures to minimise negative overarching impacts of relief operations on affected people and their environment were developed (JEU, 2014). The 2011 edition of the Sphere Standard saw a much stronger representation of environment, with the inclusion of DRR as a cross cutting theme, comprising sub-themes of climate change and the environment (ibid.). The integration of the Core Humanitarian Standard into the 2018 version, replacing the previous Sphere Core Standards, also sees greater emphasis on flagging and preventing any potential negative effects of a response (Commitment 3) and on environmental impact and use of natural resources (Commitment 9).

Whilst the impact of this addition in the 2018 version of the Standard remains to be seen, the guide to the new handbook emphasises that this greater prominence and focus on environmental impact in humanitarian response will now firmly establish environmental sustainability as a key component of good quality humanitarian response (Sphere, 2018). The new edition also links to a greater number of resources and guidelines relating to the environment and environmental assessment which have been developed over the years.

Guidelines, tools and initiatives

The following tools range from overarching guidelines for cross sector programming, to sector or context specific assessments, developed primarily by UN agencies, but including some by donor and practitioner organisations. They are listed in chronological order to give some idea of the developing arch of this type of project.

- UNHCR Environmental Guidelines - In 1996 UNHCR produced Environmental Guidelines (later updated 2005) to introduce environmental considerations in a consistent and coordinated manner into all relevant sectoral activities relating to work with refugees and returnees. UNHCR has also produced a plethora of technical guidelines on different environmental issues related to camp management (Kelly, 2013).

- Rapid Environmental Assessment (REA) - In 2001, the Benfield Hazard Research Centre and CARE International developed a detailed and comprehensive set of guidelines on Rapid Environmental Assessment (REA) in disasters Rapid (Kelly, 2001, 2005), which aimed to provide a systematic way to incorporate environmental impact assessment into disaster management.

- Environmental Guidelines – Developed by DFID in 2003, and principally aimed at development activities the Environmental Guidelines demonstrates a positive move by a donor to consider the environment in the screening of the projects it funds. The guidelines provide all DFID staff, particularly project officers, with sufficient advice and guidance to enable them to undertake environmental screening.

- The Flash Environmental Assessment Tool (FEAT) – The first version of FEAT was initially developed in 2004, based on lessons from the Indian Ocean Tsunami. Requested by the Joint UNEP/OCHA Environment Unit (JEU), the tool aimed to provide a standardized assessment methodology to prioritise the impacts of chemical accidents following large-scale natural disasters.

- Environmental Needs Assessment in Post-Disaster Situations - In 2009, UNEP developed guidelines primarily designed to inform and influence the early recovery process and intended as a first step towards elaborating a systematic approach to addressing and assessing environmental impacts and concerns following natural disasters.

- Guidelines for Environmental Emergencies – Developed by JEU in 2009 these guidelines are intended as a reference guide for countries wanting to improve their framework for preparedness in the event of an environmental emergency, and for international environmental emergency responders providing assistance (JEU, 2009).

- Environmental Assessment resource pack - produced by Tearfund in 2009, this pack focuses primarily on immediate, ground-level environmental impacts with an impressively detailed framework for international development projects which demonstrates how demonstrates consideration of the environment can be integrated and "normalized" across projects.

- Environment Marker – this was developed by UNEP and adapted by OCHA in 2014 in an attempt to integrate key environmental considerations into project design for consolidated humanitarian appeals. Through simple coding the Environment Marker tracks a project's expected impact on the environment, and whether recommended actions have been undertaken. The tool is to be seen as a possibility to ensure that any negative impact on the local environment of a humanitarian project is reduced as much as possible. (JEU, 2014). The Marker has been implemented in Afghanistan, South Sudan and Sudan, coordinated by UNEP and OCHA.

Networks, training & awards

A number of organisations have been playing leading roles in promoting and supporting the integration of the environment into humanitarian response, including coordination of networks and the development trainings.

The Joint UNEP/OCHA Environment Unit (JEU) - the Joint UNEP/OCHA Environment Unit (JEU) brings together the environmental expertise of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the humanitarian response network coordinated by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). It started out with a focus primarily on environmental contamination in natural disasters such as such as oil spills and industrial accidents. Its mandate has now expanded and the JEU works to ensure that environmental issues are an integral part of all elements of the humanitarian response in three priority areas:

- Responding to environmental emergency, by mobilising experts and equipment
- Increasing the preparedness of communities, disaster responders, governments, and industries against the potential risks and impacts of environmental emergencies.
- Integrating Environment in Humanitarian Action: Ensuring that environmental considerations are integrated into the humanitarian programmatic cycle: including strategic planning, contingency planning, humanitarian financing, and performance monitoring and evaluation.

Environment & Humanitarian Action Network – hosted by JEU the EHA Network is an informal group, bringing together over 100 experts every 2-3 months, through web-based calls, plus one annual face-to-face meeting. The network facilitates partnerships at global, regional and national levels and foster collaboration between the environmental science and humanitarian communities. It also provides a forum by which members can exchange experiences during all phases of the

humanitarian programming cycle, including assessment, planning, implementation, monitoring, reporting, and evaluation.

Groupe URD - a French-based NGO, which specialises in the analysis and development of humanitarian policy, Groupe URD collaborated with UNEP/PCDMA on the development of a training programme on environmental issues and humanitarian assistance: Mainstreaming the Environment in Humanitarian Action. The online modules cover issues and themes such as sustainable water management and ecological sanitation, waste management, humanitarian logistics and the environment in the project cycle.

In 2012, Groupe URD also initiated the Humanitarian Environment Network, a network of French NGOs whose aim is to mainstream environmental considerations throughout the work of its members and the wider humanitarian sector. It does this through sharing resources via a shared library, conducting studies, developing tools and advocacy.

ProAct Network is a Swiss-based NGO which focuses on the nexus of environment disasters/conflict, climate change, natural resource management and sustainable development. The ProAct web site contains an extensive range of documents related to disaster/conflict and the environment. In addition to reports and documents generated through its own work, the web site provides a repository for a wide range of assessment and disaster-related environmental management tools and materials (ProAct Network, 2019).

Global Shelter Cluster - The Global Shelter Cluster, co-convened by the IFRC and UNHCR, has set up an Environment Community of Practice within the Global Shelter Cluster membership (Kelly, 2013). They have also developed a shelter-specific assessment tool including a package of materials for use by a Shelter Cluster Environment Advisor, including training materials (ibid.).

The Green Recovery and Reconstruction Training Toolkit for Humanitarian Aid (WWFUS/ARC 2010) - After the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, the American Red Cross and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) formed a five-year partnership to help ensure that the recovery efforts of the American Red Cross did not have unintended negative effects on the environment (Jowett, 2010). As a result, the Green Recovery and Reconstruction Toolkit (GRRT) was developed - a training program designed to increase awareness and knowledge of environmentally sustainable disaster response approaches. The GRRT is made of ten modules (Kelly, 2013) and has been informed by over 30 international authors and experts including ICRC, Oxfam, World Vision, RedR, United Nations Environment Programme, International Union for Conservation of Nature, CARE, Danish Refugee Council, USAID, U.S., Save the Children, Sphere, and Tearfund. The GRRT was originally pilot tested in Indonesia and Sri Lanka, and has since be used in Chile, Haiti, India, and Pakistan (Jowett, 2010).

Green Cross International is a Swiss-based NGO with associated organisations in 30 countries (Green Cross, n.d). The organisation aims to respond to the combined challenges of security, poverty and environmental degradation to ensure a sustainable and secure future, seeking solutions through dialogue, mediation and co-operation (ibid.). Key areas of activity include preventing and resolving conflicts over natural resources and addressing environmental consequences of wars, conflicts and man-made calamities (ibid.)

Green Star Awards – The biennial Green Star Awards, first presented in 2009, are a collaborative initiative between the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Green Cross International (GCI), and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The purpose of the Green Star Awards is to recognise individuals, organisations, governments and companies who demonstrate outstanding achievements in prevention, preparedness, and response to

environmental emergencies– as well as to integrate environment with humanitarian action across the world (Green Cross, n.d.)

Reflective/evaluative studies of environmental mainstreaming

A number of evaluative studies have been carried out over the last two decades to understand the opportunities and challenges in mainstreaming the environment in humanitarian action.

In 2007, DFID commissioned a study, *Mainstreaming the Environment into Humanitarian Response*, where 19 NGOs, five United Nations Agencies and the IFRC were interviewed about their experience of this environmental mainstreaming. The findings highlighted challenges in issues of prioritisation, awareness amongst practitioners, lack of policy statements, lack of environmental performance indicators for monitoring and evaluation and a lack of use of existing tools (Barrett et al., 2007). Lack of effective tools for environmental assessment was raised as a key reason why the environment is often not successfully integrated in humanitarian response activities. The study found that many humanitarian agencies do not use any tools at all and most of those that do, use them in an ad hoc and uncoordinated manner (ibid.). Where tools were used, there was a lack of evidence for the success of these assessments (ibid.).

Another question raised by the study focused on whether tools used for environmental assessment should be stand-alone assessments or whether there should be a focus on integrating them more successfully into other assessments undertaken during relief and recovery operations, ensuring a more holistic assessment (Barrett et al., 2007).

In 2013, DFID commissioned another study, *Mainstreaming Environment into Humanitarian Interventions – A Synopsis of Key Organisations, Literature and Experience*. The study provides a summary and overview of 14 organisations with environmental mainstreaming initiatives, as well as examining the tools and guidelines used or developed by these organisations. That 14 organisations are recognising the need and benefits of mainstreaming, suggests a significant increase since the last 2007 report. However, based on the interviews held with these organisations, the study concludes that there is no tool that is universally accepted by the humanitarian community and their use remains makeshift (Kelly 2013; JEU, 2014). What is more, the report clearly underlines the inadequacy of defining the environment a cross-cutting issue, since this was seen to reduce its immediate relevancy to humanitarian interventions (Kelly, 2013). Instead the target should be integration, "so that solar water heaters or rainwater harvesting are not seen as exotic tree hugging, but normal and expected in a humanitarian intervention-funding." It calls for a more strategic approach to considering sector-level environmental issues in humanitarian assistance, with real time monitoring and evaluation of environmental consequences, greater accountability for these, and follow-through by donors to ensure environmental considerations are included in proposals and operations (Kelly, 2013).

A year later, in 2014, a study commissioned by the Joint UNEP/OCHA Environment Unit (JEU), *Environment and Humanitarian Action; Increasing effectiveness, sustainability and accountability*, reached similar conclusions. The study draws on consultation with over 100 people representing government, the donor community, UN agencies, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and individual consultants/experts. It found that particularly in relation to sudden-onset emergencies, the environment is all too often overlooked or postponed until emergency needs have first been addressed, with serious long-term implications on the very people the humanitarian response is designed to support (JEU, 2014). Gathering lessons and experiences of what has and has not worked

to integrate environment into humanitarian operations, the study suggests specific entry points for environmental mainstreaming, including within the Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC).

The study calls for system-wide accountability and responsibility, with the UN, OCHA, humanitarian organisations and donors addressing the lack of leadership and accountability for environment during humanitarian action as part of the IASC Transformative Agenda. This entails increasing political commitment and human and financial resources dedicated to environment in humanitarian action (JEU, 2014). It also suggests an analysis of mainstreaming in at least five priority countries, and a better analysis of existing mainstreaming mechanisms, with their impacts documented. It identifies the need for strong advocacy strategies targeted at humanitarian practitioners, ensuring a broad-scale approach to, and understanding of, mainstreaming environment (ibid.). Crucially, it identifies the critical role donors must play if a change is to happen (see section below, *The role of donors)*.

Stating that a "business as usual" approach to planning and managing the environment in humanitarian action is no longer acceptable (JEU, 2014), the study highlights the link between humanitarian aid and climate change and the need for to make humanitarian action fit for the future. This, it states, requires a fundamental shift towards a model of humanitarian action that "not only strengthens the response to crisis, but also learns and adapts in order to anticipate crisis, acts before they become crisis and prevents their recurrence" (JEU, 2014, p4). Central to this is greater attention to environmental stewardship, with its multiple and inextricable linkages with human livelihoods (ibid.).

Recent initiatives

Environment and Humanitarian Action - Country Studies: Nepal, Haiti and Afghanistan

JEU, 2016

Following on from the JEU study of 2014, and in response to some its recommendations, the JEU commissioned three further studies, this time assessing the extent to which environmental concerns have been taken into consideration throughout the HPC by clusters coordinators and partners, and the level of awareness of stakeholders of the environment and humanitarian action nexus in Nepal, Haiti and Afghanistan (JEU, Afghanistan, 2016). The studies aim to provide operational guidance and advice to humanitarian actors, including government, and lessons learned to improve environmental mainstreaming (JEU, Haiti, 2016).

The studies indicate that while there is generally a high level of awareness of the need to support environmental mainstreaming, the majority of humanitarian actors require context specific practical guidance to ensure integration takes place (JEU. Afghanistan, 2016) and much more can be done to integrate environment into preparedness actions in high risk countries (JEU, Nepal, 2016). Both the Nepal and Afghanistan studies highlighted the importance of engaging national and local environmental expertise, and the importance of contextualising global level guidance.

Implications and opportunities for Cash Transfer Programming in humanitarian response

JEU/LSE 2018

In 2018, MSc students at the London School of Economics and Political Science compiled a report for the UN Environment/OCHA Joint Unit (JEU) and the Global Shelter Cluster, investigating how the move towards cash transfer programming (CTP) could affect the environmental impact of humanitarian assistance (Blanco Ochoa et al. 2018). The study pointed out that whilst CTP has gained traction as a 'preferred and default' humanitarian modality (Agenda for Humanity, 2016a), since it allows disaster affected people to optimise consumption and boost their local economy, it can also precipitate environmental stress that may compromise future resilience if markets and supply chains are unsustainable (Blanco Ochoa et al. 2018).

However, the "higher operational scrutiny" that the use of CTP entails leads to a 'viability' evaluation against a checklist corresponding to the three core criteria of context, markets and protection (Blanco Ochoa et al. 2018). These three factors will also shape the scale of environmental risk (Levine and Bailey, 2015). Modality selection is therefore a path to embed (or mainstream) environmental evaluation in current humanitarian practice but does not present a panacea, since environmental mainstreaming should be integrated into every stage of the HPC. The new ways of working and challenges CTP poses to humanitarian practice presents opportunities to challenge the status quo.

The report also highlighted other opportunities that CTP provides to address environmental challenges (adapted from Blanco Ochoa et al. 2018):

1. Cash increases efficiency. In practice, an increase in the efficiency of aid delivery could translate to more space in budgets and programmes to integrate environmental assessments and safeguards.

2. Cash facilitates behaviour change - Restrictions on the transfer of cash allows practitioners to guide or constrain those choices (ODI, 2015). With environmental considerations in mind, conditioned transfers can improve environmental protection instead of compromising it, and even facilitate community ownership over their environment and recovery.

3. 'Cash for work' is a tool to address environmental impacts. Extending this concept to include the environment, these programmes could engage beneficiaries in work that addresses the environmental effects of disasters or conflicts and socialise community environmental management.

Reducing Footprints, Engaging Staff: Internal Climate Change Policy at International NGOs

Collated for, but not commissioned by the British Red Cross, 2018

Whilst this report focuses on climate change policy, many of the conclusions and recommendations it draws can also be applied to environmental policy more generally. However, what this report points towards is the reframing humanitarian action through an environmental lens, including a more central consideration of the role climate change will play in disasters (whether "natural" disasters (cyclones, flooding, drought etc.), or conflict linked to natural resources). This is arguably a crucial perceptual shift that is required to ensure that response strategies are aligned with human and planetary survival.

The report argues that progress will be much easier if the environment is considered as something that it is normal to think and care about. A motivating example of this change in action has been the last year's national pivot away from plastic consumption. The normalisation of environmental concern socially and institutionally, rather than seeing it as an extra, makes changes significantly more achievable. Ideally, it leads to environmental impact becoming a standard factor in the decision making process. In this vein, communications about environmental mainstreaming should be centred on people's guiding values - if colleagues are convinced of why they should care about the environment, they will want to act on it themselves.

The report identifies the importance of having a small number of motivated individuals in organisations to spearhead initiatives. It points how these individuals should reflect on the concerns or beliefs that are holding management back from taking action. It also suggests the tactic of appointing a 'local champion', whereby decisions made centrally are communicated and encouraged by a staff member in each local area or office who has taken the 'champion' role.

The role of donors

Donors have a critical role to play if a change is to happen (JEU, 2014). However, in the 24 Principles and Good Practice of Humanitarian Donorship (GHD, 2003), the environment is not mentioned once. This is reflected in the chronic lack of funding for environment in humanitarian action (JEU, 2014). The JEU 2014 study points out the varying attention to the environment between donors. What is clear however, is that a consideration of the environment is never used as a restrictive criterion for gaining access to funding (JEU, 2014), meaning the importance of mainstreaming is greatly weakened.

Another key issue where funding and the environment is concerned is that of programme timeframes, with many humanitarian actors still constrained by the funding mechanisms of project-based interventions that run for a few years only (Marin & Naess, 2017). To meaningfully engage with more holistic, resilience building, livelihood security, or climate change adaptation goals of humanitarian intervention, requires far longer commitments (ibid.).

The following recommendations relating to the funding environment in the JEU report read as follows (JEU, 2014):

- Donors should develop an environmental mainstreaming policy for humanitarian aid.
- Donors should integrate environmental mainstreaming while analysing programme proposals.
- Donors should make the consideration of environmental impacts explicit in their decisions, therefore driving practitioners to include these impact statements in funding proposals.
- Donors should commit to longer-term funding.
- Donors should strengthen knowledge of programme officers and operational partners at headquarters and country levels, and establish a technical support helpdesk.

Next steps - emerging areas/questions for further study

Following conversations with Groupe URD and JEU to identify both what had been done to date and what research gaps still existed, both stressed the need for further evidence of environmental mainstreaming impacts at field level. In addition, JEU pointed out that whilst a lot of attention has

given to sustainable energy in humanitarian responses, there is a need for further research into humanitarian waste management.

Speaking about the 2018 edition of the Sphere Handbook, JEU mentioned the ambitious Shelter chapter and how an analysis of how it is taken on board by NGOs would be very useful.

Localisation could also be another area for research – "*the environment is inherently local*" - research into local leadership around environmental stewardship and the role of local people as local and indigenous knowledge experts in emergencies is another possible area for enquiry.

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Other useful resources not examined in this study

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Environment and Humanitarian Action in the age of global reform agendas http://www.eecentre.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Backgroundconcept.pdf