FRAME TOOLKIT

# FRamework for Assessing, Monitoring and Evaluating the environment in refugee-related operations

## Module III
## Rapid Environmental Assessment

UNHCR
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés

care

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# ACRONYMS

| | |
|---|---|
| EA | Environmental assessment |
| EIA | Environmental impact assessment |
| GPS | Global positioning system |
| IDP | Internally Displaced Person |
| IP | Implementing Partner (of UNHCR) |
| NGO | Non-governmental organisation |
| REA | Rapid environmental assessment |
| TOR | Terms of Reference |
| UNHCR | United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees |

# 1. WHAT IS RAPID ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND WHY DO IT?

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Rapid Environmental Assessment (REA) is intended to help a person to survey the environmental conditions of a particular location during a specific period of time – the purpose being to identify any existing or potential problem areas or concerns with specific regards to the use of natural resources, but also considering broad social and economic impacts. This form of assessment is undertaken by gathering information from a range of sources, by completing a series of short descriptions, checklists and ranking matrixes, and by analysing, discussing and synthesising the findings.

This particular REA tool – and several other types of environmental assessment and REA exist (see Box 1) is based on five checklists, designed to help users:

- begin to gather essential baseline data;
- identify actions which might cause short- or longer term impacts;
- identify possible solutions to at least some of the negative impacts which might be revealed;
- assess where additional technical expertise might be required; and
- identify what actions can and should be addressed immediately – possibly through simple interventions.

**BOX 1. GENERAL INFORMATION ON ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENTS CAN BE FOUND AT THE FOLLOWING SITES:**

The World Bank (www.worldbank.org/environmentalassessment)

Food Aid Management (www.foodaid.org/envmt3.htm)

International Association for Impact Assessment (www.iaia.org)

Benfield Hazard Research Centre and CARE International.
(http://www.benfieldhrc.org/disaster_studies/rea/rea_guidelines.htm)

The checklists in this Handbook are written for UNHCR and Implementing Partner staff working in relief operations, especially emergency situations. While specific experience or technical knowledge of environmental issues is an obvious bonus at such times, neither is essential.

It should be stressed that a REA is not a substitute for a formal Environmental Assessment (EA). The latter is an internationally recognised systematic assessment which may be required by host governments and/or donor agencies in development as well as humanitarian operations. A REA does not require the technical expertise, funding levels or resources that are needed to carry out a comprehensive EA. The results of a REA are, however, far more subjective and, therefore, are not as conclusive as those from a formal EA.

This REA guide has been prepared as a first step in assessing risks and needs in an emergency or a situation where time is restricted for a more elaborate assessment. The results are intended to be primarily used when discussing and formulating response management plans. It is therefore intended to serve as an early decision-making tool in emergency-like situations. Results from the REA, however, will also find longer term application as data gathered through this process will provide the context and basic information that can shape a later EIA, but can also importantly serve as the baseline for future monitoring progress – at a slightly later stage when prevailing conditions permit this to happen.

**ELSEWHERE IN THIS TOOLKIT, USERS CAN FIND RELATED INFORMATION ON**:

- Frequently asked questions about environmental assessment – Section 2.2 of the **Environmental Assessment Handbook**.
- How to conduct a more formal environmental assessment – Section 4 of the **Environmental Assessment Handbook**.
- Baseline data for Monitoring. Section 4.3 of the **Community Environmental Action Planning Handbook**.

## 1.2 WHAT MIGHT AND SHOULD NOT BE EXPECTED FROM A RAPID ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT?

This REA Guideline can assist UNHCR, government agencies, Implementing Partner staff and communities to:

- **compile relevant environmental information** – baseline data – to allow informed decisions to be made and to establish the basis for future monitoring;
- **analyse, summarise and prioritise** environmental concerns of relevance to relief operations;
- **identify environmental impacts that require immediate action**; and
- **identify environmental impacts that require further analysis** and investigation, possibly by technical experts.

As such, the **REA is a management tool that can influence decisions** to the benefit of the environment – and ultimately the population of concern – by assisting decision-makers in prioritising activities and planning for future impacts of relief operations.

While a REA can highlight key environmental concerns in an emergency, prioritise them and influence discussions prior to actual implementation, its purpose is not to provide the definitive solution or identify needed actions to the concerns identified. It will, however, **begin to provide the answers to some of the problems identified** and the broad overview of the prevailing environmental situation it will create should allow more informed decisions to be taken. Equally important is the fact that a REA will also – from the outset of an emergency – identify environmental concerns that may require immediate action or further investigation. Prevention, being far better than cure, might therefore be enabled.

## 1.3 WHEN COULD/SHOULD A REA BE USED?

As with almost every tool or approach, different types have been developed to suit particular needs. This REA has been developed for application in refugee and returnee situations, primarily during an emergency response. This REA **can and should be undertaken up to a maximum of three months** after the onset of an emergency situation. Beyond, and sometimes even before, that time limit a formal EA should be commissioned and undertaken. Elements of this REA, especially Checklists 1-3 (see Section 4), can also be applied as an integral part of contingency planning.

As field tests of this tool have shown, however, this REA may prove equally useful in more protracted situations when sudden changes may take place in a camp or settlement. Camp closure and consolidation, for example, might result in the sudden movement of refugees to a long-established camp or settlement elsewhere in the region/country. Such an action is likely to have environmental, as

well as social and economic, repercussions: these need to be identified **before the move** takes place so that appropriate response mechanisms can be put in place.

This REA should therefore be viewed as a multipurpose tool, relevant in fast evolving situations where population displacement takes place, but equally applicable during care and maintenance situations, or during a repatriation and/or a re-integration operation. It is likely to find equal use when planning/altering camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs).

## 1.4 DO I HAVE TO USE REA?

Experience from around the world shows that the environment is invariably affected by the onset of a refugee operation, during the care and maintenance phase, and even when refugees are finally able to return to their homes. Clearance of vegetation, waste accumulation, erosion and water pollution are among the most visible impacts of refugee-related operations, but there are more – some of which can have long-term and lasting effects.

The time and resources needed to organise and conduct this REA (see Section 2) are not excessive: the whole process has been deliberately streamlined to allow even inexperienced users to obtain vital information in the least amount of time. While conducting a REA is not obligatory, on balance, the benefits of carrying out this quick assessment and to having up-to-date information and a general overview of the environmental situation, far outweigh the option of taking no action at the time, but possibly having to later engage in expensive and time consuming rehabilitation work (see Box 2).

**BOX 2. HOW WOULD A REA CONTRIBUTE TO OTHER UNHCR SECTORS/ACTIVITIES?**

**Rapid environmental assessment should be considered an integral part of a wider situation analysis in all refugee and returnee operations.** Its conclusions and recommendations can have a direct impact on activities relating to the following:

- site selection and camp/settlement design;
- the arrangement and construction of shelters and other infrastructure;
- the location and rate of use of ground water resources;
- the sourcing of shelter and construction materials, as well as fuelwood;
- treatment facilities and distribution networks of drinking water;
- the provision of sanitation and health facilities;
- food production and supply;
- livestock keeping;
- the choice of energy sources and associated cooking/heating practices;
- construction of airstrips and roads; and
- conflict avoidance with local communities.

# 2. HOW TO PLAN AND MANAGE A REA

## 2.1 BASIC REQUIREMENTS

This REA is designed for people – primarily UNHCR or Implementing Partner staff – with little or no training in environmental issues or assessment methodologies. To facilitate this assessment process and streamline the process of decision making at a crucial time, it has been designed so that **it can be carried out in a maximum of 72 hours**, and not be too intrusive in terms of demands of peoples' time.

The REA should be **completed by a team of three or more people** – ideally someone from a local non-governmental organisation (NGO) – preferably one with experience in environmental issues – a representative from the local (and ideally refugee) community and someone from the international humanitarian community. One person should be nominated/elected as the Team Leader. Clearly, the more people, and especially those with local knowledge, involved in the REA, the more viewpoints and perspectives will be represented with regards the environment. However, a balance may need to be found between the number of people formally undertaking the REA and the number of people consulted. Too many people on the team can become a burden. One action which underlies the successful completion of a REA is "tasking of responsibilities" – each member of the team must have clear responsibilities, be fully aware of these, and report on these regularly to the Team Leader.

**BOX 3. TOLE OF THE TEAM LEADER**

The REA Team Leader is expected to play a pivotal and driving role in carrying out the REA**. S/he must become fully familiar with information contained in this Handbook and be able to brief colleagues on the purpose, the means of conducting a REA, and the content of the Handbook.** The Team Leader may choose to provide members of the REA team with the full handbook for their own use and reference, although field tests show that it is probably more effective to provide them with only the five checklists and then guide them through the actual process.

At the outset, the Team Leader must provide a draft programme for carrying out the REA – which should be discussed and agreed with all team members. The Team Leader should also prepare simple Terms of Reference (TORs) for his/her colleagues and ensure that these, together with the Team Leader's own TORs, are clear and agreeable to all members of the team.

For all of the above, the Team Leader must therefore be able and prepared to act as an overall facilitator as well as actual Team Leader. A simple matrix such as the following might help the Team leader with overall co-ordination:

| TASK/RESPONSIBILITY (insert team member's initials) | RESPONSIBLE | ACCOUNTABLE | CONSULTED | INFORMED |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Action x | | | | |
| Action y | | | | |
| Action z | | | | |
| etc | | | | |

Identifying and collecting some key information sources before the REA actually begins will save considerable time and help formulate questions and orient meetings. Suggested information sources that should be consulted and/or used during the REA are:

- background information on the state of the environment in that particular area, prior to the emergency (see Section 2.2);

- relevant maps of the area (1:25,000 or 1:50,000 topographical maps, aerial photography or thematic maps of protected areas, land use or natural resources, as well as villages, roads and the like – see also Section 2.2);
- local community leaders and refugee community leaders;
- relevant local or regional technical departments (government or education institutions), to find out what, if anything, is/was being considered in terms of development or other support to that particular region. This is also the occasion to identify regulations that might affect refugee/returnee livelihoods, e.g. restrictions on agriculture or keeping livestock; and
- bilateral development or conservation agencies who may have projects planned or underway in the area or its immediate surroundings.

## 2.2 USEFUL INFORMATION SOURCES OF ENVIRONMENTAL DATA

It may be useful to consult other sources of environmental information, some of which are available via the Internet. The Food and Agriculture Organisation's (FAO) statistical database, for example, is an especially rich source of general information and specific data on agriculture, forestry and fisheries at the country level. This and other relevant sources are listed below:

- FAO – United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (www.fao.org);
- UNEP – United Nations Environment Programme (www.unep.org);
- UNESCO World Heritage Sites (http://whc.unesco.org/);
- Ramsar Convention on Wetlands (www.ramsar.org);
- National Environmental Action Plans or Agenda 21 (incomplete collection) (www.un.org/esa/agenda21 /natlinfo);
- National Environmental Laws (incomplete collection) (www.ecolex.org or (http://faolex.fao.org/faolex);
- GCRIO – The US Global Change Research Information Office (www.gcrio.org);
- IUCN – international Union for Conservation of Nature (www.iucn.org);
- WWF – World Wide Fund For Nature (www.panda.org); and
- WCMC – World Conservation Monitoring Centre (www.unep-wcmc.org/).

Ministries such as the Ministry of Environment or Ministry of Agriculture are often useful first points of contact for maps, census data and information on what projects might be underway in the field of conservation.

Country maps can be downloaded from the UNHCR database (http://intranet.hcrnet.ch or www.unhcr.ch). UNHCR's Field Information and Co-ordination Support Section should be consulted for more specialist information, e.g. satellite imagery.

If no formal maps are available, a simple sketch should be created at the outset and modified afterwards as further information is obtained.

Information collected from these various sources will guide the REA team in their assessment, helping them identify the country's/region's most critical environmental issues and any measures which are already in place or which are planned to respond to these problems. Collection of such information will also be of great value when designing an Environmental Action Plan for refugee camps or settlements (see the **Community Environmental Action Planning** module in this Toolkit). Consulting different people and institutions at this stage of the REA should also help with the later introduction of standards and solutions to at least some of the main environmental problems. It should also help identify and select future partners for undertaking such work.

## 2.3 GETTING ORGANISED

The REA process must start somewhere. The stimulus to do so might be initiated by UNHCR (HQ, Branch Office or Field Office, or by an individual Programme Officer or Environmental Focal Point), by a concerned Implementing Partner, by government or even by a community who fears that it will be affected by decisions taken.

**GETTING ORGANISED**

Useful tips on organising and conducting meetings are also examined in Annex I of the Community environmental Action Planning Handbook

If a decision to carry out a REA has been taken, but no contact has been established with UNHCR up to this point, it is recommended that this be carried out now, and communication lines kept open throughout and following the REA. While it might be advantageous, it may not be necessary or appropriate for a UNHCR representative to be part of the REA Team. Also, given that UNHCR human resources and expertise may not always be at hand at the time of an emergency, it is recommended that technical experts from various in-country ministries are involved in the REA. This will not only facilitate the collection of pertinent information but will also give an opportunity to weave relationships with government and local counterparts.

Once a decision to undertake a REA has been taken, and permission to do so received from the necessary authorities, someone must take the lead in identifying the team members. The ideal team size is three people: although this particular REA could be undertaken by one person, an individual viewpoint could easily result in a narrow or biased perspective of the environmental situation which does not reflect the majority of people's concerns. As more people become involved in the process, it should take less time to collect background information, talk to local and refugee representatives, analyse the results and devise a follow-up action plan, but at the same time it will require added co-ordination, analysis and debate. Gender balance should be taken into consideration on each occasion a REA is conducted: it is the responsibility of the commissioning organisation and Team Leader to ensure that this has been catered for.

BEFORE CARRYING OUT A REA:

a) **plan the process**: define its objectives and the key issues it might address; identify and commission the team, prepare clear Terms of Reference for each team member; identify information needs and possible sources;
**b) assemble resources needed**: make logistical arrangements, obtain permission and security clearance, recruit support staff and interpreters; secure necessary equipment e.g. a global positioning system device;
**c) gather relevant information**; and
**d) have a skeleton plan already sketched out** – it is often easier to engage with people is a basic plan is available, even if this ends up being finally rejected for something else.

Once a team has been appointed, a simple strategy should be discussed on how to proceed. The following pointers might prove useful with this and subsequent application of the REA:

- appoint/nominate a Team Leader for the duration. Make sure s/he is agreeable and becomes familiar with this Handbook and its contents;
- identify possible resource persons who might be consulted during the REA process for specific information, or to help introduce the REA team to other sources of information;
- establish clear TORs for the REA, with specific responsibilities of each team member identified;
- identify necessary resources – flip charts and paper, marker pens, chalk, notebooks and pens, a Global Positioning System (GPS) device, and arrange logistics (transport and a meeting place) for the duration of the exercise;
- thoroughly brief team members at the outset;

- draw up a provisional list of people/agencies to meet: divide this task among team members if appropriate;
- arrange, in advance, fixed times to meet with all team members, to debrief and plan;
- in researching, meetings and interviews, aim for quality detail rather than amassing bulk information;
- keep meetings focused by having a predetermined set of questions, but do allow time for people to express their concerns;
- organise for site visits to take place; engage in local consultations (see Box 4);
- perform regular cross checks between the five checklists to verify findings, or spot discrepancies;
- record all information as you go: do not commit responses or observations to memory alone;
- prepare a final report (see Box 5 for suggested contents and Section 5 for the basis of a summary) and present findings and recommendations;
- establish a Task Force to follow-up on recommendations (Section 5); and
- leave all flip charts, maps, notes and the like with the group of people you are working with (ideally this might constitute a future Task Force to oversee follow-up of recommendations) – it may be useful at some stage to have these translated to local languages for presentation among the communities concerned.

**BOX 4. GATHERING INFORMATION**

While a thorough understanding of how communities interact with their surroundings would require much more time than that allotted for this REA, as with all other issues addressed during this process, considerable information can nonetheless be obtained. The most appropriate means of gathering information is through discussions with:

- Women, who are generally responsible for tasks such as fetching water, collecting firewood and wild plants, cooking, gardening and caring for domestic animals. One should not underestimate the knowledge that women have in agriculture, as part of their responsibility is to assist their family in the field. Some might even engage in economic activities and market their products;
- men, who can provide valuable information on crop cultivation, management of natural resources and livestock keeping;
- elders of the community are often particularly valuable sources of information when it comes to identifying trends in the availability of natural resources, to the extent even of being able to identify those which are no longer present in the area, and to account for the underlying reasons for this; and
- nomads, if present in the area, also have a very good knowledge of their environment because of their reliance on natural resources, as well as their mobility. Their perspectives may help provide a broader perspective on changes that have occurred in the environment in recent years.

# 3. HOW TO USE THIS HANDBOOK

## 3.1 REA STRUCTURE

This REA comprises a series of short checklists, each addressing a number of environmental – and some social and economic – issues. These issues range from an overview of the ecological state of a given site or area, to specific impacts of humanitarian activities. By addressing such a wide range of issues, the REA results will become directly applicable to specific actions and programme activities, as well as to general operational phases such as contingency planning, emergency response, care and maintenance, repatriation and re-integration.

The questions in the checklists do not require specialist knowledge or experience, allowing practically any person to carry out a REA at virtually any time. The five different, but related, checklists – each designed to evaluate a different aspect of the environmental situation and real or possible impacts – are as follows:

Checklist 1 – **Situation Analysis**
Checklist 2 – **Key Influencing Factors**
Checklist 3 – **Environmental Situation**
Checklist 4 – **Environmental Impacts of Relief Activities**
Checklist 5 – **REA Results Summary**.

The combined results of the checklists (**Checklist 5**) give an overview of the environmental situation and impacts by concentrating on three important aspects:

- the general condition of the local environment, with particular attention given to its current condition, fragility or resilience;
- the value that indigenous communities place on the environment; and
- the possible environmental impacts of humanitarian relief activities.

## 3.2 USING THE CHECKLISTS

Checklist 1 (**SITUATION ANALYSIS**) is intended to describe the overall scenario and can be expected to be completed as a result of initial meetings and briefings. Its purpose is to begin to define the area and general humanitarian situation, determine whether there are any outstanding or obvious threats to the local environment, and begin to identify local expertise. All this should help orient the team in future meetings and on-site examinations.

More precise information is required to complete Checklist 2 (**KEY INFLUENCING FACTORS**), data for which would normally be gleaned through interviews and on-site investigations. A simple ranking system is introduced in this checklist to help the team identify the seriousness of specific situations. Low expectations of self-sufficiency, for example, will almost certainly imply a higher dependency on local natural resources, a situation which could lead to resource depletion, environmental degradation and conflict with other communities. It is therefore timely at this stage of the process to identify such crucial aspects as this.

The value (not only monetary) that indigenous communities place on the environment and possible environmental impacts of humanitarian relief activities are assessed independently in Checklists 3 (**ENVIRONMENTAL SITUATION**) and 4 (**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF RELIEF ACTIVITIES**), respectively. The highest ranked issues in these two forms represent what the most important threats to the environment are likely to be, where these will take place, and what they are likely to amount to.

In Checklists 3 and 4, a system of multiple checks and scores – values of “High”, “Medium” and “Low” – is proposed to reflect how natural and cultural habitats are valued and the seriousness of

environmental impacts from relief activities. REA users should feel free to replace the suggested rating system with a system with which they feel most comfortable, for example using symbols such as ✓✓✓ for "High" and ✓ for "Low". The method of rating is not that important: what is important is that all participants in the REA team use the same consistent and comparable methodology.

The final results are summarised for easy understanding and analysis in Checklist 5 (**REA RESULTS SUMMARY**) which should help users to identify the most important issues where indigenous environmental priorities and humanitarian actions may conflict. The ranking of issues and cross references in the same form will assist managers in easily prioritising immediate action points and identifying issues that require additional follow up possibly by relevant technicians and/or environmental experts. This form should be accompanied by a short (2-4 page) narrative report describing how the process was approached and undertaken. Suggested headings for this are contained in Box 5.

When the REA is completed and all five forms have been completed, it is important that the results and recommendations are shared back with those who participated in the exercise. A separate meeting may need to be called, at which the draft findings can be presented and discussed openly. While helping to ensure transparency, this may also be an important occasion to cross check and verify certain conclusions.

Final REA documentation should be kept on file for subsequent follow-up and to serve as a baseline against which future changes in the situation can be evaluated. A complete copy of the finished REA, together with any request for further technical support, should also be sent to UNHCR at the following address:

**BOX 5. SUGGESTED FORMAT FOR FINAL REPORT**

Title, Place and Agencies/Individuals Undertaking the REA

1. Summary
2. Purpose
3. REA Methodology Followed
4. Results
4.1 General Environmental Threats/Concerns
4.2 Specific Threats
5. Discussion and Conclusions
5.1 Overview of REA Process
5.2 Overview of REA Findings
5.3 Next Steps
5.4 Main Recommendations

REA Team Members
Acknowledgements
ANNEX (e.g. completed REA checklists)

Operational Solutions and Transition Section (OSTS)
UNHCR
Geneva, SWITZERLAND

# 4. FIVE STEPS TOWARDS CONDUCTING A RAPID ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

## 4.1 STEP 1 – SITUATION ANALYSIS

### 4.1.1 EXPLANATION OF TERMS

**Ratio of refugees to local inhabitants**
Natural resources can come under extreme stress and exploitation when population numbers increase – especially if this is a sudden event. When population influxes do occur, it is important to measure the increased stress on natural resources by knowing the approximate ratio of refugees to local inhabitants. Such knowledge is also useful for planning during more protracted situations.

**Required environmental assessment**
In some countries an environmental assessment may be a legal undertaking, even for an activity such as the establishment of a refugee camp or settlement, or for a change, such as an expansion of such a facility. While most countries have not made a big issue of this, some governments have drawn attention to the need to conform with national policies, a trait which is likely to become more common in years to come. Regardless of this, however, the many positive benefits which can emerge from conducting a REA or EA at such a time are quite significant. Application of a REA would also show UNHCR and its partners to be more accountable for what is taking place.

**Physical area of concern**
An early issue the REA team must define is the geographical area to be included in the REA process. In this REA, the "area" or "affected area" must be defined in terms of its size and boundaries: the same definition must be maintained throughout the REA process. This area should, if possible, be related to administrative limits, e.g. a village. The definition of the geographical area must be clearly documented (e.g., on maps or as a narrative) so that any follow-up activity to the REA can take the area definition into account. Covering an entire camp or settlement may not be practical: if a large area has to be considered, representative samples should be taken, with the above-mentioned criteria still recorded and respected.

**Social customs and practices**
This question is intended to capture any observations, comments and concerns related to how people interact with their environment. Relevant comments or concerns may include:

- existence of local traditions or practices (i.e. cooking habits or use of medicinal plants) regarding the use of a particular natural resource;
- customs or possessions (e.g. livestock) brought by refugees that will place additional stress on natural resources;
- local, indigenous practises related with access to, and use of, natural resources; and
- social customs, which often change when rural people are accommodated in camp situations: this may have negative effects on how natural resources are used and accessed.

The following questions outline a simplified process of information acquisition and interpretation, which should allow the REA team to draw a rapid overview of the main environment-related issues and concerns arising for a given site and its surroundings.

Results from this step will help focus later questions, structure meetings and influence who might be consulted or interviewed. As the questions posed in this part of the process are largely descriptive, it will help users if upon completion of this checklist, a small number of priority issues or concerns are already identified and agreed upon. This information can then automatically be transferred to Checklist 5 for an overall summary of observations.

### 4.1.2 CHECKLIST 1 – SITUATION ANALYSIS

**Tips**:

- If the Team Leader has not already done so, it is essential before proceeding that all members of the team are well briefed of the purpose of this exercise and have had some time to examine the checklists.
- It is also helpful at this stage to spend 5-10 minutes discussing peoples' perceptions of the meaning of the term "environment".

- **Where is this event taking place?**

| | |
|---|---|
| Country | |
| Province/County | |
| Township | |

- **Is the REA being carried out before or after the population influx?**

| | |
|---|---|
| Before | |
| After | |
| During | |
| Unknown | |

- **Has this area previously hosted refugees? If "Yes" what were the impacts and what actions were taken to address these?**

……
…..……..……
……..……..

- **Define the physical boundary of this REA, e.g. does it include local villages or distant areas that might be used to source natural resources?**

| | |
|---|---|
| Approximate size | |
| GPS co-ordinates | |
| Main physical delimitation (e.g. river, altitude, slope, rainfall), if obvious | |

Note: If a map of the area has not been obtained, try and sketch the physical outline of the area by hand or, even better, plot the outline using a GPS device. This can prove invaluable at later stage of the monitoring process.

- **Ratio of refugees to local population (within a defined geographical limit for villages)**

| | |
|---|---|
| Estimated number of refugees | |
| Estimated number of local population | |
| Ratio of refugees to local population | |

- **What is the predominant environmental situation?**

| | |
|---|---|
| Rainforest | |
| Dry forest | |
| Savannah | |
| Barren land | |
| Agricultural land | |
| Other (please describe) | |

- **When is the REA being carried out?**

| | |
|---|---|
| Month | |
| Wet or dry season (e.g. monsoon) | |

- **Have any environmental threats/concerns been identified?**
  If so, please list:
  - 
  - 
  - 

- **What type(s) of fuel(s) are used or are likely to be used for the following applications?**

| ***Application*** | ***Local inhabitants*** | ***Refugees*** | ***Comments(e.g. source of fuel)*** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Cooking | | | |
| Heating | | | |
| Tea/coffee making | | | |
| Income generation | | | |
| Industry | | | |
| Other | | | |

- **What type(s) of construction materials are used or are likely to be used for the following applications?**

| ***Material*** | ***Local inhabitants*** | ***Refugees*** | ***Comments*** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Household structures | | | |
| Other shelters | | | |
| Roofing materials | | | |
| Compound fences | | | |
| Other | | | |

- **How will social customs or practices by refugees and local populations impact the environment?**

……
……
……
……
……
……
……

- **Has any Local Environmental Expertise been identified? If so, please describe.**

- **Are there any <u>required environmental assessments</u> to be carried out (i.e. according to national laws, international laws, donor requirements)? If so, where are these recorded?**

- **Potential Implementing Partners**
  It is important to identify qualified implementing partners as early as possible. Using the form below, select those categories that seem to most accurately qualify the organisation's areas of expertise and possible intervention.

| NAME OF ORGANISATION | TYPE OF ORGANISATION (GOVERNMENT, INTERNATIONAL OR NATIONAL NGO; ACADEMIC INSTITUTION; ETC) | AREAS OF POSSIBLE INTERVENTION | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Conservation | Forestry | Agriculture | Livestock | Domestic Energy | Environmental Education | Capacity building | Environmental Assessment | Environmental Co-ordination | Other |
| | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | |

- **Any other general observations: ……**
  **……**
  **…….**
  **……..**

| CHECKLIST 1 – SITUATION ANALYSIS SUMMARY | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Priority Issues Emerging from Notes** | **Comments** | **Action and Timeframe (immediate, further investigation required, no action needed…)** |
| 1 | | |
| 2 | | |
| 3 | | |

## 4.2 STEP 2 – KEY INFLUENCING FACTORS

### 4.2.1 EXPLANATION OF TERMS

**Aggravating factors**
A number of factors which might aggravate the situation have been identified, although this list is not exhaustive. Each of the factors is to be assigned with a rank (see Box 6), **the purpose being to assess the degree of threat in more detail**. The ratings for each factor, however, should be assessed independently: an overall summation of this checklist should not be attempted.

**REA users are encouraged to add new environmental issues and questions as needed to reflect the local context**. For example, to describe the area's surface and ground water systems a few basic questions could be asked to obtain a sufficient overview:

- where does the water come from?
- is the water treated? If so, how?
- how is the water used?
- who collects and uses the water?
- where does the water naturally drain, be absorbed, or be stored?
- are there any natural processes which might affect or are affecting the water supply, e.g. seasonal flooding or seasonal streams?

**BOX 6. A NOTE ON RANKING**

This REA uses a simple yet meaningful and established ranking system (H=High, M=Medium and L=Low) to help prioritise identified concerns. This will help users quickly identify key aggravating factors from Checklist II as any "H" ranking is likely to be a priority issue to address.

Likewise, when Checklists III and IV have been completed, it may be helpful to scan the last column of these lists to see which issues emerge with high ranks (e.g. HHHH or HHHM), compared with others (e.g. HMLL or MLLL). Some issues will be immediately identifiable as the key concerns, but discussion may still be needed to help prioritise others.

### 4.2.2 CHECKLIST 2 – INFLUENCING FACTORS

***Instructions**: Discuss the **suggested factors** listed below and try to assign a rank to each. Make judgements based on discussions with local people and refugee representatives, available information and personal observations. Rank = High (H), Medium (M) or Low (L). **Do not attempt to aggregate these but assess each factor on its individual merits.***

- **What are the key aggravating factors?**

| Aggravating Factors | Rating | Environmental Implications |
|---|---|---|
| Density of refugees and local populations. | | The denser the living conditions (taking into account space available and ratio of refugees to local populations), the greater the potential environmental impact. |
| Separation of refugees from home resources and traditional resource-use systems. | | The more that refugees are separated from (or denied access to) their homes, the greater potential impact on the environment as they are likely to depend more on natural resources. |
| Likelihood of recurrent natural disasters such as droughts, floods, wild fires or strong winds. | | High likelihood of recurrent environmental hazards may mean that the environment is already stressed, at high risk or fragile. |
| Ungoverned access to natural resources. | | If refugees or returnees have free and uncontrolled access to natural resources such as trees or land, the situation can quickly and irreversibly get out of control, resulting in e.g. deforestation, soil erosion and loss of livelihood. |

contd

| Aggravating Factors | Rating | Environmental Implications |
|---|---|---|
| Poor local governance. | | If local government or community law is unable to restrict uncontrolled access to natural resources, and no steps are taken to bolster this situation, negative environmental impacts should be anticipated. |
| Lack of self-sufficiency. | | Refugees or returnees who are already self-sufficient will normally have a lower impact on the environment: those unable, i.e. who lack or are unable, to reach self-sufficiency will be a burden. |
| Lack of supplies, resources or saleable skills among refugees or returnees. | | Lack of resources or skills can easily result in environmental damage through natural resource extraction. Note that subsistence skills or the keeping of livestock other than as a short-term supply of meat should be considered carefully, as both may potentially involve additional natural resource extraction. |
| Lack of cultural homogeneity: The degree to which refugees hold similar cultural beliefs and practices among themselves and with local populations. | | A lack of common cultural structure may result in disagreement over natural resource use. |
| Lack of social solidarity among refugees and between refugee and local populations. | | Low solidarity may indicate the likelihood of conflict over resources and limits to the ability of refugees to meet their needs. |
| Lack of capacity to absorb waste: The environmental, social and physical structures available to handle waste produced by refugee operations. | | Low waste absorptive capacity may lead to environmental degradation. |
| Poor environmental resilience: Ability of an ecosystem to recover from additional environmental stress or damage. | | Low resilience likely means high fragility and greater possibility of environmental damage. |
| Other | | |
| Other | | |

| CHECKLIST 2 – SUMMARY OF KEY INFLUENCING FACTORS | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Priority Issues Emerging from Notes** | **Comments** | **Action and Timeframe (immediate, further investigation required, no action needed…)** |
| 1 | | |
| 2 | | |
| 3 | | |

## 4.3 STEP 3 – ENVIRONMENTAL SITUATION

### 4.3.1 EXPLANATION OF TERMS

This checklist provides an overview of the area's physical environment, its major ecosystems, vegetation pattern, important natural features and major uses, and users, of land and natural resources. This overview serves three main purposes:

- it provides REA users with a rapid overview of the key environmental issues;
- it identifies what resources are used by local and refugee communities, and begins to determine the value of these resources; and
- it establishes, from the onset, baseline data and/or observations for subsequent monitoring and evaluation of environmental impacts.

**Presence and condition of natural resources**
Describe local natural resources such as trees, grass, water bodies and soils. What are the dominant species and where are these located? Are the specific resources abundant or scarce? Do they appear healthy or diseased? Is there evidence of pollution: if so, is this a new or formerly existing problem? How far is the resource from human settlements and (proposed) camp/settlement site?

**Primary users**
Men and women commonly use some natural resources in a different way. A gender distinction can also be made with regards roles and responsibilities: men are frequently responsible for clearing ground or preparing the soil for planting, while women might have a greater role in caring for crops than men. Children, boys and girls, also have distinct roles, and tend to exploit certain natural resources in different ways.

**Information source**
Discussions with representatives of local and refugee communities are one of the best ways to collect information on animal and plant species, and to understand the values placed on different natural resources by the different user groups. If possible, try and obtain specific identification on which species are present or being used in order to facilitate follow-up to the REA. For example, reporting that "trees are a valuable source of materials" is a first step but it is not specific enough to identify which species might be being used, for what purpose they are being collected, or to identify steps necessary to protect certain tree species. In such a case, it would be more useful to report that "*Acacia* trees are valuable for firewood: harvesting is uncontrolled as there is a strong demand from dealers to supply local towns" – or that "*Eucalyptus* trees are cut to make charcoal, currently taking place near the river".

Cross-checking – with national or international sources of environmental information – specific issues/species that may have been missed during discussions with community representatives, can be included in the REA. Possible environment information sources include:

- indigenous and refugee/IDP communities;
- local, regional and national governmental agencies;
- universities, research centres, conservation projects and local environmental experts;
- NGOs, UN agencies and donors – especially those involved in environmental activities.

**Local rules**
It is important that natural resources are managed wisely to ensure that they are being used at a sustainable rate – often this is done by applying and respecting formal or informal local rules concerning access to, and use of, specific resources. For certain commodities, e.g. medicinal plants, or access to sacred sites, an appointed manager or guardian from the host community might need to be consulted. If local rules are enforced and respected then the threat level will normally be low.

**Threat level**
Threat level refers to the current estimation as to whether specific resources such as an individual tree or wildlife species or a broader ecosystem service such as a natural spring is threatened by the added presence of refugees in that region at that point in time. A high threat level would indicate that immediate attention needs to be given to that situation.

**Cultural and economic value**
Natural resources and habitats are valued for several reasons, including:

- the role they play in providing habitats important to rare, endangered or threatened species – animals and plants;
- the fact that many poor communities depend to a large degree on natural resources as a means of livelihood;
- the revenue they produce from activities ranging from the collection and sale or timber or non-timber food products (mushrooms, berries, fruit…), to nature-based tourism; and
- animal and plant species, or habitats, may hold a cultural and/or social importance to certain societies.

**Any unique or threatened habitats or species in the affected area must receive special focus throughout the REA**. Such habitats and species are probably highly sensitive to human interference and cannot be easily replaced once damaged or degraded. All efforts must be taken as soon as possible to protect such habitats and species from any likely or real impact.

## 4.3.2 CHECKLIST 3 – ENVIRONMENTAL SITUATION

**Instructions:** *Provide a brief description of the condition of the **suggested** natural resources and habitats listed below. Add additional information at the bottom of the chart as required. Make judgements based on discussions with local and refugee representatives, available information and personal observations. Identify which natural resources and sites are most valued by local and refugee communities. The presence of any protected area (national parks, game or forest reserves) or other ecologically sensitive areas must be recorded and valued on this form. Please refer to Box 6 for guidance on ranking.*

*Details in the left hand column are given only to stimulate discussion: users should feel free to adapt these categories to suit the situation. Hint: If communities are participating in this stage of the exercise, refer also to the environmental threats identified earlier – this will serve as a cross-check and means of stimulating discussion.*

| **Natural Resources and Habitats** | **Presence and Condition** *(describe location, quality, quantity, status and condition)* | **Primary Users** *(describe groups, gender, approx. numbers)* | **Information Source** | **Strength of Local Rules on Resource Use?** *(H/M/L)* | **Current Threat Level?** *(H/M/L)* | **Culturally Important?** *(H/M/L)* | **Economic Value?** *(H/M/L)* | **Total Score** (add row, e.g. HHML) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **VEGETATION** | | | | | | | | |
| Dominant Tree Species | | | | | | | | |
| 1. | | | | | | | | |
| 2. | | | | | | | | |
| 3. | | | | | | | | |
| Shrub Species | | | | | | | | |
| 1. | | | | | | | | |
| 2. | | | | | | | | |
| 3. | | | | | | | | |
| Grass Species | | | | | | | | |
| 1. | | | | | | | | |
| 2. | | | | | | | | |
| 3. | | | | | | | | |
| **WILDLIFE** | | | | | | | | |
| 1. | | | | | | | | |
| 2. | | | | | | | | |
| 3. | | | | | | | | |
| **WATER RESOURCES** | | | | | | | | |
| Surface Resources | | | | | | | | |
| 1. | | | | | | | | |
| 2. | | | | | | | | |
| 3. | | | | | | | | |
| Ground Water Resources | | | | | | | | |
| 1. | | | | | | | | |
| 2. | | | | | | | | |
| 3. | | | | | | | | |

| **Natural Resources and Habitats** | **Presence and Condition** *(describe location, quality, quantity, status and condition)* | **Primary Users** *(describe groups, gender, approx. numbers)* | **Information Source** | **Strength of Local Rules on Resource Use?** *(H/M/L)* | **Current Threat Level?** *(H/M/L)* | **Culturally Important?** *(H/M/L)* | **Economic Value?** *(H/M/L)* | **Total Score** (add row, e.g. HHML) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Other Water Resources | | | | | | | | |
| 1. | | | | | | | | |
| 2. | | | | | | | | |
| 3. | | | | | | | | |
| **SOILS** | | | | | | | | |
| 1. | | | | | | | | |
| 2. | | | | | | | | |
| 3. | | | | | | | | |
| **PROTECTED AREAS AND VULNERABLE SITES** | | | | | | | | |
| Legally/Gazetted Protected Areas | | | | | | | | |
| 1. | | | | | | | | |
| 2. | | | | | | | | |
| 3. | | | | | | | | |
| Ecologically Sensitive Areas | | | | | | | | |
| 1. | | | | | | | | |
| 2. | | | | | | | | |
| 3. | | | | | | | | |
| Culturally Important Sites | | | | | | | | |
| 1. | | | | | | | | |
| 2. | | | | | | | | |
| 3. | | | | | | | | |
| **OTHER** | | | | | | | | |
| 1. | | | | | | | | |
| 2. | | | | | | | | |
| 3. | | | | | | | | |
| 4. | | | | | | | | |
| 5. | | | | | | | | |
| 6. | | | | | | | | |

- **Additional observations or comments:** ……
  ……..
  ……
  ……..

| CHECKLIST 3 – SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL SITUATION | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Priority Issues Emerging from Notes** | **Comments** | **Action and Timeframe (immediate, further investigation required, no action needed…)** |
| 1 | | |
| 2 | | |
| 3 | | |
| 4 | | |

## 4.4 STEP 4 – ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF RELIEF ACTIVITIES

### 4.4.1 EXPLANATION OF TERMS

Humanitarian relief activities subject nearly every element of the environment to various stresses or impacts, some of which may cause harm. The effects can take many forms – from potentially permanent damage to mild degradation – and can have direct or indirect impacts on the surrounding environment, as well as people already living in the area. Environmental impacts can also be ongoing, recurrent or potential in time.

Since environmental stresses resulting from relief activities differ in the intensity, frequency, duration and timing of their impacts, the relative seriousness of an environmental stress can be measured as a function of the following stress factors, and rated as before (H, M or L):

**Severity of impact**: Is the stress likely to destroy or remove an element of the environment? A high severity rating will indicate significant and probably lasting changes to the environment.

**Permanence of damage**: Is the damage short-term or long-term? Can the environmental system recover if the stress is removed, or is it likely to be permanently damaged? A high rating would indicate that it is unlikely – at least in the foreseeable future – that the environmental consequences of an action or actions will/can be reversed.

**Extent of impact**: How widespread is the damage? What is the size of the area affected? The larger the area actually or potentially impacted, the higher the level of rating that will be applied.

**Probability of occurrence**: How likely is it that the anticipated threat will occur? How likely is it, based on the best available knowledge, that the stress will cause immediate or future harm? A highly probable source should be ranked higher than an uncertain source. In a care and maintenance situation, this factor may not always be relevant. Even then, however, certain activities can still be judged, e.g. the environmental impacts of building a road up and down a slope – instead of following contours – should have been foreseen at the outset of camp planning and design.

**Urgency**: Some sources of environmental stress are immediate and urgent in nature. Others may represent future risks. Is the need for attention to the source of stress immediate?

Based upon the best available knowledge determine which other environmental impacts are likely to occur as a result of specific relief activities. It is likely that some relief activities will result in more than one environmental impact. When specific relief activities have been linked to potential environmental impacts, rank the environmental stresses for each potential environmental impact identified. A particular environmental stress might, for example, result in serious environmental impacts, with significant and widespread consequences – if it happens. The likelihood of it happening is, however, very low, which is why the ranking system weighs different environmental stress factors against each other.

Ranking of environmental stresses is not about achieving absolute precision (e.g. is it “High” or “Medium”), but rather about achieving relative rankings for all current or potential stresses through discussions with sources of good local knowledge and experience (communities, technical department and agencies, conservation projects and research institutions, for example). At the end of this exercise, the most serious stresses to the environment will emerge. Please refer to Box 6 for further guidance on interpreting the ranking system.

## 4.4.2 CHECKLIST 4 – ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF RELIEF ACTIVITIES

**Instructions:** Identify environmental stresses currently or potentially being caused by humanitarian relief activities. Use the ranking system shown below to indicate the level of environmental stress. Specify any additional environmental impacts, as needed, in the column titled "Possible Environmental Impact" and rank them accordingly. Make judgements based on observations and discussions. In columns 4-8 insert a ranking scale (H=High, M=Medium, L=Low) that applies to that specific possible environmental impact, adding these together in the final column for an overview of the situation.

| **Relief Activity** | **Environmental standard or "best practice"** | **Possible environmental impact** (multiple checks possible) | **Severity of impact** | **Permanence of impact** | **Extent of impact** | **Probability of occurrence** | **Urgency** | **Total Score** (add row) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **SITE IDENTIFICATION** | | | | | | | | |
| Camp/settlement location | At least 15km from ecologically sensitive or protected areas, and between camps/settlements<br><br>Above flood prone areas, preferably on gently slopes (2-4%). Avoid slopes steeper than 10% gradient | Encroachment on protected areas | | | | | | |
| | | Encroachment on sensitive areas | | | | | | |
| | | Disturbance of migration routes | | | | | | |
| | | Deforestation | | | | | | |
| | | Flooding | | | | | | |
| | | Erosion | | | | | | |
| | | Others (please list) …….. | | | | | | |
| **CAMP PLANNING/CONSTRUCTION** | | | | | | | | |
| Camp size | Preferably less than 20,000 people and 30-45$m^2$ of land per person | Natural resource depletion | | | | | | |
| | | Others (please list) …….. | | | | | | |
| Ground cover and top soil removal | Minimal: avoid indiscriminate bulldozing | Lack of shade | | | | | | |
| | | Dust | | | | | | |
| | | Erosion | | | | | | |
| | | Others (please list) …….. | | | | | | |
| Camp layout (shelter orientation) | Minimum disturbance of natural drainage pattern<br><br>Clustered layout to facilitate shared cooking | Erosion | | | | | | |
| | | Flooding | | | | | | |
| | | Firewood consumption | | | | | | |
| | | Others (please list) …….. | | | | | | |
| Road construction | Along contour lines – not up and down slopes | Drainage problems | | | | | | |
| | | Erosion | | | | | | |
| | | Flooding | | | | | | |
| | | Increased trafficking of natural resources | | | | | | |
| | | Others (please list) …….. | | | | | | |
| **SHELTER** | | | | | | | | |
| Use of poles in shelter construction | If feasible, use soil-construction or other alternative materials | Deforestation | | | | | | |
| | | Excavation pits | | | | | | |
| | | Others (please list) …….. | | | | | | |

| **Relief Activity** | **Environmental standard or "best practice"** | **Possible environmental impact** (multiple checks possible) | **Severity of impact** | **Permanence of impact** | **Extent of impact** | **Probability of occurrence** | **Urgency** | **Total Score** (add row) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sourcing of shelter materials from natural surrounding environment | Control of access to and use of harvesting areas. Apply rotation harvesting | Natural resource depletion | | | | | | |
| | | Deforestation | | | | | | |
| | | Others (please list) …….. | | | | | | |
| **WATER** | | | | | | | | |
| Water supply | Water source sustainable – management plan in place for surface and groundwater sources | Depletion of source (surface or ground water) | | | | | | |
| | | Disturbance of watershed | | | | | | |
| | | Increased population density | | | | | | |
| | | Others (please list) …….. | | | | | | |
| Water treatment | Safe disposal of chemicals | Contamination | | | | | | |
| | | Others (please list) …….. | | | | | | |
| Water points construction | Drained and protected from waste, livestock and pollution | Mosquito breeding grounds | | | | | | |
| | | Pollution (water) | | | | | | |
| | | Others (please list) …….. | | | | | | |
| **SANITATION** | | | | | | | | |
| Latrines | Minimum of 30m horizontal distance to water sources. Bottom of pit should be a minimum of 2m over groundwater table. | Contamination of groundwater | | | | | | |
| | | Contamination of other water sources | | | | | | |
| | | Others (please list) …….. | | | | | | |
| Drainage system | Maintain natural drainage patterns as far as possible. Drain along contour lines. | Downstream pollution (other communities) | | | | | | |
| | | Erosion | | | | | | |
| | | Flooding | | | | | | |
| | | Others (please list) …….. | | | | | | |
| Drainage of waste water (households, washing, laundry, businesses) | Drain along contour lines, away from water sources. Washing and laundry facilities located downstream | Pollution (soil, water, air) | | | | | | |
| | | Erosion | | | | | | |
| | | Others (please list) …….. | | | | | | |
| Solid waste management systems | Maximise re-use and recycling. Collection point (100l per 10-15 families. Impermeable landfills to protect ground water. Incinerate hazardous waste. | Pollution (soil, water, air) | | | | | | |
| | | Pollution of living environment | | | | | | |
| | | Increased disease transmission | | | | | | |
| | | Others (please list) …….. | | | | | | |
| **LOGISTICS** | | | | | | | | |
| Transport of relief materials | Avoids damage to infrastructure | Roads and/or bridges damaged | | | | | | |
| | | Erosion | | | | | | |
| | | Others (please list) …….. | | | | | | |
| Procurement | Prioritise recyclable and/or easily disposable materials. Reduce packaging. | Excessive solid waste | | | | | | |
| | | Pollution (soil, water, air) | | | | | | |
| | | Others (please list) …….. | | | | | | |

| **Relief Activity** | **Environmental standard or "best practice"** | **Possible environmental impact** (multiple checks possible) | **Severity of impact** | **Permanence of impact** | **Extent of impact** | **Probability of occurrence** | **Urgency** | **Total Score** (add row) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **FOOD** | | | | | | | | |
| Food distribution and change in cooking practices | Promote fast-cooking foods. Promote energy-saving (pre-soaking, milling, use lids, double cooking and improved stoves). | Deforestation | | | | | | |
| | | Conflict with local communities | | | | | | |
| | | Air pollution …… | | | | | | |
| Firewood distribution | Only in exceptional cases (except vulnerables) and in return for refugee work. Household energy needs must be assessed. | Deforestation at considerable distance | | | | | | |
| | | Tension with local authorities | | | | | | |
| | | Others (please list) …….. | | | | | | |
| **AGRICULTURE** | | | | | | | | |
| Expansion of area or type of farming often supported by seeds and tools distribution. | Sustainable farming practices encouraged. Land-use plan agreed by stakeholders. | Loss of habitats and biodiversity | | | | | | |
| | | Deforestation | | | | | | |
| | | Land degradation/erosion | | | | | | |
| | | Shortened fallow period | | | | | | |
| | | Invasive species | | | | | | |
| | | Disturbance of traditional seed management | | | | | | |
| | | Others (please list) …….. | | | | | | |
| Use of fertilizers and/or pesticides | Minimal – avoid soil nutrient overload and contamination of watercourses. | Contamination (soil, water) | | | | | | |
| | | Increased resource extraction | | | | | | |
| | | Others (please list) …….. | | | | | | |
| **LIVESTOCK** | | | | | | | | |
| Livestock keeping practised or expanded | Sustainable numbers with adequate fodder and separate water sources. Slaughter sites located at periphery, away or downstream from watercourses. Land-use plan agreed by stakeholders. | Loss of habitat and biodiversity | | | | | | |
| | | Introduction/expansion of animal diseases | | | | | | |
| | | Land degradation/erosion | | | | | | |
| | | Pollution from slaughter sites | | | | | | |
| | | Conflict over grazing rights | | | | | | |
| | | Others (please list) …….. | | | | | | |
| **FORESTRY** | | | | | | | | |
| Tree planting | Natural regeneration encouraged. Promote native over exotic species in mixed forests. | Conversion of farm land | | | | | | |
| | | Monocultures, loss of habitats and/or species | | | | | | |
| | | Others (please list) …….. | | | | | | |
| Wood harvesting from surroundings | Available forest resources assessed. Management plan agreed by stakeholders. | Deforestation | | | | | | |
| | | Conflicts with existing users of forests | | | | | | |
| | | Others (please list) …….. | | | | | | |

| **Relief Activity** | **Environmental standard or "best practice"** | **Possible environmental impact** (multiple checks possible) | **Severity of impact** | **Permanence of impact** | **Extent of impact** | **Probability of occurrence** | **Urgency** | **Total Score** (add row) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **INCOME GENERATION** | | | | | | | | |
| Income generation activities practised | Alternatives to environmentally unfriendly activities (charcoal making, wood cutting, illegal hunting) promoted. | Natural resource depletion | | | | | | |
| | | Waste (solid, liquid) | | | | | | |
| | | Pollution (soil, water, air) | | | | | | |
| | | Others (please list) …….. | | | | | | |

| **CHECKLIST 4 – SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF RELIEF ACTIVITIES** | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Priority Issues Emerging from Notes** | **Comments** | **Action and Timeframe (immediate, further investigation required, no action needed…)** |
| 1 | | |
| 2 | | |
| 3 | | |
| 4 | | |

## 4.5 STEP 5 – REA RESULT SUMMARY

### 4.5.1 EXPLANATION OF TERMS

Priorities must be set in order to take effective action to protect and enhance the environment. Human and financial resources, however, are not unlimited. The REA Team must, through application of the REA checklists, determine environmental priorities to select what issues are most important and deserve attention first.

To summarise findings from the REA, and to establish the above-mentioned priorities, refer back to notes made on the various Checklists. Checklists 1 and 2 (**SITUATION ANALYSIS** and **KEY INFLUENCING FACTORS**), for example, captured the importance of the size of the population influx and their relative proportion to local populations in the area, mapped social customs or practices that may impact the environment and clarified whether any formal environmental assessment regulations are in place. In addition, aggravating factors with environmental implications were rated.

Checklist 3 (**ENVIRONMENTAL SITUATION**) provided an overview of the environmental situation in the area and raised specific questions on the condition (quality and quantity) of natural resources and ranked various elements according to rarity, cultural and economic value to the community and threat level. By adding the scores in each row, the column "Total Score" should indicate which natural resources and habitats and cultural sites represent the highest value in that situation.

Checklist 4 (**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF RELIEF ACTIVITIES**) assessed the current and potential environmental impacts of relief activities. As in Checklist 3, a ranking system is used by adding the score in each row to obtain a Total Score. This indicates which relief activities will have the most serious impacts on the environment, and specifies these environmental impacts.

The final checklist (**REA RESULTS SUMMARY**) is based on the results of the previous checklists and will help the REA Team to identify which priority environmental concerns must be addressed immediately – either through concrete action or further investigations. By summarising the key areas of concern from the previous checklists, users will be able to quickly identify where there are links, repetitions, discrepancies or cross-referenced patterns in the REA. For example, if a specific tree species is valued highly by the indigenous community (from Checklist 3), but this same tree species has been singled out for shelter construction (from Checklist 4), then a conflict exists and should be addressed by employing rules concerning access and use for the concerned tree species. (For more guidance on how one might deal with this issue, please refer to the **Community Environmental Action Planning** module in this Toolkit.)

All environmental concerns raised through the REA process should be discussed in an environmental task force for mid- or longer-term action. Future environmental protection strategies should focus on preventing, mitigating or, if other measures have been exhausted, rehabilitating the environmental impacts raised and highlighted through the REA process.

### 4.5.2 CHECKLIST 5 – REA RESULTS SUMMARY

**Instructions:** Review the four completed REA checklists to identify key environmental issues that require immediate action or further investigation. List the priority issues below. With an environmental task force (members should include UN agencies, NGOs, local authorities, and representatives from the local and refugee community), identify follow-up actions, timeframe and responsible persons.

Note: This summary could serve as the basis for the final REA report, a suggested outline of which is shown in Box 5. This summary, however, does not replace the need for a formal report from the REA.

**COUNTRY: ……**
**Refugee camp/Settlement: …….**
**Dates on which the REA was Conducted: ……**
**REA Team Leader: ……**

| **CHECKLIST 1 – SITUATION ANALYSIS** | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Priority Issues Emerging from Notes** | **Comments** | **Action and Timeframe** |
| 1 | | |
| 2 | | |
| 3 | | |

| **CHECKLIST 2 – KEY INFLUENCING FACTORS** | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Priority Issues Emerging from Notes** | **Comments** | **Action and Timeframe** |
| 1 | | |
| 2 | | |
| 3 | | |

| **CHECKLIST 3 – SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL SITUATION** | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Priority Issues Emerging from Notes** | **Comments** | **Action and Timeframe** |
| 1 | | |
| 2 | | |
| 3 | | |
| 4 | | |

| **CHECKLIST 4 – ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF RELIEF ACTIVITIES** | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Priority Issues Emerging from Notes** | **Comments** | **Action and Timeframe** |
| 1 | | |
| 2 | | |
| 3 | | |
| 4 | | |

| OTHER OBSERVATIONS (including any unresolved discrepancies that arose in discussions) |
|---|
| 1 |
| 2 |
| 3 |

| FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION |
|---|
| 1 |
| 2 |
| 3 |
| 4 |

- **Next Steps**

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- **Persons/groups consulted for the REA (e.g., UNHCR staff, government representatives, local authorities, traditional authorities, local stakeholders…)**

| Name | Function | Institution |
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- **Who participated in the REA mission?**

| Name | Function | Institution |
|---|---|---|
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# FRAME Toolkit

**This toolkit comprises the following modules:**

1. **Introduction to the FRAME Toolkit**
2. **Environmental Assessment**
3. **Rapid Environmental Assessment**
4. **Community Environmental Action Planning**
5. **Environmental Indicator Framework**
6. **Geographical Information System**
7. **Evaluation**

**For more information on this Toolkit, please contact:**
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**or**

**CARE International, Geneva, Switzerland**