



UNITED NATIONS

ENVIRONMENT MANAGEMENT GROUP

**EMG**

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**1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Issue Management Group on Environment and Humanitarian Action**

EMG/EHA IMG/  
14.03.2018

GoTo Meeting, Wednesday, 28.02.2018  
15:30 to 17:00 (Geneva time)

Distribution: EMG members

## **Report**

### **Introduction**

The 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Issue Management Group on Environment and Humanitarian Action took place online on February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2018, chaired by Mr. Elliott Harris, Director of the EMG. The meeting discussed the revised draft Terms of Reference of this IMG, and took a close look at its draft workplan.

### **1. Opening Remarks**

The Chair opened the first meeting of the Issue Management Group on Environment and Humanitarian Action by reminding the attendees of its origins in the Nexus Dialogue (19 October 2017) on strengthening partnerships between the environmental and humanitarian sectors in the context of the humanitarian change agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. The Chair recalled how such Dialogue highlighted the need for coherent integration and for the institution of a collaborative platform. It was believed that the EMG would be well placed to follow up on these needs, setting this IMG as a unique platform for collaborative engagement. The Chair presented the draft Terms of Reference, which reflected the feedback and comments received from the agencies involved. The Chair stated that the purpose of the meeting was to finalise the Terms of Reference and to discuss the suggested workplan.

### **2. Adoption of the Agenda**

The agenda was adopted.

It was requested that a list of names and email addresses of the interested and involved focal points be circulated among the attendees at the closure of the meeting.

### **3. Consideration of the revised draft Terms of Reference**

The Chair opened the discussion on the Terms of Reference by making reference to the ambitious set of deliverables, noting how they are foreseen to be accomplished within a two-year timeframe. The Chair pointed out that the next Senior Officials Meeting will be a useful occasion to evaluate the work of the new IMG up to September 2018.

UN-Habitat stressed the importance of considering the urban context of displacement and suggested highlighting this perspective in the ToR. JEU suggested that this perspective could be included in Deliverable 1.1. and that existing tools mapped under the Joint Initiative could be viewed to see if they fit in an urban setting as well. The Chair requested JEU to suggest narrative in this regard to include in the ToR.

UNDP suggested to prioritize and make clear what goals should be worked on first.

With regard to Deliverable 1.2 (a common approach to environmental standards in humanitarian action), duplication with the work ongoing in the Consultative Process on Environmental and Social Sustainability (ESS) should be avoided. Rather than having two sets of common approaches, humanitarian agencies should be invited to agree on the approach developed under the Consultative Process, recognizing that language that is specific to humanitarian contexts may need to be added. UNDP requested more discussion on how these two processes could be brought together, and suggested that collaboration with the IMG on Environmental Sustainability Management be mentioned in the ToR as a relevant process to link up to, especially with regard to its work on renewable energies and waste management.

The Chair highlighted that the work under the Consultative Process on ESS has not been carried out with an eye on emergency settings and that the standards used in programming may not be applicable as such in sudden onset situations where there is little time for careful consideration before action. The Chair proposed that the IMG and the Consultative Process meet to discuss this and that the language in the ToR is made clearer with regard to collaboration between the two processes. UNDP suggested a call in the series of thematic calls on standards that is being organized by the Consultative Process could be dedicated to this issue.

As an agency participating in both processes, WFP expressed interest in engaging in the proposed discussion, highlighting that it will be important to look at what tools will be workable at different stages of the emergency time spectrum. WFP also noted that in emergency settings, it may be more relevant to make sure that there are standard operating procedures in place into which environmental considerations have been integrated, rather than focusing on screening. WFP will propose language to the Secretariat with regard to deliverable 1.2.

UNFPA supported a tightening of the objectives of the IMG, while recognizing the need for the work the IMG is about to undertake. A retrospective study including an analysis of case studies of environmental consideration in emergency settings would be useful in guiding the development of standard operating procedures, compared with simply compiling examples or developing theoretical approaches.

The Sustainable UN Secretariat welcomed the IMG, referring to the reoccurring requests for assistance with greening of field operations, and offered collaboration on aspects such as waste management, logistics, travel, fleet management and communication through the Greening The Blue platform. SUN also welcomed the active involvement of non-UN organisations in the work of the IMG, noting that a wealth of expertise and experience exist in this regard, outside of the UN.

The Chair pointed out that the goal of this IMG is to elaborate recommendations and standards for UN actors to follow, but that it is likely that they will indirectly influence the actions of other organizations. The inclusion of non-UN actors in the framing of such recommendations could be complicated.

WFP reminded participants that the Joint Initiative already involves non-UN actors, and that collaboration can happen in this context. JEU noted that the Interagency Standing Committee (IASC) also include non-UN actors, and that communication with them can be arranged through the more informal Environment and Humanitarian Action (EHA) network.

The Chair concluded that non-UN actors are welcome as observers to the IMG, and that they can work through their individual agency partners to feed into decision making processes.

UNFPA stressed that the goal is to have a UN approach and suggested the involvement of external stakeholders as actors in a peer and partner review exercise. Strategic partners can this way address products through a technical review. The Chair supported this approach and requested this to be clearly explained in the ToR. As the IMG's work moves on, the question can be revisited to consider whether there are aspects of the work where non-UN partners could be more actively engaged. The ToR would then need to be revised, reflecting this in the working modalities.

FAO suggested to make better reference in the ToR (for example in paragraph 3 in the introduction and in deliverable 3.2.) the link between the growing need for humanitarian assistance, and interconnected risks including (conflict, natural hazard, climate extreme, health threats or epidemics). The Chair suggested FAO make a written proposal over how and where to add them to the text.

UNFPA suggested that the main bullet point under point C) Objectives and Scope better reflect the actual scope of the IMG, which is to integrate environmental consideration into humanitarian action, risk reduction and recovery efforts. The objective as described in the draft ToR is broader than the more specific deliverables. The Chair suggested UNFPA make a written proposal over how to make this point clear in the Terms of References.

## **Conclusions**

- The Secretariat will, with the help of the IMG Members who provided comments during the meeting, revise the draft ToR and recirculate it to the IMG with a no-objection clause.

#### **4. Consideration of the draft work plan of the IMG**

The EMG Secretariat presented the work plan, which has been developed to address the deliverables in the ToR. The plan is to start, in 2018, with the identification of the lead agencies for the various actions. Sub-groups may be established to focus on the implementation of the specific deliverables. It was noted that a good part of the actions could be implemented within existing resources in the EMG Secretariat, the JEU and others, however there might be the need to mobilize some external financial resources. The need to take roles and responsibilities among the IMG members was emphasized, together with the need to implement advocacy work, especially in contexts such as the UNFCCC and CBD COPs.

The Chair concluded that the creation of subgroups where interested agencies come together around a specific aspect of the work plan might be needed to drive the work forward. It remains to be clarified how the IMG wants to organize itself around deliverables 1.1. and 3.1.2. and 3.1.3. The Chair suggested, it may be useful to establish separate work streams for these deliverables as well. He requested the IMG members to consider which deliverables/issues their agencies would be willing to work on together with others in subgroups. Once the subgroups are established, each group will be asked to consider needs for resources and how to raise funds identified as needed, in-house, with donors and/or with external partners.

The Secretariat clarified that the plan is to work on advocacy and collecting guidance and tools in 2018, and the focus on processes and procedures in 2019. While some deliverables can be implemented simultaneously, some work streams will feed into others, determining the order in which the deliverables need to be implemented.

The Chair welcomed the provision of a timeframe quarter by quarter and suggested that the work to implement deliverables 1.2 and 2.2. start immediately to prepare the ground for the other planned deliverables.

The EMG Secretariat committed to reframe the workplan into four streams of work in accordance with the new version of the Terms of Reference, and then provide an indication of the order of priorities for the agencies to analyze and decide what to work on.

UNFPA pointed out the need for a sound follow-up mechanism after the implementation of the IMG is concluded in 2019. It was suggested that each work stream considers the long-term sustainability of their work, and how follow-up and implementation of recommendations can be ensured.

#### **Conclusions**

- The EMG Secretariat shall reframe the workplan and provide an indication of the order of priorities.
- IMG Members are invited to consider and communicate to the Secretariat which indicate which areas of work they would like to engage in / which subgroups they wish to join based on the revised workplan.

## **5. Next steps and meeting of the IMG**

The EMG Secretariat requested any additional comments on the ToR by March 7, 2018. Following the finalisation of the work plan and ToR, work will continue in the smaller subgroups, for which specific tasks may need to be defined. To facilitate coordination among outputs and subgroups, each subgroup should share their specific work plan with the entire IMG. Regular updates will be provided to all IMG members regarding the various subgroups' progresses.

UNDP noted that there is a need to decide whether each workstream should make individual efforts to raise funds or whether there should be a joint resource mobilization effort in the IMG.

## **6. Other matters**

No other matters were discussed.

## **7. Closure of the meeting**

The Chair closed the meeting at 5:00p.m. Geneva time.

## Annex I – List of participants

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>
Chair	Elliott Harris	EMG Secretariat
1	Daniel Schensul	UNFPA
2	David Evans	UN-Habitat
3	Holly Mergler	UNDP
4	Maria Cruz Gonzalez	UNDP
5	Hernani Escobar	UNFCCC
6	Isabella Marras	SUN
7	Julie MacKenzie	WFP
8	Tanvi Agrawal	WFP
9	Lovisa Selander	UPU
10	Margherita Fanchiotti	OCHA/JEU
11	Tomas Declercq	OCHA/JEU
12	Marika Palosaari	UNEP
13	Yoshie Fujiyama	UNEP
14	Elena De Bortoli	DFS
15	Sinead Brophy	UNODC
16	Vanessa Gray	ITU
17	Rodrigue Vinet	FAO
18	Wirya Khim	FAO

19	Dominique Burgeon	FAO
20	Olivier Perrais	FAO
21	Hossein Fadaei	EMG Secretariat
22	Jannica Pitkanen-Brunnsberg	EMG Secretariat