

EEHub FAQs

**1/ How can I deploy as an environmental expert with the UN Environment / OCHA Joint Unit?**

The Joint Unit deploys environmental experts on UN emergency response missions through the Environmental Emergencies Roster, which comprises 58 institutions and individuals. Through the roster, the JEU has access to the partners’ pools of experts who could be mobilized for response.

Environmental Field Advisors are deployed through the [Stand-By Partnership Programme (SBPP](https://www.standbypartnership.org/)) of which OCHA is a partner and which also includes 14 partner-sending organizations.

**2/ When are sampling and analysis necessary?**

National sampling and analysis capacity should be used whenever possible. The [UN Environment / OCHA Joint Unit](http://www.unocha.org/themes/environmental-emergencies) and UN Environment Humanitarian Affairs Officers will endeavor to identify locally available sampling and analysis capacity ahead of the mission.

If this is not possible, upon arrival, the deployed expert should make it a priority to identify available sampling/analysis capacity required to fulfil the mission objectives, both in-country and in the region.

Should sampling and analysis be required, but not available, the expert should determine a sampling strategy in-country. A list of required resources (equipment, options for analysis and approximate cost) should then be sent to the JEU and the Response Partner to establish whether these additional costs can be covered by the mission – by the requesting party, the Response Partner, the JEU, the UN in-country or another actor. It is important to ensure the impartiality and quality of any laboratory used.

**3/ How are local actors involved?**

The expert ensures the involvement of regional, national and local actors in preparedness and/or response missions in order to:

* improve mission quality
* build capacity for both international and national actors
* ensure the integration of local knowledge and an understanding of the local context
* strengthen uptake of mission recommendations

The Joint Unit, through OCHA and the UN Environment Regional Humanitarian Affairs Officers, endeavors to always include a representative of the requesting party in the mission. Additionally, local NGOs and academia can be involved. It is not always possible to identify these people in advance, and the deploying expert should take a proactive approach in reaching out to national actors, in order to identify additional local capacity to be involved in the mission.

Liaising with other in-country experts and response partners can also prove beneficial in gaining contextual information and furthering the assessment process; this should also be pursued when possible. Depending on the duration and type of involvement, the JEU could offer short-term consultancy contracts to cover these experts’ time and fees. In this instance, the expert should discuss available options with the JEU mission focal point.

**4/ How should handover strategies be planned?**

An exit and handover/transition strategy should be considered from the earliest Plan of Action and integrated into every interim plan and team operational briefing. If not, the plan can be lost in the urgency of the mission. Failure to properly plan and execute a handover/transition strategy may seriously imperil your achievements and the long-term success of your mission, resulting in lost opportunities to stabilize changes and innovations. Typically, an effective strategy requires an ongoing inventory of assets and processes under the team’s control; identifying local partners to assume key functions performed by the team at the earliest opportunity; and, if necessary, strengthening their capacity before the handover takes place. This handover/transition strategy may be implemented over the course of the mission, as partners are identified and determined ready, and should not occur all at once at the end of the mission.

**5/ What happens after a mission is completed?**

After completion of the mission, the JEU will send out a short survey to the expert focusing on 1) mission highlights, 2) key challenges encountered, 3) best practices, and 4) recommendations for future missions. A debrief will be organized by the JEU and the deploying partner within 7 days of mission completion. For some partners, the debrief will be carried out jointly with various staff of the deploying organization. Sometimes, a separate debrief in the deploying organization’s premises will take place. The deployee has the right to receive written feedback on his/her performance during a mission. Ideally, an evaluation form should be filled out by the deployee’s supervisor before the debrief takes place.

**6/ Who to speak to about financial concerns?**

If finances become a concern at any point during the mission, the environmental expert should contact the UN Environment office in the region. The JEU is also able to discuss financial support with environmental experts if required.