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Greening Humanitarian Aid

A case study on environmental mainstreaming in the
Minawao Refugee Camp in Cameroon



*Image 1: Refugees in Cameroon help build 'Great Green Wall' to combat desertification.
Picture taken by Bourgois (2021)*

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Abstract

This thesis is a qualitative case study on greening policies in the Minawao Refugee Camp in far-northern Cameroon. It thoroughly investigates the actors and dynamics of humanitarian aid and specifically explores how environmental mainstreaming can shape humanitarian governance.

The case was chosen due to its unique policies and programmes that aim to green the refugee camp and use a participatory approach to tackle the challenges.

The concepts used throughout the thesis are humanitarian governance including both politicisation and de-politicisation aspects as well as clusterisation. A particular focus is placed on environmental mainstreaming.

In addition, the humanitarian-development-peace nexus which plays an increasingly important role in shaping humanitarian aid is introduced and discussed.

The theoretical framework is built upon these three concepts, humanitarian governance, environmental mainstreaming, and the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, as well as the dynamics between each other.

A flexible qualitative research design is applied, using mixed methods for the data collection consisting of expert interviews and secondary data from reports and media. The collected data was coded and analysed using the “thematic analysis” method. The findings are divided in politicisation, de-politicisation, and clusterisation themes.

The research confirms that environmental mainstreaming requires long-term planning, while humanitarian governance remains focused on immediate response to save lives and alleviate human suffering. Power dynamics, funding issues, and the involvement of governmental institutions lead frequently to disproportionate politicisation of humanitarian aid. However, ownership, resilience, and partnership help to de-politicise the process. Moreover, clusterisation allows for better coordination and helps to interlink humanitarian aid, development assistance, and environmental mainstreaming, leading to improved results and outcomes for the beneficiaries.

The thesis shows that while environmental mainstreaming remains a significant challenge to humanitarian governance, it is of crucial importance to both be included in conceptual work and daily practice, and considered in further research.

Keywords: humanitarian governance, environmental mainstreaming, humanitarian-development-peace nexus, clusterisation, refugee camps, Cameroon.

Words: 10 000

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1 Introduction

In this section the thesis research is introduced by firstly illustrating the problem and overall aim. Afterwards, the relevance, scope, and outline of the thesis are defined.

Migration is a constant, dynamic flow of people, moving across and within borders. As recently reported, more than 100 million people are currently forcibly displaced worldwide (UNHCR, 2022b). Displaced people are fleeing due to life- and livelihood-threatening circumstances in their homes. The same applies to the Sahel-zone and specifically to the large refugee camp, Minawao in far-northern Cameroon. This brings about severe humanitarian needs, which are further elaborated in the following sections. Hence, local and international humanitarian organisations are currently intervening and implementing emergency relief and aid programmes. While many actors are involved, this unleashes the challenges of humanitarian governance and politicisation simultaneously. The region is struggling with severe environmental issues and humanitarian interventions play a crucial role in this respect. Environmental mainstreaming, a new trend aiming at “greening” the sector, is the focus of this study.

1.1 Research Problem

This research takes a closer look into international humanitarian aid by investigating greening policies and examining the theoretical framework behind it. While looking at the case of Minawao Refugee Camp in Cameroon, environmental mainstreaming in the field of humanitarianism is analysed. This refugee camp is particularly interesting as it is large-scale and of long-lasting persistence (UNHCR, 2020). Many stakeholders and actors are involved in this camp, while refugees originate from many different Sub-Saharan countries.

There have been few previous studies and developed theories about bringing greening policies into the profession of humanitarian work. As the primary goal of humanitarian response is saving lives, environmental policies have so far been rather low on the agenda. Standardized rules and regulations struggle to enforce more sustainable and environment-friendly policies (Kunz & Gold, 2017). Most research efforts have been on greening supply chain management and logistics (Sarkis et al., 2013). Further literature can in particular be found on humanitarian aid in relation to climate change (Eriksen et al., 2017).

Humanitarianism is the system of giving to people in need, based on ethical values (Pringle and Hunt, 2014). Environmental mainstreaming is the process of bringing environmental concerns and issues to the centre of all policies and their implementation (Nunan et al., 2012; Dominelli, 2013).

Against the background of the scope and aim of this study, its goal is to fill in the research gap, where the theoretical framework, i.e. humanitarianism, development, and environmental mainstreaming overlap, interact or collide at times, coming together in the case of refugee camps and settlements of displaced people. Not only are these camps example of humanitarian action with large environmental impact, but they also bring together uncountable factors and aspects of the work in a defined geographical area that can be reviewed in a case study. This comes down to the following research question:

“How does environmental mainstreaming shape humanitarian governance in the refugee camp Minawao, Cameroon, in Sub-Saharan Africa?”

1.2 Aim and Scope

The broader aim of the thesis is to understand current environmental challenges faced by the humanitarian aid sector, using the example of Minawao Refugee Camp in far-northern Cameroon. The goal is to determine the implications of environmental mainstreaming has on humanitarian governance. Thereby, humanitarian aid, mainstreaming theories, and the humanitarian-development-peace nexus will be related to with each other to understand the political concepts

behind them. More specifically, the aim is to discover why the humanitarian aid sector is struggling to implement specific environmental policies and how politics may challenge each concept.

The research intends to contribute to the literature on humanitarian governance, policy mainstreaming, and non-governmental international politics. The case study of Minawao Refugee Camp can illustrate already implemented greening efforts and exemplifies sectoral challenges (UNHCR, 2021; United Nations, 2019). While the case is reduced to a single camp, both regional and country contexts influence it and have to be considered. Minawao is a camp that entails and visualises the complexity of challenges in governing humanitarian aid (UNHCR, 2020). It also enables a depiction of detailed inside views of greener projects and their implications (Eriksen et al., 2017).

Due to its unique policies, it appears to be greener than other refugee camps (UNHCR, 2021). Problems affecting the camp include desertification, high poverty rates, and lack of (natural) resources. This is being addressed by e.g. re-forestation projects, or participatory approaches (UNHCR, 2021; United Nations, 2019), whereby refugees gain ownership over their properties and land. In this camp there are many actors and stakeholders involved, while multiple NGOs aim to tackle Minawao's environmental challenges.

The thesis itself has a limited scope, in order to have a feasible size to allow the analysis of detailed findings. Hence, three expert interviews are conducted and analysed. Content of the interviews primarily include the struggle of putting the long-term approach of environmental mainstreaming into the immediate fast response framework of humanitarianism, greening processes in daily work as well as politicisation and practical obstacles. Implementation of greener policies and enhanced sustainability relate to mainstreaming processes, while the organisational sphere can be positioned within the framework of humanitarian governance.

1.3 Relevance

The thesis' relevance comes about in diverse aspects including political, migration, environmental factors. Migration is an ongoing occurrence that is constantly being politicized and brought into public discussion (Haas et al., 2020, Agier, 2010). International humanitarianism is a large, growing sector that is gaining significant political relevance and receiving more governance legitimacy in the global discourse (Barnett, 2013).

Environmental factors are also becoming increasingly important due to pressing challenges such as environmental destruction, degradation, and climate change (Dominelli, 2013). These environmental processes are often reinforced through population movements and settlements, such as in the case of growing refugee camps (Agier, 2011). Exhaustion of resources both in local and international contexts builds up the need for new policies, new governance strategies, and new approaches.

This thesis shall shed light on how environmental mainstreaming is shaping and challenging humanitarian governance, and humanitarian principles at its core. It reveals the need for further research in the sector affecting some of the most vulnerable people worldwide. International organisations have implemented numerous interventions in Minawao which aim to address multiple challenges, with desertification being one of them (United Nations, 2019). This brings about not only a great need for greened policies, but can also help to transfer their experiences and potential achievements to the rest of the sector (Eriksen et al., 2017). It aims to add to humanitarian governance academic literature and the concepts of migration governance, and environmental mainstreaming in the sector. Additionally, the humanitarian-development-peace nexus plays an essential role in this regard and shall be addressed.

1.4 Outline of the Thesis

The thesis is structured as follows: the first chapter introduces the topic, the research problem, its relevance, and its aim. The second chapter illustrates the background information and the case, the Minawao Refugee Camp in Cameroon. Next, the literature is analysed, as well as the conceptual framework and underlying theory. The fourth chapter presents the methodology used in the thesis. Afterwards, an analysis is conducted by examining three sections including politicisation, de-politicisation, and clusterisation in relation to environmental mainstreaming. The sixth chapter discusses the findings of the thesis, before drawing a conclusion and presenting recommendations for further research.

2 Background: the Case

In the following section, the case is introduced to gain a deeper inside view both into the background and context of the thesis. As the socio-political contexts differ in every region, the case of Cameroon and Minawao is introduced and reviewed. The case was chosen due to its approach to refugees as well as new, innovative projects addressing pressing needs of the affected people with a clear focus on environmental mainstreaming.

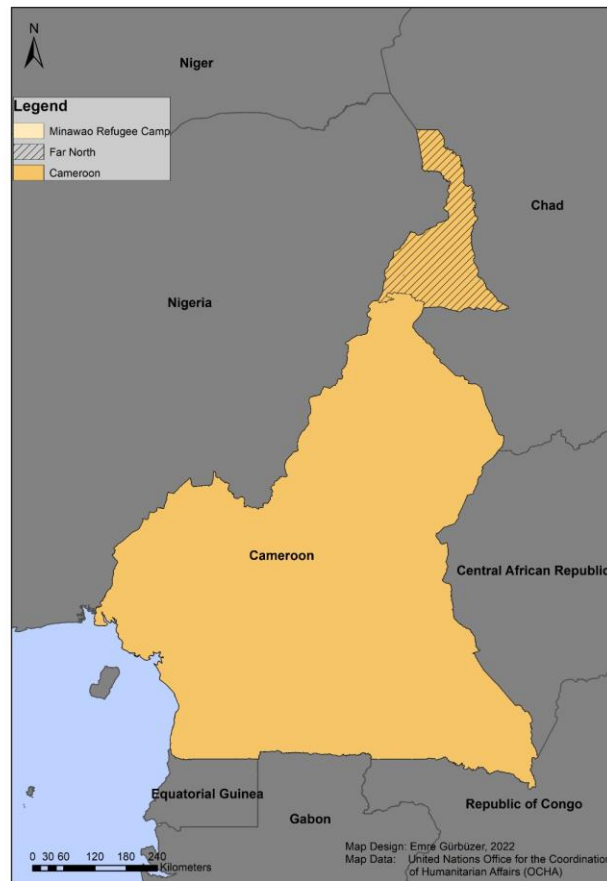


Figure 1: Map of Cameroon. Map Design: Emre Gürbüzler. Map Data: UN OCHA.

2.1 Regional Background

2.1.1 Country Background: Cameroon

The present section takes a closer look at Cameroon to understand the regional background. It is equally important to contextualise the refugee camp to understand the challenges the Minawao camp is facing.

Cameroon hosts a population of more than 25 million inhabitants (2019) (World Bank, 2022). It is resource-rich in certain parts and known to hold many of Africa's different landscapes united in one country. Independence has been restored since 1960. There are about 300 different ethnic groups with their own languages and cultures (Benneh and DeLancey, 2021).

The demography shows an exceptionally young and fast-growing society (UNDP, 2022). The health sector is poorly developed, while education has been prioritised by the government (Benneh and DeLancey, 2021).

The GDP in 2020 was at USD 40.8 billion, and GDP grew at a rate of 0.5% in 2020 (World Bank Data, 2022; World Bank, 2022). With the Human Development Index (HDI) at 0.563, Cameroon ranks 153 worldwide (UNDP, 2022).

The political context shows a centralised government as a unitary, presidential republic. For many years, the country's political situation was relatively stable, but has recently shown more vulnerability to corruption (Human Rights Watch, 2022).

2.1.2 Northern Cameroon Refugee Context

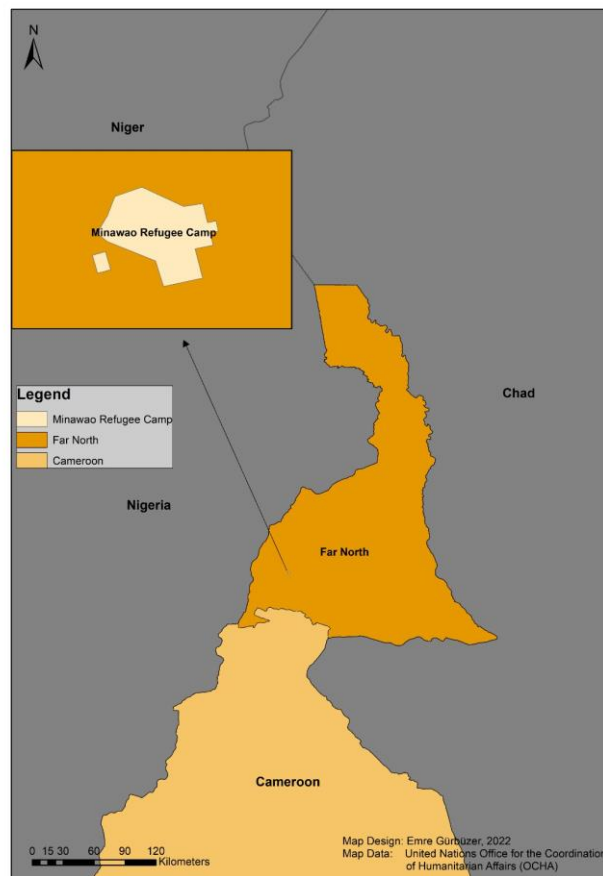


Figure 2: Map of Far-Northern Cameroon and Minawao Refugee Camp. Map Design: Emre Gürbüzler. Map Data: UN OCHA.

The far-northern territories of Cameroon, where Minawao is located, experience large refugee and migration movements. In the following, their underlying push- and pull-factors are analysed.

Boko Haram victims:

The Islamistic terrorist group “Boko Haram” has been active since 2002 and has been present in the northern part of Nigeria and its neighbouring countries, being responsible for extreme brutality and bloodshed. Many people have been killed, or were forcibly displaced (Benneh and DeLancey, 2021; Statistica, 2022).

Sahel-zone/Environmental based:

The region is bordering with the Sahel-zone, which is known for both its desertification and numerous conflicts. Water shortages, failed crops, poverty, and economic stagnation in northern Nigeria, Chad, and other neighbouring countries are driving people to flee. Lake Chad lost 90% of its water, but used to be a

strategically beneficial resource for surrounding communities (OCHA, 2022; Usigbe, 2019).

Internally Displaced People (IDPs):

Besides international conflicts and the threat of the terror group "Boko Haram", there are also internal conflicts within Cameroon. Many factors fuel internal disputes, violence, and combat (UNHCR, 2017). Conflicts, the Covid-19 pandemic and natural disasters led to an increase of over 70% in food insecurity from 2021 to 2022, affecting more than 900.000 people (OCHA, 2022). Hence, many people move to different parts of the country (UNHCR, 2017; OCHA, 2022).

2.2 Minawao Refugee Camp

Minawao Refugee Camp, located in far-northern Cameroon, was established in July 2013 in Mayo-Tsanaga district, bordering northern Nigeria. Originally, it was built for maximum capacity of about 15.000 (UNHCR, 2020). In 2020, it was about 623 hectares and had over 71 000 inhabitants according to UNHCR (2020). Due to its proximity to the border, most refugees arrive from North-Eastern Nigeria.

The camp grew to a large settlement with expanding infrastructure. Minawao has two pre-primary schools, Early Childhood Development (ECD) centres, six primary schools, one secondary school, and multiple temporary learning centres (UNHCR, 2020).

There are almost 60 actors involved in the refugee camp, including national ministries, government actors, national and international NGOs, UN organisations, and red cross movements (UNHCR, 2020). Most activities entail projects, (in total 178), such as WASH (water and hygiene), protection, health, nutrition, education, and cash programmes (UNHCR, 2017; UNHCR, 2020).

Minawao represents the major challenges Cameroon is experiencing and is centralised in the refugee camp. Lack of resources, desertification, deforestation, and water shortages are augmented by human settlements. Growing numbers of arriving refugees deepen and deteriorate the conflict around already exhausted (natural) resources (OCHA, 2022).

As such, Minawao is a case which displays the challenges of governing humanitarian aid, and the impact of environmental mainstreaming has on it. The greening projects and interventions reflect sectoral obstacles, being faced with numerous vulnerabilities and dilemmas.

3 Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

In order to gain a deeper understanding of the case study itself, previously conducted research is analysed and discussed, to allow the identification of research gap and where the present literature is building upon it.

The case study entails different theoretical baselines and conceptual frameworks. Particularly relevant for the research question are humanitarian governance, environmental-mainstreaming approaches, and research concerning these issues surrounding migration.

While reviewing the literature, the focus is on international humanitarianism. Humanitarian action is the response to adversity by providing various forms of support for highly vulnerable people, in order to mitigate suffering, combat adversity, and reduce loss of life (Pringle and Hunt, 2014).

Müller and Sou (2019) argue that humanitarian assistance is the act of giving to people in need, based on the aim to help less fortunate individuals, and those in the greatest need. This can be done in response to environmental crises, war, and conflict, violence, food insecurities and famines, health and diseases, and much more. This “help” has been institutionalised and has grown significantly in recent years (Müller and Sou, 2019).

Fassin (2007a) claims that humanitarian aid is driven by ethical norms and willingness of humanity to provide support. Consequently, this results in an expanding sector driven by ethical norms, which aims to help save people’s lives. Considering different scholars’ argumentations (Fassin, 2007a; Müller and Sou, 2019), one can conclude that humanitarianism is structured and framed in a unique way, and considers the various challenges and opportunities, to govern the system.

3.1 Humanitarian Governance

The international humanitarian system is organised and structured by humanitarian governance.

Many scholars have analysed and researched the emergence of politicisation in the sector (Fassin, 2007a; Fassin, 2007b; Müller and Sou, 2019). The rise of non-governmental politics has had a growing importance and relevance in political debate as well as within the sector of humanitarian aid (Ryfman, 2007). This goes along with globalisation and global governance, including a growing number of actors and stakeholders in decision-making processes. Humanitarian governance is a complex and multi-layered system (Barnett, 2013).

In Fehler et al. (2007) various authors claim that humanitarian governance is a system steered and directed by ethical norms. With the aim and focal point of solidarity, humanitarianism builds a global network and cooperation, providing aid to the most vulnerable people worldwide (Ryfman, 2007). These newly emerging actors are increasingly influencing politics and the decision-making process. This field gains more and more importance through its reach, fiscal scope, and institutionalisation.

Fassin (2007a) and Müller and Sou (2019) analyse and argue that many different actors are involved in the humanitarian sector, and are split between giving donors and implementing partners. These include local, regional, and international, profit and non-profit organisations, inter-governmental organisations, governments and their institutions and ministries, donors, and philanthropists. Popular and globally present examples hereby are the International Federation Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC), Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF), and United Nations organisations (Ryfman, 2007).

Barnett's (2013) research shows the legitimacy of the actors in humanitarian governance is not through legal appointing, democratic elections, or anything comparative. Legitimacy is predominantly self-proclaimed and self-appointed. This is further strengthened by the outcome of their work and received support from civil society (Barnett, 2013). Considering Fassin (2007a) and Fehler et al. (2007), one can conclude the challenging part in non-governmental politics is the

uncertainty and unclarity concerning legitimacy and self-affirmation. Moreover, the self-proclaimed legitimacy has been echoing critical voices, such as Ryfman (2007) and raising questions about the rightful power of non-governmental actors in this field.

3.1.1 Politicisation

Fassin (2007a) and Ryfman (2007) claim that humanitarian work has been heavily politicised in the past through many different actors such as media, political parties and governments, organisational representatives, and civil society. Controversial interventions, geopolitical interests, or political debates play a major role into this dynamic (Rysaback-Smith, 2015). As it is often an inter-state action, this can be used to pursue other political interests. These could include the interest in natural resources, expansion of economic and trade market, resolving political tensions, or stabilizing and security-building (Barnett, 2013). The importance of humanitarian governance goes so far, that today, there is no war without building humanitarian corridors and no interventions of the West without “humanitarian considerations”. Pressing humanitarian challenges and needs are becoming part of general political debates and international political relations (Müller and Sou, 2019). Humanitarian actors and organisations are participating in international debates and negotiations with e.g. governments and dictators advocating for justice for the affected people (Ryfman, 2007). Through this interaction, political power is being enforced.

While there are network interlinkages, there is no predetermined structure. Hence, there is a prevailing hierarchy between different power levels and the ongoing struggle for power dynamics. Hereby, it is often visible that stakeholders with larger financial funds have a more considerable say and impact on the system. Above that, there are different underlying power dynamics between the Global North and Global South (Fassin, 2007a). Humanitarian aid can therefore be part of the international creation of suppression while reinforcing those simultaneously. Due to giver-receiver relations in the space of aid, the receiving part of the relationship has less power and remains dependent on the givers’ interests (Fassin, 2007a).

Moreover, mass media plays a large role in politicising international humanitarianism and shape the non-governmental government (Fassin, 2007b).

3.1.2 De-politicisation

At the core of humanitarian aid are several basic principles, including neutrality, impartiality, and independence (Barnett, 2013; Rysaback-Smith, 2015), aiming for non-political responses without political agendas. This has been formalised and implemented since the 20th century and further institutionalised ever since as humanitarianism's main philosophy (Rysaback-Smith, 2015).

These values drive many humanitarian organisations in their responses and interventions, aspiring de-politicisation of their work (Fassin, 2007b; Rysaback-Smith, 2015).

De-politicisation is the process of a previously politicised issue, undergoing a transition by multiple factors. Scholars such as Ilcan and Rygiel (2015) argue that building resiliency can be a driving force to de-politicise humanitarianism (Ryfman, 2007). Resiliency thereby is the act of building capacity both for beneficiaries and other affected people, in order to be prepared for external crises and be able to build back on their own afterwards.

Furthermore, empowerment is another strategy to de-politicise humanitarianism and humanitarian governance (Ilcan and Rygiel, 2015). Empowerment as well as resilience strengthen the beneficiaries to create their own responses to internal and external crises and can help prevent future crises.

3.1.3 Clusterisation

Clusterisation is a process within humanitarian governance, which breaks humanitarian organisations into so called "clusters" according to their specialities throughout a disaster. This helps distribute responsibilities and tasks, allowing actors the opportunity to specialise and coordinate. Thereby, the burden is shared and can create a higher level of collaboration throughout the field. Different

sectors have their own cluster groups within regional and country levels (IASC, 2006).

The current international humanitarian coordination system was set in 1991 by a General Assembly resolution of the United Nations. Later in 2005, the Humanitarian Reform Agenda was introduced, along with improved accountability measures, increased partnership efforts, and initially the Cluster Approach (IASC, 2006). The clusters include eleven different sectors, ranging from health, logistics, nutrition, and protection. Among them prevention, mitigation, preparedness, “disaster” response, recovery, and reconstruction (IASC, 2006; ShelterCluster.org, 2022a). Clusterisation has recently gained more and more in focus contributing to better cooperation and coordination. This process also helps minor actors to participate more effectively in the sector by having e.g. World Food Programme (WFP) as the logistics lead supporting them. This approach to humanitarian governance leads to less overlaps and gaps in the sector, as well as enhanced efficiency, transparency, and predictability (IASC, 2006; Inter-Agency Standing Committee, 2022). While clusterisation offers many benefits and advantages to the sector, it remains challenging as the cluster system is perpetuating hierarchies in humanitarian governance as UN organisations are the “lead”, dominated by the Global North. This leads to unequal power dynamics and reinforces persisting ones. The theory behind the increasing clusterisation of humanitarian governance remains understudied with only a few scholarly references.

Looking at administrative aspects of humanitarian governance, it can be said that the sectors politicisation and institutionalisation have strongly influenced it. Governance of humanitarian aid, means also governing “human life” and humanity (Fassin, 2007a). The politicisation means that humanitarian aid and response became a tool of political actions and interests. Governments often use aid, to pursue further interests in other sectors. Power dynamics connected to the altruistic narrative of “saving of human lives” affect inter-country relations (Barnett, 2013).

Clusterisation in humanitarian governance is severely understudied and scholars have paid little attention to it. Hence, this study contributes to the research of the role that clusters play in recent developments.

3.2 Humanitarian Aid and Migration: Refugee Camps

A large amount of humanitarian work is related to migration and displacement of people. Humanitarian assistance is required when forced displacement occurs due to violence, war, environmental disaster, or other factors which make it impossible to stay (Haas et al., 2020, pp.31-33; Jahre et al., 2018; Zetter, 2019).

Humanitarian governance of migration includes administration, labelling, categorising, and securitisation (Haas et al., 2020, pp.21-40). Depending on “category” or “label” migrants receives, one is entitled to aid, international assistance and the right to protection (Agier, 2010; Barnett, 2013). This has been implemented through several international frameworks, treaties, and agreements, i.e. the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants and a Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework of 2016 (UNHCR, 2022a). It reaffirms the great need for international solidarity for forced refugees and migrants and the obligation to respect human rights, while providing shelter and protection (UNHCR, 2022a). Humanitarian governance around refugees and migrants has been framed as a “migration industry” (Haas et al., 2020, p.66), which entails all the different activities, actors, and political economy behind it. Besides humanitarian and non-governmental organisations and their employees there are businesses, smugglers, counsellors, international organisations (European Union or FRONTEX), and advocates which are involved (Haas et al., 2020, p.66). Researchers have used this concept to explain structures that prevail beyond migrant networks (Haas et al., 2020, p.66). Governance of refugee camps is primarily conducted in cooperation with many different actors (Jahre et al., 2018).

The engagement of previously listed actors makes refugee camps a political space. Even though it was tried to artificially de-politicise these spaces, scholars claim that these efforts of international actors have been unsuccessful as they remain undeniably political (Ilcan and Rygiel, 2015). Refugee camps have been described as a “biopolitical paradigm” (Fassin, 2007a, pp.501, 509), aiming to distance themselves from the political field. Several scholars find refugee camps to be

highly politicised territories (Ilcan and Rygiel, 2015; Jahre et al., 2018; Agier, 2010).

Refugee camps are strongly linked to humanitarian governance as it is a place where it is put into practice. Additionally, both migration and humanitarianism are highly politicised topics in international debates.

3.3 Environmental Mainstreaming

Taking the previous factors of humanitarianism and humanitarian governance into account, one can link environmental mainstreaming to policy-making. This concept challenges humanitarian governance and is further elaborated in the following. This has, additionally, effects on (de-)politicisation as well as clusterisation, as they relate to governance and policy-making structures.

Environmental and climate change mainstreaming is a process that has been rather present in the development and development cooperation field in the recent past. Mainstreaming is a complex process “[...] that brings marginal, sectoral, issues into the centre of discussions, thereby attracting more political attention, economic resources and intellectual capacities.” (Gupta and van der Grijp, 2010, p.63). This mainstreaming can be seen in various sectors concerning different issues. A clear example of this is gender-mainstreaming, which this thesis aims to address. Even though environmental mainstreaming is predominantly a developmental concern, it has previously been addressed and challenged in the humanitarianism field. With rising climate change concerns and problems such as waste and environmental degradation, environmental protection has recently been moved as a core challenge in international humanitarian action. Scholars from different fields and backgrounds now recognise the great need to “green” this sector as well (Dominelli, 2013). It has become one of the upcoming most significant challenges for the global arena.

To specify the concept clearly, one must differentiate between environmental mainstreaming and climate change mainstreaming (Gupta and van der Grijp,

2010). While both are somewhat similar concepts, climate change mainstreaming focuses on climate change adaptation (Kunz & Gold, 2017). This entails desertification, changing weather patterns, and rising temperatures considered throughout the entire sector and policy making (Gupta and van der Grijp, 2010). Environmental mainstreaming is a holistic approach which addresses overall factors related to the problem. This includes man-made influences, such as waste management and pollution (Nunan et al., 2012). As this study focuses on humanitarian aspects and the politics behind it, the research uses the concept of environmental mainstreaming¹.

3.4 Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus and Refugees

The concepts above challenges core features of humanitarian governance, hence, it is relevant to next examine the humanitarian-development-peace nexus next. This concept aims to challenge the current features of humanitarianism and development-led approaches to refugees and aims to bridge the relevant gap.

The humanitarian-development-peace nexus is a concept which brings up the challenge of interlinking and connecting the different spheres and shows, how they overlap and relate to each other. In most practical cases, each sphere of humanitarian response, development work, and peace-building is reciprocal and mutually dependent. As challenges are similar across all sectors, there is a great need for inter-sectoral response (Zetter, 2019). Development and humanitarianism are two different concepts, with each different core notions and approaches. Bringing humanitarianism and development together can help bridge the gap between emergency responses and long-term interventions, which can strengthen building resilience and enhances better response (Ilcan & Rygiel, 2015).

¹ *Conceptual clarity: focus is on the concept of “environmental mainstreaming” and not “climate change mainstreaming”.*

Migration is a topic which is addressed through all these different approaches, whether it is humanitarian response, building resilience, or peace-building efforts. Here, all these concepts congregate to address the different perspectives to find sustainable, suitable, and efficient long-term responses (Ilean & Rygiel, 2015). Nevertheless, this is rarely the case in practice. The focal point is divided into each individual sector and struggles to combine them (Zetter, 2019)².

This challenge can be linked to features of humanitarian governance, as well as politicisation, de-politicisation, and clusterisation, as they go along with challenging current structures in the humanitarian sector. Similarly, both clusterisation and the nexus aim to bridge the gaps in current humanitarianism and strive to implement more sustaining and sustainable solutions.

3.5 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of the underlying research is threefold. It is based on humanitarian governance, environmental mainstreaming, and the humanitarian-development-peace-nexus.

The theoretical framework builds upon a development-led approach to refugee crises on the particular example of integrating environmental mainstreaming (Kelly, 2013). This is a development approach to humanitarian governance, which also goes into the current trend of clusterisation in humanitarian governance, while promoting more cooperation, more intra-sectoral coordination, and a unification of the different sectors. Throughout addressing a humanitarian crisis, it is shifting from emergency and humanitarian response towards building resilience and addressing all other necessary sectors (Zetter, 2019). The theoretical framework is considering the contribution of this research in relations to previous studies in the literature. This allocates the present study in the field of research, revealing the current gap in the literature and the theories it is conducted and analysed within. Refugee camps and forced displacement, coming along with a

² *conceptual clarity: scholars refer to it as the humanitarian-development nexus and the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. Both are relevant for the framework of the study, covering the same issues.*

humanitarian crisis are always addressed with humanitarian aid response. This is governed through emergency frameworks. Putting environmental mainstreaming into the debate challenges current and past approaches and brings about a new, development-led approach (Gupta and van der Grijp, 2010; Zetter, 2019). The graph below illustrates the relations between the theories and visualises their interactions.



Figure 3: Illustration of the theoretical framework

4 Methodology

In this chapter, the research design is explained, and specific methods are depicted. Next, the data collection approach is explained and illustrated.

4.1 Research Design and Methods

This thesis is a single case study of a flexible and exploratory design. It creates a link between theories and empirical data gained from the case. “Case study [...] involves an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context using multiple sources of evidence.” (Robson and McCartan, 2016, p.150). While the theoretical background and previously conducted studies provide the framework, the empirical data will enable the additional character of the case study. The research is done with a holistic approach and aims for a real-world research, while unfolding the theories in practice (Robson and McCartan, 2016).

The collected data method includes both primary and secondary data from expert interviews (Bogner et al., 2009).

The data analysis is qualitative and thematic (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The analysed data from reports, secondary data from stakeholders, and interview data are all interpreted in the empirical data analysis. Collected and coded material is structured into different sub-topics and investigated (Punch, 2005, p. 199; Braun and Clarke, 2006).

4.2 Data Collection and Material

4.2.1 Semi-structured Expert Interviews

The first way to collect data is through three semi-structured expert interviews with professionals working in the field and experienced in the challenges of the case. This helps to overcome the limitations that are linked to the methodology of a desk study, which would include a lack of primary data, such as observation and talking to locals (Robson and McCartan, 2016, pp.285-298; Punch, 2005, pp.168-171)

Semi-structured interviews offer the potential to receive the necessary information and still give the experts freedom to share exactly what they are specialised in (Robson and McCartan, 2016, pp.290-293). Interviews are transcribed, coded, and analysed (Kvale, 2007, pp.92-119). The conversation is conducted in the English language as it is predominantly used throughout the sector and the interviewees are living in different countries. Interviewees are anonymised and referred as e.g. “Interviewee A”. They are selected through online research on the case and due to their unique field experience. The interviews are conducted through online video-calls.

The interviewees agree to the interviews being recorded by signing an informed consent form. Alternatively, they agree via email and in the beginning of the call. To find more experts, a snowball-effect is used, letting the experts recommend others. About 15-20 questions are asked, with an open end and flexibility to adjust. The questions depend on individuals, leaving the possibility for explorative follow-up questions (Bogner et al., 2009; Kvale, 2007). While some experts have specific insights on the case, others are experts in the sector. The interviewees work for NGOs in the humanitarian aid sector and are experienced in working with emergency responses, humanitarian needs, and environmental policies. The appendices B, C, and D include the interview guide, interview questions, and information about the data collection emails.

4.2.2 Qualitative Secondary Data

Further data is collected through secondary qualitative sources (Robson and McCartan, 2016, p.359), including reports, media and press statements from different stakeholders in the sector and the field. These sources are gathered through online research and are selected on several criteria (Punch, 2005, p.184). The study's timeframe is from the establishment of the Minawao Camp back in 2013 until the present. Most data is available for recent years.

The data includes different power dynamics between its stakeholders. While international organisations such as the European Commission's Directorate General are considered, important sources also come from NGO statements about their internal greening efforts. Furthermore, the media and the press hold different standpoints. Thereby, it is taken into account that none of these sources include directly affected people, i.e. Minawao Refugees. The data collection tables for the sources are listed in the appendices A.

4.3 Limitations

Limitations of the study are based on the limited single case study, which only gives the perspective of a singular case with unique challenges. Factors that are relevant in one camp might occur differently in other contexts. Local politics, climate, cultural factors, and more, uniquely affect this individual case. As the subject research is a desk study, there is no field observation, nor interviews with the affected people. Hence, there is a lack of deep cultural and contextual understanding from the research towards the researched context. Looking at the case from an outside perspective brings about both, limited data and limited understanding (Robson and McCartan, 2016). The study limitations are taken into consideration throughout the entire research and are addressed by finding well-rounded and diverse data resources. An extensive literature review and data review can assist overcoming the limited access to primary data. This is also addressed by conducting remote expert interviews, which gives the researcher an improved understanding of the case and can provide an in-depth analysis and interpretation of the findings (Bogner et al., 2009; Robson and McCartan, 2016).

Further limitations include cognitive biases from the researcher in the process of the thesis. These biases can include language biases, the outside-perspective of the researcher, and potentially biased information from the interviewees and the collected data (Robson and McCartan, 2016, p.171; Bogner et al., 2009, p.253).

5 Data Analysis

In this chapter, the collected data is analysed. This qualitative, thematic analysis is approached through the method explained above. Deductive coding reveals different categories and themes from the data sources.

Thematic analysis:

	Subtheme 1	Subtheme 2	Subtheme 3
Politicisation	-actors and power dynamics	-donorship and funding -political economy	-role of governments
De-politicisation	-ownership	-building resilience -nexus approach	-partnership and collaboration
Clusterisation	-coordination	-bridging the gaps	

The collected material entails information about different approaches around the issue area. This encompasses governance in migration and humanitarian response, policies in humanitarianism, greening strategies, mainstreaming approaches and challenges, and future potential for the nexus of environmental mainstreaming and humanitarian governance. Furthermore, the politicisation and de-politicisation of humanitarian aid is addressed throughout the following analysis.

In order to analyse the collected data, codes are defined and used throughout the process. Creating such categories facilitates the comparative process and creates an analytical space to examine the material (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

The material is divided into thematic sub-sections, which are split into how environmental mainstreaming becomes part of politicisation and de-politicisation of humanitarian governance. Collected findings from the data will be analysed.

5.1 Politicisation

Examining how environmental mainstreaming has become part of the politicisation process of humanitarianism, one must assess the identified theme: *power dynamics* between *actors* and who gets to have a say in the sector. While Minawao Camp has already introduced greener projects, comparable camps are further behind in terms of environmental approaches (Interviewee A, 14 April, 2022). As current greening trends in humanitarianism are often weak when looking at global developments, it needs to be acknowledged that the current unstructured system plays a role in it. Experts claim that the involved actors are structured unclearly, and task-division is un-coordinated (Interviewee A, 14 April, 2022). Moreover, the actions of aid workers are often politicised when organisations have to decide whether to intervene in certain conflicts. Most refugees in Minawao are internationally recognised as forcibly displaced people, which is much less of a driving factor than in other cases. Environmental mainstreaming can influence decision-making and goals in responses and can lead to different actions.

Interviewee A, (14 April, 2022): *“So most of our meetings are on Zoom now. And so that reduces a significant carbon footprint. And when we come to visit them, it's two people twice a year. And we're seeing that with a lot of other international non-government organizations are reducing travel.”*

To draw conclusions from the first theme, the way power dynamics between the actors are structured is fuelling into the politicisation process of humanitarian governance. While environmental mainstreaming impacts the actors and stakeholders mentioned above, they all have different takes on the challenges and react differently.

The next theme to be analysed is *funding, donorship, and the political economy* behind the governance of humanitarian aid. Donorship and funding opportunities in the sector tend to be highly politicised. Environmental policies can further increase this, as they might require re-allocation and new allocations of funds for projects and responses (Brügge, 2020). In the case of Minawao, there are projects that require more financial support, in order to make them more sustainable and long-lasting. An example is planting the “Great Green Wall” (Interviewee A, 14 April, 2022). This initiative for re-forestation is to grow a wall of trees in the Sahel-zone to combat regional desertification (Great Green Wall, 2022; UNHCR, 2021). Although aid organisations aim to invest in more sustainable tools and materials, it often means higher expenses. Additionally, not all materials are available to be procured locally due to a lack of resources. However, local procurement is seen as a more sustainable solution than flying in materials from abroad (Interviewee C, 23 May, 2022).

Interviewee A, (14 April, 2022): *“So with our manufacturers, [...], a lot of items are made in China. And then we tried to procure locally when we can, we need to make sure that the materials are at a certain high quality level. [...] That reduces (immensely the environmental impact).”*

A further area of conflict is the competition over agreements and grants for NGOs. Humanitarian aid organisations have to compete against their partners, who often have similar goals, for the same financial means. Hence, instead of agreeing on a joint solution and finding the most beneficial solution for the affected people, organisations have to shape their projects to satisfy donors requirements. Hereby, it is commonly visible that funding, and the lack of it, may lead to environmental mainstreaming not being adequately considered (Interviewee B, 16 May, 2022). This results into further politicisation of the process.

The European Union’s organs are large donors and driving forces in determining funding and trends (Pusterla and Pusterla, 2021). Recommendations and standards are being set in place but are not yet binding (Pusterla and Pusterla, 2021). Also other donors set up environmental policies, with a lack of feasible implementation

possibilities (Brügge, 2020). The issue perceived hereby is the lack of funding that goes into greening policies and environmental mainstreaming efforts.

Interviewee B, (16 May, 2022): *“There's loads of different types of standards coming in, which is good and has to be formalized a bit better, but it doesn't go with the funding, because the funding for the humanitarian assistance overall is actually reducing because it's very much stretched across many different crisis.”*

Interviewee B, (16 May, 2022): *“In terms of the feasibility, I would say that the requirements to do environmental mainstreaming should be there by [...] the donors.”*

It can be concluded that all actors perceive funding levels as too low and generally insufficient (Interviewee B, 16 May, 2022). NGOs as implementing partners, tend to not be able to work at their full capacities due to lack of funding (Interviewee A, 14 April, 2022).

The second theme about funding and donorship clearly unfolds the obstacles for humanitarian workers and their organisations to implement what is needed and required to mainstream the environment within the entire sector. The current political economy and governance system create a frame in which required measures are of great difficulty to be implemented and brought into action.

The third theme is the analysis of the *role of governments*, which play a major role in international humanitarianism and its governance. They are some of the largest donors and impact sectoral dynamics and trends.

Interviewee B, (16 May, 2022): *“The donors are doing the advocating more to the governments to give more towards the humanitarian assistance because every country has some kind of percentage that they provide to the UN, EU, or whatever. For humanitarian assistance, it is often at the mean super low. [...] It depends on the country, but it's quickly below even 1% of GDP. So at this point, it doesn't really go with the funding.”*

Not only do they provide the fiscal means for humanitarian action, they also determine other factors, such as letting aid workers and organisations into conflict

zones, providing or denying legal or logistical frames, infrastructure, and more (Interviewee C, 23 May, 2022). Having the governments as a large determining stakeholder, leads to heavy politicisation of adopted responses. Through their actions, politicians create a political stance on humanitarian aid. This can be seen from both sides, giving donor country and beneficiary country. Both have power to influence and politicise the action as demonstrated by the collected data (Interviewee C, 23 May, 2022).

The government and local authorities have significant impact on refugee and migrant movements. They are the ones who determine labels and categories of migrants and regulate the flows. These authorities can decide to either hinder or support migrants entering, passing through, or hosting immigrants.

In the case of Minawao, the government and authorities of Cameroon have been welcoming towards incoming refugees, facilitating humanitarian assistance and giving humanitarian organisations the possibility to help (Interviewee A, 14 April, 2022).

Local authorities help the refugees in the camp to receive their own land. Additionally, arriving migrants are encouraged and supported to build their own council and build local governments. These local councils can decide e.g. which infrastructure projects need to be supported, what kind of investments should be done and how they want to be governed without external guidance (Interviewee A, 14 April, 2022).

This shows how the government and local authorities can help to benefit and support refugees and create the framework and baseline for them to create a better livelihood. Authorities can give the refugees the right to participate in political debates and local councils. Non-governmental actors, such as humanitarian organisations, do not have the same legal and political power to implement such.

Interviewee A, (14 April, 2022): *“They have a government council [...] within the camp. It's Nigerians who vote each other in and they do a lot of their own development projects. So they identify when a road needs to be constructed. They identify if there are WASH issues, they will come together and figure out how to improve different systems.”*

The above examples demonstrate the ubiquity of politics and politicisation of governing refugees in the camp. Politicisation plays a large role in humanitarian governance and plays into environmental mainstreaming as well. It influences how environmental mainstreaming can shape governance. While the role of the government plays an important role and politicises humanitarian response, it can be concluded that more local ownership and independence the people gain themselves, the more it will de-politicise the issues. Hence, the above leads to the following analysis section.

5.2 De-politicisation

As the previously analysed themes show, many parts which politicise the issue area, but there are also others that play more into de-politicisation. The next theme analysed here is *ownership*. This goes along with above shown examples of building one's own local council and government. Ownership can make the affected people more engaged in their own development efforts and can help them become part of the change. Local populations and refugees, namely all affected stakeholders, are supposed to be engaged and participate (Interviewee C, 23 May, 2022; ShelterCluster.org, 2022b). The ultimate goal for the beneficiaries is to become independent from humanitarian aid and generate their own livelihood and income.

Interviewee A, (14 April, 2022): “ *The United Nations who runs the camp, in collaboration with the government of Cameroon designates a plot of land to the family. They have to establish themselves [...] they need to start finding a livelihood.*”

Interviewee A, (14 April, 2022): “[...] *If they can get their own land, and use it for some kind of income. That changes everything, in that great self-reliance.*”

This also includes making local partners independent from assistance from the West and from international organisations (Interviewee C, 23 May, 2022). The local organisations can act and respond without outside, politicised, assistance,

and can respond incised framework as it can disconnect from “political interests” of humanitarianism. This can have beneficial environmental mainstreaming implications and reduce greenhouse gases and emissions. Furthermore, it enhances local procurement efforts to get resources and materials from local markets.

Interviewee A, (14 April, 2022): *” We can trust our local partners, they're going to do really good work, [...], they can do emergency response work, they can do development work, and they can do it well. And they don't need their hand held by the West.”*

Ownership, which the interviewees have argued, is a further tool that shapes humanitarian governance. Local organisations have support from international partners but are much more independent in their own actions, while beneficiaries are less dependent on external resources and assistance.

Interviewee A, (14 April, 2022): *“But if we do the let-go thing, they can do the local procurement. They can identify the local goods, they can identify what’s good for their country and for their citizens. Then we can significantly reduce green-house gases. Then we don’t need to fly anymore.”*

In addition to local partner organisations, the current humanitarian governance needs more local experts to create ownership, independence, and mainstreaming environmental policies throughout the process (IFRC, 2021).

Interviewee A, (14 April, 2022): *”Yes, we need more local experts. [...] Every country needs it, but not every country can support (it).”*

Nevertheless, it is important to consider the local partners responding without external help. In many crisis regions, e.g. war-zones, it might not be able to have the necessary infrastructure for local procurement, such as insufficient resources, roads, logistics, and transportation means (Interviewee C, 23 May, 2022). Additionally, other external factors can make environmental-mainstreaming and greener humanitarian responses more difficult.

Interviewee B (16 May, 2022): *“So there's lots of obviously, like, mitigation measures that you have to put in place, and not only from an environmental perspective, [...], where we did solarize the water points [...], I think we improved this three times. And three times they were they were stealing all the solar panels.”*

The next theme of de-politicisation is *building resilience and the nexus approach*. This takes a closer look at the humanitarian response approach of making the affected people resilient to external crises, and enhancing and strengthening long-term response (ShelterCluster.org, 2022b; Brügge, 2020). This goes hand in hand with the nexus approach mentioned in the literature review, unifying the humanitarian-development-peace response. At its core is the goal to build back better and stronger after a disaster hit, which is a major part of mainstreaming environmental policies (IFRC, 2021). This is because greener policies require long-term planning and engagement, in comparison to the fast and immediate response of humanitarian action (Interviewee C, 23 May, 2022).

Interviewee A, (14 April, 2022): *“Cameroon, has been happening for a long time, we know what consistently needs to happen. And so we go with both, (meaning humanitarian response and development projects).”*

It is of great need to find local partners whom can take over responsibilities after the international emergency response. In this way, the people can address their own needs and reduce their vulnerabilities. Humanitarian assistance requires immediate response after a crisis hit or broke out (Interviewee B, 16 May, 2022). Humanitarian response can implement greener policies throughout its response, but it is only when development projects come into effect, that real change and resilience can be realised (Interviewee C, 23 May, 2022).

Interviewee C, (23 May, 2022): *“This environmental mainstreaming or environmental friendly approach should always be in the back of our heads. So while having humanitarian intervention, we cannot forget about the environment,*

[...], but it's more during the development process, that you can actually work towards changing something.”

The community's resilience is needed to be there as part of a first response, as it takes much longer for external organisations to be of help (IFRC, 2021). The nexus approach, which is enhanced by building resilience (Interviewee C, 23 May, 2022), is helping to de-politicise humanitarian governance, as it entails long-term planning and much slower and volatile actions that are used as political tools. These longer investments have less of a political stance compared to a quick responses.

The third theme under de-politicisation is *partnership and collaboration*. Current trends are going towards increased partnerships internationally, between different kinds of partners, whether with a local organisation, implementing ones, international actors, or any others. Linking different stakeholders together helps strengthen greener responses (NRC, 2022; IFRC, 2021; ShelterCluster.org, 2022b) and can help to mainstream standardized policies throughout the sector (Brügge, 2020). It is more environment-friendly to procure locally, or coordinate better between similar actors, to decrease e.g. transportation, share knowledge or come to mutual agreements, and unified goals (Interviewee B, 16 May, 2022). An excellent example of this is the climate and environment charter for humanitarian organisations (ICRC/IFRC, 2022). Moreover, Sphere standards are signed by humanitarian organisations who are committing to responsible, effective, and standardised humanitarian response (Sphere, 2019). Many organisations such as the Norwegian Refugee Council or the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies are setting goals to collaborate and partner up even more (NRC, 2022; IFRC, 2021).

Introducing standards can help de-politicise the debate, as humanitarian governance acts within an agreed framework and less on own decisions (ICRC/IFRC, 2022; Sphere, 2019). Here, environmental mainstreaming requires increased partnerships (NRC, 2022). Recently, there have been more and more efforts to create better networks within the sector (Sphere, 2019).

Interviewee A, (14 April, 2022): *“So we have a tripartite agreement. So UNHCR provides the specs provides the land, IEDA relief, uses the UN instructions to teach the families on how to make the mud bricks, how to construct the homes. And then we (the NGO) provides the tarpaulin and the rope for the top of the tent, or the top of the mud bricks.”*

This shows a strong partnership between international and local organisations, as well as within the cluster. Collaboration and partnership can help to implement environmental mainstreaming, and structure humanitarian governance. By partnering up and implementing unified goals, standardisation and mainstreamed policies are becoming much more feasible. Clusterisation is further analysed in the following section.

5.3 Clusterisation

Considering factors such as collaboration, partnership, and the nexus approach, it becomes clear that clusterisation in humanitarian governance plays an important role. Hence, the following analysis focuses on *clusterisation* and starts with *coordination* and collaboration.

Bringing environmental mainstreaming into humanitarian governance demonstrates clusterisation which is a dynamic process that is beneficial for accountability, coordination, standardisation, and bringing different stakeholders and actors together. The clusters facilitate sub-sections in humanitarian response, concentrating on a specific part of the response (ShelterCluster.org, 2022b).

Interviewee A, (14 April, 2022): *“We rely heavily on our partner [...] to attend the UN cluster, to build the relationships on the ground. We provide higher level training for them. We work with them on procurement. But what we've seen over time, [...], they build their capacity.”*

Interviewee B, (16 May, 2022): *“In any case, like clusters, or taking the lead on supporting or formalizing this a bit more, and also pushing the partners to work*

within the standards. And this has to be well-coordinated,[...], different organizations need to be trained on this. And this is kind of what clusters can be doing.”

Clusters are there to assist the humanitarian organisations with e.g. logistics or communication and can provide means to implement the interventions and projects (ShelterCluster.org, 2022b). Moreover, clusters as united forces, can push for governmental assistance, policy changes, request more funding, or help standardise the responses (Interviewee B, 16 May, 2022).

Clusterisation fuels de-politicisation, as it helps to structure it and to make power relations clearer. Furthermore, it also makes the response more strategic, organised, and coordinated, making it less politicised.

Looking at the second clusterisation theme, *bridging the gap*, it can be analysed and observed that the clusters help fulfil different steps of humanitarian response. From analysing collected data, one case argues that building strong clusters can help bridge the gap between different organisations, different sectors (e.g. protection, shelter, and nutrition), and between emergency response, and long-term resilience (ShelterCluster.org, 2022b). The shelter cluster report on environmental mainstreaming in humanitarian interventions argues for both a bottom-up approach and the support from the top, i.e. donors and large institutions (Brügge, 2020). The cluster calls for responsibility on all levels, international organisations, NGOs, donors, academia, and coordinating bodies to improve their strategies, coordinate, follow a set of guidelines, or provide an adequate amount of funding (Brügge, 2020).

The analysis shows that environmental mainstreaming greatly impacts humanitarian governance and shapes it in different ways, while challenging core concepts and main approaches.

6 Discussion

This chapter discusses the presented and analysed data and sets it in relation to the reviewed literature in chapter two, within the given conceptual and theoretical framework. Previous findings of the analysis are discussed and the arguments evaluated.

As previously explained, environmental mainstreaming has at its core the aim to implement all policies throughout the process with environmental considerations. The longevity and timeframe of planning in each approach are of different magnitude. While environmental mainstreaming requires long-term planning, humanitarian response is much more reliant on fast, emergency response. Additionally, environmental mainstreaming affects humanitarian governance by strengthening resilience throughout the responses (Ilcan and Rygiel, 2015).

Environmental mainstreaming goals are to aspire to the most sustainable solutions. Hence, local stakeholders such as regional and local partners and smaller NGOs play a much more crucial role. Decision-makers shift and aim to become more explicit in their power relations and structures. While environmental mainstreaming requires long-term planning for more sustainable responses, humanitarian emergency aid aims to act as fast as possible in order to save lives and alleviate human suffering (Eriksen et al., 2017; Kelly, 2013). Hence, one can conclude, that the way they are both structured and built now, goes against each other in their core natures (Brügge, 2020).

Even though humanitarianism is supposed to follow the principles of neutrality, impartiality, and independence (Rysaback-Smith, 2015), politicisation can be found ubiquitously in the sector. Politicisation factors include uneven power dynamics between the involved actors, donor relations and funding, and the role of governments and local authorities. Findings from the interviewees and the secondary data show the difficulties and complexities of such (Interviewee A, 14 April, 2022; Interviewee C, 23 May, 2022). Actors are operating in an unbalanced

playing field, where international relations play a critical role. Moreover, foreign organisations can impact local contexts. Larger organisations demonstrate power and financial flexibility, while smaller organisations show dependencies on external funds. Humanitarian aid organisations are struggling to implement environmental mainstreaming, and this is often due to limited funds. While the literature shows donor's efforts to implement and standardize environmental approaches, the interviewees argued that for humanitarian organisations, it are the donors and governments who are not providing sufficient funds for the respective implementation (Pusterla and Pusterla, 2021).

Governments play a significant role in providing the proper framework for humanitarian responses. It is the political context in the country or case which heavily influences the possibilities and prospects of emergency responses. The data findings show that a collaborative government and local authorities can have significant benefits for the beneficiaries and affected people (Interviewee A, 14 April, 2022).

De-politicisation is set into a relationship with ownership for beneficiaries, emphasising resilience and the nexus approach, as well as partnership and collaboration. These factors are identified to strengthen de-politicisation processes in humanitarian governance. While the literature only marginally refers to the issues (Ilcan and Rygiel, 2015), the analysis unveiled that humanitarian governance, shaped by environmental mainstreaming, can have significant de-politicised implications.

Clusterisation is an essential element in the current humanitarian governance. The way that environmental mainstreaming shapes the sector uncovers the relevance of clusterisation. The secondary data and the expert interviewees emphasised on its relevance in the context of ownership, strengthening local participation, building resilience, partnership, and collaboration (ShelterCluster.org, 2022b; ShelterCluster.org, 2022a; Brügge, 2020).

Going in line with clusterisation, the humanitarian-development-peace nexus plays a major role in shaping current governance dynamics and how environmental mainstreaming is considered (Zetter, 2019).

Reflecting on the reviewed literature, concepts, and theories, it can be stated that the collected and analysed data can validate and add-on to previously conducted studies. While only a few scholars argue for the mainstreaming environment in humanitarianism, there is much more development literature that can be found in this context (Gupta and van der Grijp, 2010). The data illustrates that humanitarian core concepts and principles are challenged by bringing mainstreaming into the interventions. The interviewees argue that longer-term approaches are needed to realise greener policies. Yet, it is challenging to implement this in the current short term biased governance system (Interviewee A, 14 April, 2022; Interviewee B, 16 May, 2022).

Environmental mainstreaming affects millions of refugees worldwide. Simultaneously, both the environment and the refugees themselves are in need of more specific attention, to prevent further suffering and destruction, while allowing more forward-looking policies with improved solutions and approaches.

7 Conclusion

The aim of this study is to analyse and investigate: *How does environmental mainstreaming shape humanitarian governance in the refugee camp Minawao, Cameroon, in Sub-Saharan Africa?*

This thesis argues that environmental mainstreaming shapes humanitarian governance in many ways, while the core natures of both concepts tend to be contradictory. As shown in the data analysis and later in the discussion, humanitarian aid requires an immediate response, while environmental mainstreaming demands more long-term perspectives. Therefore, it concludes that the approach of humanitarian-development-peace nexus with its multi-faceted and cross-sectoral understanding, is more suitable for mainstreaming rather than the current structures of humanitarian governance.

Moreover, the cluster approach is a further step towards creating a framework of governance that enables both improved structures and mainstreaming greener policies easier to implement. Core structures and features of humanitarianism are ethical-based and aim to save lives and alleviate human suffering as fast as possible. This leads to emergency responses only, which a lack long-term planning and sustainable approaches. The clusters address humanitarian action with new ways of organisation, structures, while increasing collaboration, partnerships, and coordination. This new concept introduces new opportunities, and can be part of shaping humanitarian governance, to be able to implement and standardise environmental mainstreaming.

As identified in the analysis, environmental mainstreaming can influence the politicisation processes and highlights the highly politicised nature of the concept. Thus, environmental mainstreaming can potentially help to de-politicise humanitarian aid via an organised, collaborated response, such as partnerships between international and local organisation, boosting ownership and independence. Fundamentally, by creating more structured, balanced power

relations with unified goals, this process can make greening policies more ubiquitous while reducing politicisation.

7.1 Implications

This thesis contributes to the field of qualitative research in humanitarian governance, in relation to environmental mainstreaming efforts, in the context of migration and refugee camps. This is realised by highlighting the various challenges the sector faces with these concepts. Refugee camps, as centres of humanitarianism and human needs, bring about obstacles that need to be addressed. This entails in the case of Minawao severe environmental degradation, along with political, social, and economic constraints. The thesis shows the difficulties of mainstreaming environmental policies in humanitarian intervention, when the main priority is to save lives.

This thesis is also relevant to all stakeholders in humanitarian governance and actors involved in the sector. It reveals significant challenges within the innovative approach to humanitarian aid in general, and shows the particular challenges facing both policy makers, humanitarian aid organisations, and their workers. As demonstrated by the interviews, implementing environmental mainstreaming and the nexus approach is of key concern. Both the challenges and their implications for practical application require more academic attention.

7.2 Future Research

Though this study investigates how environmental mainstreaming affects humanitarian governance in specific instances, it does not allow an overall generalisation of the sector as a whole. Hence, there is a need for future research to validate and build upon the relevant findings.

Clusterisation in humanitarian governance is severely understudied as it has only recently become a trend and is still being established as a standard approach in

humanitarian response. Therefore, its direct implications for the humanitarian sector, as well as in relation to environmental efforts and mainstreaming, are still unclear and there is a gap in academic literature.

Moreover, the politicisation of humanitarian aid, being a controversial topic, leave room for further research to better understand of the underlying dynamics. It remains to be questioned how these processes are linked and intertwined in this complex issue area.

Having a larger data collection can enable future researchers to understand the direct effects of environmental mainstreaming in different cases. It is hitherto questionable, how environmental mainstreaming will evolve. As the analysis and discussion unveil significant hardship in the realisation of environmental mainstreaming in refugee response, future research shall exhibit how detailed fractures originate and respectively evolve going forward.

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9 Appendix:

Data Collection:

Appendix A: Data Collection, Selected Secondary Sources

Selected Sources (Secondary Data)				
No.	Title	Year	Type	Additional Information
Reports				
1	Pusterla, F. and E. Pusterla.: The future of humanitarian aid in a new context full of challenges.	2021	Report from Policy Department, European Parliament Study	
2	Brügge, C., Pinochet, J. and Vichitlekarn, V.: Environmental Mainstreaming in Humanitarian Interventions	2020	Report	
NGOs				
3	NRC: "How NRC is greening its humanitarian aid."	2022	Statement from NGO	
4	Green Response, IFRC	2022	Statement from NGO	
5	Sphere Standards: Reducing environmental impact in humanitarian response	2019	Thematic Fact Sheet	
6	Global Shelter Cluster, PowerPoint Presentation	2022	Workshop Presentation	Humanitarian needs for the shelter cluster
7	Climate Charter: the Climate and Environment Charter for Humanitarian Organisations (ICRC/IFRC, 2022)	2022	Charter	

Appendix B: List of Interviewees

Selected Expert Interviewees					
No.	Name	Institution	Profession	Expertise	Date
1	Interviewee A	Shelterbox NGO	Humanitarian Director	Specialisation in the work of the NGO in terms of greening policies and in the overall humanitarian sector	14.04.2022
2	Interviewee B	Polish Humanitarian Action (PAH)	Project Manager	Work experience in the humanitarian aid sector, focus in emergencies and migration	16.05.2022
3	Interviewee C	Polish Humanitarian Action	Project Manager	Work experience in the humanitarian aid sector	23.05.2022

Appendix C: Email Interview Invitations:

Hello!

I am a Bachelor’s Student at Lund University in Sweden in Development Studies and Political Science. I am currently conducting research on environmental mainstreaming and greening the international humanitarian sector. Thereby, I will be looking at the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, humanitarian governance, and more. The research focus for this case study will be the Minawao Refugee Camp in Cameroon. The case was chosen due to its unique efforts in environmental response and climate change adaption.

I would kindly like to ask if there is a possibility to ask You or a colleague questions on the challenges?

I am very much looking forward to your response, and thank you already in advance for your cooperation.

Kind regards,
 Rebecca Majewski

Appendix D: Interview Guide:

1. Could you tell me a bit about experience in the field? What do you work with? / What have you worked with in the past?
 - What does your organisation work with?
2. What does the situation look like in Minawao Refugee Camp? How was your experience in Minawao Refugee Camp?
3. Can you tell me a bit about the Minawao Refugee Camp and in what ways it differs from others? What makes it unique?
4. What are the greatest needs for the refugees, once they arrive in Minawao? What are the most important long-term needs for the refugees in Minawao?
5. What is the major thing you would report about in the refugee camp?
6. How does your organisation work in this refugee camp?
7. Does your organisation aim to implement greening policies in Minawao?
8. What challenges are created through the current humanitarian governance system? What are the challenges in the humanitarian governance system?
9. Where do you see potential benefits and challenges in implementing greening policies in the sector, especially in refugee camps?
10. How does environmental mainstreaming/greening policies challenges the current system of humanitarian governance?
11. How does environmental mainstreaming shape humanitarian governance in Minawao?
12. How do you think environmental mainstreaming can impact humanitarian governance?
13. What elements from environmental mainstreaming can impact what elements from humanitarian governance?
14. Does environmental mainstreaming or greening policies play into the clusterisation of humanitarian governance? In what way?

Additional/flexible questions:

1. How does environmental mainstreaming shape humanitarian governance in Sub-Saharan Africa?
2. What are the top 3 measures that would make live for the refugees easier in Minawao?