



Building Resilience: The EU's approach

FACTSHEET

Facts & Figures

The EU is committed to strengthening resilience worldwide.

Regional Resilience Programmes

- AGIR

The Global Alliance for Resilience Initiative (AGIR) supports 14 West African countries in strengthening the resilience of the most vulnerable across the Sahel. With an initial **€200 million**, AGIR aims at 'Zero Hunger' in the next 20 years.

- SHARE

The EU's 'Supporting the Horn of Africa's Resilience' (SHARE), a joint humanitarian-development approach to improve the ability of people, communities and countries to face persistent and acute emergencies. With a package of more than **€ 270 million**, SHARE has boosted resilience initiatives in the Eastern Horn of Africa (Ethiopia, Kenya, Djibouti and Somalia) since 2012.

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Cash-for-Work site in Safo, department of Madarounfa (Niger). Photo credit: WFP/Rein Skullerud

Key messages

- Today's world is characterised by increasingly complex challenges and trends: climate change, protracted displacement, pandemics, extremism, population movements and growth. Such challenges test the resilience of communities and national institutions and stretch the ability of regional and international organisations to support them.
- The EU is placing resilience as a central objective of development and humanitarian assistance. To reduce humanitarian needs we must put people first, and allow them, especially children, to fulfil their full potential. We need to tackle the root causes of conflict, fragility and vulnerability, addressing under-nutrition and poverty.
- The European Commission wants to prevent forced displacement from becoming protracted and to gradually end dependence on humanitarian assistance in existing displacement situations. It is of paramount importance that political and developmental stakeholders, in close cooperation with humanitarian actors, engage at the outset of a displacement crisis.

What is resilience?

Resilience is the ability of an individual, a household, a community, a country or a region to withstand, cope, adapt, and quickly recover from stresses and shocks such as violence, conflict, drought and other natural disasters without compromising long-term development.

The EU approach to resilience

The costs of humanitarian crises are escalating, as climate change generates more severe weather-related disasters and as the world faces new pressures from population growth, urbanisation, land and eco-systems' degradation, scarcity of natural resources, fragility of states and complex conflicts.

There is an urgent need to help people and communities to withstand and recover from increasing shocks and stresses. In other words, help them build their resilience.

Achieving resilience in third countries requires all EU actors (humanitarian, development and political) to work together differently and more effectively. This entails more collaborative action between humanitarian aid and development cooperation, from the on-set of a crisis to the aftermath of a crisis or disaster. This involves the development of shared assessments, strategies and implementation plans to build resilience.

In October 2012, the Commission presented its Communication ['The EU Approach to Resilience - Learning from Food Security Crises'](#) to confirm its strong commitment to building resilience in crisis-prone countries.

[The 'Action Plan for Resilience in Crisis Prone Countries 2013-2020'](#) operationalises the Communication and sets the ways forward for a more effective EU collaborative action on building resilience, bringing together humanitarian action, long-term development cooperation and on-going political engagement.

This EU approach integrates earlier EU commitments to risk management, including initiatives on disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation, social protection, nutrition and food security. It ensures that different sectors complement and work better together towards the shared goals of reducing poverty and humanitarian needs. Resilience is factored into all EU development and humanitarian assistance.

Co-ordinated planning and programming between EU and Member States humanitarian and development actors, based on joint analyses and identification of risks and vulnerabilities, are applied in more and more countries (e.g. Nepal, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Haiti, Jordan, Mali, Senegal, Kenya Central African Republic). The European Union Emergency Trust Fund, which was announced at the Valletta Summit on Migration in November 2015, is a good example of drawing on all EU strengths to address the root causes of destabilisation, forced displacement and irregular migration by promoting economic and equal opportunities, strengthening the resilience of vulnerable people, and boosting security and development.

The EU Action Plan for Resilience

The European Union's Action Plan for Resilience outlines the steps to be undertaken for delivering early results and supports collecting best practice on effective support for populations in need. Priority is given to vulnerable countries that face recurrent crises and that are prone to risk.

The successful implementation of the Action Plan requires strong collaboration among EU Member States, other partner countries, the affected communities themselves as well as NGOs, international organisations, the private sector and the research community.

PRIORITIES:

Supporting the development and implementation of national resilience capacities

Early priority in the action plan is given to vulnerable countries and regions where both EU humanitarian and development assistance are present. The aim is to develop shared assessments, strategies and implementation plans to build resilience. The EU is already incorporating resilience into an increasing number of national indicative programmes and multi annual indicative programmes, especially in fragile and crises-prone countries, mostly where the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department (ECHO) has been present for a longer period and where development is seen as the best way of building resilience.

Promoting innovation, learning and advocacy

A common understanding of what works and what does not work, and why, is required. The European Union and partners are working on new approaches and systems of monitoring and research, to establish better practice and to scale up or to further advocate for resilience. In Haiti and the Caribbean, for example, the EU



has been at the forefront of developing catastrophe insurance for prompt pay-outs when a disaster strikes, both at national and local level.

Improving methodologies and tools

Effective mechanisms and guidance are being developed to support the European Commission, the European External Action Service and the EU Delegations, as well as all relevant stakeholders in implementing their resilience commitments. In partnership with the United Nations and other partners the European Union developed InfoRM (Global Open Source Risk Management for Humanitarian Crises and Disasters), the first global tool to measure the risk of humanitarian crises and help better prevent, mitigate and prepare for them.

MAIN INITIATIVES:

The most important initiatives now are the Supporting Horn of Africa Resilience (SHARE) in East Africa, the Global Alliance for Resilience Initiative (AGIR) in the Sahel and West African Region. Apart from these, the European Commission is working in a disaster reduction programme in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific, as well as in Global Climate Change Alliance programme.

The European Commission will increasingly incorporate flexibility and preparedness for early action in its development programmes. In December 2015, the EU mobilised €125 million in support of countries affected by 'El Niño' in Africa, Central America and the Caribbean. The objective of this initiative is to respond to the drought situation while building early pre-emptive action and preparedness capabilities at the same time.

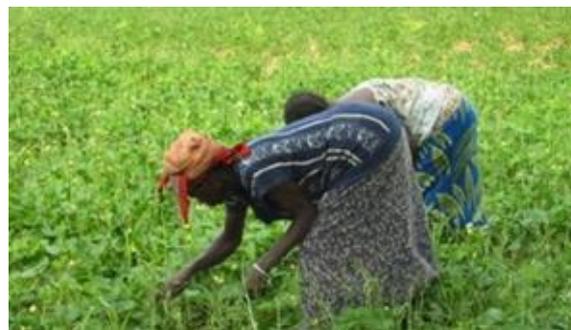
The EU also introduced a "Resilience Marker" to track activities in humanitarian projects to reduce risks and to strengthen coping capacities to avoid or reduce future humanitarian needs.

In 2015, the EU launched the [Resilience Compendium](#) – 29 practical examples of DRR and Resilience by the EU, by governments, other donors, agencies, civil society organisations (CSOs) and vulnerable communities

As a prominent part of the European Development Days 2016 – Europe's leading forum on development and international co-operation, the 2016 EU Resilience Forum is bringing together representatives from donors, civil society organisations, think-tanks, and partner countries highlighting the importance of local action to address fragility and protracted displacement.

Examples of projects contributing to resilience

In West Africa, the European Union is collaborating through AGIR with regional and national authorities who are setting up a food security reserve system in case of food crisis. The programme involves farmers, local authorities, national governments and regional institutions. Effective coordination allows the mobilisation of the most appropriate response to specific food crises reducing the negative side effects often produced by traditional emergency food distributions. © EC



In Ethiopia, resilience is being built in selected areas that in the past have regularly been stricken by drought and where humanitarian assistance has been provided on and off. EU assistance there includes support to productive activities, water, sanitation and hygiene, nutrition and health. A longer-term presence in these areas is foreseen, whereby a quick change from a predominantly humanitarian to a development mode and vice versa will be possible if the situation so requires. © EC





Vietnam is frequently hit by tropical storms, causing floods and landslides. School-based disaster preparedness sessions funded by the European Union have taught approximately 500 000 school children and over 15 000 primary school teachers how to prepare for and cope with disasters involving all concerned people in drafting child-friendly safe-school plans. This program uses innovative and child-friendly methods, such as the simulation exercises and drills. © EC

In **Nepal**, early warning systems have minimised losses of life and property. When flood levels on the Rapt river breached the warning level, communities downstream were notified through a radio and telephone network. They had time to shift their essential and movable assets to higher and safer places. When the flood reached the villages, all potentially affected people in those locations had already reached safety. © EC



In **Haiti**, an initiative supported by the EU has provided low-income micro-entrepreneurs with affordable insurance against weather-related risks. Thousands are now better protected against losses derived from natural calamities, preventing them from default on debts and/or problems to get loans when they need funding to recover from a crisis. Despite being a highly disaster-prone country, Haiti has one of the world's lowest insurance rates, so efforts are being made to scale up these endeavours. © EC

In **Mali**, a joint humanitarian and development framework addressing the structural causes of food and nutrition insecurity in northern Mali was developed under the AGIR programme. The framework allows a better articulation and complementarity between the different humanitarian and development assistance instruments towards greater resilience, as well as a better alignment of their interventions with the priorities identified under AGIR. © EC



In **Senegal**, EU development cooperation contributes to building resilience through several ways: by supporting NGO projects at local level in areas of highest vulnerability; by supporting producer organisations in the development of agricultural insurance and health insurance for producers so they can cope better with individual or external shocks; and by supporting the government with an ambitious sector reform contract. Resilience activities focus particularly on the poorest population, which is highly vulnerable to food crises. © EC

