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## HUMANITARIAN IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (HIP)

### EU Children of Peace

AMOUNT: EUR 11 000 000

#### 0. MAJOR CHANGES SINCE PREVIOUS VERSION OF THE HIP

The on-going Ebola epidemic has not only cost thousands of lives and put tremendous stress on health systems, it has also had a negative impact on society and the social structures at large in the three most affected countries: Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. UNICEF estimates that at least 5 million children aged between 3 and 17 have been out of school due to Ebola, and the outbreak is threatening to reverse years of education progress.<sup>1</sup> This is critical, not only do children miss out on their education, but also on lifesaving items and health messages that can be passed on to children while at school. Schools also serve as a safe place where children are accounted for and protected from risks such as trafficking and child labor. Education can also provide necessary psychosocial support and restore a certain sense of normality. An increasing number of girls and boys have also lost their parents due to Ebola and another key concern is that, in the affected countries, communal responsibility for children has weakened, or even disappeared. Ebola orphans are being stigmatized, discriminated against and threatened by their communities and many are forced to leave and fend for themselves. For these children education can play a critical role in helping to tackle discrimination and stigmatization.

Providing education in the countries affected by Ebola will also strengthen the resilience of the population for future health crises. Education will help ensure that people are better equipped to keep themselves, their families and their communities safe.

Considering the Ebola outbreak's devastating impact on education and child protection in Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia described above, an amount of EUR 1 000 000 has been added to the current HIP from the operational reserve. This additional contribution will be used to ensure that children affected by the Ebola outbreak will receive education through the EU Children for Peace initiative. In areas where schools remain closed the additional funding can be used to provide: alternative sources of education; train teachers in Ebola prevention. The funding can also be used to support the re-opening of schools (including through providing catch-up classes for example) and support WASH in schools. Special attention should also be given to the provision of psychosocial support to affected children and especially to assist the Ebola orphans and prevent the stigmatization of child victims of Ebola.

#### CONTEXT

On 12 October 2012, the Nobel Prize Committee decided to award the 2012 Nobel Peace Prize to the European Union for over six decades' contribution to the advancement of peace and reconciliation, democracy and human rights in Europe.

The Commission formally accepted the prize, on behalf of the European Union, on 14 November 2012. The award - an amount of approximately EUR 930 000 (SEK 8 million) –

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.unicef.org/emergencies/ebola/>

was supplemented by funds from the EU's humanitarian aid budget to provide EUR 2 million in specific support for children affected by conflict and crisis situations (EU Children of Peace initiative). This was continued as an EU flagship initiative for education in emergencies in 2013 and 2014, each time adding funds in order to respond to the growing needs of ever-more affected children.

The current Humanitarian Implementation Plan (HIP) provides further support in the same context following up on the commitment to continue funding "Children of Peace" projects every year. The European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid states that "in responding to humanitarian need particular vulnerabilities must be taken into account. In this context, the EU will pay special attention to women, children, the elderly, sick and disabled people, and to addressing their specific needs".

Furthermore, the present HIP is in accordance with the Commission Communication "A Special Place for Children in EU External Action" (2008) and its accompanying Staff Working Document on Children in Emergency and Crisis Situations<sup>2</sup> in which education in emergencies and child soldiers are among the three focal issues, alongside emphasis on separated and unaccompanied children and children associated with armed forces or armed groups. The operations funded under this HIP will also feed into the Commission's contribution to the implementation of the EU Guidelines on Children and Armed Conflict<sup>3</sup> (adopted in 2003 and revised in 2008).

Children are both particularly vulnerable and particularly exposed to conflicts, as they do not have resources of their own and often lack protection.

Over 1 billion children live in conflict-affected areas, affecting girls and boys in many different ways.<sup>4</sup> Even more than adults, children risk to be killed or injured – in addition, in many context they are used as active participant in the hostilities. They can be recruited by armed groups – as fighters, for sexual exploitation or forced labor. Children are at high risk to be separated from their families or forcibly displaced. They also form a large proportion of antipersonnel mine victims.

Girls and boys are also at times left out of school during or in the immediate aftermath of conflict. The impact of conflict on these children is often long lasting, and in some contexts of protracted crises, they can easily become a "lost generation". An extreme example of long-term behavioral impact is that of many former child soldiers who replicate as adults the violent patterns that they experienced in their childhood, thus perpetuating violence. The international community has been trying to tackle these situations for years but the growing number of parallel complex crisis has only exacerbated the problem.

## 2. HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

Half of the 58 million children without access to education live in conflict-affected areas.<sup>5</sup> Conflicts often last several years and families can remain in refugee or internally displaced

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<sup>2</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/children\\_2008\\_Emergency\\_Crisis\\_Situations\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/children_2008_Emergency_Crisis_Situations_en.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/GuidelinesChildren.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/aid/countries/factsheets/thematic/children\\_conflict\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/aid/countries/factsheets/thematic/children_conflict_en.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Source: UNICEF: [www.unicef.org/education/bege\\_59826.html](http://www.unicef.org/education/bege_59826.html), Septembre 2014  
ECHO/CHD/BUD/2015/91000

person (IDP) camps for a very long time. Failure to provide education during protracted crises undermines entire generations of children, who remain uneducated and unprepared to contribute to their communities' recovery and resilience.

Education and recreational activities are crucial for the protection and development of conflict-affected children, as they provide them with necessary psychosocial support, enable them to keep their dignity and to develop their social and human values, and basically restore a certain sense of normality. Schools can be a safe place where children are accounted for and protected from risks. Life-saving items (food) and messages (vital health, nutrition and hygiene information, education regarding landmines, HIV prevention, DRR training and awareness, prevention of recruitment by armed groups, etc.) can be passed on to children in schools, who can pass on knowledge to their families. In this way, provision of education in conflict setting can be lifesaving, as well as a vector that supports the other humanitarian sectors.

Even more importantly, psycho-social support and education in emergencies operations can help to break the circle of violence, often perpetuated by young people who themselves have been traumatized during situations of conflict and war. This "education for peace" aspect is particularly relevant as part of the legacy of the Nobel Peace Prize which triggered the "EU Children of Peace" initiative.

Nevertheless, education in emergencies remains a severely underfunded area in humanitarian assistance worldwide<sup>6</sup>. In times of conflict, when the national education structures no longer function and children do not have the possibility of going to school, humanitarian aid may be the sole instrument providing children, and particularly the most vulnerable, access to educational activities, which protects them from abuse and exploitation.

To reduce the vulnerability of children affected by conflict, action is therefore required in the field of education in emergencies and conflict situations, comprising of, *inter alia*, protection, peace, relevant legal frameworks (International Humanitarian Law, International Human Rights Law and Refugee Law) mediation and conflict resolution education; child protection (notably unaccompanied children and ex-child soldiers); community-based educational activities in conflict-affected areas, promoting peaceful reconciliation; education in camps; child-friendly spaces; mine-risk training; non-formal education and activities supporting the transition to formal education in conflict-affected areas.

### **3. HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE**

As the humanitarian response to the educational needs of conflict-affected children suffers disproportionately from underfunding, the Commission intends to expand its support in this area. This follows up on its EUR 2 million financing decision in 2012 incorporating the Nobel Peace Prize money awarded to the European Union, the EUR 4 million financing decision in 2013 and EUR 6 712 500 in 2014 – including a EUR 500 000 contribution of assigned revenue from Luxemburg and a EUR 250 000 contribution of assigned revenue from Austria.

This HIP is aimed specifically at promoting education projects in emergencies, targeting children affected by conflict. ECHO<sup>7</sup> will support education activities in ongoing crises and early recovery phases. It may also support transition to formal education systems in

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<sup>6</sup> Source: "Too little, too late" report, Child Protection Working Group.

<sup>7</sup> European Commission's Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid & Civil Protection - ECHO  
ECHO/CHD/BUD/2015/91000

preparation for a development intervention. Furthermore, it may support longer-term educational activities in protracted crises and in refugee/IDP camps. Funding should also be complementary to other EU funding mechanisms directed towards education in emergencies (see "No Lost Generation" initiative in the Syria context), while overlap must be avoided. However, ECHO will not provide long-term support to national education systems in early recovery situations.

Activities funded under this HIP could include components of peace education (i.e. mediation, conflict resolution, etc.).

Activities shall be tailored to take into account the different needs of children based on their age, gender and other specific circumstances.

Partners will be expected to ensure full compliance with visibility requirements and to acknowledge the funding role of the EU/ECHO, as set out in the applicable contractual arrangements.

#### **4. LRRD, RESILIENCE, COORDINATION AND TRANSITION**

Education requires a long-term perspective, which humanitarian aid alone cannot provide. Education in emergencies and crisis situations constitutes an opportunity to strengthen coherence and bridge the gaps between humanitarian and development assistance, linking relief, rehabilitation and development (LRRD) and to enhance resilience. Complementarity and synergies with other EU services and funding instruments, in particular those of DEVCO<sup>8</sup> and FPI<sup>9</sup>, will therefore be sought. In addition, complementarity and synergies with funding provided by the Global Partnership for Education is encouraged.

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<sup>8</sup> European Commission's Directorate General for Development and Cooperation – EuropeAid - DEVCO

<sup>9</sup> European Commission's Service for Foreign Policy Instruments – FPI