HUMANITARIAN IMPLEMENTATION PLAN *(HIP)*

HORN OF AFRICA

Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia[1]

The full implementation of this version of the HIP is conditional upon the necessary appropriations being made available from the 2021 general budget of the European Union

AMOUNT: EUR 170 244 909,55

The present Humanitarian Implementation Plan (HIP) was prepared on the basis of financing decision ECHO/WWD/BUD/2021/01000 (Worldwide Decision) and the related General Guidelines for Operational Priorities on Humanitarian Aid (Operational Priorities). The purpose of the HIP and its annexes[2] is to serve as a communication tool for DG ECHO[3]'s partners and to assist in the preparation of their proposals. The provisions of the Worldwide Decision and the conditions of the Agreement with the European Commission shall take precedence over the provisions in this document.

0 MAJOR CHANGES SINCE THE PREVIOUS VERSION OF THE HIP

Fourth modification as of 13 December 2021

Somalia and Kenya are faced with a severe drought resulting from cumulative poor seasonal rainfall, compounded with protracted conflict (particularly in Somalia), the impact of a regional desert locust infestation (the worst in 70 years in Kenya), other extreme weather events and the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. At the end of the last rainy season of the year, it is now obvious that the failure of three consecutive rainy seasons may result in the worst drought in the past 40 years (since 1983/84) in the Horn of Africa region.

Drought-related displacement is rapidly rising and over 110 000 people have been displaced in Somalia alone by the drought until now, and more than 2.6 million people have been directly affected. In Kenya and Somalia, close to 6 million people are in need of emergency food assistance (in IPC 3 or higher) and acute malnutrition in children under 5 years old is steadily rising. Humanitarian partners report widespread livestock deaths and a spike in the price of daily commodities.

Additionally, based on global forecasts, the first and long rainy season of 2022 is likely going to be below average, which would result in a fourth consecutive failed rainy seasons (if so, adverse effects on livelihoods are likely to linger through 2022 into mid-2023).

Already in September 2021, Kenya's president had declared the drought as a national disaster. In Somalia, a state of emergency was declared by the Federal Government on 23

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[1] Eritrea can potentially be covered by this HIP, but does not currently benefit from a conducive environment for the implementation of humanitarian aid actions.
[2] Technical annex and thematic policies annex
[3] Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO)

November, with urgent appeals for international assistance. Essential services for the drought response are below 30% of the required funding.

On 1 December, a multi-agency drought alert was issued describing the deteriorating drought conditions in the Horn of Africa by the IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Center, the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission, the Food and Agriculture Organization, the Famine Early Warning Systems Network, and the World Food Program. The statement predicts a rapid deterioration of the food security situation and an immediate need to activate and scale-up response mechanisms, especially provision of food, water, nutrition assistance and livelihood protection programs, including water-trucking, feed supply and cash-transfers.

Early action and enhanced preparedness for a significant scale-up of emergency response is needed to avert worsening of the situation in the upcoming lean season (January-February 2022), and as the poor rainfalls are expected to continue.

In order to scale up the humanitarian response to this drought in Somalia and in Kenya, the European Commission has mobilised an additional amount of **EUR 21 544 909,55** (EUR 3 million for Kenya and EUR 18.54 million for Somalia).

The purpose of this additional funding will be to address the most acute needs of people affected by the drought. These main identified needs include access to clean water for household consumption, but also livestock; access to food and livelihood support, to health and nutrition services. Further specifications are provided in the Humanitarian Implementation Plan Technical Annex.

Third modification as of 15 September

Since mid-2021, the conflict in Tigray escalated and spread to neighbouring regions, in particular Amhara and Afar, displacing populations and generating large humanitarian needs in all the regions. The number of active hostilities within Tigray decreased end of June, following the withdrawal of Ethiopian National Defence Forces (ENDF) and allies (Eritrean forces and Amhara special forces) from large parts of East and Central Tigray, including its capital (Mekelle). Western Tigray remains under control of ENDF and Amhara Regional forces and Eritrean forces have retreated to the Northern Part of Central and Eastern Tigray, in the North-western Zone and in several strategic locations across Western Tigray.
There is still localised fighting in Western and Eastern Tigray, as well as on the Tigray/ Afar border but the conflict has now significantly spread outside Tigray to neighbouring Afar and Amhara regions, where TPLF/ Tigrayan Defence Forces have launched new offensives. With Oromo Liberation Army joining forces with TDF, hostilities are spreading to other parts of Ethiopia.

While access within Tigray has considerably improved, access to Tigray is extremely constrained, despite international calls for unimpeded access and commitment by the GoE to guarantee the delivery of emergency aid to all those in need. Humanitarian access into Tigray is currently limited to one entry point via the Abala/ Afar Region that is challenging and unpredictable due to insecurity, extended delays due to clearances and thorough searches at checkpoints. UN flights have resumed, also subject to heavy checks and regular cancellations.

This largely inadequate humanitarian supply line (estimated to be approximately ten time less than what would be needed), worsened by a lack of cash, fuel, electricity and communication services has resulted in a significant reduction in humanitarian operations and effective capacity to deliver much needed assistance. Basic services, including the provision of healthcare and water are seriously undermined. Food stocks are depleted in Tigray. The agriculture season was largely missed in Tigray and is seriously impacted in areas affected by conflict in Amhara.

Reliable consolidated data is still scarce due to lack of coverage, access and limited capacity to conduct independent assessments. As a consequence of the de facto siege situation in Tigray, an estimated 5.5 million people are in need of emergency assistance including close to 1 million who may be facing famine conditions already. Over 2 million people have been displaced within Tigray alone, while displacement in neighbouring regions is increasing as the conflict is intensifying.

In order to scale up the humanitarian response to this conflict, an additional amount of **EUR 30 million** will be allocated from the EU Solidarity and Emergency Aid Reserve after approval of the relevant request by the Budgetary Authority.

The purpose of this additional funding will be to address the most acute needs of people affected by the conflict in Tigray and in other areas directly affected by the spread of the Northern Ethiopia conflict with particular focus on bordering regions (Afar and Amhara). Further specifications are provided in the Humanitarian Implementation Plan Technical Annex.

Second modification as of 8 of April

Five months into the conflict, the humanitarian situation in Tigray remains dramatic, especially in terms of food insecurity, unprecedented rates of malnutrition, volatile security and protection.

Access has improved after the Ethiopian Prime Minister Officer (PMO) issued an official statement providing "*full unhindered access for humanitarian aid*" upon simple notification and "*region-wide*" (March 3). However, many areas across Tigray, especially rural and hard-to-reach areas, remain inaccessible due to security impediments, presence of military forces, and lack of effective and much-needed scale-up in terms of humanitarian capacity, resources, and deployment of right profiles on the ground. Security remains highly volatile due as per fluid conflict dynamics (from skirmishes to weaponry), now affecting even those areas that did not use to experience direct fighting before.

Overall, the impact of humanitarian assistance is very low compared to the vast scale of dire needs on the ground. Protection remains a matter of huge concern with alarming reports, official statements and numerous testimonies on allegations of extra-judicial killings, SGBV, and other humanitarian and human rights violations. Public service disruption, including electricity, internet, banking, and telecommunication, continues occurring in the region, either intermittently or on longer-term.

Population displacements: Reliable data is still scarce due to lack of coverage and independence in terms of assessments. Estimates of IDPs resulting from the Tigray conflict continue to range between 1-2.2 million, based on both formal and informal reporting.

Refugees: Since 4 November 2020, over 68.000 Ethiopian refugees have fled to Sudan. In addition, before the conflict, there were over 105.000 Eritrean refugees in Tigray, including around 96.000 in camps. Amongst those, at least 20.000 Eritrean refugees remain unaccounted for after Hitsats and Shimelba camps in Northern Tigray were caught into hostilities and eventually closed by the government (January 23). The Ethiopian Agency for Refugees and Returnees Affairs (ARRA) has been dealing with the relocation of Eritrean refugees to Main Aini and Adi Harush camps in Southern Tigray, which have now reached their maximum capacity and are unable to address increased needs.

In order to scale up the humanitarian response in Tigray, the European Commission has allocated an additional **EUR 11 million** from DG ECHO's Operational Reserve. The purpose for this additional funding will be to address the acute needs of people affected by the conflict in Tigray. Further specifications are provided in the Humanitarian Implementation Plan Technical Annex.

First modification as of 8 March 2021

The desert locust upsurge is still underway in the Greater Horn of Africa and the Arabian Peninsula. Since end of 2019, desert locusts spread from Yemen across several countries in the region at rates not seen in several decades. While significant progress was made in 2020 to control and curb the spread of the infestation in the affected countries throughout the Greater Horn of Africa, the pest has not been eradicated. This is due to internal factors (insecurity/conflict in Yemen, Somalia and Ethiopia, limiting the possibility for surveillance and control operations, lack of capacities at national level) as well as external factors (COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on operational roll-out, favourable weather conditions for desert locusts breeding). Hence, in the first weeks of 2021, the situation remain critical with new generations of desert locusts in several areas in eastern Ethiopia and northern and central Somalia. On 3 February 2021, Somalia declared State of Emergency over desert locusts acknowledging the risk for high and alarming damage to crops in 2021, and calling for support from international donors.

With over 35 million people already food insecure in the region, the desert locust upsurge remains an unprecedented threat to food security. The risk of new infestations and continuous breeding could limit food and fodder availability while rising food prices mean that the likelihood of an impact on vulnerable households will remain high. As herders might be forced to move to other areas, the risk of communal conflict over pasture, grazing land and rangeland will also increase. And the situation is further aggravated by the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in widespread loss of income and worsened economic situations.

In order to avoid any further deterioration of the humanitarian situation in the Horn of Africa and Upper Nile Basin regions, the European Commission has allocated an additional **EUR 8 million** from DG ECHO's Operational Reserve. The purpose for this

additional funding will be to support desert locusts' surveillance and control operations in the most affected countries, namely **Ethiopia, Somalia, Kenya and Sudan**[4]. Further specifications are provided in the Humanitarian Implementation Plan Technical Annex.

1   CONTEXT

Across the Horn of Africa (HoA), conflict is the key driver of humanitarian crises, translating into massive displacements, acute food-nutrition insecurity and serious protection violations. It is regularly and increasingly exacerbated by climate-induced natural disasters, pests and epidemics outbreaks. As from September 2020, over 22 million people are in immediate need of humanitarian assistance in countries covered by this HIP, with projections of an increase to over 25 million people by the end of 2020[5].

Armed conflict, intercommunal and ethnic violence prevail across large areas of the region. These dynamic conflicts destroy lives and livelihoods, and drive large parts of the population into temporary or protracted displacements. In **Somalia,** the armed conflict opposing primarily the Government, regional security forces, and Al Shabaab is compounded by recurrent inter-clan fighting and, more recently, by tensions between the Federal Government and Federated Member States. International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and human rights violations are widespread. The government is assisted in its stabilisation efforts by the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), supported by the EU and the international community, with the aim of promoting peace, security and effective governance in Somalia. **Ethiopia** is increasingly engulfed in an ethnic-based political crisis in almost all regions, culminating in active warfare between Ethiopian security forces and armed opposition groups in the Oromiya region and very recently into the Northern region of Tigray, where Ethiopian National Defence forces have engaged with forces loyal to Tigray region's leadership, the TPLF (Tigray People's Liberation Front). There are 3.2 million Ethiopians either displaced or returned (often forcibly) amidst recurrent patterns of politicised, pushed premature and often unsecure Internally Displaced Person (IDP) returns at a large scale.

The HoA hosts almost 1.2 million refugees and asylum seekers[6], mainly from **Somalia** and **South Sudan**, but also from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Eritrea, Sudan, Burundi, Ethiopia and Yemen. At the same time, hosting countries are changing their policies and practices towards refugees, with many no longer being granted prima facie recognition despite little changes in the situation of their country of origin.

In 2020, several acute disasters hit all countries in the HoA, further aggravating the protracted crises, and creating an unprecedented humanitarian situation: the worst desert locust upsurge in decades, several episodes of flooding due to unusual rain sand the COVID-19 pandemic.

The outlook for 2021 is grim. Internal conflicts, violence and political crises in **Somalia**, **Ethiopia, Eritrea** (and South Sudan) are foreseen to continue, resulting in continued displacement within and across international borders, despite restrictive measures linked to the pandemic. Climate change is driving an increased frequency and intensity of

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[4] Sudan that is normally covered under the Upper Nile Basin HIP will also be part of the geographical scope of this 8 million top up.

[5] IGAD's Food Security and Nutrition Response Strategy (August 2020) projects 25.23 M people by year end.

[6] Ethiopia and Kenya host some of the largest refugee caseloads in Africa

droughts and floods, resulting in less time for affected populations to recover, further exacerbating pressure on pasture and water resources, in a context of already-degraded environments and eroded livelihoods. Despite air and ground control efforts, new generations of Desert Locust swarms are expected to cause widespread damage to crops in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia. Finally, beyond its immediate health impact, the COVID-19 pandemic is expected to trigger severe and longer-lasting socio-economic consequences, pushing millions of people into extreme poverty, especially in urban areas and eroding livelihoods and increasing protection needs of vulnerable groups, such as refugees and IDPs. DG ECHO's Integrated Analysis Framework for 2020-2021 identifies **extreme humanitarian needs in Somalia and Ethiopia** and **high humanitarian needs in Djibouti and Kenya** and assesses the vulnerability of the populations affected by these crises as very high in all countries in the region.

	Djibouti	**Ethiopia**	**Kenya**	**Somalia**
INFORM Risk Index[7]	5.2/10	6.9/10	6.0/10	8.9/10
Vulnerability Index	5.6/10	6.6/10	6.0/10	9.1/10
Hazard and Exposure	4/10	7.4/10	5.8/10	8.9/10
Lack of Coping Capacity	6.4/10	6.8/10	6.2/10	8.8/10
Global Crisis Severity Index[8]	3/5	4/5	4/5	5/5
Projected conflict risk	2.2/10	9.9/10	9.3/10	10/10
Uprooted People Index	6.1/10	8.6/10	7.7/10	10/10
Humanitarian Conditions	2.5/5	3/5	3.5/5	4.5/5
Natural Disaster Index	5.8/10	4.5/10	5.1/10	6.9/10
HDI Ranking[9] **(Value)**	171	173	147	N/A
Total Population[10]	**973 560**	**112 078 730**	**52 573 973**	**15 142 905**

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[7]   INFORM is a global, open-source risk assessment for humanitarian crises and disasters
[8]   http://www.inform-index.org/Global-Crisis-Severity-Index-beta
[9]   Humanitarian Development Index (HDI) developed by UNDP
[10] World Bank data, 2019

2 HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

2.1 People in need of humanitarian assistance

	Djibouti	Ethiopia	Kenya	Somalia
Refugees/Asylum seekers	30 000	763,827[11]	498 000	30 000
Disaggregated by gender & age	*51% female/ 49% male; 0-17: 49% 18-59: 48% 60+: 1%*	*52.1% female /47.9% male 0-17: 63% 18-59: 37%*	*48.9% female /51.1% male; 0 – 17: 53.6% 18 – 59: 43.7% 60+: 2.7%*	*45.5% female /54.5% male 0-17: 46% 18-59: 51.1% 60+: 2.9%*
IDPs	Not applicable	2.4 million	Not applicable	2.6 million
Returnees	Not applicable	350 000[12]	0	130 400[13]
People in IPC (3-5) (in million)[14]	0.006[15]	12.8[16]	1.3[17]	2.1[18]
Children under 5 affected by Moderate Acute Malnutrition	4 720	2 200 000	395 496	830 000
Children under 5 affected by Severe Acute Malnutrition	1 280	554 000	135 509	178 400
Out of School Children[19]	4 000	1 880 000[20]	1 200 000[21]	≥ 3 000 000

2.1.1 Refugees, migrants and asylum seekers

In the Horn of Africa, protracted refugee caseloads co-exist with "new crisis" caseloads, usually in the same camps or settlements and in urban contexts, requiring an adapted and differential response, using a clear targeting approach towards the most vulnerable.

Djibouti hosts around 30 000 refugees and asylum seekers from Somalia, Ethiopia and Yemen. They live mainly in three camps all located in highly food insecure areas, with very limited access to any form of livelihoods and a full dependence on external food assistance, as well as in urban areas. In addition, Djibouti has become an epicentre of

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[11] UNHCR Ethiopia – infographics on Refugees and Asylum-seekers as of 31 May 2020
[12] This number only refers to Ethiopians who have been deported from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
[13] 130,400 returnees (total since December 2014) = 91,800 assisted and 38,600 spontaneous returns
[14] Includes people affected by drought/ flood events as well as refugees
[15] WFP Country brief 2019 December
[16] HRP Ethiopia Mid-Year review (August 20), and addition of refugee population. This figure is based on the assumption that current levels of Food assistance provided will be maintained. In addition to those 12,8 million people, some 8 million food insecure people are already covered by the national Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP)
[17] 2020 long rains food and nutrition security assessment (LRA)
[18] FSNAU Technical Release, 30 September 2020, projection for December 2020
[19] Figures before COVID-19 restriction measures and closure of schools in all countries. Since September 2020, schools have reopened in Somalia
[20] Including children living in refugee camps and children IDPs
[21] Including 123 512 children living in refugee camps

complex, bi-directional migratory flows across the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, with 160 000 to 200 000 migrants, including a high number of children, transit annually through Djibouti, the vast majority from Ethiopia. Migrants are particularly vulnerable, facing detention, violence and abuse. Following the COVID-19 outbreak and associated restrictions on movement, the situation of migrants has deteriorated, especially in the city of Obock, as they compete with host communities for the use of scarce resources.

Ethiopia is the third largest refugee hosting country in Africa with almost 770 000 individuals, comprising South Sudanese (45%), Somalis (26%), Eritreans (23%), and Sudanese (6%) living in 26 refugee camps and out-of-camp / host community settings in peripheral regions of the country. More than 60% are below 18 years old. The refugee context has significantly deteriorated in the past months due to: (i) a significant slow-down of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) process; (ii) end of *prima facie* for Eritrean refugees; (iii) slow and problematic registration processes for Eritreans and South Sudanese asylum seekers as well as rumours of end of *prima facie* for the latter; iv) COVID-19 prevention and control measures with borders closures put in place in March 2020. Moreover, with the unprepared and uncoordinated relocation of the Gambella reception centre from Pamdong to Pagak in March 2020 amidst a surge of new arrivals, approx. 5 000 non-registered people are hosted in Pagak, of which an unknown proportion are legitimate asylum-seekers. Additional influxes are expected to continue, especially from South Sudan due to renewed fighting, and from Eritrea given the absence of any change to the situation inside Eritrea (notably indefinite military service, harsh oppression and violation of human rights, as well as the lack of economic opportunities), despite a restrictive pre-screening policy established for Eritreans by the Administration for Refugee & Returnee Affairs (ARRA), which raises concerns about possible refoulement.

The Ethiopian government's pledges for refugees are limited compared to the size of the refugee population and the level of their needs – they are therefore very highly dependent on external assistance.

The official number of refugees and asylum seekers in **Kenya** currently stands at approximately 498 000 individuals, primarily from Somalia and South Sudan, but also from DRC, Burundi and Ethiopia. By the end of August 2020, there were over 220 500 refugees in the Dadaab camps, over 197 000 in Kakuma camp and Kalobeyei settlement and almost 81 000 in urban areas (mainly Nairobi), representing 44%, 40% and 16% of the caseload respectively. They entirely depend on international humanitarian assistance for their survival, given the ongoing encampment policy and the limited prospects for durable solutions, including voluntary return and local integration. The Kenyan government's removal of the *prima facie* recognition for Somali nationals in 2015, as well as the suspended registration of new arrivals raises serious protection concerns for those undocumented residing in the camps as they are at risk of arbitrary detention and face restrictions in accessing some basic services and food aid. According to UNHCR, there are over 15 000 profiled but non-registered persons across the three camps in Dadaab, mostly from Somalia. Since its peak in 2017, the pace of voluntary repatriations has significantly reduced, due to persistent drought and the sustained conflict in Somalia. Despite the return since December 2014 of almost 85 000 people to Somalia[22], there are

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[22]   UNHCR Statistics package, 31 August 2020

concerns about the safety and sustainability of such returns; also, several returnees have subsequently returned to Dadaab camps but are ineligible for assistance.

Somalia hosts some 30 000 refugees and asylum seekers mainly from Ethiopia and Yemen. This is a relatively steady figure since last year.

2.1.2   *Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)*

While there has not been major large-scale new displacement waves in **Ethiopia** since the 2018-19 peak, the displacement problematic remains high on both humanitarian and political agendas – although for different reasons.

An estimated total of 3.24 million people are either IDPs or returnees in Ethiopia and require support until they can access the same rights and basic services as the host population – as per the Kampala Convention, ratified by the government in February 2020. According to the 2020 Humanitarian Response Plan mid-term review, there are a total of 2.28 million IDPs, of whom 1.678 million are conflict-related and 602 000 drought-related. In addition, an estimated 940 000 IDPs have forcibly returned to their places of origin. The 2019 large-scale premature and often coerced government-led returns process created a highly complex and politicised situation resulting in an estimated 125 000 returnees (13% of the total) unable to return to their houses due to insecurity and tensions with local communities, and in IDPs hiding within host communities in places of displacement for fear of being forcibly returned. Local authorities frequently refuse to register IDPs (notably secondary displaced people), effectively excluding them from humanitarian assistance. 50 000 new government-led returns took place in the first half of 2020, mostly along the borders between East Oromiya and Somali region and Amhara and Benishangul-Gumuz regions. Pushed/ coerced returns of IDPs put them at risk of further violence, further weakens their highly depleted resources and causes avoidable additional public health risks related to COVID-19. They appear unsustainable, as shown by numerous cases of secondary displacements.

In **Somalia**, 2.6 million people (16.8% of the total population) are reported displaced mainly by drought, floods and conflict. Many live in Al Shabaab-controlled areas, where access and provision of humanitarian assistance is extremely complicated. Forced evictions of IDPs and urban poor continue to be a major risk in Somalia's urban areas with 84 478[23] people having been forcibly evicted from their homes in January-June 2020, including 51 000 in Benadir and 19 000 in Bay. Although these figures have decreased in comparison with the same period last year, in part due to calls to suspend evictions during the COVID-19 pandemic (e.g. the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) Moratorium on Evictions), evictions remain a significant protection problem. Prevention interventions have managed to prevent the evictions of 22 590 people from January to June 2020.

2.1.3   *Deportees and returnees (cross-border)*

While the pace of spontaneous and sustainable refugee returns remains low, the frequent cross-border movements deserve to be monitored in a systematic manner. Due to COVID-19, Voluntary Repatriation programmes have been suspended in the region.

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[23]   NRC Report, July 2020

Ethiopia faces large-scale returns of Ethiopian migrants, mostly deported from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), though deportations have increased from neighbouring countries (e.g. Somalia) on the grounds of COVID-19. Since November 2017 when the KSA started to systematically deport irregular Ethiopian migrants from Saudi Arabia, an estimated 350 000 individuals have been sent back to Ethiopia at an average pace of 10,000 per month (of which an average 400 unaccompanied minors per week). During their journey, and in detention before being deported, migrants are exposed to **extreme hardship** and **violence**, such as racketeering, kidnapping and torture for ransom, physical abuse, death, robbery and sexual assault. Limited support is provided upon arrival at Bole International Airport in Addis, but no support to reintegration is currently provided. Although deportations from KSA have reduced since April 2020 following enhanced advocacy for a moratorium during COVID-19, thousands of migrants are still stranded in war torn Yemen or stuck in Djibouti. COVID-19 measures seem to beg used to facilitate containment, detention, encampment, and/ or deportation in countries of origin or of return. There are reports of serious rights abuse on stranded migrants.

Assisted returns to **Somalia** have largely subsided in 2020, in large part due to the suspension of movements related to COVID-19.

An increased rate of spontaneous cross-border movements is also evident in the context of the South Sudanese crisis: according to UNHCR, over 65 000[24] refugees have returned to South Sudan from Ethiopia and Kenya since November 2017, with over 2,000 in June 2020. In late 2019, with the promise of a peace agreement in South Sudan, returns were promoted by the Government of South Sudan and some refugee hosting nations; however, given the ongoing violence, stalled peace process, instrumentalisation of the returns process, and now COVID-19 pandemic, UNHCR considers that the conditions for safe, voluntary, informed and sustainable refugee returns are not met in South Sudan.

2.1.4 *Populations affected by food insecurity and under- nutrition*

Due to the combination of crises (drought, floods, conflict, desert locust upsurge and impact of the COVID-19 pandemic), there were 17.3 million people severely food insecure in the region and in need of humanitarian assistance as of August 2020 and almost 900 000 severely acute malnourished children. These figures encompass the refugees in Ethiopia, Kenya and Djibouti, who rely exclusively on external food assistance for survival and face, due to foreseen critical pipeline breaks, further cuts in the food ration, already at only 70 % to 80% of the standard ration.

2.2 **Description of the most acute humanitarian needs**

2.2.1 *Protection*

Armed and intercommunal conflicts/violence in Ethiopia and Somalia expose communities to life-threatening protection risks, such as killings, arbitrary detention, evictions, family links disruption, Sexual and Gender Based Violence, grave violations against children's rights, restriction of movements and massive internal and cross-border forced displacement. Moreover, the protection risks stemming from the direct correlation between natural disasters and conflict are insufficiently analysed, negatively impacting the effectiveness of humanitarian assistance. Vulnerable people turn to negative coping

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[24] Overview of spontaneous refugee returns, UNHCR, June 2020

strategies (such as early marriage, child labour, transactional sex) due to extreme food insecurity and limited access to humanitarian assistance.

2.2.2 *Food Security & Livelihoods*

Acute food insecurity needs have further increased in 2020, from the already very high levels in 2019. The impact of COVID-19 on food production, supply chains and trade links, and on people's income activities, is taking its toll across the region, with an additional 15 million people at risk of food insecurity by the end of 2020[25]. In addition, the desert locust upsurge continues to impact crops and pastures, affecting market availability and incomes: in July 2020, FAO estimated that up to 2.5 million people were becoming food insecure in the IGAD region due to the Desert Locust[26]. Conflict-affected populations, including IDPs, have also seen their livelihoods disrupted and sources of food depleted. Despite efforts in some countries to reinforce existing safety nets, the coverage remains insufficient. As needs increase, current food assistance responses are insufficient and suffer from inadequate coverage and reduced rations. Refugees are affected by food ration cuts as pipelines remain underfunded. There is a need to scale-up timely and effective food assistance to the severely food insecure, and to create synergies with self-reliance strategies to protect the livelihoods of households still able to cover their food needs. Such strategies could, in turn, reduce the dependency on humanitarian food assistance.

2.2.3 *Nutrition*

High rates of acute under-nutrition are still observed in numerous areas of the region, such as the Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASALs) of Kenya, and drought- and conflict-affected areas in Ethiopia and Somalia, triggered by multiple and interconnected factors (food insecurity, lack of access to quality health services, insufficient access to safe water and sanitation) exacerbated by insecurity, displacements and by the exceptional impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Throughout the region, there are 6 million malnourished children under-5 and Pregnant and Lactating Women, of which more than 800 000 children in severe acute malnutrition urgently needing treatment and follow-up. Strategies to strengthen, or implement nutrition programming integrated into the health care system should consider risk and resource analysis, with a strong focus on adaptations allowing continuity of services and complementarity with existing capacities.

2.2.4 *Health*

Health systems in the region are generally weak and under-resourced. The region is prone to recurrent epidemic outbreaks (cholera, polio, yellow fever, viral haemorrhagic fevers, measles, meningitis, kala azar, etc.). In many parts of the region, very low vaccination coverage, high under-nutrition rates, mass population movements, overcrowded IDP/refugee camps, and poor WASH conditions, sharply increase the risk of transmission of diseases and mortality. Infant and maternal mortality rates remain very high, especially in disaster-affected areas. It is also critical to fill gaps in secondary health care as part of life saving actions through proper referral system, and to ensure the

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[25] WFP estimates the number of acutely food insecure people in East Africa could increase by 73% (WFP COVID-19 Sitrep 11)

[26] IGAD-FAO-WFP Joint Statement, 27 July 2020

quality of drugs, medical equipment and nutrition products. Lastly, recent political changes have reduced the reluctance among countries in the region, notably Ethiopia, to recognise (as required under the International Health Regulations) the prevalence of certain diseases such as cholera, which used to result in a failure to declare large-scale outbreaks or epidemics, thus prolonging the outbreak, the risk of exposure by communities and the risk of expansion across borders (pandemic). The COVID-19 pandemic[27] has laid bare the weaknesses of the surveillance systems and emphasized the need to upgrade Early Warning Alert and Response systems (EWARS) in all countries.

2.2.5   *Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)*

Regular and reliable access to safe water for drinking, hygiene and livestock is a major challenge across the region including in IDP and refugee camps and settlements. The lack of clean water and inadequate hygiene and sanitation practices are identified as underlying causes of high mortality, under-nutrition and expansion of epidemics outbreaks. Competition over access to water also leads to conflicts between communities. There is a need to improve access to safe water and to upgrade the management and sustainability of WASH facilities/services, notably by promoting self-reliance. Preparedness and response to water-borne or diarrheal diseases, as well as creation of effective barriers to transmission routes, should be strengthened.

2.2.6   *Shelter and Non-Food-Items (NFIs)*

The provision of shelters and NFIs is essential for refugee/IDP camps or settlements from the onset of a response and especially for newly displaced population. It is also necessary for the increasing number of people affected by natural disasters, such as droughts and floods.

2.2.7   *Education in Emergencies (EiE)*

Indicators related to education remain extremely poor. Beyond the COVID-19 pandemic and related school closure, drought, economic shocks and conflict are the main factors disrupting the education of children in the HoA, while millions still do not have access to education. An increase in school drop-outs, often representing a negative coping mechanism resulting from lack of livelihoods, has been observed across the region, as well as increased child protection risks for the most vulnerable children and adolescents, particularly for girls, who face the additional risk of early pregnancy and forced marriage. Overall, quality of education across the region is a concern, with a number of barriers both on the supply and demand sides, such as high percentage of teachers being non-qualified, scarcity of learning spaces and educational material, high pupil to teacher ratios, insecurity and unsafe schools. Adolescent boys and girls are often excluded from the provision of education, especially in crisis contexts and are exposed to protection risks. Gender-based discriminations significantly hamper girls' education access and retention, especially transition to the secondary level. In refugee settings, many children remain out of school or lack an appropriate learning environment and education programmes. COVID-19 exacerbated these needs, as schools closed for months in the whole region, leaving millions of children out-of-school and at risk.

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[27]   According to the WHO, the main challenges for an effective COVID-19 response is the lack of contact tracing, insufficient testing and inadequate coordination between national and county authorities.

2.2.8 Disaster Preparedness

Despite the high exposure to multiple risks, including on-going conflicts, epidemic diseases in humans and livestock, crop infestation and natural hazards, the overall regional capacity to prepare and respond is insufficient as demonstrated during the above-normal 2019 and 2020 rainy seasons and resulting floods and landslides. Inadequate and under-resourced Disaster Risk Management systems and weak institutionalisation of disaster preparedness hampers the capacities of countries, communities and individuals to adequately prepare, anticipate and respond to crises. Alerts by existing early warning systems most often fail to trigger early action and response at the necessary level.

3 HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE AND COORDINATION

3.1 National / local response and involvement

Regionally, the capacities and/or willingness of Governments to respond to natural and man-made disasters and epidemics outbreaks remain limited.

In 2013, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development[28] (IGAD) launched the Drought Disaster Resilience and Sustainability Initiative (IDDRSI) to "end drought emergencies in the Horn of Africa" by building sustainable livelihoods. The 2nd phase of the initiative was launched for the period 2019-2024[29]. The recurrence of droughts across the region however, and the absence of a corresponding regional intervention on floods preparedness, indicates that much remains to be done, namely in multi-risk Early Warning Systems (EWS) and overall resilience strengthening, so as to ensure timely anticipatory or early response. In August 2020, IGAD launched the Regional Food and Nutrition Response Strategy, which outlines the interventions required to safeguard livelihoods, sustain gains made so far in relation to food availability and access, prevent and treat acute and chronic malnutrition, and ultimately save lives.

The East Africa Desert Locust Control Organization has seen its capacities overwhelmed by the size and scope of the 2019-20 Desert Locust outbreak.

The IGAD's Nairobi Declaration and Plan of Action 2017, initially specific to the Somali refugee situation, represents the regional application of the CRRF[30]. These initiatives, subsumed into the Global Compact for Refugees (end-2018) aimed at bringing together humanitarian and development actors, including host governments, to contribute to a more holistic and predictable response to refugee situations; to support host populations and local authorities; and to facilitate a transition to local integration and durable solutions. The Nairobi Action Plan has so far translated into the Djibouti Declaration / Action Plan on Refugee Education (December 2017), and the Kampala Declaration / Action Plan on Jobs, Livelihoods and Self-Reliance for Refugees, Returnees and Host Communities (March 2019). A thematic meeting on Health is planned in the future.

In **Djibouti**, the overall local response is limited and needs significant external support to address all identified humanitarian needs. The Office National d'Assistance aux Réfugiés

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[28] IGAD members are Djibouti, Ethiopia, Somalia, Eritrea, Sudan, South Sudan, Kenya and Uganda
[29] https://resilience.igad.int/
[30] https://www.unhcr.org/comprehensive-refugee-response-framework-crrf.html

et aux Sinistrés (ONARS) coordinates the provision of emergency assistance to people affected by displacement and natural disasters.

The humanitarian response in **Ethiopia** is delivered through complex collaboration between the government and humanitarian partners, which in the context of ethnic conflict and the politicised IDP problematic, has raised concerns about forced returns and non-adherence to humanitarian principles. Despite **Ethiopian government**'s pledges in the framework of the CRRF and the new Refugee Proclamation in early 2019, there has been a serious slow-down of the CRRF process. The CRRF Coordination Unit established independently from the Administration for Refugees and Returnees Affairs (ARRA) has been dismantled, the Steering Committee has not met since mid-2018, and government ownership, apart from ARRA, is lacking. Four new directives fostering refugees' integration passed in December 2019 are pending implementation. The National Disaster Risk Management Commission (NDRMC) and ARRA, both under the Ministry of Peace, are the main government institutions in humanitarian response, with a lead role in coordination, as well as implementation. However, government's response capacity at regional and zonal level remains quite limited. The EU Delegation's support to contingency planning and budget should help in building the capacity of regional and zonal governments to respond to new shocks. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, an Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC) has been established at national level, managed by National Disaster Risk Management Commission (NDRMC). The ECC oversees the response in the quarantine sites, in close collaboration with the Emergency Operation Centre (EOC) established within the Ethiopian Public Health Institute (EPHI) of the Ministry of Health.

Kenya has signed and ratified the key international legal instruments governing the treatment of refugees[31]. National law remains enshrined in the 2006 Kenya Refugee Act supporting an encampment policy where refugees are restricted to residing in "designated areas". A revised Refugee Bill addressing some of issues related to encampment and socio-economic rights of refugees was endorsed by the Parliament in 2017 but is not yet assented into law by the President (October 2020). Aside from the formal legal barriers that restrict prospects for refugee inclusion and self-reliance, there are also a number of informal barriers including administrative hurdles, stigma, and lack of awareness amongst refugees of their rights. The Refugee Affairs Secretariat (RAS) is the formally recognised Government of Kenya entity for the management of refugee affairs. Though gains have been made in establishing presence and capacities for RAS, these remain inadequate. Drought-related issues fall under the responsibility of National Drought Management Authority (NDMA), which addresses resilience in the ASALs and responds to emergency levels of food insecurity. The Government of Kenya through the Ministries of Health initiated and is leading the Integrated Management of Acute Malnutrition (IMAM) since 2008. IMAM has been used to respond in areas where acute undernutrition had peaked, but the scale up of the response has not always been sufficient, with gaps particularly noted in maintaining adequate supplies, outreach and case follow up.

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[31] Kenya has signed and ratified the 1951 United Nations Convention Relating the Status of Refugees and the 1967 United Nations Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees (1967 Protocol). Kenya has also signed and ratified the 1969 Organization of African Unity Convention Governing Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa (OAU Convention), 1981 African Charter on Human and People's Rights and the 1990 African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child.

Coordination and implementation of the COVID-19 response in Kenya is led by the national Public Health Emergency Steering Committee under the Ministry of Health. The committee is supported at technical level by the National COVID-19 Taskforce for joint planning, monitoring and information management. Both functions work in close collaboration with the UN, NGO and Red Cross. Through the Council of Governors, linkages are made through the county coordinating committees mirroring the structure at national level.

In **Somalia**, humanitarian capacities remain highly limited at all levels. Humanitarian aid is under the authority of the increasingly assertive, but under-resourced, Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management (MOHADM). The MOHADM has progressively taken the lead in coordination activities. At state level, the disaster management agencies of Somaliland (NADFOR) and Puntland (HADMA) have limited though increasing capacity and are supported by some external partners. However, the interaction between these entities and the Federal Member States' relevant ministries remains ill-defined and is at times competitive. Through donor-supported initiatives, the Government is increasing its efforts to put in place coordination mechanisms to address durable solutions to displacement, in particular in Benadir and Baidoa. More recently new coordination platforms for COVID-19 programmes have been added.

3.2   International Humanitarian Response

In the region, the UN Appeals in 2020 amounted to over USD 3.78 billion; this comprised the total appeals for Ethiopia, Somalia, Djibouti, the COVID-19 response plans and the UNHCR budgets for Ethiopia and Kenya and for the Somali refugees.

 In **Djibouti**, there is a limited presence of humanitarian actors and donors. The 2019-2020 flash appeal is 23% funded. UNHCR's Refugee Response Plan 2020, budgeted at USD 17.7 million is just 36% funded, while the Djibouti component of IOM's Regional Migrants Response Plan, budgeted at USD 3.5 million, is 63% funded.

The humanitarian aid architecture in **Ethiopia** is complex. It includes the Ethiopia Humanitarian Country Team and the Humanitarian Resilience Donor Group, which is the humanitarian donors' coordination forum. Common humanitarian services include UNHAS air services and IOM DTM (Displacement Tracking Matrix). The 2020 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) for Ethiopia, elaborated jointly by the government and the UN, was reviewed in August, in order to integrate the humanitarian consequences of the desert locust infestation and the COVID-19 pandemic. It now reaches an unprecedented USD 1.65 billion, with 12.8 million people in need of humanitarian food assistance. In October 2020, the HRP was funded at 29% (lowest percentage in 11 years). The HRP does not include the bi-annual refugee response that for 2019-2020 amounts to USD 643 million.

In **Kenya**, the main humanitarian situation being the refugee crisis, UNHCR has the lead for coordination of humanitarian activities in the camps. UNHCR's overall revised appeal for the combined refugee situation in Kenya is USD 164.6 million; as of September 2020 this was 47% funded. For the first time since 2013, in response to the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Desert Locust upsurge and floods, OCHA launched an emergency appeal for USD 286.8 million, including USD 26.9 million for immediate development requirements. As of 10 September 2020, it is 36.1% funded.

In **Somalia**, UN agencies, other donors, and several international NGOs are well established. Coordination is taking place through the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) and several thematic clusters. A revision of the aid architecture is currently ongoing to reflect the launch of the National Development Plan (NDP) 9 and better implement a nexus approach. The Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) for 2020, including the COVID-19 response plan, is over USD 1.01 billion aiming at covering 3 million people, with some 60% financed as of end-September 2020, excluding an additional USD 200 million humanitarian funding provided outside of the HRP.

3.3   Operational constraints

3.3.1   Access/humanitarian space

Across the region, a highly volatile and aggravating **security** situation is a major constraint for humanitarian operations. The increase in attacks directly targeting aid workers and the increased pressure and obstruction from various parties constitutes an extremely worrying trend, as it severely constrains the independence, impartiality and operating space for relief organisations. The situation is particularly acute in Somalia (South and Central, and Gedo Region), in the Kenya-Somalia-Ethiopia border regions, and in Oromiya region in Ethiopia. The presence of Al Shabaab in 23 districts in Somalia continues to restrict access to some 1.3 million people.

Humanitarian access to people affected by crises, requires a continuous negotiation, dialogue and network with a wide range of stakeholders at different levels, including civil and military authorities, security forces, armed groups, youth, elderly, women association, other influential actors.

3.3.2   Partners (presence, capacity), including absorption capacity on the ground

DG ECHO has an extensive partner network in all countries of the Horn of Africa. Insecurity and administrative requirements put in place by authorities, as well as context-specific difficulties, can affect DG ECHO and partners' capacity to undertake proper needs assessments and to monitor operations, as well as partners' capacity to deliver aid in a timely, effective and accountable manner. Access is further restricted due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has constrained the deployment, presence and movement of humanitarian workers and goods, both within countries and across borders, pushing many partners to adapt their ways of working. This may lead to a less efficient supervision of Implementing Partners, among other risks. On the other hand, in most countries of the HoA these restrictions have also created opportunities to work more intensively with local partners and apply new ways of interacting with communities. Access to asylum seekers remains, at times, constrained.

3.3.3   Other

The risk of **instrumentalisation of humanitarian aid** remains high, leading to lack of independent assessment of needs and reducing access to those populations who rely most on humanitarian assistance for their survival. It also puts humanitarian workers' lives at risk and can lead to misperception regarding the independence and neutrality of the humanitarian action.

In order to provide assistance to the people most in need, especially in areas with difficult access, DG ECHO may allow as a last resort option the implementation of life-saving

actions in **remote management modalities**. Partners will have to strictly comply with the guidelines laid out in the DG ECHO Remote Management Guidance note[32].

4   HUMANITARIAN – DEVELOPMENT – PEACE NEXUS

DG ECHO Country Teams across the region have involved counterparts of other EU services (DEVCO, FPI, EEAS and EU Delegations) in the elaboration of the 2021 HIP priorities and identification of Nexus opportunities; likewise, EU Delegations across the region have included DG ECHO in their identification of priorities under the 2021-2027 MFF, in accordance with EU priorities.

In all the countries of the region, the **European Development Fund** (EDF) has been the main EU instrument providing assistance through National Indicative Programmes agreed with the authorities. As the new programming cycle is under preparation, some programmes funded under the 11th EDF for the period 2014-2020 will still be ongoing in 2021 with substantial resources programmed for food security and resilience.

The **EU Emergency Trust Fund (EUTF)** for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa (EUTF for Africa), which has been a key financing instrument allowing a Nexus approach, particularly on forced displacement, will be fully contracted by the end of 2020, with some programmes continuing into 2021 offering some nexus opportunities – such as the EUR 60 million "EU response to health and socio-economic impact of COVID-19 in the IGAD region", with UNOPS/GiZ.

The **Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP)** contributes to the implementation of the comprehensive approach to conflicts. Crisis response actions in the region respond directly to EU political priorities and longer-term interventions are initiated for conflict prevention, peace-building and crisis preparedness.

In **Djibouti**, the EU has mobilised EUR 105 million from the 11th EDF to support vulnerable communities and households in the sectors of Water and Solid and Liquid Waste Treatment, and Food Security. These interventions have allowed the EU to address some of the underlying structural factors that increase humanitarian needs. Specific vulnerable groups among refugee communities have also been supported via the 11th EDF. The EUTF (EUR 23 million) has constituted an important linkages between humanitarian and development, addressing durable solutions for refugees and access to services for people affected by forced displacement. This Nexus work has intensified during the COVID-19 pandemic, with complementary support provided through different EU instruments to migrants stranded in Djibouti, continuing throughout 2021.

In **Ethiopia**, the joint DG ECHO- DG DEVCO RESET[33] program, established in 2012, has promoted bridge-building between humanitarian and development assistance, articulated around the objectives of ensuring food and nutrition security and protecting livelihoods for populations recurrently vulnerable to natural shocks, while ensuring access to essential basic services This was further complemented in 2020 with a DEVCO-funded DRR Programme, aimed at building governmental preparedness and response capacity at Federal and regional levels, including the mobilisation of

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[32]   http://dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu/actions_implementation/remote_management/start
[33]   RESET stands for Resilience in Ethiopia

contingency funds. Synergies between humanitarian assistance supported by DG ECHO and the Ethiopian social safety net (PSNP) supported by DEVCO have also been sought, and the on-going adaptation of PSNP into a fully shock-responsive safety net will provide additional opportunities for synergies. Since 2016, under the EUTF, further complementarity was reached between humanitarian and development initiatives supporting the refugees and host communities within the wider framework of the CRRF. With the multiplication of inter-communal ethnic conflicts in Ethiopia, the IcSP is supporting a peace and reconciliation initiative in Gedeo / West Guji, in complementarity with DG ECHO's humanitarian support. Further synergies with IcSP on peace and reconciliation and prevention of electoral violence could also be explored.

In the next development programming phase, **more nexus opportunities** could be pursued in health and nutrition; in climate shock response, in livelihoods recovery and alternative livelihoods, particularly challenging in urban areas; digitalisation and enabling environment for financial service providers; in human rights, IHL and protection; and in durable solutions to forced displacement (drought-related, refugees).

Over recent years, the main focus of the nexus approach in **Kenya** has been the search for durable solutions for refugees. With a total of EUR 44.45 million through 3 programmes, the EUTF has been a leading supporter of the roll-out of the CRRF, in particular the innovative integrated settlement in Kalobeyei (Turkana county), and also through support to enhance the resilience of refugees and host communities. In addition, the 11th EDF has supported food security and resilience to climatic shocks in the ASALs. The IcSP in Kenya supports Civil Society Organisations (CSO) in fostering youth engagement with security operators in various areas of the country, as well as actions fighting misinformation on COVID-19, promoting youth/women participation in political processes to prevent violent extremism, and supporting CSO-centred resolution of land-related conflicts in Samburu and Turkana counties.

Key nexus opportunities for 2021 have been identified in addressing forced displacement, notably through the EU's continued support to the Kalobeyei Integrated Socio-Economic Development Plan (KISEDP), as well as the nascent Garissa Integrated Socio-Economic Development Plan (GISEDP), encompassing the Dadaab refugee camps), wherein refugees and the host community can live together peacefully, have access to social services and develop economic ties to build sustainable livelihoods. For the next programming period, Kenya's status as a Middle-Income country will certainly require innovative approaches to nexus given DG ECHO's focus on refugees and on the most vulnerable and marginalised districts and populations.

In **Somalia**, the majority of development donors align to the National Development Plan-9 (NDP-9) (2020-2024). NDP-9 is a comprehensive strategy for poverty reduction and inclusive growth informed by an analysis of the drivers of poverty, notably political fragility, conflict, insecurity and lawlessness, and climatic shocks. The strategy is articulated around the four pillars of inclusive politics, improved security and the rule of law, inclusive economic growth, and improved human development and resilience to shocks. Pillars 3 and 4 offer the main Nexus opportunities for humanitarian programmes.

In Somalia, the **main relevant nexus** interaction between humanitarian and development assistance is being established in 5 domains: i) linking the humanitarian cash transfer programme with the shock-responsive component of the emerging safety net programmes under the EUTF's Inclusive Local and Economic Development (ILED)

programme and the WB-supported Baxnaano safety net programme. The link is also made to the livelihoods component of the resilience-building programmes, inter alia for COVID-19 affected households (socio-economic impact); ii) durable solutions for protracted IDP and growing urban poor population (e.g. with the EU REINTEG programme); iii) in health and nutrition, reaching out to development donors (e.g. USAID, DFID, Italy, Switzerland) on key concepts of Essential Package of Health Services and a more structural approach via health district programming; iv) on Education in Emergencies, DG ECHO has closely worked with the education cluster and with the long-term donors (in particular DEVCO) to complement its emergency focus on IDPs and out-of-school children with mid-term aspects such as curriculum development, teacher training, capacity building of the Ministry of Education and inclusion of secondary education and TVET; v) Protection issues and violations of IHL, where humanitarian actors alone can benefit from the long-term backing by development and political actors (advocacy, follow up of legislation such as sexual offences bill, evictions and tenure security). **Further nexus opportunities** for 2021 and beyond will also be pursued in the DP/DRR domain, in particular to address the floods risk. In addition, the IcSP is addressing social exclusion and conflicts over unresolved clan disputes and land through a EUR 23.4 million support to the consolidation of the State building process. The EU is also providing support to AMISOM as part of the EU's comprehensive and long-term support for security and development, and it implements three EU missions in the framework of the Common Security and Defence Policy.

5   ENVISAGED DG ECHO RESPONSE AND EXPECTED RESULTS OF HUMANITARIAN AID INTERVENTIONS

General considerations for all interventions:

The humanitarian response shall be compliant with EU thematic policies and guidelines that are described in detail in the HIP Policy Annex. For instance, mainstreaming of protection, gender (including mitigation of risks of SGBV), age, and disability inclusion should be duly reflected in all proposals.

Furthermore, the increasingly negative consequences of environmental degradation and climate-related challenges and the COVID-19 pandemic will continue to impact humanitarian crises and the provision of humanitarian assistance for the foreseeable future. For these reasons, in their proposals partners are requested to follow an all-risks assessment approach, to contemplate measures to reduce the environmental footprint of operations and to factor in as appropriate the COVID-19 dimension.

5.1   Envisaged DG ECHO response

As communities continue to be affected by conflict, violence, food insecurity, climate change and impact of COVID-19, ECHO will prioritise the response to most acute needs and most vulnerable communities / households / individuals, support common services and deepen its engagement with development and political/diplomatic actors towards long-term solutions to protracted situations, according to the respective mandates.

DG ECHO will adopt an **integrated multi-sectoral or cross-sectoral approach to programming that aims to meet basic needs[34] of affected populations**. Designing an integrated programme requires enhanced coordination and coherence across sectors, starting with joint assessments and continuing through the cycle with joint protection-sensitive vulnerability targeting, joint response/delivery and common monitoring and evaluation, leading to greater effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian assistance. As COVID-19 will remain a challenge, appropriate measures will be needed to continue delivering life-saving assistance in terms of physical protection, duty of care, messaging and communication, as well as creative solutions to ensure the continuity of activities.

As the entire HoA region keeps being impacted by recurrent natural disasters and harsh climatic conditions, such as regular floods and droughts, large and small-scale in nature, the humanitarian response in the region should take current and future climate risks into account. Disaster risk reduction and disaster preparedness should thus feature in the humanitarian aid programmes financed through this HIP, in order to strengthen early response capacity and coping capacities hereby increasing the resilience of people and institutions, and reducing the impact of climate related disasters on the most vulnerable people. In this respect, DG ECHO will systematically address **Emergency Preparedness & Early Response** through a) Emergency / Rapid Response Mechanisms (E/RRM) as standalone actions b) Flexibility measures (including "Crisis Modifiers") embedded in other actions and c) Disaster Preparedness (DP).

Considering DG ECHO's budget, mandate and comparative advantage in **Ethiopia**, its priority in 2021 will be to address the acute needs of people affected by inter-communal ethnic conflicts or violence, i.e. populations in displacement, communities hosting/ affected by displacement and populations returned/integrated/relocated. With ethnic conflicts widely spread across the country and difficult to predict, the most recent example being the conflict outbreak in the Northern Tigray region, DG ECHO will notably focus on areas that are assessed to have been under-represented in the HRP severity of needs map, due to lack of data, partners and limited support.

Moreover, DG ECHO will continue to ensure a rapid response capacity to new and rapid-onset conflicts and natural shocks, such as drought, floods, epidemic outbreaks and pests. Priority will be given to the most urgent and critical needs through an early response, depending on the nature of the shock, in an attempt to mitigate its impact and prevent a further deterioration. At the same time, some targeted Disaster Preparedness activities will focus on enhancing the capacity of nationally-recognised rapid response partners with local networks to deliver timely, professional and principled humanitarian assistance to conflict affected populations in addition to the traditional mechanisms described above.

Support to the refugee response will ensure that essential needs such as food, water and basic services are covered in the different refugee settings, with particular attention to new arrivals and acute needs, and that international protection space is maintained in accordance with Refugee Law, despite a challenging political environment. DG ECHO's engagement in addressing urgent humanitarian needs of deportees will gradually

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[34] Basic needs are the essential goods, utilities, services or resources required on a regular or seasonal basis by households for ensuring long-term survival and minimum living standards, without resorting to negative coping mechanisms or compromising their health, dignity and essential livelihood assets

decrease in favour of development-led reintegration initiatives. DG ECHO will still remain engaged in 2021, to support the quarantine sites in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and to address critical needs of particularly vulnerable groups such as unaccompanied minors.

DG ECHO's support for **Kenya** in 2021 will continue to focus on basic survival services (food assistance, WASH, health-nutrition, protection and education) for refugees and asylum seekers (including the undocumented) living in camps. Support will be well articulated with the longer-term actions funded by other EU instruments and development donors, avoiding overlap. Should the food security situation deteriorate in the ASALs, or in the event of other new crises, DG ECHO would consider a coordinated and harmonised approach responding to the basic needs of the most vulnerable population, preferably through unrestricted cash.

In **Somalia**, DG ECHO will prioritise actions based on a comprehensive context analysis, focusing on emergency response through life-saving activities for populations recently displaced by acute crises (conflict, drought, flood) or exposed to high levels of food insecurity (IPC 3+) or outbreaks of epidemics. The mitigation of the consequences of the "triple threat" of the desert locust upsurge, floods and the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 (notably in food insecurity and protection) will be a priority to address under this HIP. In addition, and having an increased attention on disaster preparedness in mind, support will be provided to strengthen early response capacity in case of new shocks, notably in the areas with high levels of, or new acute, displacement, food security and malnutrition and particularly affected by climate –induced disasters. Actions aiming at improving flood-related disaster preparedness through capacity building, knowledge transfer and strengthening of locally owned systems: supporting 1) the proper dissemination of flood warning/mitigation/prevention related information and 2) the institutionalised and systemic preparedness and response capacity to recurrent floods. A more strategic collaboration on prevention and river management with development donors will be needed and will be pursued as part of the strategy. Coordination and complementarity with other emergency preparedness & response mechanisms (e.g. emergency interventions under crisis modifiers, shock responsive component of existing safety nets) will also be considered.

Considering the satisfactory nexus approach for the refugee response, DG ECHO will, in **Djibouti,** build on the COVID-19 response and continue to provide protection services and other type of assistance to vulnerable migrants, in coordination with the EU Delegation. It is estimated that the number of migrants from neighbouring countries will increase, notably due to the economic and social impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

5.2 Other DG ECHO interventions

ECHO Flight, providing safe air transport for humanitarian actors in order to reach people in need in locations otherwise not reachable or very difficult to reach, in particular in Kenya and in Somalia**,** is subject of a separate HIP.

The **Emergency Toolbox HIP** may be drawn upon for the prevention of, and response to, outbreaks of Epidemics. Under the Emergency Toolbox HIP, the Small-Scale Response, Acute Large Emergency Response Tool (ALERT) and Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) instruments may also provide funding options.