

## **HUMANITARIAN IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (HIP)** **SOUTH, EAST, SOUTH-EAST ASIA AND THE PACIFIC**

AMOUNT: EUR 100 447 097

The present Humanitarian Implementation Plan (HIP) was prepared on the basis of financing decision ECHO/WWD/BUD/2022/01000 (Worldwide Decision) and the related General Guidelines for Operational Priorities on Humanitarian Aid (Operational Priorities). The purpose of the HIP and its annexes<sup>1</sup> is to serve as a communication tool for DG ECHO's<sup>2</sup> partners and to assist in the preparation of their proposals. The provisions of the Worldwide Decision and the General Conditions of the Agreement with the European Commission shall take precedence over the provisions in this document.

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

#### **Seventh modification – 06/12/2022**

##### **Disaster Preparedness Budget Line top-up – from Palestine**

EUR 2 million originally allocated to Palestine from the 2022 Disaster Preparedness Budget Line remains available, as the relevant project envisaged to be supported through this allocation was instead funded under the umbrella of the Programmatic Partnership with IFRC.

As no additional disaster preparedness project could be identified at this stage in Palestine, it is proposed to reallocate **EUR 2 million** to Asia, to reinforce targeted on-going preparedness actions within the broader “Rohingya crisis”: EUR 1 million for Myanmar and EUR 1 million for Bangladesh. Details are available in the HIP Technical Annex.

#### **Sixth modification – 10/10/2022**

##### **Disaster Preparedness Budget Line top-up – from Lebanon**

EUR 1 million originally allocated to Lebanon from the 2022 Disaster Preparedness Budget Line remains available, as the relevant project envisaged to be supported through this allocation was instead funded under the umbrella of the Programmatic Partnership with IFRC.

As no additional disaster preparedness project could be identified at this stage in Lebanon, it is proposed to reallocate **EUR 1 million** to Asia, to reinforce targeted on-going preparedness actions within the broader “Rohingya crisis”: EUR 700 000 for Myanmar and EUR 300 000 for Bangladesh. Details are available in the HIP Technical Annex.

#### **Fifth modification – 14/09/2022**

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<sup>1</sup> Technical annex and thematic policies annex

<sup>2</sup> Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO)

## **ERR Sri Lanka crisis**

**In Sri Lanka**, humanitarian needs throughout the country have increased rapidly since the beginning of 2022, due to an unprecedented socio-economic crisis. In June, the worsening humanitarian impact of the crisis led to the launch of a Humanitarian Needs and Priorities (HNP) Plan, calling for USD 47.2 million to provide life-saving assistance to 1.7 million most affected people.

**EUR 1.5 million** will be allocated to address the food and basic needs of the most vulnerable households. This targeted humanitarian support will address the urgent needs of those most severely affected by the crisis and most lacking coping capacity, particularly in urban areas, estate areas and Northern provinces.

Interventions to be considered under this allocation should allow the most fragile households to meet their basic needs (food; livelihood; education; health; protection), through Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance.

### **Fourth modification – 05/08/2022**

This modification is intended to transfer **EUR 4 487 097** to be allocated to the IFRC pilot Programmatic Partnership action (ECHO/-XA/BUD/2022/91000) ‘Accelerating local action in humanitarian and health crises’, including **EUR 450 000** for a Programmatic Partnership regional flexibility result.

### **Third modification – 03/05/2022**

## **OR Rohingya and Myanmar crises**

**In Bangladesh**, over 919 000 Rohingya refugees live in precarious and deteriorating conditions in Cox’s Bazar refugee camps. The recently launched 2022 Joint Response Plan calls for USD 881 million to address the need of humanitarian assistance for over 1.4 million Rohingya refugees and vulnerable host communities. The relocation of approximately 27 000 refugees to the island of Bhasan Char created additional humanitarian needs. Gaps in humanitarian coverage are important, and have a dramatic effect, as Rohingya refugees remain entirely dependent on humanitarian aid.

To address most urgent gaps, **EUR 17 million** will be allocated to address the most pressing needs of Rohingya refugees and host communities in Bangladesh. Though most unmet needs remain in Cox’s Bazar, partners could also include activities on Bhasan Char as part of their proposal. Sectors considered under this allocation round will be:

- For Cox’s Bazar: site management and site development, shelter and NFI (including possible stockpiling to respond to unexpected emergencies), provision of LPG, health (including MHPSS and nutrition services as well as nutrition surveillance), protection, food assistance.
- For Bhasan Char: protection, food security, health and nutrition.

**In Myanmar**, from 2021 to 2022, the number of people in need of humanitarian assistance has increased from 1 to 14.4 million, while the number of people targeted

through the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) has increased from 0.94 to 6.2 million. Displacement has risen throughout the country, with OCHA reporting 912 700 internally displaced people across the country as of 11 April 2022. To address the rising needs, **EUR 5 million** will be allocated to respond to the needs of the most vulnerable population groups throughout the country. Sectors considered under this allocation round are: Shelter, WASH, Protection, multi-sector emergency response to conflict-affected populations, support to localisation and to operationalising and developing the Triple Nexus. Eligible locations include all areas and population groups where humanitarian needs are present, including Rakhine State and for the Rohingya.

### **Second modification – 10/02/2022**

#### **OR Myanmar**

Following the 1 February 2021 coup d'état in Myanmar, humanitarian needs have grown considerably, with the UN identifying 14.4 million people in need of humanitarian aid in 2022, compared to 1 million people at the start of 2021. The 2022 Humanitarian Response Plan targets 6.2 million vulnerable people and funding requirement amounts to USD 826 million. The total number of IDPs is now estimated by UNHCR at 823,400 people, more than a doubling since the military take-over and still increasing exponentially, in addition to 600,000 stateless Rohingya surviving in IDP-like conditions and dependant on humanitarian aid. The dramatic consequences of the crisis are multiple, including in particular the spread of violence over almost the entire country, resulting in continuous large-scale displacements of civilians, as well as a dramatic increase in poverty and vulnerability across the country that is expected to have a lasting impact. It is estimated that 14 out of 15 states and regions are within the critical threshold for acute malnutrition.

Countrywide, the impact of conflicts and population displacements could be particularly marked in terms of food insecurity and undernutrition, as the combined result of reduced cultivated land, reduced livelihood opportunities and sharply increased prices of essential commodities.

For these reasons, it is proposed to allocate **EUR 10 million** to cover the most critical needs of the affected population. The amount will be integrated and directly allocated to Allocation Round 2 – Myanmar, the details of which are available in the HIP Technical Annex. No new proposals will be accepted.

### **First modification - 21/01/2022**

#### **OR Philippines Typhoon RAI**

On December 16, 2021, Super Typhoon Rai (local name Odette) brought torrential rains, violent winds, landslides, and storm surges to the Philippines. Typhoon Rai was the first Category 5 super typhoon since Typhoon Nock-ten in 2016 and ended up affecting 514 municipalities in 10 regions with a devastating impact. A month after the typhoon, the situation remains dire with a very high number of affected people (including displaced people) in need of assistance, a high number of houses and infrastructure damaged, and serious damage to agriculture and livelihoods.

According to the Philippines Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) as of 13 January 2022, more than 2.3 million families (about 8.2 million individuals) are affected. It is estimated that 1.36 million houses have been destroyed or damaged. OCHA reported that 2.4 million vulnerable people require emergency humanitarian assistance. Furthermore, Super Typhoon Rai has occurred in a special difficult context, mainly because the national response capacity is reduced by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, the population of many of the regions affected by the typhoon is also affected by the armed conflict.

Following the Government of the Philippines's acceptance of international support, the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) released a Humanitarian Needs and Priorities (HNP) document appealing for USD 107.2 million for emergency relief over the next six months. Immediate needs remain for food, water, sanitation and hygiene, shelter, logistics, health, non-food items and essential household items (NFIs), cash, medical assistance as well as protection services and restoring access to education. To date, about 55% of the funding requirement is still unmet. Given the evolving situation, the HCT plans to recalibrate and update the HNP for reflect greater needs.

It is proposed to allocate **EUR 10 million** to cover the most critical needs of the affected population. Partners must have the capacity to operate immediately in the affected areas in terms of structure, personnel, financial means, and technical expertise to respond effectively to the emergency on the scale required. Priority activities to be supported are food security and emergency livelihood, essential non-food items, water and sanitation, logistics, support to public health, education (in support of disrupted distant learning), and protection. The expected initial duration of the actions is up to 6 months.

### **External Assigned Revenue Luxembourg (Myanmar)**

An additional amount of **EUR 960 000** has been made available from a contribution in External Assigned Revenues from the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, under the title of "Humanitarian Response to the Myanmar Complex Crisis".

This amount will be used in line with the overall objective agreed with the Luxembourg Ministry: to deliver an integrated response to the multifaceted crisis, covering the most urgent needs of IDPs and other conflict-affected population groups. The sectors targeted in priority are protection, health, food assistance, shelter and WASH. The amount will be integrated and directly allocated to Allocation Round 2 – Myanmar, the details of which are available in the HIP Technical Annex.

## **1. CONTEXT**

This HIP covers both human- and natural-hazard induced crises including the disaster preparedness (DP) strategy for South and South-East Asia. East Asia and the Pacific are likewise covered under this HIP<sup>3</sup> and will be amended should the need arise.

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<sup>3</sup> The HIP covers 35 countries: South Asia (6 countries - Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka); East and South-East Asia (10 Member States of the Association of South-East Asian Nations - ASEAN - plus Timor Leste, China,

In terms of human-induced crises, this HIP response strategy encompasses: i) the multi-faceted crises in Myanmar including the refugee spill-over effects into neighbouring countries such as Bangladesh, Thailand, India, and the wider South-East Asia region; ii) the crisis in Mindanao, Philippines. The region covered by this HIP is one of the most at risk globally and is equally marked by accelerating environmental change and climate risks, leading to disastrous outcomes on affected communities thus exacerbating the vulnerabilities of the poorest population groups in the region, in particular regarding food insecurity and malnutrition. The onset of COVID-19 is likewise having far reaching socio-economic consequences in a region which is home to 60% of the world's population.<sup>4</sup> Support to national DP and disaster risk management (DRM) systems and strategies thus remain critical. Similarly, DG ECHO stands ready to intervene in case of sudden onset disasters in countries with limited capacity to cope, and/or where national or local capacities are overwhelmed.

### **1.1 Myanmar**

For years the crisis in Myanmar has been characterised by widespread human rights violations, systemic violence, and institutionalised discrimination against Rohingya and other ethnic minorities. Since the 1 February 2021 coup d'état, rights abuses, and International Humanitarian Law (IHL) infringements have reached unprecedented levels and spread across the country affecting most of the population. As a result, politically motivated violence has dramatically increased and spread, triggering high levels of forced displacement in rural areas, while contestation in urban settings led to disproportionate use of force and killings of protesters and other civilians, including children. In parallel, the collapse of the economy is expected to generate up to 3 million people in need of humanitarian assistance<sup>5</sup> by end 2021, in addition to the pre-existing 1 million conflict- or disaster-affected and stateless people. This has been compounded by i) the impact of three waves of COVID-19 and subsequent restrictions on movements, livelihoods, and humanitarian assistance, ii) the unprecedented collapse of social services across Myanmar, including health and education, and iii) the price volatility of essential items. The financial crisis and the disruption of the banking system have created new challenges to humanitarian assistance and significantly hindered aid delivery, on top of the shrinking humanitarian access. The combination of above factors, in a country highly susceptible to natural hazards, is expected to be devastating and could lead to record levels of humanitarian needs in 2022.

### **1.2 Bangladesh**

The district of Cox's Bazar, one of the country's poorest, is hosting almost 1 million Rohingya refugees from Myanmar fully reliant on humanitarian assistance. The restrictions on delivery of assistance posed by the pandemic's prevention measures and the relocation plans of refugees are creating additional needs and heightened vulnerabilities. With regular outbreaks of diseases with epidemic potential, including COVID-19, the camps' population density, overlapping vulnerabilities amongst refugees and destitute local communities continue to be compounding factors for a comprehensive

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Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Mongolia, a total of 14 countries); the Pacific region (14 countries not counting EU Member States overseas territories)

<sup>4</sup> UNESCAP - <https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/SPPS-Factsheet-Population-Trends-v3.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> Myanmar HRP addendum 2021

humanitarian-development approach. That would enable more sustainable response strategies to address secondary impacts on people and environment whilst building longer-term approach. Bangladesh continues to be exposed to several vulnerabilities. Almost 25% of the population live in poverty and are subject to significant migration flows and repeated shocks, primarily caused by the adverse impact of climate change. The COVID-19 pandemic and the recurrent containment measures put in place by the government have crippled the economy and thrown millions into further poverty and damaging coping strategies, gravely affecting those depending on the informal sector.

### **1.3 Regional Refugee Crisis**

Mixed migration is a dominant feature in the South and South-East Asia region marked by a complex web of population movements. Since the Rohingya refugee crisis in 2017, the region witnessed a stark uptick of Rohingya refugees resorting to perilous journeys via sea and land routes, with many losing their lives along the way. Myanmar coup in February has compounded the pre-existing refugee crisis in the region. Smuggling and trafficking has increasingly found a foothold exploiting the hopes of those who seek a better life. With COVID-19, countries have imposed ever stricter measures and denying access to national territories, safe disembarkations, exercising deportation and breaching the fundamental principle of '*non-refoulement*' with total disregard for access to refugee status determination. Moreover, the unfolding political instability in Afghanistan, causing further forced displacement into South/ South-East Asia and Central Asia cannot be discounted.

### **1.4 The Philippines**

The armed conflict crisis in Mindanao remains a fragile and complex situation. Armed conflict between government forces and non-state armed actors have intensified in 2021. From January-June 2021 UNHCR reported more than 322 000 internally displaced persons (IDPs), of whom more than 7% are protractedly displaced. The UN Protection Cluster and DG ECHO partners have reported IHL and International Human Rights Law (IHRL) violations, including grave violations against children. The Philippines archipelago is also located on the Pacific Ring of Fire, and the rugged terrain and small islands, often poorly connected, exacerbate risks of the strong monsoonal climate (e.g. typhoons and floods), with earthquakes, and volcanic activities, making the country one of the most hazard prone places in the world. Natural resources and environmental issues are caused by forest degradation, unsustainable land use, pollution due to rapid population growth and congestion in urban areas.<sup>6</sup> Under the COVID-19 pandemic, some regions in Mindanao and especially the conflict-affected cities and provinces are among the areas of concern following the surge of cases outside of the capital in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2021. The capacity of the local government units to prepare for and respond to displacement needs to be further strengthened.

### **1.5 Nepal**

Nepal is highly vulnerable to natural hazard-induced disasters such as earthquakes, flooding and landslides compounded by unplanned settlements, population growth, weak public service provision and infrastructure, lack of regulatory standards, and low literacy

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<sup>6</sup> [ADB Country Environmental Analysis for the Philippines](#)

rates. COVID-19 has disproportionately impacted the most marginalised groups' livelihoods, health, and food security. Despite a positive shift towards a federalised disaster management policy and legislative framework, operationalising the system will take time whilst underlying challenges and critical gaps persist. Technical capacity and coordination at all levels of the administration need to be reinforced to leverage design and institutionalisation of risk analysis, tools, and systems to prepare for and respond early to crises.

## 1.6 Regional Disaster Preparedness

Over the past two decades, humanitarian crises in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) have gradually become more protracted, unpredictable, and complex. Crises are increasingly exacerbated by factors such as climate change, environmental degradation, rapid urbanisation and by the overlap between disasters, the COVID-19 pandemic, conflict, and fragile situations. Against this fragile risk landscape, the upward trend of climate induced hazards, as manifested in 2020 with La Niña - the cool phase of the El Niño-Southern Oscillation climate pattern, further compounds vulnerabilities and leads to disastrous outcomes for affected communities. Those who are most vulnerable and marginalised are often the least prepared for acting early, ahead of recurrent and protracted hazards' manifestation in the region, including situations of conflicts, crises, and violence, which have further compounded their vulnerabilities. The 2021 Inform Risk Index shows that six countries have a high risk of disaster and humanitarian crisis: Bangladesh, Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) India, Myanmar, Nepal, and the Philippines, whilst six others display a medium risk: Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam.

	Myanmar	Bangladesh	Regional Refugees <sup>7</sup>	Philippines	Nepal	Cambodia	Indonesia	Lao PDR	Thailand	Viet Nam
INFORM Risk Index <sup>8</sup>	6.3/10	6.0/10	n/a	5.6/10	5.0/10	4.7/10	4.8/10	4.0/10	4.0/10	3.7/10
Vulnerability Index	5.2/10	5.7/10	n/a	5.1/10	4.4/10	4.0/10	3.3/10	3.6/10	3.0/10	2.2/10
Hazard and Exposure	7.4/10	7.4/10	n/a	7.8/10	5.1/10	4.2/10	7.4/10	6.0/10	5.5/10	5.4/10
Lack of Coping Capacity	6.4/10	5.0/10	n/a	4.3/10	4.3/10	6.1/10	4.5/10	3.0/10	4.0/10	4.2/10
Global Crisis Severity Index <sup>9</sup>	4.0/5	3.3/5	3.8-2.4-1.8/5	2.5/5	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2.1/5 <sup>10</sup>	n/a
Projected conflict risk	9.6/10	9.3/10	n/a	9.2/10	6.1/10	3.3/10	7.7/10	2.9/10	7.0/10	5.3/10
Uprooted People Index	7.2/10	7.7/10	n/a	5.6/10	3.6/10	0.0/10	4.0/10	0.0/10	5.5/10	0.0/10
Humanitarian Conditions	3.7/5	3.6/5	3.9-2.3-1.6/5	1.5/5	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1.3/5	n/a
Natural Disaster Index	7.8/10	8.2/10	n/a	8.4/10	5.8/10	5.8/10	7.7/10	4.9/10	6.2/10	7.4/10
HDI Ranking <sup>11</sup>	147 (0.583)	133 (0.632)	n/a	107 (0.718)	142 (0.602)	144 (0.594)	107 (0.718)	137 (0.613)	79 (0.765)	117 (0.704)
Total Population <sup>12</sup>	54 409 894	164 689 383	898 665 <sup>13</sup>	109 581 085	29 136 808	16 718 970	273 523 620	7 275 560	69 799 980	7 338 580

<sup>7</sup> Not one single indicator exists. The ones used are the following crises from the Global Crises Severity Index: Regional Rohingya Crisis; Myanmar Refugees in Thailand; and International Refugees in Malaysia (in the order of appearance).

<sup>8</sup> INFORM is a global, open-source risk assessment for humanitarian crises and disasters

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.inform-index.org/Global-Crisis-Severity-Index-beta>

<sup>10</sup> Multiple Crises

<sup>11</sup> Humanitarian Development Index (HDI) developed by UNDP

<sup>12</sup> World Bank data, 2020

<sup>13</sup> An estimate of both registered and unregistered/undocumented refugees in India, Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand. See breakdown in part 2

## 2. HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

### 2.1 People in need of humanitarian assistance:

	Myanmar	Bangladesh	Regional refugees <sup>14</sup>	Philippines	Other Countries
Total number of vulnerable people in need of humanitarian assistance <sup>15</sup>	4 000 000	1 356 043	898 665 <sup>16</sup>	322 000	17 368 543
Refugees, asylum seekers, stateless, people on the move		884,041	Malaysia: 179 000 Indonesia: 14 600 Thailand: 92 000 India: 208 065 <sup>17</sup>		Papua New Guinea: 10 920 <sup>18</sup>
IDPs	556,000			322 000	West Papua: 50 000 <sup>19</sup>
Host Communities		472,002			
Food insecure people	6 200 000	40 000 000		28 000 000	
Malnourished children U5	800 000	5 500 000		4 000 000	
Other crises affected					DPRK: 10 400 000 <sup>20</sup> India – Kashmir: 6 907 623 <sup>21</sup>

#### 2.1.1 IDPs and Refugee

According to the July 2021 **Myanmar** humanitarian snapshot, there are a total of 556 000 IDPs in the country. There were 336 000 pre-existing IDPs at the start of the year, including approximately 126 000 Rohingya still confined to camps in Central Rakhine. Pre-existing IDPs in Rakhine, Kachin and Shan states continue facing severe movement restrictions and thus have limited access to livelihoods, while return and resettlement options have mostly vanished in the new political and security context. Following the military coup and subsequent upsurge in fighting, an additional 220 000 new IDPs were identified. This figure remains an estimate expected to evolve significantly considering the very dynamic and unpredictable context along with an extremely constrained humanitarian access. In addition, there are an estimated 470 000 stateless people in Rakhine state and 249 000 returnees and locally integrated people across the country. Since the coup d'état, multi-sectoral humanitarian needs have emerged in rural and urban settings, and OCHA is expecting a huge increase of people in need of humanitarian assistance in 2022.

The 2021 **Bangladesh** UN Joint Response Plan (JRP) for the Rohingya Humanitarian Crisis reflects a total of 1 356 043 Rohingya refugees and vulnerable host community members in need of humanitarian assistance. Amongst the 884 041 Rohingya refugees, 48.4% are men and boys and 51.6% are women and girls; 51% of the refugee population are children, 4% are elderly and an estimated 12% are persons with disabilities. From the 472 002 host communities' members 49.6% are women and girls, 50.4% are men and boys, 52.9% are children, and 4.6% are elderly.

**Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and India** are host to refugees and asylum seekers from various nationalities. In addition to the long-standing influx of Rohingya, following the coup in Myanmar refugee movement has significantly increased. Weak legal protection frameworks across the region, combined with these countries being non-signatories to

<sup>14</sup> Above figures are UNHCR registered refugees with actual unregistered caseloads being far higher (e.g. Malaysia, 400 000 unregistered refugees, and Thailand 5 000). All numbers are likely to continue to increase considering the situation in Myanmar.

<sup>15</sup> Sources: OCHA Humanitarian Snapshot (Myanmar), OCHA figures to be confirmed; Joint Response Plan for Bangladesh; UNHCR Mindanao Displacement Dashboard for Philippines; UNHCR Persons of Concern data.

<sup>16</sup> An estimate of registered and unregistered/undocumented refugees in India, Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand.

<sup>17</sup> Includes 22 459 refugees/asylum seekers from Myanmar registered in India (as of June 2021).

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/download/?url=746Bek>

<sup>19</sup> IDMC

<sup>20</sup> This corresponds to 40% of a population of 25 million.

<sup>21</sup> [https://www.censusindia.gov.in/2011-prov-results/prov\\_data\\_products\\_J&K.html](https://www.censusindia.gov.in/2011-prov-results/prov_data_products_J&K.html)



International Refugee Law (IRL), place refugees, asylum seekers and migrants, in a highly precarious legal void. Considered as “illegal” and with the fundamental right to protection denied, they are often subjected to arbitrary arrests, indefinite periods of detention, and deportations. Unable to work legally, they remain vulnerable to exploitation including debt bondage. COVID-19 has exacerbated their vulnerabilities in terms of stigmatisation, authorities raiding refugee/ migrant hosting areas, forced evictions, and loss of livelihood and access to health care and treatment due to movement restrictions.

In the **Philippines**, the conflicts in Mindanao between the government and different armed non-state actors as well as other forms of violence cause repeated multiple displacements for the most vulnerable populations and depletes their already meagre resources. Displacements also compound risks and secondary effects of COVID-19. The most vulnerable IDPs are those: 1) without access to mainstream relief and emergency assistance and likely not in the government registry; 2) socially and physically isolated and in hard-to-reach areas usually with volatile security access; 3) experiencing IHL violations; 4) facing freedom of movement restrictions by armed groups; 5) children subjected to grave violation of children’s rights and losing access to education.

### *2.1.2 General Population*

Needs for **Disaster Preparedness** in South- and South-East Asia remain high as vulnerability profiles continue to evolve, with increased urban migration, erosion of traditional coping mechanisms, erratic meteorological patterns, and higher disaster impact from hydro-meteorological events. In 2020, more than double the yearly average<sup>22</sup> disasters, almost solely attributable to hydro-meteorological and climatological events, were experienced in the ASEAN region. Over 24 million people, of which 3.37 million were displaced, were affected and over 1.44 million homes damaged. Over half of the ASEAN population already live in urban areas, and by 2025, a further 70 million people in this region are estimated to become city dwellers<sup>23</sup>. This growth is increasingly happening in subnational regions with populations between 500 000 and five million people, which are often remote and less serviced than mega-cities. Income inequality in ASEAN cities, already higher than in rural areas before COVID-19, has been exacerbated by the impact the pandemic.

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

### *2.2.1 Protection*

Protection is a key need in conflict-and displacement-affected countries of the region. Severe IHRL and IHL violations characterise the conflicts in Myanmar and the Philippines, but also in India, South Thailand, and other countries, with sections of the population specifically targeted or deprived of access to rights and services. In Myanmar the protection risks continue to significantly increase, as fighting observed across the country since the coup are characterised by systematic violations of IHRL and IHL along with disproportionate and indiscriminate use of weaponry. In Mindanao, many IDPs do

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<sup>22</sup> 5 years average. Annual Report 2020, the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre)

<sup>23</sup> ASEAN, 2018

not have any identification documents and thus do not receive assistance. Children suffer from a range of protection risk such as early marriage, child abuse, exploitation, and forced recruitment by armed groups. Across the region the lack of legal status heightens the risks faced by refugees and asylum seekers, including individuals detained as illegal immigrants in immigration detention centres. Statelessness is at the root of many protection needs in the region, and the Rohingya are the largest stateless group in the world. Access to documentation and protection services remain a key humanitarian need for the refugee population in the region, as these also facilitate access to other basic needs and services. Recent forced displacement demographic indicates most refugees/asylum seekers being women and children, but displacements following the Myanmar coup may encompass a different demography. For the Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar, the trauma caused by the flight from the persecutions in Myanmar is being exacerbated by the protracted displacement in the camps in Bangladesh and the increasing protection risks to which they are currently exposed, compounded by the uncertainty about their future. Lack of legal status and legal documentation, heightened securitisation of the camps and a constrictive human rights policy and asylum space further erode the dignity dimension of their stay. Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) is highly prevalent throughout the region, often exacerbated by traditional gender roles, as well as by conflict and there are strong indications that the pandemic has further increased the prevalence of domestic violence.

### *2.2.2 Health*

The burden of infectious diseases is high in many countries across the region. Epidemics, in particular malaria, dengue, acute watery diarrhoea, and other communicable diseases, occur frequently with an extended geographical scope. The COVID-19 pandemic is still rampant throughout the region, with significant direct and indirect impacts. Access to quality healthcare is limited in many countries of the region, particularly in isolated areas. In Myanmar, access to health care, already scarce before the coup and in conflict affected areas, has dramatically reduced because of the collapse of the public health system across the country following the coup. In Bangladesh, the Rohingya refugees remain fully dependent on external aid to access reliable health care. Throughout the region, mental health remains an unmet need for many refugees and IDPs having fled or suffered violence in conflict areas, and this has been further compounded by the effects of COVID-19 restrictions. Specifically in Cox's Bazar the precarious living conditions combined with the numerous threats of relocations and induced movements to other camps or areas in country, including the island of Bhasan Char and the uncertainty attached to that, have significantly increased the need for mental health and psychosocial support services.

### *2.2.3 Nutrition*

Asia sees the largest burden of acute child malnutrition, globally.

In humanitarian contexts, acute child malnutrition is especially prevalent among displaced populations, e.g. the Rohingya in Cox's Bazar district of Bangladesh, yet also following the frequent and large-scale natural disasters in the region, acute child malnutrition may periodically become significant among marginalised and vulnerable populations. Furthermore, intensified drought conditions, exacerbated by climate change, as seen in parts of e.g. India, Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR), Indonesia and Papua New Guinea, is associated with endemically high child malnutrition.

#### 2.2.4 Food Assistance and Basic Needs

Food security and access to basic needs in general are acute humanitarian needs for all conflict- and displacement-affected populations throughout South and South-East Asia. The situation has continued to worsen during 2021 due to pandemic-related restrictions and ensuing loss of productive income and remittances. In Cox's Bazar, refugees face lack of livelihoods opportunities and diminished capacity to access multiple services due to heightened security measures compounded with the worrying sanitary trends due to the uprising pandemic cases which render refugees increasingly vulnerable and fully dependent of external aid, particularly food and nutrition. Based on recent surveys 87% of refugees show a high level of vulnerability due to the lost opportunities this year due to the pandemic, compared to the 70% of last year. Food security of the refugees has been declining since 2017 when 67% of refugees had an acceptable Food Consumption Score (FCS); between 2019 and 2020 the proportion of refugees with acceptable FCS further declined from 58% to 50%<sup>24</sup>. In Mindanao, the regressing capacity and restricted access increases the food insecurity of IDPs and 100% of the Lumad population have Poor FCS, Poor to Borderline FCS for 90% of Marawi IDPs and 80% for repeatedly displaced Maguindanao/SPMS Box<sup>25</sup> IDPs. In Rakhine in Myanmar, prolonged displacement, discriminatory policies and practices, restrictions on freedom of movement impede access to livelihoods and basic services leading to reliance on negative coping mechanisms. In new conflict affected areas, the Myanmar Armed Forces has prevented the delivery of essential services, supplies and humanitarian aid to a large extent, thus putting tens of thousands of individuals in dire situations. Throughout the region, refugees and asylum seekers escaping conflict and violence and/or taking perilous journeys in the hope for better opportunities, arrive with no belongings and often under life threatening conditions. In highly disaster-prone areas of the region, catastrophic floods and cyclones, also frequently destroy the livelihoods of millions of individuals, causing significant loss of crops as well as arable land.

#### 2.2.5 WASH, Shelter & Settlements

WASH infrastructure, services, and access to basic supplies in most refugee and IDP camps remain fragile, and heavily dependent on continued humanitarian intervention, and the provision of shelters and non-food items (NFIs) as well as the planning, set up and management of disaster affected settlements is essential for displaced populations in the region, whether displaced by conflict or natural events. In the Philippines, the absence of sufficient WASH services and facilities in the conflict-affected areas further worsen the situation. According to the national statistic authority, areas in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) remain with the highest incidence of poor sanitation with 16% of population practicing open defecation, 38% with unimproved sanitation and 13% with limited sanitation level service. 25% have no access to basic drinking water services. As seen in the previous months during COVID-19 community quarantine, displacement has been doubly difficult as there is almost no access to clean water sources and sanitation facilities. In Bangladesh and Myanmar, the access to reliable WASH, shelter and settlement assistance remains

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<sup>24</sup> Refugee Emergency Vulnerability Assessment Round 4, WFP

<sup>25</sup> The SPMS is a collective name of 4 municipalities and 8 towns which are a stronghold of BIFF (IS Affiliated local chapter)

relevant in areas where the population is affected by displacement, relocation, and disasters.

#### *2.2.6 Education in Emergencies*

Refugee, displaced and conflict-affected children in Myanmar, Bangladesh and the Philippines are at particularly risk of being deprived access to learning, which combined with pandemic-related school closures and restrictions leads to increased child protection risks. In Myanmar, the recent massive population displacements and countrywide Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM), of which many teachers are part, has reduced access to education dramatically. In Bangladesh, the suspension of regular education activities since March 2020 has increased exponentially the already high percentage of out of school refugee children, which is further compounded by the coping strategies put in place by the families to overcome the hardship caused by the pandemic. With a very concerning learning gap, even more pronounced for girls than boys, education remains a priority in this response as children are increasingly exposed to risks, such as trafficking, child labour, and early marriage. Alarming is also the education gap for adolescents, where enrolment is extremely low for both genders. Due to disrupted livelihoods and recurrent displacement, parents cannot send their children to school in Mindanao. In BARMM, only 1 in 5 children enrolled completes primary school, and only 1 out of 10 students completes junior high school, as child labour replaces education. For those who are in school, learning facilities are very poor. In Lumad areas, there are hardly any access to national government schools. Attacks against education are an increasing feature of the conflicts in Myanmar and the Philippines creating further barriers to learning.

#### *2.2.7 Vulnerability to natural hazard-induced disasters (Disaster Preparedness)*

Although disaster risk management is a priority in regional and national strategies in ASEAN, Bangladesh and Nepal, these are being advanced with differential pace across the ASEAN Member States and in South Asian countries. Development gains are undermined by frequency of disasters, crises, lack of comprehensive risk informed preparedness for and early action to reduce the impact of future disasters. One of the main causes of human suffering in both South and South-East Asia is directly linked to the socio-economic vulnerability of sections of its people. Vulnerable people who lack training and therefore capacities, social connections, support, or finances to deal with a standard environmental event such as a hurricane, flood or drought are those who pay, often with their own lives, the most severe costs of disasters and climate change. With climate-induced hazards increasing in intensity and frequency, shocks, crises, and disasters result in a high human and economic cost. The secondary impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is further exacerbating pre-existing vulnerability and alongside creating new needs. Despite their economic and technological dynamism, several ASEAN countries and subnational regions remain caught in protracted cycles of conflict and violence, which contribute to underdevelopment and fragility. Countries experiencing violent conflict and/or fragile governance are in addition those least likely to be able to respond to disasters and adapt to climate change. The on-going COVID-19 pandemic has further amplified the prevalence of urban poverty and inequality within countries. This has several implications for cities in ASEAN, Bangladesh, and Nepal, including the spread of informal settlements, increases in informal employment, lack of financial inclusion and gender inequality. Those who are between the poorest and

marginalised sections of society tend to reside where land and rents are the cheapest, which is often in areas at higher comparative risk. They have limited to no capacity to mitigate/transfer their risks for example through purchase of risk insurance policies. Moreover, vulnerable households often fall outside of safety nets, leading to limited access to services and protection. Hence, both lives and livelihoods are routinely lost irrespective of the size of shocks with inescapable spiral mechanisms activated.

### **3. HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE AND COORDINATION**

#### **3.1 National / local response and involvement**

##### *3.1.1 Myanmar*

Prior to the coup the government had little capacity and willingness to provide assistance to people in need, as these were mostly in conflict-affected areas. Since February and the subsequent upsurge in fighting in many parts of the country, this situation has been further worsened, and a large part of the population is also not willing to receive assistance from services associated with the state and de facto authorities. The Myanmar Red Cross Society has demonstrated significant operational capacities with the important support of the broader international movement, while ensuring a principled approach in a very complex operational context. Local organisations, including grassroots Community Based Organisations (CBOs), remain the main first line responders in an environment characterised by massive access challenges. Localisation is de facto a focus of all international actors to allow effective aid delivery, along with significant yet largely unmet capacity building and funding needs. This should be an entry point to greater focus on well-coordinated nexus initiatives.

##### *3.1.2 Bangladesh*

The government is responding to recurrent disasters as well as to the worrying increasing trends of COVID-19 in various parts of the country. Capacity is however stretched, particularly in regions already severely affected by floods and cyclones in the previous year. Due to the magnitude of needs aggravated by the pandemic as well as the heightened risks in highly congested urban areas, local and international efforts come together in support to the national capacity. While national NGOs have extensively proven their capacity to respond to the most common disasters, the pandemic and years of neglect have further eroded the capacities of local communities to anticipate and prepare for future crises, thus creating severe damages and losses. In the refugee response, the 2021 JRP builds on the roles and efforts of both national and international capacities. Bangladesh has not signed the 1951 Refugee Convention. The government has steadily increased its oversight over the refugee response through various structures at local and central level. Still, the multiplicity of coordination mechanisms has further complicated the governance linearity resulting in increased administrative hurdles that hinder the response capacity.

##### *3.1.3 Regional Response to Refugee Crisis*

South East Asia countries and India are not signatories to the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocols, nor to the 1954 and 1961 Statelessness conventions. Albeit efforts

to address refugee/migrant legal frameworks at national level, these continue to be very weak.

#### *3.1.4 Philippines*

Emergency and relief assistance to crises and disasters primarily rests on the local government units (Municipality, City, and Province) through their calamity funds and local disaster risk reduction management funds. Some of the towns in the centre of armed conflict in BARMM have no internal revenue allocation from the national government. Perceptions of alliance with armed groups or being opposition parties also hinder access to mainstream support. The Bangsamoro Transition Authority through the Ministry of Social Welfare and Development has started responding, but the enactment of the local governance and services law to institutionalise the service remains to be seen. Post-crisis recovery plans for major past crises have not yet succeeded in relocating all IDPs, with more than 24 000 remaining in transitory sites and host families. One of the main causes of delay is regarding acquisition of land for relocation, as well as housing and property rights issues linked to missing legal documentation.

#### *3.1.5 Regional Disaster Preparedness*

In Southeast Asia, ASEAN has adopted several key instruments which steer ASEAN Member States to take collective action towards disaster preparedness, risks reduction and resilience-building under the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response Work Programme 2021-2025. Considering the evolving vulnerability profiles of the region, support to national disaster preparedness and disaster risk management systems and strategies is essential. The COVID-19 pandemic created unprecedented political space in ASEAN Member States to support the expansion of Social Protection. Schemes have been delivering at a rarely experienced scale (47% additional beneficiaries covered by cash transfers), speed (average 39 days between first COVID-19 national case and emergency payments) and magnitude of financing (USD194 billion to date)<sup>26</sup>. This rapid scale up of shock responsive social protection schemes capitalised on the adoption of the Disaster Responsive Shock Preparedness Guidelines by ASEAN in November 2020.

### **3.2 International Humanitarian Response**

#### *3.2.1 Myanmar*

At national level, the overall response is led by the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) and coordinated by a range of clusters with sub-national coordination forums. The current crisis has demonstrated the need to expand effective humanitarian coordination capacities beyond the areas traditionally targeted by the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP), i.e. all newly conflict-affected areas. The HRP 2021 is largely underfunded, with only 40% out of USD 278.5 million requirements reported by the Financial Tracking Service as of July, although not all humanitarian funds may be accounted for. The interim emergency response plan published in June 2021 has increased the funding requirement by USD 109 million, including for new and urban areas, with only 15%

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<sup>26</sup> UNICEF, April 2021

pledged at the time of drafting this HIP. The humanitarian response remains dramatically insufficient, despite significant additional funding from several donors, which may have serious and lasting consequences for people with urgent yet unmet needs.

### 3.2.2 *Bangladesh*

*Refugee response:* At the national level, the refugee humanitarian response is led by the Strategic Executive Group (SEG) co-chaired by the UN RC, UNHCR and IOM. In Cox's Bazar the humanitarian operations are coordinated by the Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG), composed of lead humanitarian agencies and key sectors. The SEG and ISCG coordination structures provide a platform for all actors engaged in the response to collaborate on common humanitarian objectives and strategies. Donors coordinate through meetings at Dhaka and at Capitals level. The 2021 JRP for Rohingya crisis in Bangladesh published in May 2021 has a financial requirement of USD 943 million. As of October 2021, the JRP is 48% funded.

3.2.3 *Country-wide (disaster response):* The Humanitarian Coordination Task Team (HCTT) works as a coordination platform to strengthen the collective capacity of government, national and international actors to ensure effective humanitarian preparedness for, response to, and recovery from the impacts of disaster in Bangladesh. The HCTT is co-chaired by the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief and the UN.

### 3.2.4 *Regional Refugee Crisis*

In the absence of a UN HRP for SEA or India, funding towards refugees, asylum seekers, migrants remain minimal, thus response strategies are severely stretched. UNHCRs funding requirement for South-East Asia (SEA), with a focus on the regional dimension of the Myanmar crisis, is only 14% funded from the total USD 407 million required (ca. €400 million) for 2021, leaving a funding gap of 86% to date. In 2020 UNHCR funding requirement was only funded at 54%.

### 3.2.5 *The Philippines*

By July 2021, 19 million USD had been provided in humanitarian funding for the Philippines. The Philippines Inter-sectoral COVID Response Plan 2020 (latest appeal), of almost USD 122 million is about 17% funded as of July 2021. The HCT is the centre of coordination of international humanitarian affairs in the country holding regular monthly meetings and ad hoc meetings as necessary during emergencies. In 2021-2022, the HCT launched a Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) funded pilot programme on anticipatory action aiming at multi-sectoral capacity building of the national government to prepare for and act early ahead of cyclones in two of the most prone regions in the Philippines. International NGOs coordinate through the Philippine INGO Network and is represented at the HCT by its convenor, ADRA. For Mindanao, a sub-country Mindanao Humanitarian Team specifically coordinates humanitarian crises response.

## 3.3 **Operational constraints**

### 3.3.1 *Access/humanitarian space*

Humanitarian access in **Myanmar** has long been constrained by measures imposed by successive regimes. Access challenges have aggravated dramatically following the coup with humanitarian aid being put on hold by the *de facto* authorities in areas affected by

the upsurge in fighting. Administrative burdens, particularly with regards to travel authorisations, have further increased.

Over the years, **Bangladesh** authorities have introduced new and more restrictive operating modalities, specifically in the refugee response. National and international agencies are subject to thorough scrutiny that may hinder the delivery of timely and predictable assistance to affected populations. In addition, heightened security measures such as fencing are posing daily challenges to the delivery of aid.

Humanitarian access to **regional refugees and asylum-seekers** is severely impeded. In Malaysia, Rohingya refugees that disembarked and/or were detained during the crackdowns in 2020 remain in detention centres with no humanitarian access. In Thailand, new refugee influxes following the Myanmar coup, have been pushed back. India, too, is keen on sending Myanmar nationals and Rohingya refugees back to Myanmar irrespective of whether conditions allow for safe and dignified returns.

In the **Philippines**, the security situation has deteriorated in 2020-2021 following the intensified operation of the state forces against the non-state armed groups. While humanitarian space still exists, it has been narrowing as more incidents of fighting occur and non-government agencies and organisations can be perceived as being on one side of the conflict by the other party.

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

In **Myanmar**, there is a large spectrum of organisations present in the field with significant capacities. However, actual delivery of aid is most often ensured by local partners due to the above-mentioned access constraints. Since the military coup and subsequent economic crisis, more particularly in the banking sector, all humanitarian actors have faced drastic additional challenges to procure and deliver assistance, but also to ensure their own functioning. It is assessed that this volatile and unpredictable operational context could lead to temporary reductions in the scale of operations.

In the refugee response in **Bangladesh**, despite these challenges, the absorption capacity of partners remains good, with UN agencies, International, National and Local NGOs, ICRC and national Red Cross societies present with adequate experience and capacity. At national level, the current upwards worrying trends of COVID-19 are impacting the capacity to deliver, due to the lockdown measures put in place. To overcome the “last mile” challenge in supporting communities highly affected by the seasonal climatic shocks, a strong network of volunteers and civil society has helped reaching out those most in need.

**Regional Refugee Crisis:** A number of vibrant civil society organisations and networks are engaged in Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, and India. Capacities vary, however, together with the handful of international organisations and joint efforts, capacities to respond and scale up operations are present.

In the **Philippines** international and local humanitarian agencies and organisations are present on the ground, some of them with sub-country offices in Mindanao. The cluster system can be activated during an emergency. Local NGOs play a significant role in the delivery of rapid, independent response on the ground. In May-June 2021, country-wide dialogue on localisation identified recommendations to strengthen its complementarity to the international humanitarian response and coordination.



### 3.3.3 *Other*

In all countries, COVID-19 restrictions also affect the mobility of partners, limiting the capacity of agencies to deliver assistance.

The complex operational context in **Myanmar** imposes humanitarian actors to develop alternative intervention modalities, including changing from cash-based to in-kind assistance and exploring alternative methods of accessing funds. This must be accompanied by reinforced due diligence and control mechanisms to avoid aid instrumentalisation or diversion and ensure accountability to beneficiaries and donors.

## 4. HUMANITARIAN – DEVELOPMENT – PEACE NEXUS

DG ECHO will seek humanitarian-development-peace (HDP) nexus opportunities with different EU funding instruments and encourage partners to also consider this aspect. DG ECHO has involved its counterparts in the other EU services in the elaboration of this HIP, its priorities, and the identification of nexus opportunities. Likewise, EU Delegations in the region included DG ECHO in their identification of priorities under the new EU multi-annual financial framework 2021-2027 and in accordance with EU priorities.

**Myanmar** is an EU nexus pilot country. The 2018 EU and Member States' Nexus Plan of Action's strategic areas are forced displacement, food/nutrition, and disaster preparedness. While the priorities set remain relevant, the drastic change in context since the military coup and the subsequent massive reduction in development programming have reduced the scope for HDP nexus in some domains and impose to redefine priorities across a much larger part of the country than previously. In fact, a MIP for Myanmar cannot be envisaged after the coup and the development programme is run under "special measures". Localised approaches should be particularly supported. Partnerships with private sector (including from the EU) in the context of COVID-19 response have demonstrated positive outcomes in 2021 and are encouraged.

In **Bangladesh**, in corroboration of a meaningful link between humanitarian and development instruments, a dedicated policy framework supported by the government is key. So far, the deliberate government opposition to any form of longer-term support has been an obstacle to the formulation of any meaningful progress in this regard, despite numerous attempts from donors and partners. On the national DP response, key nexus opportunities have been identified on exploring links between social protection/safety nets and anticipatory actions, with the aim of developing an evidence-based dialogue on shock-responsive safety nets. Regarding the refugee response, further synergies would be established on education, protection, nutrition, by looking at how to best engage resources to invest on advocacy for policy change in key areas.

**Regional Refugee Crisis:** Concerted efforts are needed to address the major drivers of forced displacement by preventing new conflicts, resolving existing ones and addressing human rights abuses<sup>27</sup>. Protection needs to be at the core of any humanitarian response and there will be the need to ensure that durable solutions and accountability measures

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<sup>27</sup> Lives in Dignity: from Aid-dependence to self-reliance- Forced Displacement and Development European Commission Brussels, 26.4.2016 COM (2016) 234.

related to refugee situations remain high on the agenda EU Services, Members States and within relevant forums, including ASEAN, Human Rights Council, UN General Assembly/ UN Security Council.

In the **Philippines**, the humanitarian response and development programmes are operating in a complementary manner across Mindanao. As DG ECHO's humanitarian response targets the most vulnerable IDPs most deprived of regular social services, development programmes should progressively extend the provision of services to these populations. DG INTPA programming in Mindanao has started in 2020-2021 with two actions that cover BARMM areas: the Support to Bangsamoro Transition (SUBATRA) and the Peace and Development in BARMM. DGs ECHO and INTPA cooperate to plan their different activities in a complementary manner. Interventions on disaster preparedness, education, COVID-19 response, protection and livelihood support are potential sectors of complementarity.

**Disaster Preparedness:** Developing comprehensive partnerships beyond traditional communities of practice is key to achieve progress in tackling complex, multi-layered hazards. As such, the establishment of partnerships, notably with regional fora and/or networks that facilitate the exchange of information and learning across public and private stakeholders is encouraged. Likewise, opportunities for engagement in national and regional advocacy initiatives will be systematically researched.

## **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 the HIP policy annex.

### **5.1 Envisaged DG ECHO response**

#### *5.1.1 Myanmar*

DG ECHO's strategy in Myanmar will continue to focus on addressing the acute humanitarian needs and improving the resilience of conflict-affected people in a crisis essentially of protection nature. Nexus is a crosscutting priority: opportunities of operationalised nexus should be thought by all partner and in all sectors listed hereafter. Protection will be a major focus for the response. Provision of emergency humanitarian assistance across all eligible sectors will be a crosscutting priority. Geographical targeting remains open, considering the very dynamic nature of the crisis and funding allocations will be based on demonstrated needs at the time of proposals' submission. Sector priorities encompass: i) protection – monitoring and analysis, specialised services for victims of violence, basic protection package in emergency response, IHL dissemination; ii) health – provision of emergency fixed or mobile health services and access to primary health care, primarily for conflict-affected and hard-to-reach populations; iii) support to COVID-19 prevention to be mainstreamed across all sectors, possibly COVID-19 specific initiatives, subject to assessment of needs at proposal submission time; iv) preparedness for, and provision of emergency multi-sector assistance, with a focus on capacity building and strengthening of local CSOs networks, along with timely, flexible, coordinated and harmonised yet locally adapted assistance to

IDPs and other conflict or disaster affected populations (primarily through the First Line Emergency Response (FLER) approach); v) disaster preparedness whose focus will be, depending on the prevailing situation, on emergencies in urban and rural settings; vi) education in emergencies, with a primary focus on retention in/return to learning through temporary learning opportunities while ensuring linkages with child protection in conflict affected areas. Advocacy on key IHL and humanitarian priorities, including de-politicisation of the response, will also be crucial to assist and protect vulnerable communities.

#### 5.1.2 Bangladesh

In 2022, DG ECHO will focus on responding to the refugee crisis through *maintaining humanitarian multi-sector assistance* geographically focused on areas that are underserved or target groups particularly affected. Protection remains relevant and should be further strengthened in areas where the current COVID-19 pandemic and restrictions have hit the most. By pursuing opportunities for nexus policy engagement, accountability to affected populations and support to community networks, Rohingya civil society and volunteers will remain relevant. Enhanced coordination at regional level and with Myanmar counterparts will help in keeping the crisis solution on focus. On DP, building on current anticipatory actions learning opportunities, DG ECHO will look at expanding to other vulnerable areas/groups by exploring ways to engage on shock responsive social protection and social care and tailored responses in urban settings.

#### 5.1.3 Regional Refugee Crisis

The envisaged response encompasses, a non-discriminatory “one-refugee” approach aiming to support humanitarian interventions targeting the most severely affected populations in need of protection and assistance, irrespective of their country of origin. The focus will be on Rohingya refugee, which remains the most numerous group, mainly in Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and India. The refugee response strategy will aim for a protection centred response along the axes of risk analysis, preparedness for first basic needs response, protection programming, coordination, and advocacy.

#### 5.1.4 The Philippines

DG ECHO’s humanitarian assistance will address most urgent, unmet needs through basic needs assistance, including humanitarian food assistance, water, sanitation, and hygiene services, psychological first aid and support to primary health care including COVID-19 response, shelter and settlement solutions, and basic protection services. Education in emergencies will continue to bring conflict-affected children back to school by providing access to safe, qualitative, and protective learning. Humanitarian cash assistance is seen as the preferred modality in principle, but in-kind transfer is available for situations that particularly requires it (e.g. limited movement and access to food). Actions include crisis modifiers to enable partners to act rapidly on new displacement. Assistance must be provided in close coordination with the Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Offices or equivalent such as the Rapid Emergency Action on Disaster Incidence of BARMM. DG ECHO funded projects will complement the gap in the government response to disasters and crises and will target population who are left behind, discriminated, and unattended due to barriers to access to humanitarian aid. DG ECHO will continue support to DP targeted actions meeting the DG ECHO DP BL

priorities. Risk-informed analysis and DP mainstreaming is expected across both DP and humanitarian assistance.

#### *5.1.5 Nepal*

The 2022 strategy builds on the on-going strategy of DG ECHO in Nepal to enhance DP of local institutions and embed risk informed and anticipatory approaches by strengthening the capacity of the elected representatives of the newly created institutions under the new Disaster Risk Reduction Management Act. Furthermore, improving targeting of vulnerable households and ensuring inclusion, the strategy aims to stimulate complementarity between risk informed and anticipatory actions and SRSP, in both landslide and flood prone regions.

#### *5.1.6 Regional Disaster Preparedness (DP)*

The main aim of DG ECHO's preparedness strategy is to put people at the very core of regional and State DRM design in ASEAN, leveraging previous DG ECHO targeted DP BL investments to reinforce local preparedness and response capacity, whenever possible working at system level. DG ECHO will engage with partners and stakeholders to ensure systematic inclusion of those who are vulnerable in urban areas in relevant DRM plans at all levels, advocating for inclusive policies that comprehensively protect vulnerable and at-risk populations so that they are better prepared to withstand shocks and crises wherever they reside. In addition, we will aim for improvements in the localised preparedness systems in conflict affected and fragile settings in ASEAN, whenever possible acting in anticipation of shocks and crises will be sought. In every preparedness investment, inclusion of climate and environmentally sensitive programming will be systematically promoted through a multi-hazard and multi-sector approach whereby risks are identified by those who are most vulnerable, marginalised and in need. A multi-country operational specific component and regional learning and advocacy components will continue to be operationalised. In Southeast Asia, particular focus will be put on risk-informed and anticipatory approaches, as well as on the support of shock-responsive social protection systems through the Pilot Programmatic Partnership with the Food and Agricultural Organisation.

## **5.2 Other DG ECHO interventions**

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.