

HUMANITARIAN IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (HIP) ENHANCED RESPONSE CAPACITY

AMOUNT: EUR 19 800 000

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 annexes¹ is to serve as a communication tool for DG ECHO²'s 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.

1. CONTEXT

Humanitarian aid continues to face a wide range of challenges. Humanitarian needs remain at an all-time high, driven largely by the resurgence in conflicts, combined with the impact of climate change, environmental degradation, global population growth, and failed governance. Yet, the gap between humanitarian needs and the resources available globally is increasing. Basic norms and principles are being challenged as rarely before, making the delivery of aid more difficult and dangerous. The United Nations (UN) estimates that 274 million people – more than 1 in 30 people worldwide – will need humanitarian assistance in 2022³. This is an increase of almost 40 million people from 2021 estimates.

As outlined in the *Commission Communication on the EU's humanitarian action: New challenges, same principles*, strong support for the enabling environment for the delivery of principled humanitarian aid is crucial. With the Enhanced Response Capacity (ERC), DG ECHO dedicates part of its budget to support initiatives that seek to increase the capacity of the humanitarian community to respond to crises in the most effective and efficient manner. The initiatives have to be global and strategic in their conception and inclusive in their approach in order to contribute to humanitarian system-wide change. The focus is on initiatives which would not have emerged or would not have the same systemic impact without dedicated funding, and which are complementary to DG ECHO geographic funding envelopes. At the same time, DG ECHO ambition is that approaches and methods developed under the ERC strengthen the overall enabling environment, and thus support direct implementation of certain priorities on the ground.

2. HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

Given the strain on humanitarian financing, it is imperative to continue building capacity of humanitarian actors at global level, in order to continuously adapt to ever changing circumstances and incentivise innovation. For the year 2022, DG ECHO has identified

¹ Technical annex and thematic policies annex

² Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO)

³ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Centre for Humanitarian Data, *The State of Open Humanitarian Data 2022: Assessing Data Availability across Humanitarian Crises* (The Hague: United Nations, 2022), 4.

several areas in which global capacity interventions are particularly likely to contribute to an overall improvement of humanitarian action. These are topics on which DG ECHO expects progress to accelerate through targeted funding and where DG ECHO considers continued support necessary.

Innovative Financing

The humanitarian financing gap between rising needs and resources is well acknowledged. As one of the means of addressing this challenge, the Communication on Humanitarian Action proposed the piloting of blended finance solutions – using humanitarian grants to catalyse, de-risk and draw in additional financing to support investments aimed at addressing existing humanitarian needs.

International Humanitarian Law

Violations of international humanitarian law (IHL) remain a major challenge for the protection of civilians in situations of armed conflicts and for safeguarding humanitarian space. As such, ensuring respect for international humanitarian law remains an essential objective of the EU's humanitarian aid policy. Among others, effective humanitarian advocacy requires having access to adequate data on IHL violations, but while many sources of information exist, this data is fragmented and lacks a coherent, comprehensive and global overview. A key focus of DG ECHO's support to IHL thus entails strengthening the collection and analysis of data and information on violations, whilst acknowledging the need to take into account any negative impact on the operational space.

Digitalisation

The use of digital tools and processes to drive efficiency and effectiveness gains in humanitarian assistance is increasingly common. Extending the use of digital tools is one of the core priorities of the Communication on Humanitarian Action, but there are still many barriers to their widespread adoption by humanitarian organisations, including issues of access and inclusion of beneficiaries of humanitarian assistance to digital programmes, and challenges pertaining to the ethical use of digital tools and data collection by humanitarian organisations. DG ECHO aims to address these underlying challenges as part of its support to a digital enabling environment.

Disaster displacement

Displacement as a result of disasters is recognised as an increasingly important humanitarian challenge. Data from the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) showed that 30.7 million people were displaced worldwide as a result of disasters in 2020 alone. Displacement remains a complex issue that needs to be addressed through a 360° approach: to prevent, where possible, to prepare better and anticipate such movements, to help people who are on the move and to strengthen their resilience and protection. Key focus areas for DG ECHO's action on disaster displacement include supporting disaster preparedness, research, and data collection activities, strengthening operational responses to assist affected populations, and strengthening multilateralism to mobilise coordinated global efforts in this area.

Support to the Grand Bargain process

Launched at the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit, the Grand Bargain is a unique agreement between some of the world's largest donors and humanitarian organisations that aims to improve the way humanitarian aid is delivered by making it more effective

and efficient. As major global humanitarian donor, the European Commission, through DG ECHO, is at the forefront of the implementation of the Grand Bargain commitments. DG ECHO is a member of the Grand Bargain's Facilitation Group, and has been supporting the Grand Bargain Secretariat for the past two years.

Addressing environmental degradation in humanitarian settings (incl. greening of humanitarian aid)

Environmental considerations are increasingly integrated in all humanitarian interventions in recognition of the need to protect the natural environment and to reduce the risk posed by environmental degradation to the most vulnerable populations. DG ECHO is also committed to reducing the environmental footprint of its activities and supports and encourages the efforts of its partners in this regard. Progress has been made in recent years (most notably in supporting clean energy, and solarised water pumping). However, important knowledge gaps remain across the humanitarian sector, including identifying effective and cost-saving solutions.

Anticipatory action as a way to address the impact of climate change

Anticipatory humanitarian action can bolster the resilience of communities, including forcibly displaced groups, in vulnerable and disaster-prone regions. In line with the Communication on Humanitarian Action, DG ECHO focuses on increasing the capacity for anticipation and preparedness as an effective way to reduce the humanitarian impact of climate change.

Unfortunately, the humanitarian community is still not as well equipped to implement these actions in urban settings, or in situations of fragility and/or conflict where there are compounding risks including overlap with climate events. The effectiveness of such approaches depends on having in place sufficiently reliable and actionable information, plans, and tools through early warning systems, including indicators or other criteria to trigger action. Additionally, increasing the capacity for anticipation will also merit strengthening links with shock-responsive social protection. Gathering the evidence-base on anticipatory action implementation is therefore critical.

3. ENVISAGED DG ECHO RESPONSE AND EXPECTED RESULTS

This section outlines how DG ECHO intends to address the gaps identified above, and provides more concrete guidelines to partners on potential initiatives to be submitted.

a) Innovative Financing

Following on from the support under ERC HIP in 2021 aimed at assisting humanitarian partners to create or lay the groundwork for humanitarian focused blended finance projects, this priority will support projects led by eligible Financial Institutions aimed at blending grant finance to attract investment in humanitarian contexts.

b) International humanitarian law

Against the background of the needs indicated in section 2, as well as the EU's overall commitment to international humanitarian law and safeguarding humanitarian space, DG ECHO will support initiatives that aim at ensuring compliance with IHL and addressing the contemporary challenges linked to IHL. This may include addressing the lack of a comprehensive overview on IHL violations through the creation of a network of

organisations that can provide such an overview. Proposals on a possible IHL initiative may include, but need not be limited to, establishing a yearly global report on IHL.

c) Digitalisation

DG ECHO strategy for supporting digitalisation seeks to advance the development of global standards underpinning an ethical and responsible use of digital tools for humanitarian action. Actions should strengthen collaboration within the sector, encourage interoperability of systems, and enhance digital skills development amongst humanitarians. In line with this approach, in 2022, ERC support will focus on projects addressing the following set of gaps:

- i. Digital ethics, including projects aimed at collaborative work on data protection standards amongst the humanitarian/donor community, work on accountability and local ownership in digital programming and development of digital use.
- ii. Digital inclusion, ensuring equality of access to the benefits of digital programmes; expanding connectivity for humanitarian beneficiaries and access solutions in situations of limited connectivity; and helping to bridge the digital divide.

e) Disaster displacement

As part of its support to disaster displacement, DG ECHO will co-chair, together with DG INTPA, the Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD) from 1st of July 2022 for a period of 18 months. In order to support the work of the PDD during the EU Chairmanship, EUR 400 000 of ERC funding will be assigned to support the functioning of the PDD Secretariat, through a grant with UNOPS. Additionally, DG ECHO may support initiatives that address challenges linked to disaster displacement, including strengthened data and evidence, actions around profiling of internally displaced persons, or mainstreaming protection considerations in disaster displacement actions.

f) Support to the Grand Bargain process

As a donor member of the Facilitation Group of the Grand Bargain, DG ECHO will contribute EUR 300 000 towards the provision of expert support, communication and coordination capacity through a grant with NRC. In the context of DG ECHO's role as co-convenor of the needs assessment workstream, financial support to the Joint Intersectoral Analysis Framework will also be provided, through a grant with IOM of volume of EUR 250 000.

DG ECHO will also provide a contribution to the Accelerated Education Working Group (AEWG), enable the AEWG to pursue the work of disseminating tools and guidance, gaining a deeper understanding of the political contexts behind commitments to accelerated education programmes, and support national governments in institutionalising flexible education. This will be provided through a grant to NRC for an amount of EUR 30 000.

g) Addressing environmental degradation in humanitarian settings (incl. greening of humanitarian aid)

Against the background of the needs indicated in section 2, and to ensure continuity of action on the greening of humanitarian aid, in 2022 DG ECHO's support will focus on projects addressing the following gaps:

- i. Greening logistics and supply chains, and waste management in humanitarian settings

In 2022, DG ECHO will retain the following two focus areas, which also support the Joint Initiative on Sustainable Humanitarian Packaging Waste Management of which DG ECHO is part:

- Life cycle assessments/commodity assessments of highest volume packaging items/commonly delivered items
- A database/catalogue of sustainable packaging technologies and options

DG ECHO would also be interested in supporting initiatives focussing on the following issues: fostering inter-organisation, cross-sectoral cooperation in waste and pollution prevention and management; development of specific standards/criteria for sustainable humanitarian packaging; better use of shared services and leveraging of Humanitarian Procurement Centers (HPCs) to facilitate procurement of sustainable items; development of a solid waste management planning frameworks ;

- ii. Providing access to clean energy and support the development of sustainable energy livelihoods in humanitarian settings

DG ECHO would be interested in supporting initiatives focussing on the following issues: data collection on individual energy needs at household and community level in humanitarian contexts globally to facilitate projects meeting those needs; identifying alternative funding opportunities, such as carbon credits, to address deforestation and cooking needs; testing of solar-electric cooking solutions for community kitchens.

Proposals covering other topics reflecting gaps and needs identified by the partners themselves will also be considered.

h) Anticipatory action as a way to address the impact of climate change

DG ECHO focuses on increasing the capacity for anticipation as an effective way to reduce the humanitarian impact of climate change. In line with this approach, in 2022, ERC support will focus on projects addressing the following gaps:

- i. Testing the implementation of anticipatory action tools in situations of fragility and/or conflict or urban settings, to establish operational modalities and/or scale them up
- ii. In settings listed in i) scaling up anticipatory action through supporting the development of the shock-responsive aspect in social protection systems, with a specific focus on the community level