

## **HUMANITARIAN IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (HIP) 2023 GREATER HORN OF AFRICA**

**AMOUNT: EUR 432 417 826**

The present Humanitarian Implementation Plan (HIP) was prepared on the basis of financing decision ECHO/WWD/BUD/2023/01000 (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<sup>2</sup>'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.

This HIP covers seven countries in the Greater Horn of Africa (GHoA): Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda.

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

#### **Fifth modification as of 18/10/2023**

##### ***Part one: Somalia***

For the last quarter of 2023, projected floods and intensification of conflict are set to further exacerbate existing vulnerabilities and create new ones. According to Somalia Emergency Preparedness and Response plan, 2 million people will require emergency humanitarian assistance as a result of conflict, floods and cholera outbreak before the end of 2023.

Between October and December 2023, 4.3 million people are expected to face Crisis (IPC Phase 3) or worse outcomes. This includes over 1 million people who will likely be in Emergency (IPC Phase 4). The increase is due to a combination of factors, including the adverse impacts of El-Nino related heavy rains and flooding. According to OCHA, up to 1.6 million people could be affected by floods. The projected floods are expected to further exacerbate the risk of epidemic outbreaks, such as cholera, measles and malaria. The epidemics situation is already dire.

As of 30 September, only 37% of the HRP has been funded.

While drought has been the major driver of humanitarian needs at the beginning of the year, since the second quarter of 2023 displacement and food insecurity have been fueled by insecurity and conflict in many parts of central and Southern Somalia, as well as flash riverine flooding. The security and protection environment in Somalia has continued to deteriorate throughout the year, due to the Government led military offensive against al-Shabaab and clan-based conflict. So far this year, nearly 600 000 people have been displaced by conflict and insecurity. At the same time, ATMIS, the African Union

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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)

Transition Mission in Somalia, has started its drawdown in line with the UNSC resolution 2687/2023.

In order to address these increased needs, the European Commission has mobilised an additional EUR 5.5 million for Somalia from the Operational Reserve to support the financial reinforcement of the humanitarian response in the country.

### ***Part two: South Sudan – impact of the conflict in Sudan***

The rapidly deteriorating humanitarian situation continues to cause various ripple effects, compounding existing vulnerabilities in Sudan and neighbouring countries. It generates widespread displacements, including over three hundred thousand people who crossed the border to South Sudan as of October 2023. The majority of people arriving are South Sudanese returnees, most of whom have indicated that they want to return to their community of origin, which are still impacted by insecurity, with very limited services and infrastructures. Recent daily arrivals of up to 2 000 people have been registered and border areas and transit centres are over-congested causing rising tensions and spread of communicable diseases such as measles. The refugees and returnees, of which 70% are women and children, are in dire need of protection and basic emergency assistance, including water and sanitation, food, healthcare and shelter/NFI. One in five of the arrivals suffers from malnutrition. Their vulnerability is increasing due to limited onward transportation assistance and insufficient humanitarian response in border areas/transit zones. Should the conflict in Sudan continue, up to 650 000 returnees, 70 000 refugees and 10 000 Third Country Nationals (TCN) are expected to arrive by the end of 2023.

In this context, the European Commission has mobilised for South Sudan an additional EUR 4 million from the Operational Reserve and EUR 2.441 million from the European Union's Solidarity Emergency Aid Reserve. This additional funding will support an urgent scale-up of the immediate humanitarian response in northern bordering areas, from border to transit sites in order to offer to the continuous flow of displaced people from Sudan a dignified temporary stay, as well as support for onward transportation of the most vulnerable people displaced from Sudan. Further specifications are provided in the Humanitarian Implementation Plan Technical Annex.

### ***Part three: Uganda***

Due to funding shortfalls, WFP had to implement a severe food ration cut as of July 2023: 82% of the refugee population only receive 30% of the General Food Assistance (GFA). The ration cuts come in a context of a constant deterioration of the food security for refugees with a financial gap for food assistance of USD 203 million (72%) and while Uganda continues to receive more refugees with 220 000 new arrivals since 2022 for a total refugee population of 1.5 million. Despite food ration cuts, additional funding is required to secure the provision of food for the next six months.

In order to provide food assistance for refugees, the European Commission will mobilise an additional amount of EUR 1 500 000 from the Operational Reserve. These additional resources will support mandated agencies for the provision of cash grants enabling refugees' access to diversified food available in local markets. Further specifications are provided in the Humanitarian Implementation Plan Technical Annex.

#### ***Part four: Somalia - Pilot Anticipatory Action approaches***

The Commission committed in its *Communication on the EU's humanitarian action: new challenges, same principles*<sup>3</sup> to scale up its approach to Anticipatory Action (AA). AA involves actions that are implemented according to a pre-determined protocol, which describes the activities to be undertaken and pre-agreed triggers established on the basis of historical and current forecast analysis<sup>4</sup>.

As part of this commitment, DG ECHO is seeking to pilot the use of an existing tool, namely the Crisis Modifier (CM), to increase investment on AA. As detailed in Annex 2 of the Disaster Preparedness Guidance Note<sup>5</sup>, a CM is a specific component of a project, with defined indicators, triggers, activities and an associated budget, which will only be activated if pre-identified and defined triggers and thresholds are reached. CMs are primarily used for immediate response following a disaster or the aggravation of a crisis (ex post) rather than for AA – (ex ante). Through this allocation, DG ECHO intends to pilot the use of Crisis Modifiers for Anticipatory Action, with a view to generate learning and additional evidence in order to step up its involvement in Anticipatory Action in the long term.

To this end, DG ECHO has pre-selected the ongoing project *Improving multi-hazard early-warning and preparedness efforts in disaster and conflict affected areas in Somalia*, implemented by partner IOM to test this approach, following the partner's demonstrated experience in AA and the existence of an ongoing action with an AA protocol/framework ready to be activated. The pre-selected partner will receive a top up of EUR 200 000 to be added to its project as a Crisis Modifier that will summarise the protocol for AA that has already been developed.

#### **Fourth modification as of 6<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

This modification is intended to transfer EUR 10 276 826 to be allocated to the IFRC pilot Programmatic Partnership action "Accelerating local action in humanitarian and health crises".

#### **Third modification as of 19 June 2023**

##### ***Part one: Sudan***

The conflict that started in Sudan on 15 April continues unabated with severe fighting in Khartoum and adjoining areas and in the Darfur States, as well as increasing intercommunal and ethnic tensions in other parts of the country. The conflict is set to further exacerbate existing vulnerabilities and create new ones, in a context where the humanitarian situation was already historically dire. It generates widespread displacements, with, as of 19 June, over two million people displaced due to the conflict, including nearly 1.7 million internally displaced and already half a million who have crossed the border into neighbouring countries. According to the revised 2023 Humanitarian Response Plan for Sudan issued on 17 May, the number of people in need

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<sup>3</sup> COM(2021) 110 final.

<sup>4</sup> [dg\\_echo\\_guidance\\_note\\_-\\_disaster\\_preparedness\\_en.pdf \(europa.eu\)](#)

<sup>5</sup> [dg\\_echo\\_guidance\\_note\\_-\\_disaster\\_preparedness\\_en.pdf \(europa.eu\)](#)

of humanitarian assistance has increased to 24.7 million in May 2023, about half of the population of Sudan.

In addition to large-scale displacement, the conflict has shattered access to cash and fuel, hence to food, water, health care and other basic services for millions of people. Approximately 3 million children under age 5 were affected by malnutrition prior to the ongoing emergency, and the country is now facing the highest rate of child malnutrition globally. More than 13 million children in Sudan are now in need of urgent humanitarian assistance. With the eruption of conflict, sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) is concerningly on the rise, with an estimated 4.2 million women, girls and other at-risk populations now exposed to the risks of SGBV. The humanitarian response capacity has also been impacted by the conflict, in terms of logistics and coordination but also by the looting and destruction of humanitarian assets.

In order to address these increased needs, the European Commission has mobilised an additional EUR 52 million for Sudan from the Operational Reserve to support the financial reinforcement of the humanitarian response in the country. These additional resources will support emergency humanitarian response in the areas most affected by the conflict, in particular Khartoum and Darfur, assistance to newly internally displaced people as well as replenish core pipelines and reinforce logistics and coordination for the response. Further specifications are provided in the Humanitarian Implementation Plan Technical Annex (allocation round 6).

### ***Part two: South Sudan***

The Sudan crisis is also impacting neighbouring countries, including South Sudan with the displacement of over 110 000 individuals into South Sudan, mostly South Sudanese returnees. People arriving in South Sudan present tremendous immediate basic needs and are stuck in congested transit places due to limited transportation for people to move on to their final destination. The Sudan Regional Refugee Response Plan launched on 17 May seeks USD 96.1 million to assist up to 180 000 returnees and 60 000 refugees in South Sudan.

In order to address these increased needs, the European Commission has mobilised an additional EUR 1 million for South Sudan from the Operational Reserve to support the immediate humanitarian response by transporting people from the entry points to their final destination. Further transportation will lead to decongestion of transit centres, which, in turn, will offer to the continuous flow of displaced people from Sudan a dignified temporary stay. Further specifications are provided in the Humanitarian Implementation Plan Technical Annex (allocation round 6).

## **Second modification as of 27 March 2023**

### ***Part one: Ethiopia***

The humanitarian outlook in Ethiopia remains very bleak in 2023. The worsening drought and impact of conflicts and violence in parts of Ethiopia and the resulting waves of displacement - coupled with a difficult macroeconomic context - mean that more than 20 million people are targeted by the UN Humanitarian Response Plan 2023 (HRP 2023) with

USD 2.16 billion (54.14%) required to cover the food needs and USD 1.83 billion (45.86%) to cover non-food needs.

While the signing of a comprehensive peace agreement by the Government of Ethiopia (GoE) and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) in November 2022 is a promising step towards peace and to the scale-up of humanitarian assistance in Tigray, unmet needs in the conflict-affected areas in northern Ethiopia continue to require immediate attention.

A likely sixth consecutive failed rain season in the drought-affected areas adds to the heightened food insecurity and further erosion of already overstretched coping strategies of the most vulnerable populations. At the same time, the impact of conflict continues to be felt in other hotspots, such as in Benishangul-Gumuz and Oromia.

In addition, since the beginning of February 2023, nearly 100 000 refugees fleeing hostilities have crossed over from Somalia into the Somali region of Ethiopia, which add up to the more than 874 000 refugees and asylum seekers already hosted in Ethiopia.

In order to address these mounting needs, the European Commission has mobilised an additional EUR 22 million for Ethiopia from the European Union's Solidarity Emergency Aid Reserve to support the financial reinforcement of the humanitarian life-saving response in the country. Further specifications are provided in the Humanitarian Implementation Plan Technical Annex.

### ***Part two: Kenya***

Kenya continues to be severely affected by the catastrophic drought in the Horn of Africa. The last rainy season (October to December 2022) has been characterised by late onset, sporadic, and poor spatial and temporal distribution of rains, marking the fifth consecutive below average rainy season. Most of the arid and semi-arid lands (ASAL) counties of Kenya received 51% - 71% less precipitation than normal.

It is estimated that around 4.4 million people (or 27% of the ASAL population) are facing high levels of Acute Food Insecurity – IPC Phase 3 (Crisis) or above, of which about 774 000 people are in IPC Phase 4 (Emergency). Compared to the same period in 2022, this represents a 43% increase of population in IPC Phase 3 (Crisis) or above. 942 000 children below five years require treatment for acute malnutrition, with two counties in an extremely critical phase 5 with Global Acute Malnutrition >30%.

The Kenya Meteorological Department indicates that the next rainfall season (March to May 2023) is likely to be depressed with a late onset and poor distribution in time and space. As a result, the severity of food insecurity is expected to further deteriorate. About 5.4 million people (32% of the population analysed) are projected to face food insecurity with 1 197 000 individuals in IPC phase 4 and 4 185 000 in IPC phase 3.

In order to address these increased needs the European Commission has mobilised an additional EUR 3 million for Kenya to support actions aimed at reducing food gaps, protect livelihoods, and prevent and treat acute malnutrition. Further specifications are provided in the Humanitarian Implementation Plan Technical Annex.

## **First modification as of 1 February 2023**

### ***Part one: Somalia***

According to the Global Humanitarian Overview 2023, in Somalia, up to 7.8 million people will need urgent humanitarian assistance through at least mid-2023. Famine was only narrowly averted in the October-December 2022 period through a massive up-scale of humanitarian aid. Needs remain extremely high and famine is now projected for the April-June 2023 period<sup>6</sup>. Only a massive up-scale of humanitarian aid within the first quarter of 2023 will avert famine. The response on the ground, though significantly scaled up, can only partially meet needs which are still increasing and worsening, the scarcity of funds and the limited donors' base. The funding will be used for an emergency integrated, multi-sectoral scale-up of the response contributing to famine mitigation response targeting excess mortality among the 7.8 million most vulnerable people: newly displaced due to drought and conflict and highly underserved populations in famine hotspots. Critical emergency lifesaving interventions are to be expanded with particular focus on multi-purpose cash assistance, health and nutrition and WASH interventions.

In order to address these increased humanitarian needs as well as the necessity to ensure an immediate availability of humanitarian funds to allow for a more efficient and cost-effective response, the European Commission has mobilised an additional EUR 15 million for Somalia from the European Union's Solidarity Emergency Aid Reserve. Further specifications are provided in the Humanitarian Implementation Plan Technical Annex.

### ***Part two: South Sudan***

South Sudanese people are faced with the highest level of food insecurity since the independence of the country. Overall, 9.4 million people will need humanitarian assistance in 2023, which represents 76% of South Sudan's population and an increase of yet another half million people compared to 2022. The latest available figures show that 8 million people will likely face crisis or worse acute food insecurity (IPC3+) during the lean season period. During this period, an estimated 2.9 million people are likely to face Emergency (IPC Phase 4) acute food insecurity and an estimated 43 000 people likely to be facing starvation. The negative trend is unfortunately continuing, with a decade of growing humanitarian needs due to continued violence and conflict, lack of access to basic services, disease outbreaks as well as economic and climatic shocks. Four consecutive years of flooding have impacted food production and livelihoods but also forced people into displacement and restricted access to basic services. In the context of South Sudan, where nearly 60% of the country becomes inaccessible by road during the rainy season, ensuring that humanitarian aid is pre-positioned in time can both save lives and ensure a more cost-effective response.

In order to address these increased humanitarian needs as well as the necessity to ensure an immediate availability of humanitarian funds to allow for a more efficient and cost-effective response, the European Commission has mobilised an additional EUR 40 million

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<sup>6</sup> <https://fews.net/east-africa/somalia/key-message-update/december-2022>

for South Sudan from the European Union’s Solidarity Emergency Aid Reserve. Further specifications are provided in the Humanitarian Implementation Plan Technical Annex.

### ***Part three: Sudan***

The humanitarian needs in Sudan are at their highest in a decade due to the combined effects of the political and economic crisis, skyrocketing inflation, the consequences of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine, dry spells and poor harvests, as well as floods. There are 15.8 million people in need of humanitarian assistance in 2023. This figure has increased three times between 2017 and 2023. A record 11.7 million people, almost a quarter of Sudan’s population, are currently facing acute food insecurity, over 2 million more than in 2021. Interethnic violence and conflict, particularly in Darfur, South Kordofan and Blue Nile states, continue to generate new internal displacements. In 2022, about 310 300 people were newly displaced due to conflict and violence, with now over 3.8 million IDPs in Sudan. Additional support is needed to scale up emergency humanitarian assistance, in particular to support immediate life-saving action in response to the new needs identified among the affected populations, in particular linked to food security, nutrition, protection (in particular on SGBV and children) and support to newly displaced people (health, emergency WASH and NFIs).

In light of this aggravating humanitarian situation, the European Commission has mobilised an additional EUR 29 million for Sudan from the European Union’s Solidarity Emergency Aid Reserve. Further specifications are provided in the Humanitarian Implementation Plan Technical Annex.

## **1. CONTEXT**

The Greater Horn of Africa is facing multiple and overlapping humanitarian crises, both recent and protracted ones, with devastating human consequences. The region is affected by man-made and natural disasters, which destroy lives and livelihoods and drive large parts of the population into temporary or protracted displacements, as well as severe food insecurity.

The overall humanitarian situation in the region has seriously deteriorated over the course of 2022. Somalia, Ethiopia and Kenya are facing the region’s worst drought in 40 years, leaving people facing famine-like conditions. South Sudan and Sudan are experiencing their worst humanitarian situation in a decade and Uganda is continuing to see new arrivals of refugees while also having to cope with increased climate-induced food insecurity. Over 56 million people are in immediate need of humanitarian assistance in the region, including more than 50 million people who are in need of food assistance<sup>7</sup>. It is estimated that there are nearly 20 million forcefully displaced people, of whom 4.5 million are refugees and asylum seekers.

Conflict remains one of the main drivers of humanitarian needs across the region, triggering internal displacement and cross-border flows. The scale of displacement continues to dramatically increase the needs of the affected communities – both the

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<sup>7</sup> This figure is composed of the number of IPC3+ estimates for the countries under this HIP, except for Ethiopia where the Ethiopia Humanitarian Response Plan 2022 was used as a source, in the absence of an IPC analysis.

displaced and host communities. Uganda, Sudan and Ethiopia are the three countries hosting the biggest number of refugees in Africa. Refugee responses continue to face pressures, such as the protection granted to refugees and overstretched resources and funding, especially in contexts where refugees rely mostly on humanitarian assistance for survival. Additionally, some countries are changing their policies and practices towards refugees, no longer granting refugees prima facie recognition despite the situation in their country of origin remaining largely unchanged.

An additional significant humanitarian concern in the region is created by climate change that is accelerating the regularity of erratic weather events and increasing the scale of the impact of natural disasters. Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia are currently facing a historic drought while severe and recurrent floods are affecting South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda. The rising climate crisis generates new vulnerabilities (including pest outbreaks, as was the most recent locust invasion) and exacerbates instability, leading to further conflicts over resources and to population displacements.

Epidemic outbreaks constitute another challenge, often linked to poor sanitary conditions in displacement contexts, such as overcrowded camps, but also the lack of access to or non-functional basic health services and infection prevention measures. This situation is also compounded by weak disaster management capacity.

Against this background, the economic situation, already weakened by the COVID-19 pandemic, continues to deteriorate, with hyperinflation and currency depreciation limiting access to and maintenance of basic services. As elsewhere, the impact of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine is also felt in the Greater Horn of Africa, especially as concerns increasing food and fuel prices, the increasing limited availability of commodities and fertilisers, and foreign exchange shortages. This, combined with the long-term economic and social crises affecting all countries, is putting at risk the limited development gains that some countries registered in the last decades, adding further strains on the Greater Horn of Africa population.

While facing these contextual challenges, serious human rights and International Humanitarian Law (IHL) violations have been/are being committed in some countries in the region. In many places, humanitarian partners are confronted with an uncondusive operating environment, as well as aid politicisation, instrumentalisation, and misappropriation. Bureaucratic, logistical, and security challenges often impede access and operations of humanitarian actors across most countries of the Greater Horn of Africa.

The INFORM<sup>8</sup> Risk Index 2023 shows a deterioration of the situation in the countries of the region, which is one of the most vulnerable worldwide with four of the ten most at-risk countries in the region<sup>9</sup>. Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda are all in the very high risk category, while Djibouti is in the medium risk one.

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

<sup>9</sup> Somalia (1), South Sudan (2), Sudan (10) and Uganda (10)



	Djibouti	Ethiopia	Kenya	Somalia	South Sudan	Sudan	Uganda
<b>INFORM Risk Index</b>	4.8	7.0	6.7	8.7	8.5	7.1	7.1
Vulnerability Index	5.4	7.1	6.1	8.6	8.8	7.2	6.8
Hazard and Exposure	3.4	7.3	8.5	8.9	7.3	7.3	7.4
Lack of Coping Capacity	6.1	6.7	5.8	8.6	9.4	6.7	7.0
<b>Global Crisis Severity Index<sup>10</sup></b>	2.5	4.6	3.6	4.4	5	5	3.3
Projected conflict risk	2.4	10	9.8	10	10	10	8.8
Uprooted People Index	6.3	9.1	7.9	10	10	9.9	8.8
Humanitarian Conditions		7					
Natural Disaster Index	5.5	4.4	5.1	6.9	4.1	4.2	4.5
<b>HDI Ranking<sup>11</sup> (Value)</b>	0.509	0.498	0.575	N/A	0.385	0.508	0.525
<b>Total Population (in million)<sup>12</sup></b>	<b>1</b>	<b>117.9</b>	<b>54.9</b>	<b>16.4</b>	<b>12.7</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>48.1</b>

In the last years, **Djibouti** has faced multiple shocks caused by desert locusts, COVID-19, and the impacts of the protracted conflict in Ethiopia, and is now equally affected by the drought leading to a deterioration of the food security and nutrition situation in the country, with roughly 192 000 people or 17% of the population in IPC3+ by summer 2022. As one of the most water-scarce countries in the world, Djibouti is strongly impacted by climate change. It also continues to serve as a major transit country for migrants in the Horn of Africa with migration flows currently exceeding pre-COVID-19 levels. The impact of the drought has also resulted in increased movements of outgoing migrants. Both transiting migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, as well as host populations are affected by increasing worldwide food prices and as a net importer of food.

**Ethiopia** faces an overall extremely fragile political and security situation, with no immediate prospect of a peaceful solution for the northern conflict following the resumption of hostilities in late August 2022 after almost 6 months of ceasefire. This only further deteriorates an already dire humanitarian situation and accelerates further internal, inter-communal and inter-ethnic conflicts across the country. The humanitarian situation in the country has worsened in 2022, with a multiplication of shocks (the spillover of the northern conflict, drought, worsening of localised conflicts, attacks against refugees, etc.). The northern conflict has created massive humanitarian needs in Tigray as well as in Afar and Amhara and has exacerbated further tensions within other regions, such as Oromia. The conflict has also given rise to extremely grave human rights abuses and violations of International Humanitarian Law. In addition, the current Horn of Africa drought has severely affected the south and south-eastern pastoralist areas of the country. As a result of the widespread conflicts and large-scale natural disasters, the level of needs in Ethiopia is massive: the 2022 Humanitarian Response Plan requires more than USD 3 billion to target more than 20 million people across the country.

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.inform-index.org/Global-Crisis-Severity-Index-beta>

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

<sup>12</sup> World Bank data

**Kenya** is also heavily impacted by the unprecedented drought affecting the Horn of Africa, with more people severely food insecure than during both the 2010/11 and the 2016/17 droughts. Malnutrition is rising at an alarming rate. As of August 2022, 3.5 million people are facing acute food insecurity (IPC3+). Drought-related displacement, both internal and cross-border, is also on the rise. The situation is exacerbated by soaring food prices particularly in the ASALs. Kenya is also still hosting more than half million refugees mainly from Somalia and South Sudan.

The humanitarian situation in **Somalia** has further deteriorated throughout 2021 and 2022. A population already decimated in their coping capacities, result of the triple threat of the desert locust infestation, localised floods and droughts, and the health and socio-economic effects of COVID-19, now faces an unprecedented drought affecting over 90% of the country following four consecutive failed rainy seasons. As of September 2022, 7.1 million people are in IPC3+, more than one million people have been newly displaced and a localised famine is projected for October-December 2022. Political instability, persistent insecurity, armed conflict, as well as rising food prices and extreme poverty exacerbate the risk of widespread famine in Somalia.

Uncertainty also prevails in **South Sudan**, with the coalition government having implemented only partially the 2018 Peace Agreement, resulting in a 24-month extension of the transitional period, postponing de facto the Constitution making, the creation of unified forces and more importantly the elections, now due in December 2024. The security situation is deteriorating, with increased sub-national violence in Eastern and Central Equatoria, Unity, Warrap, Upper Nile and Jonglei States, resulting in civilian casualties, new displacements and a very insecure environment for aid workers. The United Nations Security Council (UNSC), while renewing the embargo on weapons, extended the mandate of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) to 30 March 2023 to protect civilians, deter violence, create conditions conducive to humanitarian assistance, support the implementation of the peace process, monitor and report about violations of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights abuses. Overall, there is a continued degradation of the food security situation in the country, with almost two thirds of the population in need of food assistance.

The situation remains extremely complex in **Sudan**, with the suspension of the transition following the coup in October 2021, which puts at risk the country's path of peace, democratic governance and economic recovery. Since the military takeover, inter-communal conflicts in Darfur, Kordofan and Blue Nile have intensified, reaching levels of violence seen during the Darfur war. The end of the UN-AU Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), in December 2020, and lack of progress in the implementation of the peace agreement are a major obstacle for the protection of civilians. A gap that the UN Integrated Transitional Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS) cannot fill, due to limited resources but also lack of cooperation from the military authorities. Besides the deterioration of the security situation, Sudan is also facing a deep economic crisis, with skyrocketing inflation. The combined effects of conflicts, the economic crisis and poor harvests are leaving over 11 million people in situation of acute food insecurity.

**Uganda** is confronted with the impact of instability in neighbouring countries, with more than 95 000 new refugees arriving in 2022, either fleeing conflict in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo or the instability in South Sudan. As the country hosting the largest

number of refugees in Africa (1.5 million), the government pursues a progressive and inclusive policy towards refugees and has signed-up since 2018 to the UN Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF), for which its policies are the inspiring model. This model is however at risk in a context of economic crisis, with growing numbers of refugees, increased tensions with host communities and reduced funding available for the refugee response. The country is also affected by numerous natural disasters and exposed to epidemics, such as Ebola. The Northeast region of Karamoja is impacted by the drought with 518 000 persons in IPC3+ (41 % of the population of the region).

DG ECHO considers the complex crisis in South Sudan, violence West-Darfur (Sudan), as well as refugees in Sudan as “forgotten crisis”<sup>13</sup>. These are severe, protracted humanitarian crises with no political solution in sight to them and that are not receiving sufficient attention.

## **2. HUMANITARIAN NEEDS**

### **1) People in need of humanitarian assistance:**

Humanitarian needs across the seven countries of the region have increased sharply and all indicators show a worrying deterioration of the situation compared to 2021. The total number of people in need has increased including the number of food insecure people that has increased by 37%. All countries and sectors have been affected by this increase. Disruption of basic and social services, obstacles to humanitarian aid delivery, under-development, and the increasing funding gap between needs and resources are key elements in this deteriorating pattern of increased and unattended needs.

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<sup>13</sup> [https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/humanitarian-aid/needs-assessment/forgotten-crises\\_en](https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/humanitarian-aid/needs-assessment/forgotten-crises_en)

	Djibouti	Ethiopia	Kenya	Somalia	South Sudan	Sudan	Uganda
<b>Refugees</b>	35 540	874 239	555 183	30 861	339 000	1.14 million	1.53 million
<i>Disag. by sex/age</i>	48% female, 52% male	52.8% female; 47.2% male	49% female, 51% male	81% female and children	55% female, 45% male	47% female 53% male	52%, female 48% male
<b>IDPs</b>	N/A	5.8 million <sup>14</sup>	-	2.97 million	2.01 million	3.71 million	11 945
<b>Returnees</b>	N/A	1.66 million <sup>15</sup>	-	92 574	1.78 million	1 172 567	N/A
<b>People in IPC 3+</b>	192 168	> 20 million	3.5 million	7.1 million	7.74 million	11.65 million	518 000
<b>Children &lt; 5 MAM</b>	11 000	4.5 million	661 744	1.5 million	1.1 million	2.4 million	69 000
<b>Children &lt; 5 SAM</b>	6 000	1.2 million	222 720	386 400	313 391	565 707	23 000
<b>Out of school children</b>	6 143 (refugee children)	2.9 million <sup>16</sup>	Ongoing data collection	4.2 million	2.8 million	3.5 million	1.2 million

### 2.1.1. Forcibly displaced populations

The situation in the Greater Horn of Africa continues to fluctuate, with a combination of protracted displacements, secondary or tertiary displacements (i.e. same people displaced several times) and newly displaced populations, often sharing the same camps or settlements including in urban contexts. Climate shocks, resurgence of conflicts in Ethiopia and in Sudan, continued violence in Somalia and South Sudan, as well as political developments highlight some of the issues related to forced displacement<sup>17</sup> and the need for an adapted and differentiated response, using protection-sensitive and context-specific approaches towards the most vulnerable.

Displaced people continue to be highly dependent on external assistance for their survival. Unaccompanied minors and women are among the most vulnerable categories requiring specific attention and tailored assistance. Host populations often face similar risks and vulnerabilities as displaced persons and should therefore also be considered for humanitarian assistance depending on their needs and vulnerabilities. The growing economic difficulties, which particularly affect refugees and IDPs, could further feed tensions between the displaced populations and their host communities.

**Djibouti** continues to be an important transit country for migrants to/from the Arabian Peninsula, and hosts a population of roughly 35 540 refugees including a significant

<sup>14</sup> Ethiopia Humanitarian Response Plan, 2022. In a highly fluid context, the figure also includes recent returns and secondary displacements, and is bound to increase, especially in drought-affected areas.

<sup>15</sup> Mainly assimilated to secondary displacements

<sup>16</sup> OCHA, Ethiopia Situation Report, as of 6 September 2022.

<sup>17</sup> notably the displacement and deprivation of liberty of some groups due to their perceived affiliation with a party to the conflict or the growing push for returns discussions

backlog of asylum seekers for a total of 11 183 individuals, in and out of camps, with limited assistance provided. The main refugee settlements suffer from inadequate basic services and challenges in the implementation of the CRRF has resulted in a lack of durable solutions and lack of local integration. Limited livelihood opportunities and reliance on humanitarian assistance has led to high dependency and vulnerability to external shocks including drought.

The displacement situation in **Ethiopia** is very fluid, with returning IDPs and new displacements occurring concurrently. Even if Ethiopia already had a large number of IDPs in the country, the conflict that erupted in November 2020 in Tigray region significantly exacerbated the displacement in northern Ethiopia and in other parts of the country due to localised inter-ethnic conflicts. Refugee camps are also seriously impacted by conflicts (five refugee camps directly targeted by attacks in Tigray, Afar and Benishangul-Gumuz regions, triggering a massive exodus of refugees who had to escape for safety, with thousands of refugees still unaccounted for). The spreading instability across the country is also impacting other refugee camps in other regions, such as in Gambella. Security, access, and bureaucratic impediments continue to challenge the effective and immediate delivery of lifesaving assistance to the affected populations.

**Kenya** is still hosting over 550 000 refugees, mainly from Somalia and South Sudan, with estimated additional 30 000 new arrivals by the end of 2022. With regard the refugee situation in Kenya, the government of Kenya has improved its policy approach towards refugees, with a new Refugee Act proposing to transform long term camps into settlements, where refugees and hosts communities have equal access to services. The ongoing regional drought is also heavily impacting Kenya creating food insecurity and potentially contributing to internal displacement in the country.

In **Somalia**, already 2.9 million people were displaced before the onset of the current drought and more than one million have been displaced by the drought by September 2022. While the majority of those displaced congregate around main towns, which also serve as humanitarian hubs, the pace of displacement and severity of needs among those displaced vastly surpass current humanitarian efforts even in accessible areas. Exclusion from humanitarian assistance or lack of equitable access to basic services for displaced marginalised or minority groups, as well as constrained humanitarian outreach into hard-to-reach drought affected communities, challenge the inclusivity and impartiality of the response. Extreme drought conditions and forecast of rain failures will continue to drive mass displacement, prevent return to areas of origin and hinder income generating activities for displaced and host communities alike.

About 20 % of the population of **South Sudan**, or over 2 million people, are currently internally displaced, while another 2.3 million South Sudanese are refugees living in neighbouring countries. Continued conflict and instability combined with recurrent flooding are the main drivers of large-scale displacement. Cross-border movements exist in and out notably when conflicts erupt in South Sudanese bordering areas (with Uganda, DRC or Ethiopia for instance) or when living conditions of South Sudanese refugees deteriorate (e.g. in DRC, Ethiopia). However, cross-border movements are not systematically monitored. South-Sudanese refugees are also under pressure from their political leadership to return in anticipation of forthcoming elections, but conditions are not met for safe and sustainable return.

In **Sudan**, as conflict intensified, mainly in Darfur and the Two Areas (South Kordofan and Blue Nile states), the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) increased to 3.2 million in 2021, according to the 2022 Global Report on Internal Displacement (GRID). Internal conflict displacements reported during 2021 increased by more than five times compared to 2020, with about 442 000 newly displaced people, the highest figure since 2014. This trend continues in 2022, with the latest IOM Mobility Tracking Round released in July 2022 identifying the accumulative presence of 3 714 377 IDPs, 1 172 567 permanent returnees from internal displacement, 55 045 seasonal returnees, 148 106 returnees from abroad, and 525 300 foreign nationals currently residing in Sudan. Conflict and communal violence are responsible for 88% of displacement in the country and is the main reason preventing returns, with 56% of Sudan's IDPs displaced for more than ten years.

**Uganda** has received over 95 000 new arrivals fleeing war and persecution in South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) since January 2022, adding a new caseload to the 1.5 million refugees already hosted in the country, making Uganda Africa's largest refugee hosting country. The conflict in eastern DRC has intensified since March 2022, triggering displacement of refugees into Uganda and putting the Ugandan refugee-hosting model under pressure due to the lack of funding and increased tensions with host communities in a context of economic crisis and increased scarcity of resources, including land issues.

### *2.1.2. Populations affected by food insecurity and under-nutrition*

The food security situation in the Greater Horn of Africa is dramatically concerning as a result of the multiple shocks that hit the region, with alarming levels of people facing crisis or worse (IPC 3+) situations. Over 50 million people are acutely food insecure and in need of food assistance in the seven countries, a 30% increase compared to the already historically high figures of 2021. The situation is particularly worrying in Ethiopia, Somalia and South Sudan, where over half a million people are facing famine-like conditions. The nutrition situation across the Greater Horn of Africa also remains of particular concern, with more than 10 million children under five acutely malnourished.

Conflict and insecurity remain the primary drivers of acute food insecurity in Ethiopia and South Sudan, while extreme weather conditions primarily drove acute food insecurity in Somalia, Sudan and Kenya. Livestock disease outbreaks and resource-based conflicts are also expected to intensify, significantly impacting and constraining livelihood activities. The economic shocks as well as the impact of the Russia's invasion of Ukraine have aggravated acute food insecurity across the region. Food insecurity and malnutrition will continue to rise.

The population in need of humanitarian food assistance in **Ethiopia** has reached record levels of an estimated 20.4 million people in 2022, driven by internal violence and massive population displacements, impeded access, climate shocks, and a worsened macro-economic context that are likely to result in continued high needs into 2023. Acute food insecurity in Tigray was and continues to be a huge concern, all the more so with the resumption of hostilities. As the Tigray region is once again cut off from life-saving humanitarian supplies, including food commodities, and with escalating needs in the drought-affected areas of the country that are likely to face a fifth season without sufficient rains, the food security situation in Ethiopia can only be expected to get worse. At the same

time, against such a complex crisis, there has been no updated IPC data for Ethiopia since around mid-2021.

The historic drought in the region has also affected **Kenya** and **Djibouti**: in Kenya, over 4.3 million people are expected to face acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 and above) between October and December 2022. In Djibouti, an arid country importing 90% of its food, prices of basic commodities have strongly increased, leaving at least 16% of the population (192 000 people) in IPC3+ by the end of 2022.

**Somalia** is at risk of widespread famine by the end of 2022, following a localised famine declaration for Bay region on 5 September 2022, as food prices have increased by more than 50% in five regions at risk of famine. Over 7.1 million people (45 percent of the total population), are experiencing high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above) including 2,1 million people facing Emergency (IPC Phase 4) across Somalia, and pockets of more than 300,000 people are facing famine like conditions (IPC Phase 5) across one quarter of the country (30 districts). An estimated 1.5 million children face acute malnutrition.

In **South Sudan**, food insecurity is at its highest since the independence of the country in 2011, fuelled by continuing conflict, severe flooding and localised drought. An estimated 7.74 million people (62.7% of the population) will likely face Crisis (IPC Phase 3) or worse acute food insecurity during the lean season. This includes an estimated 2.9 million people likely to face Emergency (IPC Phase 4) acute food insecurity as well as 87,000 people likely to be in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5).

**Sudan** is facing its worst food crisis in a decade, driven by political, security and economic instability and poor harvest. The last IPC analysis indicates a further increase of 2 million people facing acute food insecurity compared to the previous one, reaching an estimated 11.7 million people, including 3.1 million people in IPC4. The Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Assessment (CFSVA) released in June 2022 shows that a record 15 million people in Sudan, or one-third of the population, are currently facing acute food insecurity, a figure that may even surge higher due to the increase in food prices.

## 2) Description of the most acute humanitarian needs

### *Humanitarian protection*

Internal and intercommunal conflicts/violence in the Greater Horn of Africa expose individuals and communities to human rights and IHL violations, such as killings, arbitrary detention, evictions, family links disruption, sexual and gender-based violence, grave violations against children's rights (including child recruitment by armed forces), restrictions of movement and massive internal and/or cross-border forced displacement. These violations and abuses have lasting impact on individuals and communities. Moreover, the protection risks stemming from the direct correlation between natural disasters and conflict negatively impact the effectiveness of humanitarian assistance. Due to extreme food insecurity and limited access to humanitarian assistance vulnerable people turn to negative coping strategies (such as early marriage, child labour, transactional sex) and migration, further exposing themselves to high risks.

### *Food assistance and Livelihoods*

Acute food insecurity skyrocketed in 2022 and is expected to persist through 2023 due to conflicts in the region and the global geo-political situation, economic shocks, weather and

climatic conditions. Famine-like conditions are affecting populations in Ethiopia, Somalia and South Sudan. Several climate forecast models are predicting a fifth consecutive below-average rainfall season in the eastern Horn in late 2022<sup>18</sup>. In addition, the long-lasting impact of COVID-19 on food production, supply chains and trade links, and on people's income activities, combined with the war against Ukraine is taking its toll across the region – rising considerably the prices of food and non-food items, and widening food consumption gaps. Despite efforts in some countries such as Kenya, Djibouti and Ethiopia to reinforce existing safety nets, the coverage remains insufficient. As needs increase, major access constraints coupled with insufficient current food assistance responses (inadequate coverage and reduced rations) have worsened the situation. Refugees in all countries are affected by food ration cuts as pipelines remain underfunded and are critically low, with further cuts foreseen in the food ration and/or reduction of beneficiaries. There is a need to significantly scale-up timely, sufficient 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. In addition, food security information systems should be reinforced, with more regular and quality data collection by the different actors, and active participation in analysis fora (such as the IPC).

### ***Nutrition***

Malnutrition rates remain very high in all countries, due to food insecurity, limited access to basic services (such as healthcare and safe water), poor sanitation and hygiene, and inappropriate child-feeding practices. National systems and institutions, when functional, do not have the capacities and resources to manage such large caseloads. The COVID-19 pandemic and the current constraints on global supply chains have further worsened the nutrition situation due to the disruption/suspension of routine health/nutrition programming, or supply availability, lower attendance to health facilities (due to restrictive measures, fear, negative coping strategies). Malnutrition in some countries (Ethiopia, ASAL in Kenya, Northeast Uganda, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan) is far above emergency levels. In the region, more than 10 million children are acutely malnourished, including about 2.6 million who are severely acutely malnourished.

### ***Health***

Health systems in the region are generally weak and under-resourced. The region is prone to recurrent epidemic outbreaks (cholera and diarrhoeal diseases polio, yellow fever and other viral haemorrhagic fevers such as Ebola, measles, meningitis, kala azar, etc.). In many parts of the region, very low EPI (Expanded Program on Immunisation) coverages, high under-nutrition rates, mass population movements, overcrowded IDP/refugee camps/settlements, and poor water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) conditions, sharply increase the risk of transmission of diseases, morbidity burden and mortality. Mortality of children under the age of five and maternal mortality remain very high, especially in conflict and disaster-affected areas. Quality assured medical supply chains are heavily disrupted and currently mainly rely on humanitarian actors with long lead times, limited and constrained capacities. It will be critical to ensure continuity of care given the scope and extent of disruption of primary health services, which in turn have direct impact on the capacity to face rapidly rising malnutrition. It is also critical to fill gaps in the referrals to secondary health care as part of life-saving actions through efficient referral systems, and

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<sup>18</sup> NOAA: <https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/international/africa/africa.shtml>



to ensure the quality of drugs, medical equipment and nutrition products. The COVID-19 pandemic<sup>19</sup> has laid bare the weaknesses of the surveillance systems and emphasised the need to upgrade Early Warning Alert and Response systems (EWARS) in all countries.

### ***Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)***

Access to safe drinking water, adequate sanitation and hygiene practices to the required minimum standards under situations of conflicts, displacements, natural disasters, epidemics and protracted refugee cases are the major challenges affecting the region. Inadequate provision of safe drinking water, sanitation and poor hygiene practices are causing high mortality among children/aged people, under-nutrition (growth stagnation in children) and WASH related (waterborne, water washed, water based, water related insect vector) epidemics. Poor location of water collection points and sanitation facilities in unsafe areas without protection mainstreaming measures increases the risk of women and girls' exposure to GBSV. Competition to access safe water leads to conflicts in areas where the daily minimum requirements are not met. Long-term developments measures are often not considered at the onset of WASH humanitarian interventions. Environmental degradation and water resources pollution are big threats to sustainable safe water provision. Water quality monitoring is still inadequate in some cases e.g. areas with elevated levels of groundwater chemicals (e.g. fluoride) and situations of water trucking. Preparedness and emergency rapid response to WASH-related epidemics outbreaks are still not timely.

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

There are high shelter and NFIs needs due to high number of people who are being displaced in the region by conflicts and natural disasters. The most vulnerable populations groups are the worst affected. The number of newly displaced populations and migrants affected either by expulsion or relocation, are continuously growing in the region.

### ***Education in Emergencies (EiE)***

Indicators related to education remain extremely poor across the Greater Horn of Africa region. An increase in school drops-out, often representing a negative coping mechanism resulting from lack of livelihoods, has been observed in all countries, 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, the quality of education across the region is a concern, with several barriers both on the supply and demand sides, such as schools used for military camps, high percentage of teachers being non-qualified, scarcity of learning spaces and educational material, high pupil to teacher ratios, insecurity and unsafe schools. Adolescent (over-age) boys and girls are often excluded from education due to the absence of alternative and/or accelerated learning possibilities, especially in crisis contexts and are exposed to further 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 (and up to 2 years in Uganda), leaving millions of children out-of-school and at risk. There is a

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<sup>19</sup> 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.

need for catch-up programmes which can help these learners to recover lost learning, make up for content that was missed, and return to the appropriate place in the curriculum where they would be if the disruption had not occurred. Learners and trainees with disabilities generally lack appropriate educational interventions within regular institutions of learning; there is need to support institutions identifying and assessing the education needs of children with disabilities and identifying the most suitable and appropriate education provision and services.

### ***Disaster Preparedness***

The Greater Horn of Africa region is experiencing one of the worst drought situations in decades, following four failed consecutive rainy seasons, affecting mainly Somalia, Ethiopia, and Kenya, as well as parts of Uganda, Djibouti, and South Sudan, with elevated chances of a fifth poor rainfall season at the end of 2022. At the same time, the 2022 rainfall season that is crucial for the northern part of the Greater Horn of Africa is expected to be above normal, with an increased risk of severe floods in the region. Record rainfall has resulted in severe flooding for consecutive years in Ethiopia, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda. In South Sudan, the 2021 floods impacted more than 835 000 people and were the worst ever recorded.

Despite the high exposure to those climatic risks, as well as to conflicts, epidemic diseases in humans and livestock, crop infestation and other natural hazards, the overall regional and national capacities to prepare, anticipate and respond remains insufficient. This was also demonstrated by the lack of adequate early action measures activated to mitigate the impact of the drought despite availability of early warning signs of below average rains and regional ongoing measures to end drought emergencies. Inadequate and under-resourced disaster risk management systems, insufficient collaboration between stakeholders and countries and weak institutionalisation of disaster preparedness, weakening of the traditional coping capacities, resulted in alerts by existing early warning systems, while in place, most often failing to trigger early action and response at the necessary level. In addition, those systems are focused on natural hazard induced disasters and less developed for man-made ones such as conflict.

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

### **1) National / local response and involvement**

In the Greater Horn of Africa, the capacities and/or willingness of governments to respond to natural and man-made disasters, and epidemics outbreaks remain limited.

The second phase of Drought Disaster Resilience and Sustainability Initiative (IDDRSI) to "end drought emergencies in the Horn of Africa" by building sustainable livelihoods was launched by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development<sup>20</sup> (IGAD) for the period 2019-2024<sup>21</sup> is challenged by the scale and severity of the current drought affecting the region. There are clear gaps in the implementation of the ending drought country programming papers and the absence of a corresponding regional initiative on flood preparedness indicates that much remains to be done, namely in terms of coordination and support to multi-risk Early Warning Systems (EWS), advocacy for transboundary

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<sup>20</sup> IGAD members are Djibouti, Ethiopia, Somalia, Eritrea, Sudan, South Sudan, Kenya and Uganda

<sup>21</sup> <https://resilience.igad.int/>

approach, and overall resilience strengthening, to ensure adequate anticipatory or early response based on effective preparedness measures.

In **Djibouti**, the overall local response is limited and relies on external support to address identified humanitarian needs. The *Office National d'Assistance aux Réfugiés et aux Sinistrés* (ONARS) coordinates the provision of emergency assistance to people affected by displacement and natural disasters but has limited capacity. Most INGOs have left the country because of insufficient funding, and the few remaining agencies struggle to up-scale their response in line with the increased needs as a result of the drought, deteriorating food security and nutrition situation and increase in prices.

The humanitarian response in **Ethiopia** is delivered through a complex and intertwined structure between the government and humanitarian partners. In a context of conflict and politicised ethnic violence, there is an increased risk of aid politicisation, instrumentalisation and diversion. The Ethiopia Disaster Risk Management Commission (EDRMC) and the Refugee and Returnees Services (RRS), both under the Prime Minister's Office, are the main government institutions to deliver humanitarian assistance, with a lead role in coordinating the humanitarian response, as well as in implementation. However, the government's response capacity at regional and zonal level remains limited and external humanitarian actors remain essential in the delivery of effective assistance to the people in need. In Ethiopia, a significant safety net programme exists (Productive Safety Net Programme - PSNP) that aims at reducing the vulnerability to food insecurity and is targeting over 8 million poor individuals. The PSNP also contains a shock responsiveness component to increase the breadth and depth of support to already enlisted or new households following emergencies and critical shocks.

In **Kenya** the 2021 Refugee Act aims to address some of issues related to encampment and socio-economic rights of refugees, in line with the commitments taken under the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF). The newly elected government has to finalise the endorsement of the Refugee Act Regulations as well as the so-called "Marshall Plan" aimed at rolling out the shift in the Government refugee policy.

In **Somalia**, humanitarian capacities remain very limited at all levels. The elected President appointed a Special Envoy for the Drought Response in June 2022, with the mandate to facilitate humanitarian assistance and coordinate across Federal Government and Federal Member States mandated bodies, as well as to pursue additional resource mobilization for the drought response and initiate exchange on longer term mitigating measures to the impact climate change. Both the President and Drought Envoy have lifted the profile of the drought in Somalia and have publicly committed to support principled humanitarian aid and facilitation of the response. It remains to be seen if and to what extent such steps will effectively facilitate the provision of humanitarian aid in the country.

In **South Sudan**, despite the inclusion of the humanitarian assistance and construction in the R-ARCSS Chapter 3 (in 2018), the signatory warring parties have, so far, failed to ensure protection of and safe access to civilian population, right to return, right of refugees, to provide basic services and to review the NGO Act (2016). In very rare occasions, the authorities have delivered aid to their population, generally at local level when authorities, more often communities, engage in an emergency response to the floods. In June 2022, the government has launched a three-year revised national development plan (R-NDS 2021-

24) to strengthen institutions for a “transparent, accountable and inclusive governance and to enforce South Sudan’s vision 2040 towards equality, justice, peace and prosperity for all”. Unfortunately, necessary resources are missing, due to lack of budget planning and widespread corruption and mismanagement of public funds, including oil revenues. Finally, the Government of South Sudan’s capacity to anticipate and reduce disasters is extremely limited.

In **Sudan**, recurrent disruptions in the functioning of line ministries continue to have serious implications for humanitarian partners’ response. The previous regime’s restrictive framework on humanitarian aid had improved under the transitional government, though several bureaucratic impediments and interferences from security services and several Ministries remained and worsened due to COVID-19 related restrictions. The coup of October 2021 has hampered the application of the June 2020 Joint Communiqué on Humanitarian Access, was agreed upon between the EU and the transitional government, in which the latter reiterated its commitment to facilitate the access and work of humanitarian organisations.

In **Uganda**, the government’s commitment and capacity to implement a progressive and generous policy towards refugees<sup>22</sup> is undermined by the growing economic hardship, whilst humanitarian funding for the refugee response in the country is dwindling, resulting in cuts in assistance (including food assistance). The scale of the refugee crisis continues to overwhelm national and local capacities and still requires support for reinforcing district and local government capacities, notably in view of operationalising the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework. Involvement of sectorial line ministries to better integrate refugees in national policies has started, but concrete implementation relies on support from the international community. The National Development Plan-III covering the period 2020-2025 aligns to the CRRF on three points: (i) water, climate change and environment and natural resources management, (ii) human capital development and (iii) regional development. The Uganda Country Programming Paper (CPP) on ending drought emergencies (EDE), under the regional IGAD strategy is being aligned to the NDP-III, a move to ensuring that the CPP initiatives are integrated within the government planning and developmental frameworks. For broader disaster management, the Office of the Prime Minister Disaster Relief and Management Department is in charge, as mandated by the “National Policy for Disaster Preparedness and Management”. However, this policy is not operationalised due to lack of legislation, hence limited national budget allocations to preparedness and response, as well as poor capacities, especially at district level. As a result, there are no comprehensive and functional early-warning or surveillance systems, nor operational government-driven emergency response capacities, which continue highly reliant on external support.

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<sup>22</sup> Uganda recognises the rights of refugees to work, establish businesses and move around freely within the country. A plot of land is allocated to each family, the size can be variable. This engagement towards refugees from the Authorities is also reflected in initiatives such as the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) rolled out in the country

## 2) International Humanitarian Response

The humanitarian response in the region remains largely underfunded, with a negative trend over the years. Even in those countries where the overall response is well-funded, important sectoral gaps remain.

	Djibouti	Ethiopia	Kenya	Somalia	South Sudan	Sudan	Uganda
<b>Funding appeals 2022</b>	USD 18.2 million (UNHCR)	USD 3.1 billion	USD 145.5 million (UNHCR) USD 250.5 million (Drought)	USD 2.26 billion	USD 1.7 billion (HRP)	USD 1.94 billion (HRP)	USD 804 million (UNHCR)
<b>% funded as of Oct. 2022</b>	18%	39%	51% (UNHCR) 62.2% (Drought)	46.4%	34%	31%	25%

**Coordination and advocacy** are key to address the protracted complex emergencies affecting the Greater Horn of Africa and, in Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan, protect humanitarian space from undue interference by authorities and parties to the conflicts. Moreover, due to the regional nature of the displacement crises in the region, the need to strengthen cross-country/regional coordination and analysis is evident. Overlapping appeals (e.g. for the drought) across the Horn of Africa create competition for limited financial resources and undermine the coherence and coordination much needed within the humanitarian system.

Regionally, coordination has also been further developed and strengthened with a new protection working group that has a regional remit, which complements the previously established groups on gender-based violence and child protection. The initiative is nascent and will require a strong push forward, but it carries potential for synergies and for streamlining programmes.

In **Djibouti** the overall humanitarian response is limited and relies on external support to address humanitarian needs. The *Office National d'Assistance aux Réfugiés et aux Sinistrés* (ONARS) coordinates the provision of emergency assistance to people affected by displacement and natural disasters, but has limited capacity. Humanitarian coordination remains limited as well, and only few international humanitarian agencies/partners are present in the country. While an Emergency Task Force has been set up to better coordinate the drought response, the lack of updated data availability and quality further impedes the accurate understanding of the humanitarian needs in the country.

The humanitarian aid architecture in **Ethiopia** is complex and struggles to deal with the large scale and multiple crises it is facing. The Ethiopia Humanitarian Country Team leads the overall humanitarian coordination through capacitated clusters, while donors are coordinating with each other through the Humanitarian Resilience and the Refugees Donor Groups (HRDG and RDG) and the INGOs through the HINGO Forum. Common humanitarian services have been established, with UNHAS to provide air services, IOM DTM (Displacement Tracking Matrix) to provide core displacements data, OCHA to

provide information and analysis on access, civil-military coordination unit. The officially unendorsed EHCT draft Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) and Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) for 2022 estimate that more than 20 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance in Ethiopia. Required funding has also increased substantially from USD 1.49 billion in 2021 to USD 3.09 billion (by USD 1.6 billion or 107%). The Drought Response Plan, (covering the period July to December 2022 and first published in a revised form in September 2022), is targeting 17 million people in the affected regions, at a cost of USD 1.7 billion. On the other hand, the Country Refugee Response Plan has projected a total of 896 000 refugee population by the end of 2022 requiring USD 605 million to respond to the needs.

The multiplication of crises of a varied nature over the past year has a direct effect on the coordination capacity of humanitarian partners and there is a need to boost the coordination by increasing the number of humanitarian actors physically present on the ground, rolling out coordination structures, and gathering of information and dissemination while adjusting the modus operandi to the nature of the crisis. Focus should also be given to the civil-military coordination and respect of IHL.

In **Kenya**, UNHCR leads the coordination of humanitarian activities in the refugee camps, while donors are coordinating through the Refugee Donor Group. In response to the drought emergency, a drought flash appeal was launched in October 2021.

In **Somalia** UN agencies, other donors, and several international NGOs are well established. Coordination takes place through the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) and a fully activated cluster system. The Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) for 2022 is over USD 1.5 billion aiming at covering 5.5 million people. In June 2022, a revised Drought Response and Famine Prevention Plan was launched, covering the period from May to December 2022, with a funding ask of USD 993.3 million. The plan seeks to reorient the humanitarian response towards famine prevention, prioritising the most vulnerable populations in areas of highest need for emergency delivery of lifesaving assistance. From January to May 2022, 3.9 million people received some form of humanitarian assistance. Area-based coordination structures are active in 37 priority areas. A rapid response mechanism is being rolled out to provide multi-sectoral emergency response packages to newly displaced or newly accessible populations.

In **South Sudan**, the cluster coordination architecture is mostly Juba-centred and yet to further decentralise to State level. Donors are included in ad-hoc Humanitarian Country Team meetings (HCT+ meetings). The top EU Member States (MS) donors are Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden. The other main humanitarian donors are the US and the UK. Additionally, civil-military coordination (with UNMISS) has been reactivated recently to guarantee interaction between civilian and military actors in order to protect civilians and promote humanitarian principles. An IASC peer to peer review and a Global Cluster mission took place in early 2022 to support the Humanitarian Country Team to reinforce the timeliness, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and principled nature of the humanitarian response. Given the lack of transparency and levels of mismanagement of public funds, most Member States and development donors have become risk-adverse, refusing to sign cooperation agreements.

In **Sudan**, full sector coordination is in place, with a specific monthly Refugee Consultation Forum (RCF) led by UNHCR. Donors are now included in the new

Humanitarian Country Team meetings. Key EU MS donors include Germany and Sweden. The other main donors are US and Canada, while the engagement of the UK has considerably decreased, reaching only GBP 19.4 million for 2022/2023 (down from GBP 226.95 million for 2021/2022).

In **Uganda**, the refugee response is led by the Office of Prime Minister (OPM)/UNHCR following the Refugee Coordination Mechanism, with sector coordination supported by line ministries and the relevant UN agencies playing a co-lead role. The main other donors to the Refugee Response Plan (RRP) are the US and the UK. Key EU MS donors include Denmark, Germany, Netherlands and Sweden. OPM is also in the lead for the National Disasters' Coordination Centre (NECOC) and the National DRR Platform, in charge of dealing with preparedness and response efforts related with disasters caused by natural disasters in the country; however, coordination at operational level remains weak. On epidemics, the Ministry of Health is on the lead of the National Task Force. The multiplicity of coordination platforms covering refugee situations, natural disasters and epidemics, hampers effective coordination. In addition to the largely underfunded refugee response, WFP and UNICEF issued appeals to respond to the critical food insecurity situation in Karamoja (respectively EUR 18 million and EUR 12 million).

### **3) Operational constraints in terms of:**

#### **i.) Access/humanitarian space:**

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's association, other influential actors. 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 are extremely worrying trends, as it severely constrains the independence and impartiality of humanitarian operations, access and the overall humanitarian space for relief organisations.

The situation is particularly acute in Ethiopia, Somalia and South Sudan (most dangerous country of operations for humanitarian workers with 4 killed in the 1<sup>st</sup> half of 2022), as well as in parts of Sudan (Darfur and the Two Areas) and Kenya (Somalia-Ethiopia border regions). In Ethiopia, parties to the various conflicts are failing on their obligation to facilitate access to humanitarian aid to the population and to protect humanitarian workers and assets. As of September 2022, humanitarian access to Tigray is once again cut off, after a limited opening between April 2022 and August 2022 that was still insufficient in light of the severity and scope of needs. The operational environment in the country is particularly risky - 27 humanitarian workers have been killed since November 2020 (with no accountability of the perpetrators). The presence of Al Shabaab in 23 districts in Somalia continues to restrict access to some 1.3 million people. Humanitarian organisations faced continued and widespread access challenges in South Sudan, with 591 incidents reported in 2021. Active hostilities, sub-national violence, and violence against humanitarian workers and assets severely impact humanitarian operations and disrupt aid delivery and assistance to vulnerable people.

A worrying common denominator across the region is the increasing bureaucratic impediments imposed by governments on humanitarian operations and partners through restricting visas for humanitarian workers, imposing heavy taxes and customs on humanitarian aid importation, requiring transportation permits for moving personnel and assets within the same country. All those have serious implications on humanitarian space and access and the capacity of partners to deliver the expected response.

Humanitarian access is also constrained by, at times, risk averse posture or static programming of humanitarian partners.

**Logistical challenges** also hinder the delivery of humanitarian assistance in the region. The poor quality of infrastructure such as all-season roads, as well as river transport, and poor-quality airstrips, present a serious challenge for an effective and efficient humanitarian response across the region. In addition, the closure of roads due to the floods and/or insecurity/fighting is restricting the movement of humanitarian actors and affected populations in accessing humanitarian assistance and services. Linking the main logistical hubs to secondary locations requires heavy and expensive operations especially in Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan. This is limiting the capacity of the humanitarian community to provide common services to remote, hard-to-reach areas for goods and services, and humanitarian personnel, as well as common services for last mile delivery. Such logistical issues should be addressed and minimised through coordinated efforts with suppliers and transportation partners, who form an integral part of field operations. The lack of funding for the logistic clusters is also an issue.

The complex operating environment in the region calls for sustained humanitarian advocacy and diplomacy to promote principled humanitarian action as well as safe and secure environment for humanitarian organisations.

In addition, preference must be given to purchases, distribution, and use of environmentally sustainable products, reducing, and optimising secondary and tertiary packaging as much as possible, avoiding procuring single-use disposable items, and favouring products with greater durability and high recycled content.

ii) Partners (presence, capacity), including absorption capacity on the ground:

DG ECHO has an extensive partner network in all countries of the Greater Horn of Africa. In Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan and South Sudan, administrative requirements put in place by the authorities, de-facto control of territories by non-state armed groups, increasingly limiting the possibilities for direct deployment of humanitarian actors to areas of field operations. These also affect DG ECHO's and partners' capacity to undertake proper assessments of needs and monitoring of operations, as well as partners' capacity to reach final beneficiaries and to deliver aid in a timely, effective and accountable manner. Due to access limitation, temporary or limited restrictions may occur and constrain the deployment, presence and movement of humanitarian workers and goods, both within countries and across borders, requiring partners to adapt their ways of working by sharing increased responsibility and also risks to local implementing partners. The capacity of international and local implementing partners remains limited in some countries of the region.



iii) Other:

The risk of politicisation and instrumentalisation of humanitarian aid remains high, limiting the ability of humanitarian organisations to conduct independent needs assessments and to target, 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. This is particularly the case in Ethiopia where the aid delivery is heavily politicised.

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<sup>23</sup>.

#### 4. HUMANITARIAN – DEVELOPMENT – PEACE NEXUS

Coordination, complementarity and continuity of action with development counterparts, concerned authorities, other Commission services, the EEAS, EU Member States and other donors is paramount to building a shared vision, focusing on consistent investment in social services and building the resilience of the most vulnerable in line with the Sustainable Development Goals and the Agenda 2030 and the Team Europe approach. The Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) – Global Europe is the main EU instrument to provide external development assistance through multi-annual indicative programmes or through individual measures (in the case of Ethiopia and Sudan).

In **Djibouti**, EU development cooperation is playing a particular role in supporting vulnerable communities and households in the sectors of water and waste treatment, as well as in education and opportunities for youth. These development interventions have allowed the EU to address some of the underlying structural factors that increase humanitarian needs. The limited humanitarian funding for the country is thus being used to cover complementary gaps creating a nexus process.

The current context in **Ethiopia** is quite challenging for developing medium- to long- term nexus approaches. While the EU's development cooperation has been partially suspended, support is being refocused via Individual Measures (on sectors such as food, health and education) to still reach the population. Complementarities are to be built between actions from development and humanitarian donors to ensure response to immediate needs, while providing, as much as possible, the basis for increasing communities' resilience.

The Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) of the country, which is funded by most major donors in Ethiopia, provides an opportunity for nexus, such as in the PSNP provision of food assistance/cash transfers to chronically food insecure households in the country and the short-term emergency delivery of humanitarian food aid. The nexus opportunity with other sectors could also be explored further for better cooperation and a coordinated response, through a dedicated joint humanitarian-development framework exercise.

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<sup>23</sup> [http://dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu/actions\\_implementation/remote\\_management/start](http://dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu/actions_implementation/remote_management/start)

In **Kenya**, the Government is significantly changing its policy approach to the refugees, moving from encampment towards an integrated settlement scheme, where refugees and host communities have equal access to services, in line with the commitments taken under the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF). The new policy will significantly affect the lives of refugees and local host communities and opens up new opportunities for humanitarian and development work on durable solutions, building on previous initiatives such as the Kalobeyei Integrated Socio-Economic Development Plan (KISEDPA).

In **Somalia**, the most relevant nexus work lies on the interaction between humanitarian cash and larger social protection interventions, aiming to inform the setup of shock-responsive social safety nets. Furthermore, river management and capacity-building for floods is funded both by DG ECHO under the Disaster Preparedness budget line as well as by development donors and will allow for future cooperation with development donors in this field.

Significant coordinated humanitarian, development and peace efforts are required to address the overwhelming challenges in **South Sudan**, lacking security and the minimum infrastructures that would allow the population to access basic services. There are opportunities for implementing a double/triple nexus approach on health and nutrition, education, protection, on food security linking humanitarian unconditional food assistance in severely food insecure areas (IPC 4 and 5) and development funding in agricultural development and sustainable food systems. Nexus opportunities could also be explored on support for disaster risk management structures and initiatives.

As one of the EU pilot countries for the nexus, an EU Nexus Action Plan for **Sudan** was established in 2017, identifying strategic areas (nutrition and protracted forced displacement) for a more complementary engagement from the EU and its Member States. Concrete implementation was difficult given limited development funding during the previous regime, and the coup of October 2021 further delayed the process. The priorities identified in the 2017 EU Nexus Action Plan remain valid but given the transformed political context, the increase in humanitarian needs and the changes in EU programming priorities, new opportunities for a nexus approach in Sudan should be to ensure durability of quality supply beyond crises, especially related to basic social services such as health and nutrition care or education, social care and direct (cash/ voucher/ food) transfers to households. The EU Special Measures offer nexus opportunities, notably in linking with the Sudan Emergency Safety Nets Project. There are also opportunities for more joined-up advocacy efforts on durable solutions for forcibly displaced persons and for pursuing better linkages with peace and stability funding instruments to address the underlying causes of conflict.

In **Uganda**, the nexus engagement under the September 2018 Action Plan is expected to continue with NDICI, aiming at strengthening self-reliance/resilience, access to basic services, including education employment and livelihood opportunities of refugees and host communities while tackling the drivers of displacement. Securing a rapid integration of refugees in development programmes in Uganda is crucial to support the government's efforts and reduce refugees' dependence on humanitarian assistance. The development thematic priority on social protection is prioritising refugee hosting areas, thus constituting an enabler to operationalise the nexus. Other opportunities for nexus implementation

include support to the ongoing transition in the health sector and education, notably to improve access to education, in particular for vulnerable learners group including refugees, as well as Disaster Preparedness and Disaster Risk Reduction.

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

### General considerations for all interventions

The humanitarian response shall be compliant with the EU's thematic policies and guidelines that are described in detail in the HIP policy annex. Partners operating in conflict areas are requested to provide evidence of strong capacity in security management (experienced and adequate human resources, as well as means).

Technical and administrative details are available in the HIP Technical Annex section 3.2.2.

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

As communities continue to be affected by conflict, violence, food insecurity and climate change, DG 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 enhancing compliance with IHL and International Refugee Law, and seeking 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 at meeting basic needs<sup>24</sup> of affected populations**. DG ECHO **prioritises multipurpose cash (MPC) to meet basic needs**, complemented by other modalities, as appropriate, and timely referrals, to meet specific sectoral outcomes. 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 the entire Greater Horn of Africa region is increasingly impacted by recurrent 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 and Early Response** through (a) emergency / rapid response mechanisms (E/RRM) as

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<sup>24</sup> 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

standalone actions (b) flexibility measures (including “crisis modifiers”) embedded in other actions and (c) targeted (DP) actions in specific countries or at regional level.

DG ECHO programmes will systematically address:

- **Centrality of Protection:** Protection of all persons affected and at-risk must inform humanitarian decision-making and response, including engagement with States and non-State parties to conflict. It must be central to humanitarian preparedness efforts, as part of immediate and life-saving activities, and throughout the duration of humanitarian response and beyond.
- **Accountability towards Affected Populations (AAP):** Active commitment to engage responsibly by taking account of, giving account to, and being held to account by the people humanitarian organisations seek to assist.
- **Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse** in line with the Statement of Commitment on Eliminating Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by UN and Non-UN Personnel. All interventions must adhere to a strict zero tolerance policy in regard to sexual exploitation and abuse, and all partners must ensure prevention mechanisms are in place and accessible to all community members.

The compliance with **minimum environmental requirements and the mainstreaming of environmental considerations** will be taken into consideration for the selection of proposals.

Considering the existing conflict dynamics and inter-communal tensions in the Greater Horn of Africa, DG ECHO will require that all proposed interventions build on a thorough conflict and protection **risk analyses** – that are gender-informed and aimed at developing a conflict-sensitive response (i.e. when the main outcome of the intervention is not protection); and directly tackling threats, vulnerabilities and capacities of affected populations, hence reducing their exposure to protection risks (i.e. interventions with a protection outcome).

**DG ECHO will support humanitarian advocacy** on principled actions as well as strengthen cross-border and regional coordination. These efforts seek to enhance systematic and timely needs assessments, as well as data collection, analysis, presentation and dissemination. Advocacy and coordination help increase the level of understanding about the issues at stake in the region and bridge the gap between emergency relief and rehabilitation, while encouraging more donors to address the crises through a nexus-oriented approach.

While DG ECHO receives an annual budget and most of the projects it funds are within that timeframe, the DG continues to support **multi-annual projects** when the partner organisation demonstrates the efficiency gains and the operational logic of a longer-lasting project, as it is for example already the case with EiE and disaster preparedness projects that usually run for (at least) two years.

In the logic of multi-annual, strategic humanitarian projects, DG ECHO also supports **programmatic partnerships** and would consider such an approach within the Greater Horn of Africa HIP if partner organisations – NGOs with a DG ECHO programmatic partnership certificate, UN agencies and the Red Cross/Crescent family – demonstrate the strategic and/or innovative character of the action and the gains being achieved through such a longer-term partnership. A programmatic partnership can be implemented through

multi-year funding (initial funding allocated for 2 years or more) or through a staged approach where funding is allocated annually.

Programmes contributing specifically to the implementation of the humanitarian-development-peace nexus or to the localisation agenda as well as programmes proposing data analysis and monitoring in the Greater Horn of Africa constitute relevant opportunities for both multi-annual projects and/or programmatic partnerships. Besides EiE and disaster preparedness, multi-annual programmes can be envisaged for other sectors if the added value of a longer-term approach can be demonstrated by the partner organisations.

Programmatic partnerships and/or multi-annual programmes at regional level (covering several but not necessarily all countries of the GHoA) would also be considered for humanitarian actions that approach environmental sustainability in an innovative and more strategic way, particularly in the field of logistics, as well as for actions related to strategic engagement on IHL and protection.

### **Country-specific priorities:**

#### **Djibouti**

In **Djibouti**, DG ECHO will continue to provide protection services and other types of life-saving assistance to vulnerable migrants, in coordination with the EU Delegation and in complementarity with EU development funding. It is estimated that the number of migrants from neighbouring countries will increase, notably due to the ongoing conflict, deteriorating economic conditions, and drought in Ethiopia.

#### **Ethiopia**

In **Ethiopia**, priority in 2023 will be to address the most urgent acute needs and ensure protection of people in areas mostly affected by conflicts or violence and natural shocks, i.e. populations in displacement, host communities and returned/integrated/relocated populations.

In the current context, special attention will be given to populations in hard-to-reach areas; newly displaced population and populations in secondary displacement to potentially uncondusive areas, together with host communities. DG ECHO's approach will remain, however, flexible to adapt to an ever more fluid situation and will focus on areas that are assessed to have the most acute needs or that have been under-represented in the Humanitarian Response Plan (severity of needs mapping), due to lack of data, partners and limited support capacity.

DG ECHO will consider supporting the refugees' response for newly arrived/displaced refugees with acute urgent needs.

The protection of civilians, advocacy for the respect of IHL, for enhanced humanitarian access and the respect of humanitarian principles will remain a DG ECHO priority across the board. This will be ensured through the requirement for protection-mainstreaming in all projects, as well as protection-focused actions that aim to address the acute protection needs amongst the most vulnerable, with an emphasis on child protection and gender-based violence (GBV).

In terms of response delivery, DG ECHO will continue to prioritise, in particular, the food security and nutrition response to address the critical needs through humanitarian food

assistance (with a priority to unconditional food assistance) and the treatment of severe acute malnutrition (SAM) including for those with complications. The protection of livelihood assets focusing on the critical needs, such as protection of core breeding livestock, can be considered for support. Cash-based transfer modalities based on cash feasibility analysis will be highly encouraged.

DG ECHO will also continue to ensure a rapid response capacity to new and rapid-onset conflicts and natural shocks, such as drought, floods, epidemic outbreaks and pests, for an early response, in an attempt to mitigate its impact and prevent a further deterioration.

Partners with demonstrated strong oversight and quality implementation, and a coordinated response, will be prioritised. Partners are encouraged to streamline their DG ECHO funding requests, i.e. avoiding several submissions as lead/co-partner/implementing partner.

In order to address effectively protracted crises and ensure effective and dynamic responses, a particular attention will be given to integrated approaches that provide a basis for stability and recovery in areas where this is conducive. Particular focus is required to build further resilience of communities affected by natural disasters (enhancing disaster-risk management) and those returning to their areas of origin, in close coordination with development actors, where present.

## **Kenya**

DG ECHO's support for the refugee crisis in **Kenya** will continue to prioritise basic survival services (basic needs assistance, health-nutrition, protection and education) for refugees and asylum seekers (including the undocumented) based on their vulnerability. As the outlook of the operation in 2023 becomes clearer with the endorsement of the Regulations of the 2021 Refugee Act, the humanitarian support must be well articulated with the longer-term actions geared towards lasting solutions to the crisis. Complementarity with actions funded by other EU instruments and development donors will be emphasised avoiding overlap. Recognising the severe drought causing an acute food security and nutrition crisis in the ASAL regions, DG ECHO will continue to monitor needs, in permanent dialogue with other humanitarian and development donors, to ensure that the basic needs of the most vulnerable populations are met.

## **Somalia**

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, floods, and epidemics) or exposed to catastrophic or very high levels of food insecurity. DG ECHO will prioritise integrated famine prevention and emergency interventions aimed at reducing excess mortality caused by drought and other factors, as well as addressing aggravated protection risks and threats among most vulnerable population groups; it will further strengthen integrated health-nutrition programming, continue Education in Emergency (EiE) programming particularly for displacement affected communities and out-of-school children, and finally, it will aim at increasing preparedness efforts and pre-positioning in order to respond swiftly to most acute climate related risks from a multi-hazard preparedness and response approach. Coordination and complementarity with other emergency preparedness and response mechanisms (e.g. emergency interventions under crisis modifiers, shock responsive

component of existing safety nets) will also be prioritised. DG ECHO supported actions in Somalia are to demonstrate high lifesaving impact capacity, ensuring effective targeting of most at risk population groups. Expansion of principled humanitarian assistance through adapted modalities of intervention in hard-to-reach areas are to be considered.

## **South Sudan**

In **South Sudan**, the EU humanitarian priorities will focus on lifesaving interventions, notably in the case of new shocks (conflict-related displacement, epidemic outbreaks, and/or natural disasters / climate shocks) targeting the most vulnerable people in most severely affected areas. The aim is to reduce excess mortality and morbidity in the country, addressing in particular acute malnutrition, severe food insecurity, mother and child health, and epidemics. Emergency response (and preparedness) including rapid response mechanisms will be favoured. Multi-sector integrated approaches and mobile outreach teams are encouraged. DG ECHO will support the provision of humanitarian protection assistance to communities affected by violence in the country, including the critical GBV and children affected by armed conflicts. Collective effective advocacy and humanitarian diplomacy are to be reinforced between humanitarian, development and peace actors. DG ECHO considers that the situation in the country is still not conducive for large-scale voluntary, safe, dignified, informed and sustainable returns of IDPs and refugees. However, protection and basic services in case of new displacements/spontaneous returns must be provided, based on needs. On top of unconditional emergency food assistance, opportunities to complement with light livelihood support could be considered, if the context allows, in close cooperation with development actors called upon to scale up. Pooled efforts and/or consortia, which support improved synergies, efficiency, effectiveness and quality, will be promoted. Opportunities to deliver cash assistance, supported by sound market and protection analyses, will be prioritised. Continued support will be provided for education in emergencies, integrating child protection, as well as for supporting the humanitarian community's activities in coordination, logistics, safety and security, context analysis, data collection, monitoring and conflict sensitivity. Localisation and developing local actors' capacity should be operationalised.

DG ECHO will also support targeted multi-hazard disaster preparedness actions aiming at strengthening Early Warning Systems; developing local contingency and preparedness plans for effective response focused on natural hazard induced and man-made disasters.

## **Sudan**

In **Sudan**, DG ECHO will focus on addressing critical humanitarian needs through the delivery of emergency lifesaving basic services and protection assistance to populations displaced or otherwise affected by conflict, natural disasters or climate shocks, or epidemics outbreaks. DG ECHO will provide an appropriate response to health, nutrition and food security crises to prevent and/or reduce excess mortality and morbidity, while also reinforcing the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. A continued response will be provided in Education in Emergencies, with a focus on providing safe access to quality formal and non-formal primary education of children and responding to children's protection needs in schools. Support for coordination, logistics, safety and security, context analysis and conflict sensitivity will also be provided.

Given the current context, DG ECHO will prioritise newly displaced populations (refugees or IDPs) affected by conflict, insecurity and natural disasters as well as host communities. Potential newly accessible areas, where critical humanitarian needs have been identified, will also be prioritised. Sustainable approaches need to be integrated in such actions at an early stage.

## **Uganda**

Priorities for DG ECHO in **Uganda** will focus on life-saving assistance to the most vulnerable refugees and their host communities. Universal access to quality basic services delivery and the provision of household-level assistance to refugees and host communities will be supported on a multi-sectoral basis. DG ECHO will continue promoting a people-centred approach. Provision of multi-purpose and unconditional cash, risk informed and targeted based on socio-economic vulnerability and the protection concerns, will remain central to the response to address basic needs of the most vulnerable. Sectoral support will continue to address needs in the protection, health (including epidemics preparedness and localised peaks of undernutrition), Education in Emergencies and WASH (addressing new acute gaps while ensuring sustainability of past investments). DG ECHO will continue to strengthen local disaster preparedness to address the multiplicity of crises including epidemics, new refugee influxes and natural hazards by ensuring effective linkages between early warning and early action. DG ECHO will build on the results achieved in the past years, continuing to support district contingency planning in highly vulnerable/exposed districts, reinforcing local first responders' capacities, pooling districts' tools and pre-positioned resources and supporting forecast-based financing interventions to improve rapidity and efficiency of anticipatory action and/or emergency responses.

DG ECHO will support priority projects in areas receiving new influxes of refugees and asylum seekers. Support in the settlements where DG ECHO is promoting the Basic needs approach will continue across sectors while active engagement to support effective transitions to development programmes or the Authorities will be pursued. Areas exposed to recurrent, multiple and high-risk hazards and epidemics will remain a priority.

In the food assistance sector, the shift from a status to a vulnerability-based model of assistance will remain a critical priority. To secure this approach DG ECHO will promote the linkages with livelihoods activities. Specific attention will be paid to secondary displacement in urban centres.

### **5.2 Other DG ECHO interventions**

The Emergency Toolbox HIP may be drawn upon to prepare and respond to fast onset crises that could not be foreseen in ECHO's humanitarian implementation plans. Under the Emergency Toolbox HIP, the Small-Scale tool (SST), the Acute Large Emergency Response Tool (ALERT), the Epidemics tool, and the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) are instruments that also provide additional funding options.

In view of the importance of logistics for humanitarian operations, DG ECHO remains also committed to contribute to logistics operations, via funding or any other tool, such as the European Humanitarian Response Capacity (EHRC), at its disposal.

The European Humanitarian Response Capacity (EHRC) is a global initiative, aiming at supporting the delivery of humanitarian assistance with a gap-filling approach. Under the



EHRC the Commission has at its disposal several tools that can be activated in case of sudden onset disasters, e.g. a series of Common Logistics Services (including air operations, warehousing services, last-mile ground transportation, etc.), and a stockpile of emergency WASH and shelter items to be pre-positioned in regional warehouses worldwide.