

## **HUMANITARIAN IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (HIP) ENHANCED RESPONSE CAPACITY**

**AMOUNT: EUR 39 700 000<sup>1</sup>**

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>2</sup> is to serve as a communication tool for DG ECHO<sup>3</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.

### **0. FIRST MODIFICATION**

This first modification concerns the addition of two strategic priorities on anticipatory action and addressing environmental degradation in humanitarian settings. These priorities will be funded from the Disaster Preparedness budget line.

The EUR 3 million top up to the ERC HIP includes:

- a) EUR 2 million to pilot Anticipatory Action approaches

DG ECHO committed in the Commission's *Communication on the EU's humanitarian action: new challenges, same principles*<sup>4</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>5</sup>. AA can help improve the quality of humanitarian response and reduce the burden on humanitarian budgets, while also fostering community resilience and the involvement of local communities.

Under the ERC, DG ECHO will support an organisation to work with communities to develop protocols and triggers and then to release AA funding on the basis of these.

Start Network is a global humanitarian network of over 80 international, national and local NGOs. Within Start Network, Start Ready is an innovative global pooled fund for AA implemented by international and local NGOs ahead of predictable crises,

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<sup>1</sup> This amount covers the humanitarian aid budget line (EUR 21 000 000) of the Enhanced Response Capacity, the global and flexible components of three pre-identified pilot Programmatic Partnerships (EUR 15 600 000), and as announced in version 1, the Disaster Preparedness Budget Line top up (EUR 3 000 000).

<sup>2</sup> Technical annex and thematic policies annex.

<sup>3</sup> Directorate

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

<sup>4</sup> COM(2021) 110 final.

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

particularly climate-related hazards, based on pre-arranged plans developed with local communities. Its financial mechanism relies upon risk-pooling and insurance, allowing to stretch the funds pre-positioned for crises that happen with regular patterns of reoccurrence in 8 countries in Africa and Asia.

DG ECHO has pre-selected Save The Children Germany in its role as grant custodian and member of the Start Network as the Partner for this project. DG ECHO has pre-selected a partner that is a member of Start Network, as Start Ready is an instrument that takes an innovative approach to using risk-pooling and insurance to pool funds and risks between large humanitarian partners and local NGOs. This innovative approach reflects the approach to scaling up AA and fostering localisation that DG ECHO is pursuing. DG ECHO is already supporting Anticipatory Action implemented by the Red Cross Movement (through the DREF) and UN (including through the FAO pilot Programmatic Partnership) and now wishes to focus on a pooled fund with a strong local NGO footprint in the area of Anticipatory Action.

- b) Up to EUR 1 000 000 for pilot projects in support of addressing environmental degradation in humanitarian settings and appraising the benefits of such an approach on improving the situation of affected people

In line with the ERC HIP objective of supporting innovation in the sector, DG ECHO is placing the focus in 2023 on financing pilot projects on the restoration of sites and their adjacent areas (camps, humanitarian settlements, urban and peri-urban areas where humanitarian assistance unintentionally led to the degradation of the natural environment and natural resources). Such restoration efforts should demonstrate the benefits that this brings to affected persons, by improving their living conditions, creating opportunities for income generation, and improving nutrition and water quality, and access to natural resources for which people rely on for their livelihoods. The objective is to fund a pilot in one or two such sites, to be developed as an example for the humanitarian community to be replicated in other affected areas. Countries or areas where little to no restoration efforts have taken place in humanitarian contexts will be prioritised.

The proposals need to focus on the rehabilitation of the natural resources (wood, water, soil and others) that were degraded or overexploited in an intervention area as a result of the humanitarian response. The project should involve the displaced communities and the host populations as active agents. It should incorporate as much as possible actions focussed on local Traditional Ecological Knowledge, use of nature-based solutions (NbS) and other innovative approaches as they can provide multiple benefits simultaneously that are particularly relevant for humanitarian contexts.

### **Pilot Programmatic Partnership with IFRC:**

Also included in this first modification is an amount of EUR 2 200 000 reserved as a flexible amount for the IFRC pilot Programmatic Partnership “Accelerating local action in humanitarian and health crisis” (year 2). This flexible amount will be used to respond to new or increased needs arising in the course of the year in accordance with the methodology agreed in the context of the pilot Programmatic Partnership (Agreement ECHO-AF-BUD-2022-92088).

## 1. CONTEXT

Humanitarian aid continues to face a wide range of challenges. Humanitarian needs remain at an all-time high, driven largely by the resurgence in conflicts and exacerbated by the impact of Russia's aggression against Ukraine, combined with the impact of climate change, environmental degradation, global population growth, economic shocks and failed governance. At the same time, the gap between humanitarian needs and the resources available globally is increasing. Basic norms and principles are being challenged as rarely before, making the delivery of aid more difficult and dangerous. The United Nations (UN) estimates that 339 million people – more than 1 in 23 people worldwide – will need humanitarian assistance in 2023<sup>6</sup>. This is an increase of 65 million people from 2022 estimates.

As outlined in the Commission's *Communication on the EU's humanitarian action: new challenges, same principles*<sup>7</sup>, strong support for the enabling environment for the delivery of principled humanitarian aid is crucial. With the Enhanced Response Capacity (ERC), DG ECHO dedicates part of its budget to support innovative and forward-looking initiatives that seek to increase the capacity of the humanitarian community to respond to crises in the most effective and efficient manner. The initiatives have to be global and strategic in their conception and inclusive in their approach in order to contribute to humanitarian system-wide change. The focus is on initiatives which would not have emerged or would not have the same systemic impact without dedicated funding, and which are complementary to DG ECHO geographic funding envelopes. At the same time, DG ECHO's ambition is that approaches and methods developed under the ERC strengthen the overall enabling environment, and thus support direct implementation of certain priorities on the ground.

## 2. HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

Given the strain on humanitarian financing, it is imperative to continue building the capacity of humanitarian actors at global level in order to continuously adapt to ever changing circumstances and incentivise innovation. For the year 2023, DG ECHO has identified several areas in which global capacity interventions are particularly likely to contribute to an overall improvement of humanitarian action. These are topics on which DG ECHO expects progress to accelerate through targeted funding and where DG ECHO considers continued support necessary.

### a) Innovative Financing

The humanitarian financing gap is well acknowledged. Despite increasing humanitarian funding, it cannot keep pace with record high number of people in need projected for 2023. As one of the means of addressing this challenge, the Communication on Humanitarian Action proposed the piloting of blended finance solutions – using humanitarian grants to catalyse, de-risk and draw in additional financing to support investments aimed at addressing humanitarian needs.

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<sup>6</sup> United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), *Global Humanitarian Overview 2023* (The Hague: United Nations, 2022), 4.

<sup>7</sup> COM(2021) 110 final.

**b) International Humanitarian Law**

Violations of international humanitarian law (IHL) remain a major challenge for the protection of civilians in situations of armed conflicts and for safeguarding the humanitarian space. As such, ensuring respect for international humanitarian law remains an essential objective of the EU's humanitarian aid policy as highlighted during the European Humanitarian Forum 2022. Monitoring, analysis and reporting is a precondition to ensure respect for IHL, as effective humanitarian advocacy requires having access to adequate data on IHL violations. While many sources of information exist, this data is fragmented and lacks a coherent, comprehensive and global overview. In 2023, DG ECHO reiterates its aim to support the strengthening of the collection and analysis of data and information on violations, whilst acknowledging the need to take into account any negative impact on the operational space. In addition, the protection of aid workers in armed conflicts, armed non-state actors' compliance with IHL, as well as addressing other contemporary challenges to IHL, remain essential.

**c) Localisation**

Local and national actors are often the first to respond to crises, playing a key role in rapidly delivering fast, quality and cost-efficient assistance to people in need. The Commission is committed, in line with the Grand Bargain, to channel more resources as directly as possible to local responders. However, the flow of funding to local and national actors (L/NAs) has been hampered by the need for many donors to reconcile this commitment with regulatory, transparency and accountability requirements. DG ECHO acknowledges that the duplication of due diligence requirements constitute some of the tougher barriers to successfully furthering the localisation agenda. Moreover, recognising that L/NAs have existing capacities, there is a need to exploit the complementarity between the knowledge and skills of international and local actors. DG ECHO seeks to finance innovative actions aimed at piloting solutions to address these key issues to ensure an inclusive localisation agenda.

**d) Gender-sensitive humanitarian assistance, including addressing gender-based violence**

The systematic integration of a gender approach into humanitarian aid is essential to effective quality programming. Preventing and responding to gender-based violence (GBV) is life saving and a priority for the EU, and recent crises have reiterated the importance of quality GBV service provision as well as access to justice and accountability for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence. In spite of this affirmation, the humanitarian community sees a gap in knowledge, policies and implementation of gender and diversity sensitive actions, including as regards LGBTI+ persons as well as sexual violence committed against men and boys.

**e) Innovative technological approaches to humanitarian logistics**

In its Logistics Policy published in February 2022<sup>8</sup>, DG ECHO has positioned itself as a strong advocate for change in humanitarian logistics, as there are significant opportunities for increased efficiency and effectiveness in this area which accounts for 60-80% of all humanitarian aid spending when the whole supply chain is taken into account. For example, proper use of logistics data is essential to allow humanitarian

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<sup>8</sup> European Commission, DG ECHO, [Humanitarian logistics policy: DG ECHO thematic policy document](#), Publications Office of the European Union, 2022.

organisations to take better decisions and collaborate more on solutions and approaches. Although a large amount of supply chain data already exists, its availability and accessibility, *i.e.* that it is in the right format to be read and compared, is an issue. The more data that is able to be aggregated, compared, and analysed, the more information will become available to humanitarian actors on availability of supply, performance and cost of suppliers, possibility of procurement at local level, gaps and challenges in the supply chain, lead times, environmental impact, etc. Overall, better collection, interoperability and use of data can lead to faster, more efficient and effective responses.

**f) Forced displacement, including disaster and climate-related displacement and internal displacement**

Displacement as a result of disasters and the adverse effects of climate change is one of the most severe humanitarian consequences of the climate crisis. Data from the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) shows that 38 million people were internally displaced worldwide in 2021 alone, including 23.7 million as a result of disasters. In July 2022, the Commission adopted a *Staff Working Document addressing displacement and migration related to disasters, climate change and environmental degradation*<sup>9</sup>, and committed to further strengthening its engagement in this area. Internal displacement is also a key priority for the EU. Despite the fact that internally displaced persons represent the majority of the displaced population worldwide, their plight is often much less visible. The protracted nature of such situations, leaving very vulnerable people in limbo for many years, creates grave concerns.

**g) Renewed support to the continued adaptation of the humanitarian system**

Coordination and leadership are key factors for an efficient and effective humanitarian response. It is hence important for DG ECHO to continue supporting issues such as humanitarian leadership, coordination, harmonisation efforts and collaborative approaches, including in the field of education in emergencies. The EU is amongst the strongest supporters of the global humanitarian system, set up under UNGA Resolution 46/182 and premised on the UN's central coordinating role of the international response to emergencies. DG ECHO is committed, *inter alia* through the Grand Bargain, to support efforts towards making the humanitarian system more effective and efficient to better address needs, increase accountability to crisis-affected people, sustain strong, impartial and independent country-level humanitarian leadership and strengthen the overall enabling environment for humanitarian aid delivery.

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

**3.1. Envisaged DG ECHO response**

This section outlines how DG ECHO intends to address the gaps identified above, and provides more concrete guidelines to partners on potential initiatives to be submitted. For technical and administrative details, please refer to section 3.2.2. of the Humanitarian Implementation Plan Technical Annex (HIPTA).

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<sup>9</sup> SWD(2022)201 final.

### **a) Innovative Financing**

Following on from the support under ERC HIP in 2022 aimed at assisting international and EU Member State bilateral financial institutions to blend grant finance with loans or other financial instruments aimed at addressing humanitarian needs, this priority will support projects led by humanitarian partners and/or eligible financial institutions, with collaboration and partnership between the two as an option that ensures that blended finance projects deliver a financial multiplier effect on the humanitarian grant, whilst demonstrating humanitarian impact.

### **b) International humanitarian law**

Against the background of the needs indicated in section 2, as well as the EU's overall commitment to international humanitarian law (IHL) and safeguarding humanitarian space, DG ECHO will support initiatives that aim at ensuring compliance with IHL and addressing the contemporary challenges linked to IHL. DG ECHO will support actions following up on the IHL-related discussions at the European Humanitarian Forum 2022 and the ideas raised to address the existing challenges. This includes actions aimed at supporting the protection of aid workers in armed conflicts, and at increasing humanitarian access through ensuring compliance with IHL by armed non-state actors and increasing the capacity of humanitarian actors to engage with these groups.

DG ECHO also reiterates its call made in the ERC HIP 2022 to address the lack of a comprehensive overview on IHL violations through the creation of a network of organisations that can provide such an overview. Proposals on an independent IHL initiative may include, but need not to be limited to, establishing a yearly global report on IHL. For this purpose, NGO partners of DG ECHO are invited to submit proposals.

Finally, given the complex humanitarian consequences of urban warfare, DG ECHO may support actions addressing advocacy, research and data collection and analysis linked to IHL in such context. Actions may also address protection from harm from unexploded ordinance, or the protection of war-affected persons with disabilities under international humanitarian law. In addition, EUR 10 million will be allocated to the ICRC pilot Programmatic Partnership "Prevention of IHL violations" (year 2).

### **c) Localisation**

Partners are encouraged to submit innovative global actions aimed at promoting local and national actors (L/NAs) equitable participation in the humanitarian aid delivery. The duplication of due diligence requirements and a lack of harmonisation in the sector constitute some of the toughest barriers to successfully furthering the localisation agenda. To support its partners and L/NAs, DG ECHO will finance actions aimed at investigating ways to set up common approaches to due diligence and/or to make available or accessible independent verification or quality insurance certification mechanisms to L/NAs to facilitate local actors' compliance with donor requirements and humanitarian standards and thus reducing the compliance burden. Recognising that capacity strengthening is not a one-way endeavour, DG ECHO will support capacity strengthening initiatives, with potential for scalability at more systematic level, that apply innovative and practical modalities and approaches between international humanitarian actors and L/NAs such as mentoring, shadowing, coaching, peer exchanges, etc. Umbrella organisations of L/NAs and national coordination platforms could be considered for these initiatives since they facilitate peer learning and contextualised approaches. DG ECHO will also support the development of innovative and practical

tools to support more equitable security risk management between donors, international and local actors fitting within existing legal frameworks.

In addition, EUR 1 500 000 from the disaster preparedness budget line will be assigned to the global strategic component on disaster preparedness of the IFRC pilot Programmatic Partnership “Accelerating local action in humanitarian and health crisis” (year 2).

**d) Gender-sensitive humanitarian assistance, including addressing gender-based violence**

To support synergies between existing and new global initiatives, DG ECHO will finance actions at global level aimed at preventing conflict-related sexual violence, enhancing access to services, justice and accountability and bridging gaps in service provision for survivors. Partners are also encouraged to submit innovative solutions for gender-based violence (GBV) and sexual and reproductive health programming, especially the development of cross-sectorial and innovative solutions designed to equip low-resourced communities with life-saving knowledge and skills or provide remote services in hard to reach areas. Proposals aiming to scale up capacity and find innovative solutions for the inclusion of minority groups in GBV programming, in particular for LGBTI+ persons as well as men and boys, will also be considered for funding.

**e) Innovative technological approaches to humanitarian logistics**

DG ECHO will support innovative approaches to the supply chain, particularly (but not limited to) technical and digital solutions. Proposals will need to offer tools to humanitarian organisations to, for instance, accelerate digitisation of their supply chains in a concrete way, while demonstrating a meaningful impact at the programmatic and operational level and having scope for broad adoption.

**f) Forced displacement, including disaster- and climate-related displacement and internal displacement**

As part of its efforts to address disaster displacement, DG ECHO is the co-chair, together with DG INTPA<sup>10</sup>, of the Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD) until 31 December 2023. In order to support the work of the PDD during the EU’s tenure as Chair of the Platform, EUR 400 000 will be used to support the functioning of the PDD Secretariat, through a grant with UNOPS. Partners are also encouraged to submit proposals contributing to stronger data collection and analysis on disaster- and climate-related displacement as well as to the development of related anticipatory approaches. To follow-up on the recommendations made by the High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement, DG ECHO will fund innovative proposals supporting the objectives of the *UN Secretary-General's Action Agenda on Internal Displacement*, published on 24 June 2022. To that end, actions could aim at finding durable solutions for internally displaced persons, preventing future internal displacement or providing effective protection and assistance to those facing internal displacement.

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<sup>10</sup> Directorate-General for International Partnerships (INTPA).

**g) Renewed support to the continued adaptation of the humanitarian system**

Further to the support provided under the previous ERC HIPs, DG ECHO will continue to finance efforts aiming at a more effective and efficient global humanitarian system:

- A strong Secretariat being key to achieve progress in the implementation of the Grand Bargain, DG ECHO will continue supporting the Grand Bargain Secretariat. An amount of up to EUR 300 000 will be made available to support the Secretariat of the Grand Bargain process, with an initial allocation of up to EUR 150 000 through a grant with NRC, in order to ensure the provision of expert support, communication and coordination capacity. The remaining amount will be allocated later in 2023, in light of the outcome of the negotiations on the future of the Grand Bargain.
- As DG ECHO attaches great importance to the strengthening of country-level humanitarian leadership, an amount of EUR 400 000 will be allocated to the Global Executive Leadership Initiative (GELI), through a grant with UNOPS, to provide humanitarian leaders with the necessary skillset and expertise to deliver help to people in need in an effective, efficient and principled way, in an evolving and increasingly challenging humanitarian context.
- With a contribution of EUR 250 000 through a grant with the Norwegian Refugee Council, DG ECHO will support the Accelerated Education Working Group (AEWG) to further their work in the five areas of focus<sup>11</sup>. This funding will specifically support the AEWGs work at national level to pursue efforts in disseminating tools and guidance, gaining a deeper understanding of the political contexts behind commitments to accelerated education programmes, and supporting national governments in institutionalising flexible education pathways.
- DG ECHO will allocate EUR 300 000 to the United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS). The contribution will enable UN Security to provide effective, timely, innovative and people centred security support to the UN family and its partners, especially in times of crisis. In particular, this support will go towards the creation of an Emergency Response Team, getting the most talented and experienced security experts to the front lines of crisis thereby allow a rapid scale-up of humanitarian operations and a better enabling environment for humanitarian aid delivery, notably in the most complex and dangerous contexts. Support will also go towards a revitalised information management system and tools that will strengthen UNDSS' capacity to respond quickly and effectively to security challenges in support of the humanitarian system by harnessing the potential of digital technologies, supporting timely data-based critical decision-making and situational awareness.
- Finally, DG ECHO will continue supporting the global strategic component of the OCHA pilot Programmatic Partnership “Strengthening humanitarian coordination and advocacy to respond to humanitarian crisis” (year 2) with EUR 2 000 000.

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<sup>11</sup> AEWG five areas of focus are: 1) Accelerated Education (AE) Programmes Included by More Governments in National Education Plans and Policies; 2) AE Evidence Base Strengthened; 3) Quality of AE Improved through the Development, Dissemination, and Utilisation of Tools & Guidance; 4) AE Programmes Better Resourced by all Key Stakeholders for Scale & Quality; 5) Resilience Strengthened for Learners, Schools, and Systems to Respond to Crisis.