

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

AMOUNT: EUR 56 584 000

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. 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.

### **0. Major changes since previous version of the HIP**

#### Modification 4 – December 2023

Since its activation for the response to the escalation of violence in the Middle East, the EHRC has organised 29 flights from Brindisi, Bucharest, Copenhagen, Ostend and Dubai to Al-Arish carried over 1 240 tonnes of cargo supplies, with partners', Member States' and the EHRC's own stocks. Additionally, the EHRC has donated logistical equipment and other goods to partners. To ensure a continuation of the activities, the budget was increased by EUR 1 000 000.

#### Modification 3 – October 2023

Due to the escalation of violence in the Middle East and the need to upscale humanitarian response, the EHRC will provide a much needed and timely surge support to the logistical capacity, with a comprehensive response. Therefore, a budget increase of EUR 7 000 000 from the Operational Reserve has been decided.

#### Modification 2 – July 2023

Due to the many activations of the EHRC to respond to humanitarian gaps in several major crises in 2023, the resources available under this HIP are not sufficient to allow the coverage of potential future emergencies until the end of the year. Therefore, a budget increase of EUR 15 000 000 from the ECHO operational reserve has been decided. This adds to the EUR 384 000 assigned from an external contribution from France, bringing the general budget increase to EUR 15 384 000.

#### Modification 1 – May 2023

Due to the persistent security and access situation in Burkina Faso, transport by air to deep field locations remains of paramount importance for the implementation of humanitarian action. The EHRC has therefore been activated to extend the EUHAF helicopter operation started end of 2022 for 4 months as from 1/4/23.

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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)

Due to the cyclonic season in Madagascar with already two cyclones having hit the country, the EHRC has been activated to implement helicopter air transport services for a period of 2 months as from the 9/3/23 to reach remote mountainous areas in the Southeast.

Due to the devastating Earthquake that hit Türkiye and Syria, an important part of EHRC stocks from Brindisi and Dubai have been mobilised for Syria and transported by air to the area and handed over to ECHO partners. In order to be ready for any new emergency, stocks have to be replenished as soon as possible.

Due to the deterioration of the security and displacement situation in DR Congo, the humanitarian community is facing a worsening situation and is increasingly overwhelmed by the new needs of thousands of displaced. An Air Bridge operation was launched on 4/3/23, to enable the access of humanitarian goods to the affected area.

Considering the resources of this HIP already engaged for several EU HABs (Afghanistan, DR Congo), EU HAF short term operations (Burkina Faso and Madagascar), the response to the earthquake in Syria and the necessity to keep a reserve for other emergency operations already looming (war in Sudan impacting neighbouring countries, cyclone MOCHA affecting Myanmar and Bangladesh, etc.) and for the rest of the year, the EHRC HIP budget will be increased by EUR 6 200 000: EUR 700 000 transfer from the HIP West and Central Africa; EUR 5 million transfer from the SEAR and EUR 500 000 transfer from the HIP Great Lakes.

## 1. CONTEXT

Humanitarian needs are increasing at a faster rate than can be met by humanitarian funding allocations and operational capacity of humanitarian partners. As a result, the needs of vulnerable people across the globe are left unmet.

As needs soar, the overall capacity of humanitarian actors is being stretched by constantly evolving needs. Humanitarian actors are called to adapt to fast-changing scenarios where even the shortest delay in field response might cost lives and allow the situation to further deteriorate. Therefore, the need to reach people in crisis and deliver aid in a timely fashion whilst at the same time reducing costs has never been more pressing. While the European Commission's main priority remains to support the delivery of humanitarian aid with funding, it has adapted its modus operandi to this new reality, as an active participant in the growing number of emergency responders required to provide life-saving assistance to affected populations.

Many challenges of humanitarian action are linked to logistics and the supply chain, which is the operational backbone of any response, from natural and man-made disasters to protracted crises. Transport and logistics services as well as the prepositioning of stocks are essential in enabling humanitarian access and providing safe, reliable, timely and cost-efficient humanitarian responses.

To respond to these challenges, the Commission has created the European Humanitarian Response Capacity (EHRC). The objective of the EHRC is to complement the funding provided by DG ECHO, and support humanitarian partners. It will do so by facilitating the delivery of humanitarian assistance, while ensuring greater effectiveness and cost efficiency in the delivery of aid.

The EHRC is a set of operational tools designed to provide rapid but temporary support to partners to fill gaps in the humanitarian response where the humanitarian community struggles to provide support, thus helping to cover immediate needs of the affected population.

The objectives of the EHRC are:

1. To enable more rapid, targeted, and direct EU operational interventions triggered and steered by DG ECHO to assist the humanitarian response in the aftermath of a natural or human-made disaster, but also in situations of protracted crises where new developments trigger operational gaps in the humanitarian response.
2. To provide direct EU leadership in steering and deciding on the delivery of humanitarian assistance, providing opportunities to work with other Member States as “Team Europe”, and driving the humanitarian agenda with the support of the EU’s overall role as a global actor and its political and diplomatic leverage in the context of crises (humanitarian advocacy).

To achieve these objectives, the EHRC will cover temporary weaknesses and gaps within the humanitarian supply chain and humanitarian expertise. The different instruments of the EHRC, include the provision of common logistics services to humanitarian partners in the form of international and in-country transport operations (across various modes of transport), warehousing capacities, emergency stockpiles, and other logistical support and coordination, as well as medical expertise.

The EHRC can also be used to break the silos in emergency contexts. Deployments of EHRC services are coordinated with civil protection stakeholders and maintaining the respect for the overall coordinating role of the UN, to build upon the respective sectors’ added value and to foster synergies.

In addition, the EHRC represents a good opportunity for a stronger Team Europe on humanitarian issues, that could ensure greater EU visibility overall. This will build on previous experiences, notably those during the COVID 19 crisis that resulted in positive outcomes on the ground. As an operational platform, the EHRC could, in particular, benefit from a stronger collaboration with EU Member States’ Specialised Agencies (MSSAs), for the direct delivery of humanitarian response.

## **2. HUMANITARIAN NEEDS**

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

The ultimate beneficiaries of EHRC interventions are the affected and vulnerable populations, through the direct engagement with humanitarian organisations with established presence and emergency operational capacity in third countries affected by natural disasters (such as floods, landslides, cyclones, tsunamis, droughts, fires, cold waves, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, epidemics, etc.) and/or human-induced disasters (such as civil unrest, conflicts, forced displacements, etc.).

Humanitarian transport and logistics operations directly assist the movement of staff and cargo of various humanitarian agencies in the regions where the services are offered and ultimately benefit the populations targeted by humanitarian as well as development programmes.

All the services provided as part of the EHRC will serve the needs of humanitarian partners (UN agencies, INGOs, IOs, MSSAs with humanitarian mandate, etc.) and, indirectly, several thousands of people affected by natural or human-induced disasters.

## 2) **Description of the most acute humanitarian needs**

Actors across the humanitarian sector are confronted with a number of operational complexities. Frequently partners do not have access to cost-efficient and reliable logistics services on the ground, both in sudden-onset crises and protracted emergencies. Moreover, they often compete for the same services, setting up parallel operations.

DG ECHO has conducted a review of lessons learnt and recommendations from past operations in response to humanitarian emergencies (e.g., via DG ECHO-funded humanitarian operations, and Union Civil Protection Mechanism activations), and has commissioned sector-specific studies to explore ways to improve humanitarian response modalities (e.g., transport and logistics). The two main observations identified are the following:

1. There is scope to improve the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the delivery of humanitarian aid by reinforcing the field of humanitarian logistics, via the pooling of transport resources and direct provision of common services.
2. There are specific situations and contexts where existing mechanisms (humanitarian organisations, UCPM, etc.) cannot fully respond to expressed humanitarian needs for which direct humanitarian tools would be beneficial.

Operational gaps in the provision of humanitarian aid are context-driven and require attentive analysis on a case-by-case basis. The capacities developed by the European Commission through the EHRC intend to cover to the extent of its capacities some of the most predictable and recurring operational gaps, such as supply chain bottlenecks, or lack of technical expertise in public health, while at the same time retaining the flexibility to adapt responses to any emerging and identified operational gap.

Humanitarian needs to be covered by the EHRC are likely to be found across most sectors including health, water, sanitation, shelter, non-food items, emergency rehabilitation of basic infrastructures, disaster preparedness, support to emergency communication, etc.

Often in an emergency the humanitarian supply chain can be a bottleneck, due to customs or administrative restrictions, damaged infrastructure, and disruption to the regional, local, or even global market. Joint solutions such as common services<sup>3</sup> can support the humanitarian response by speeding up the response and ensuring and improving access. While there are already a number of excellent initiatives that aim to do this, there are still opportunities or situations where such an approach could provide tangible benefits. This is one of the key areas for potential systematic improvement in the

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<sup>(3)</sup> Where one dedicated provider of humanitarian logistics solutions, such as transport or warehousing, puts these services at the disposal of humanitarian responders.

humanitarian supply chain, as set out in the Humanitarian Logistics Policy<sup>4</sup>. Therefore, operations, such as common services, could be organised or partly supported to facilitate the initial transport needs in an emergency response or reinforce the capacity in protracted crises.

In the hours following a sudden large disaster, precise enough information on the needs on the ground may not be available. On the basis of lessons learnt, significant urgent gaps in the humanitarian supply chain can be anticipated with the use of pre-positioned stockpiles on a no-regret basis.

In many contexts there are significant access challenges, linked to security and logistics issues such as the poor state of infrastructure can be damaged or destroyed by events like flooding or other natural disasters. The security context often impacts access; humanitarian aid workers can face regular roadblocks and incidents of aggression, including abductions by bandits or armed groups.

Needs and operational gaps in countries where DG ECHO has ongoing operations will be monitored, as well as other areas where operations could be relevant in the future, in order to decide on the activation of relevant operational services for new, additional or continued EHRC support, or indeed to consider its discontinuation.

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

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

National and local response are fundamental in any humanitarian response. However, local services and state capacities can in occasions be overwhelmed and unable to respond to the operational requirements of the humanitarian actors, which might also require a good level of coordination.

For air transport there are often no local commercial air operators respectful of the minimum international standards of aviation, flying to the destinations relevant to the international humanitarian response.

Local capacities offered by the private sector for sea or road transport in countries of operation are a resource to humanitarian actors that should be used and supported as much as possible, in order to improve their resilience to crises, develop the local economy or train local actors.

Within this context, the EHRC can offer a significant advantage in allowing local responders and humanitarian partners to have access to efficient and effective logistics means, such as warehousing, transport or rapid deployment of humanitarian supplies or expertise.

#### **2) International Humanitarian Response**

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[https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/humanitarian\\_logistics\\_thematic\\_policy\\_document\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/humanitarian_logistics_thematic_policy_document_en.pdf)

Several international humanitarian actors intervene in the domains covered by this HIP, either in terms of logistics, air transportation, stockpiling, or provision of expertise.

The Global Logistics Cluster coordinates and liaises between humanitarian actors to support and inform operational decision-making processes, with the overarching aim of advancing the predictability, timeliness, and efficiency of the humanitarian emergency response. In 2022, its activation in 11 countries, provide a framework for coordination of humanitarian actors, in addition to a last-resort provision of logistics services.

In 2022, only four humanitarian organisations provided air services to the humanitarian community<sup>5</sup>. In humanitarian contexts where several of these organisations are operating, schedules are created to ensure that services complement each other as much as possible, by taking into account their respective mandates. Of all of them, WFP/UNHAS<sup>6</sup> is by far the largest provider of humanitarian air transport and has offices managing air operations globally (in around 15 countries).

Humanitarian aid organisations also work with private companies which offer free transport solutions on certain occasions. However, this support is provided on an ad hoc basis, and in the absence of a larger coordination framework on this matter with the private sector, emergency response strategies cannot be based on such transport options.

DG ECHO is a firm supporter of the localisation agenda regarding the preparation to disasters and creation of stockpiles. Complementary, when confronted with gaps during sudden emergencies or peaks in an ongoing crisis, a widely used strategy to ensure the rapid deployment of in-kind emergency items to affected areas is the use of regional pre-positioning of emergency stocks. Such stockpiles can be used by multiple actors, national authorities, international development agencies, NGOs and International Organisations. Many of these actors use the services of WFP/UNHRD's network of hubs to preposition stocks. Different Humanitarian Procurement Centres (HPCs) provide a simplified process for supply chain and are a resource available to the different humanitarian partners.

During public health emergencies of international importance, the World Health Organization (WHO) plays a key role as UN normative and technical agency in the sector. So does the Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network (GOARN) in outbreak contexts. The GOARN is a global technical partnership, established by WHO as a key mechanism to engage the resources of agencies beyond the UN for rapid identification, confirmation, and public health response to emergencies. GOARN currently comprises over 270 technical institutions and networks across the globe. The main objective of the network is to provide technical support to WHO Member States experiencing a human health emergency due to various threats including disease outbreaks, food safety, chemical toxins, zoonosis, natural and human made disasters.

DG ECHO supports capacity building both under its civil protection mandate (rescEU, European Civil Protection Pool/European Medical Corps) and through EU humanitarian

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<sup>5</sup> WFP/UNHAS, MAF-PACTEC, ASF and DG ECHO (via EU Humanitarian Aid Flight)

<sup>6</sup> United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS).

aid. DG ECHO's support to public health expertise and capacities is established and its usefulness has been shown in the past (e.g., Ebola outbreaks).

### **3) Operational constraints:**

Several operational constraints related to the implementation of EHRC activities are identified, notably safety and security concerns for the aviation sector.

The main technical constraints of humanitarian air transport operations are linked to the remoteness of destinations, the state of airstrips, the availability air traffic control, meteorological conditions, security, and fuel availability, as well as permissions from national aviation authorities. Operations must be flexible to adapt to the variety of situations and emergencies that need to be addressed. Therefore, high standards need to be met in challenging aviation contexts: aircraft operators must meet aviation safety, security and quality requirements and be in line with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) regulations related to this type of air transport project.

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

Humanitarian response worldwide relies primarily on the competency, proficiency, and dedication of humanitarian organisations. DG ECHO is fully committed on continuing to support its partners to provide principled and operationally sound humanitarian assistance.

The EHRC interventions mentioned in this HIP add specific operational support to the DG ECHO funding portfolio. The EHRC has three main features:

- Gap-filling: The EHRC aims at filling clearly identified operational humanitarian gaps.
- EU steer: The EHRC is directly steered by the Commission.
- Visibility of the EU: The EHRC focuses on activities that promote EU-led humanitarian action (in partnership with EU Member States).

General principle of cost-effectiveness applicable to all EU funding, will continue to guide the further development of the EHRC.

EHRC operations will be implemented under this HIP via different modalities. Some actions may be operated directly by DG ECHO (with, e.g., procured services, or grants) through DG ECHO partners and contracting private service providers with the required expertise, whilst others may be indirectly managed through DG ECHO partners or collaborators. All operations funded under this HIP will require a direct involvement of DG ECHO staff in their implementation. Specific governance structures will be developed for each project.

Pursuing the objective of reinforcing the EU capacity to respond in humanitarian setting under a Team Europe spirit, cooperation with Member States' Specialised Agencies will be welcome. In doing so, the Commission will maintain an enhanced and collaborative approach, drawing on many experienced and specialised actors, each with their own initiatives and niche capabilities.

#### **4.1 Envisaged DG ECHO response**

The EHRC aims to mobilise operational tools developed by DG ECHO, and put them at the disposal of humanitarian partners, EU Member States, and emergency responders, enabling the EU to the extent possible to directly intervene and assist the rapid delivery of humanitarian assistance in case of gaps.

In addition to the workstreams identified below, further services in other sectors may be identified in 2023 under the European Humanitarian Response Capacity (EHRC) to bolster humanitarian assistance and support humanitarian operations.

#### **Air Transportation Operations**

EU humanitarian air transport operations aim to fill air transport gaps by providing safe and reliable access for humanitarian staff and cargo. They are implemented in countries and humanitarian contexts where there is no availability of private sector flights, and they are often deployed in contexts where there is no safe civil aviation structure nor reliable services.

DG ECHO has a framework contract with a broker for the provision of transport and logistics services worldwide. This broker has the required expertise to offer emergency transport solutions in challenging contexts and meets air transport requirements as they work with companies which meet the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) rules and requirements.

In addition to the broker, DG ECHO also relies on the expertise of WFP, the only DG ECHO humanitarian partner that currently meets necessary requirements related to air transport operations. WFP Aviation (UNHAS) has direct access to many air operators at short notice, with bases already set up in many African countries, and a dedicated safety and quality assurance unit, the Aviation Safety Unit (ASU) and Quality Unit (QA) dealing with all the issues related to aviation safety and quality Air operations.

As part of its air transport operation, the EHRC will mainly consist of two actions: the EU Humanitarian Aid Flights and the EU Humanitarian Air Bridge. In addition, specific ad hoc humanitarian flights could be implemented should the humanitarian response require it. Support to other air transport services can be assessed if needs are identified.

##### *1. EU Humanitarian Aid Flights programme*

**EU Humanitarian Aid Flight (EU HAF)** provides regular passenger and cargo transportation solutions to humanitarian organisations, with a focus on regions where many EU funded projects are implemented, on deep field destinations, or on acute emergencies which require increased aerial support. EU HAF aims to provide timely, flexible, safe, and reliable humanitarian transport solutions, which are well coordinated with other humanitarian services.

The geographical coverage and the number of operating aircraft of **EU HAF** in 2022 should be the starting point for the 2023 operation as these operations continue to meet proven ongoing needs. The number of aircraft could be adapted, and other countries could be considered in case of emerging needs, following assessments of aviation specific constraints and the needs of humanitarian organisations. The flexibility offered



by entrusting the EU HAF to WFP/UNHAS allows for a reduction or increase of the fleet at very short notice and gives DG ECHO access to a wide range of aircraft.

Working through WFP/UNHAS increases efficiency and effectiveness by facilitating enhanced coordination and better flexibility between WFP and DG ECHO air transport offerings. This is achieved through synergies and economy of scale by using the same structures and supply channels, when it comes to air operators, booking, and fuel supply.

DG ECHO field technical assistants and WFP aviation experts will analyse the needs and propose schedules to respond in the best way possible to agencies' demands. They will consider DG ECHO's HIP strategy in the country, existing UNHAS schedules, partners' needs, aviation constraints, airstrip specifications and security, but also available budget. Following these consultation processes, the existing set up will be maintained or adapted.

EU HAF facilitates partners' humanitarian response and improves the quality of humanitarian operations by enabling access to remote or cut-off areas and allowing more frequent monitoring and evaluation missions. Moreover, the capacity to carry out emergency evacuations by air is, for many organisations, a prerequisite for the implementation of their projects.

The EU Humanitarian Aid Flight project primarily aims to transport humanitarian aid workers but can also accept specific requests for cargo. The starting point for 2023 is to directly support humanitarian operations in DRC, Kenya and Mali where the projects are currently transporting more than 1,500 passengers and 20 tonnes of cargo per month. Needs and gaps will be monitored/assessed on a regular basis to decide the opening/closing of HAF operations.

## 2. *EU Humanitarian Air Bridge operations (HAB)*

EU Humanitarian Air Bridge operations mainly consist of international transport of cargo and passengers, on an *ad hoc* basis. These operations are implemented when there is a gap in commercial options due to specific circumstances such as the closure of all commercial flights to Afghanistan since 2021 and the drastic reduction in commercial options during the COVID crisis in 2020.

The identification of potential EU HAB operation will take into account existing humanitarian actions and will follow the request of humanitarian stakeholders (DG ECHO country offices, humanitarian partners, EU Member States). DG ECHO will implement regular internal assessments within its operational units to evaluate potential needs for HAB operations.

Any potential **EU HAB operation** should reinforce the EU's response, without competing with and/or duplicating existing EU and non-EU humanitarian aid and civil protection systems of delivery. Implementation should encourage working as a Team Europe, by seeking the association of EU Member States. Beyond the delivery of cargo, a combined ECHO and EU Member States HAB operation can increase EU visibility. It could also, in specific contexts, contribute to raising the profile of a crisis and addressing operational constraints faced by humanitarian actors on the ground, such as limited access and logistical or administrative barriers.

## **Common Logistical Services**

DG ECHO provides common logistical services to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of humanitarian logistics operations, as well as contributing to the greening of humanitarian aid.

Amongst other potential initiatives, the following services are already provided by the EHRC:

- Humanitarian supply chain activities, from warehousing to international and in-country transport of supplies, across various modes of transport, and last mile delivery. These services are available to be deployed globally in cases when there is a sudden onset emergency (or escalation in a protracted crisis), providing strategic solutions, with a strong commitment to support the local market and local emergency responders to the maximum extent possible, and to coordination, avoiding duplicating existing initiatives.
- Coordination and consolidation of humanitarian requests for cargo transportations, notably to the EU HAB. This could include an end-user coordination service, to consolidate cargo requests and identify the most suitable transportation solutions.

DG ECHO will evaluate with DG ECHO country offices, relevant partners, and other humanitarian stakeholders the need of setting up common services in a given context.

The EHRC services should be aligned with the minimum environmental requirements and recommendations<sup>7</sup>, particularly regarding sustainable supply chains.

## **Procurement and stockpile prepositioning**

To strengthen and enhance DG ECHO's and its humanitarian partners' collective capacity for an effective and efficient emergency response, DG ECHO has developed EHRC Emergency Stockpiles. Currently, DG ECHO has four regional stockpiles: in Brindisi, Dubai, Panama and Kuala Lumpur, within the UNHRD system.

These stockpiles will not replace other actors in the concerned country or region but act as a regional and sub-regional safety net in the logistics chain. They aim to respond to small and medium impact disasters, where international community funding and media coverage is low or in the first few days of major disaster when responders are not able to cover the needs and markets are disrupted and /or not yet stocked.

The stockpiles complement existing DG ECHO preparedness and response systems, including Disaster Preparedness projects and localisation agenda, and can be complemented with other supplies from participating EU countries, including items mobilised on an ad hoc basis via the Union Civil Protection Mechanism. A mapping exercise and a consultation among partners, sector specialists and cluster coordinators will inform any decision to open new sub-regional stockpiles.

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<sup>7</sup> As found in the Guidance on the operationalisation of the Minimum Environmental Requirements and Recommendations for EU-funded humanitarian aid operations

DG ECHO will continue the establishment and fine-tuning of its stockpile of emergency relief items in several warehouses worldwide, to cover the needs of disaster-affected people. Prepositioned items will primarily focus on shelter and WASH sectors, although other sectors will be considered if deemed relevant, and in consultation with the relevant sector specialists, UN mandated agencies, partners, and clusters. Stockpiling of medical items could be considered as further option.

In addition to prepositioning, DG ECHO will undertake ad hoc procurement of specific relief items, to be directly deployed during a crisis. The identification of items and procurement options will be based on identified gaps and needs by DG ECHO country offices, in consultation with partners, sector specialists and cluster coordinators, taking into consideration the local market capacities and DG ECHO's policy in promoting the use of multi-purpose cash actions.

Procurement and stockpiling under the ERHC should be aligned with the minimum environmental requirements and recommendations, particularly regarding sustainable supply chains and waste management.

The items procured and stockpiled will be at the disposal of all ECHO certified partners on a no-cost basis. The Technical Annex to this HIP provides operational details. Items are to be handed over to a distributing partner in-country who will be consignee for the stocks when they arrive and responsible for storage, last mile delivery and handover to the final beneficiaries. The distribution of stocks as well as beneficiary selection is to be established by the partner.

### **Provision of expertise**

The European Commission and the EU Member States have a wide set of available expertise, which can be vital in humanitarian response. Under the EHRC, DG ECHO will be able to mobilise several skillsets of expertise, in several sectors and in partnership with different European Union bodies and Member States, to support humanitarian partners, emergency responders and ultimately affected populations victims of natural or human-induced disasters.

Initially, the EHRC will provide expertise in particular in the logistics and health sectors.

For the logistics sector, the ECHO field network includes a number of logistics experts, based in Panama, Bangkok, and Nairobi. Specific additional expertise can be deployed in case of specific needs, with the purpose of identifying potential areas of logistics development.

For the health sector, DG ECHO has developed a specific Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) to deploy its own, as well as Member States', public health experts from its EU Health Task Force. These deployments would support international emergency preparedness and response to infectious diseases events or outbreaks of unknown origin in humanitarian contexts. ECDC experts could be put at the disposal of UN or INGO health partners with relevant field presence according to needs and opportunity, and in coordination with the established humanitarian coordination system.