

**TECHNICAL ANNEX**  
**AFGHANISTAN, PAKISTAN, IRAN AND CENTRAL ASIA**  
**FINANCIAL, ADMINISTRATIVE, AND OPERATIONAL INFORMATION**

The provisions of the financing decision ECHO/WWD/BUD/2024/01000 and the General Conditions of the Agreement with the European Commission shall take precedence over the provisions in this document.

The activities proposed hereafter are subject to any terms and conditions that may be included in the related Humanitarian Implementation Plan (HIP).

**1. CONTACTS**

Operational Unit in charge	DG ECHO / D4
Contact persons at HQ	Contact persons in the field
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## 2. FINANCIAL INFO

Indicative Allocation<sup>1</sup>: EUR 129 800 000<sup>2</sup> of which an indicative amount of EUR 16 500 000 for Education in Emergencies.

### Programmatic Partnerships:

Programmatic Partnerships have been launched since 2020 with a limited number of partners. An indicative amount of EUR 700,000 will be dedicated to ongoing Programmatic Partnerships in 2024. New Programmatic Partnerships could be funded under this HIP<sup>3</sup>.

Indicative breakdown per Actions as per Worldwide Decision (in euros)<sup>4</sup>:

Country(ies)	Action (a) Human-induced crises and natural hazards	Action (b) Initial emergency response/small-scale/epidemics	Action (c) Disaster Preparedness	Actions (d) to (f) Transport / Complementary activities	TOTAL
Afghanistan	113 000 000				113 000 000
Pakistan	4 000 000		4 000 000		8 000 000
Iran	4 000 000		300 000		4 300 000
Regional	4 000 000		500 000 <sup>5</sup>		4 500 000
<b>Total</b>	<b>125 000 000</b>		<b>4 800 000</b>		<b>129 800 000</b>

## 3. PROPOSAL ASSESSMENT

### a) Co-financing:

Under the EU Financial Regulation, grants must involve co-financing; as a result, the resources necessary to carry out the action must not be provided entirely by the grant. An action may only be financed in full by the grant where this is essential for

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<sup>1</sup> The Commission reserves the right not to award all or part of the funds made or to be made available under the HIP to which this Annex relates, or to allocate part of the funding to interventions with a regional or multi-country approach.

<sup>2</sup> total amount of the HIP

<sup>3</sup> More information can be found in the 'Guidance to Partners – DG ECHO Programmatic partnerships 2024' <https://www.dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu/programmatic-partnership/programmatic-partnership>

<sup>4</sup> For flexibility and fast responsiveness purposes, this breakdown can be adjusted within certain limits based on newly arising needs.

<sup>5</sup> EUR 500,000 prioritising actions for Central Asia as a follow up to Central Asia scoping mission.

it to be carried out. In such a case, justification must be provided in the Single Form (section 10.4)<sup>6</sup>.

- b) Financial support to third parties (implementing partners)
- c) Pursuant to Art. 204 Financial Regulation, for the implementation of actions under direct management under this HIP, partners may provide financial support to third parties, e.g., implementing partners. This financial support can only exceed EUR 60 000 if the objectives of the action would otherwise be impossible or excessively difficult to achieve. In such cases, justification must be provided in the Single Form (section 10.6) based on the following grounds: a limited number of non-profit NGOs have the capacity, skills or expertise required; there are only a limited number of organisations in the country of operation, or in the region(s) where the action takes place; in a confederation, family or network context, the partner would rely on other members of the confederation, family or network to ensure geographical coverage, while minimising costs and avoiding duplication. Alternative arrangements
- d) In case of country or crisis-specific issues or unforeseeable circumstances, which arise during the implementation of the action, the Commission (DG ECHO) may issue specific ad-hoc instructions which partners must follow. Partners may also introduce via the Single Form duly justified requests for alternative arrangements to be agreed by the Commission (DG ECHO) in accordance with Annex 5 to the Grant Agreement. Field office costs.

Costs for use of the field office during the action are eligible and may be declared as unit cost according to usual cost accounting practices, if they fulfil the general eligibility conditions for such unit costs and the amount per unit is calculated:

- i. using the actual costs for the field office recorded in the beneficiary's accounts, attributed at the rate of office use, and excluding any cost which are ineligible or already included in other budget categories; the actual costs may be adjusted on the basis of budgeted or estimated elements, if they are relevant for calculating the costs, reasonable and correspond to objective and verifiable information

and

- ii. according to usual cost accounting practices which are applied in a consistent manner, based on objective criteria, regardless of the source of funding.
- e) Actions embedded in multi-annual strategies

Funding under this HIP may be used to finance actions implemented in the framework of multi-annual strategies, as and when provided for in the HIP.

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<sup>6</sup> Single form guidelines: <https://www.dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu/ngo/action-proposal/fill-in-the-single-form>

f) Regional and multi-country actions

Regional/multi-country actions can be supported under this HIP (and where relevant in conjunction with other HIPs<sup>7</sup>), where they are proven more suitable/effective than country-based interventions to respond to identified needs, taking into account the operating context, the strategy and the priorities set out in the HIP (or respective HIPs), the operational guidelines provided in section 4.1.2. of this Annex, as well as the applicant organisation's capacities. The proposals should specify the breakdown between the different country allocations.

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<sup>7</sup> For multi country actions falling under more than one HIP, partners are requested to submit only one proposal in APPEL. The single form should refer to the HIP that covers the majority of targeted countries.

#### 4. ADMINISTRATIVE INFO

##### **Allocation round 1 Afghanistan**

- a) Indicative amount: up to EUR 113 000 000
  - Up to EUR 98 500 000 for all Humanitarian Operations
  - Up to EUR 14 500 000 for Education in Emergencies (EiE)
- b) Description of the humanitarian aid interventions relating to this assessment round *if it does not cover all the funding*.
- c) Costs will be eligible from 01/01/2024<sup>8</sup> Actions will start from 01/01/2024 (as the earliest date).
- d) The initial duration for the Action may be up to 24 months or more<sup>9</sup> provided that the added value of a multi-annual duration is demonstrated by the partner<sup>10</sup>. Education in Emergencies actions do not need further justification and should have an initial duration of at least 24 months unless there is a needs- or context-based justification for a shorter duration. For Disaster Preparedness, justification is needed only for particularly volatile contexts. Follow-up actions, which continue/extend ongoing operations financed under a previous Humanitarian Implementation Plan, can be submitted as modification requests to extend the overall duration to a maximum of 48 months. Actions that are extended further to modification requests can be funded under a maximum of three successive Humanitarian Implementation Plans. The same approach may also be used to the extent appropriate in furtherance of any multi-annual strategies provided for by the HIP (see point e) of section 2 above)<sup>11</sup>.
- e) Potential partners<sup>12</sup>: All DG ECHO partners.
- f) Information to be provided: Single Form or Modifications requests of on-going actions<sup>13</sup>.
- g) Indicative date for receipt of the above requested information: 29 Feb2024

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<sup>8</sup> The eligibility date of the Action is not linked to the date of receipt of the Single Form. It is either the eligibility date set in the Single form or the eligibility date of the HIP, whatever occurs latest. In case of amendments to existing agreements, the eligible date will however be the eligible date set in the initial agreement.

<sup>9</sup> Maximum duration of an action is 48 months.

<sup>10</sup> See the factsheet on EU Humanitarian Aid Multi-Year Funding (November 2022) available on the DG ECHO Website ([DGEcho WebSite \(dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu\)](https://dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu))

<sup>11</sup> Additional guidance may be issued by DG ECHO in this respect, as appropriate.

<sup>12</sup> Unless otherwise specified potential NGO partners refer to certified partner organisations.

<sup>13</sup> Single Forms will be submitted to DG ECHO using APPEL.

## **Allocation round 2 Pakistan**

- a) Indicative amount: up to EUR 8 000 000
  - Up to EUR 3 000 000 for all Humanitarian Operations
  - Up to EUR 1 000 000 for Education in Emergencies (EiE)
  - Up to EUR 4 000 000 for all Disaster Preparedness Operations
- b) Description of the humanitarian aid interventions relating to this assessment round *if it does not cover all the funding*.
- c) Costs will be eligible from 01/01/ 2024<sup>14</sup> <sup>15</sup> Actions will start from 1/01/2024 (as the earliest date).
- d) The initial duration for the Action may be up to 24 months or more<sup>16</sup> provided that the added value of a multi-annual duration is demonstrated by the partner<sup>17</sup>. Education in Emergencies actions do not need further justification and should have an initial duration of at least 24 months unless there is a needs- or context-based justification for a shorter duration. For Disaster Preparedness, justification is needed only for particularly volatile contexts. Follow-up actions, which continue/extend ongoing operations financed under a previous Humanitarian Implementation Plan, can be submitted as modification requests to extend the overall duration to a maximum of 48 months. Actions that are extended further to modification requests can be funded under a maximum of three successive Humanitarian Implementation Plans. The same approach may also be used to the extent appropriate in furtherance of any multi-annual strategies provided for by the HIP (see point e) of section 2 above)<sup>18</sup>.
- e) Potential partners<sup>19</sup>: All DG ECHO Partners
- f) Information to be provided: Single Form or Modifications requests of on-going actions<sup>20</sup>
- g) Indicative date for receipt of the above requested information: 29 Jan 2024

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<sup>14</sup> The eligibility date of the Action is not linked to the date of receipt of the Single Form. It is either the eligibility date set in the Single form or the eligibility date of the HIP, whatever occurs latest. In case of amendments to existing agreements, the eligible date will however be the eligible date set in the initial agreement.

<sup>15</sup> The eligibility date of the Action is not linked to the date of receipt of the Single Form. It is either the eligibility date set in the Single form or the eligibility date of the HIP, whatever occurs latest. In case of amendments to existing agreements, the eligible date will however be the eligible date set in the initial agreement.

<sup>16</sup> Maximum duration of an action is 48 months.

<sup>17</sup> See the factsheet on EU Humanitarian Aid Multi-Year Funding (November 2022) available on the DG ECHO Website ([DGEcho WebSite \(dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu\)](https://dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu))

<sup>18</sup> Additional guidance may be issued by DG ECHO in this respect, as appropriate.

<sup>19</sup> Unless otherwise specified potential NGO partners refer to certified partner organisations.

<sup>20</sup> Single Forms will be submitted to DG ECHO using APPEL.

### **Allocation round 3 Iran**

- a) Indicative amount: up to EUR 4 300 000
  - Up to EUR 4 000 000 for all Humanitarian Operations
  - Up to EUR 300 000 for Disaster Preparedness
- b) Description of the humanitarian aid interventions relating to this assessment round if it does not cover all the funding.
- c) Costs will be eligible from 01/01/ 2024<sup>21</sup> 22 Actions will start from 1/01/2024, as the earliest date.
- d) The initial duration for the Action may be up to 24 months or more<sup>23</sup> provided that the added value of a multi-annual duration is demonstrated by the partner<sup>24</sup>. Education in Emergencies actions do not need further justification and should have an initial duration of at least 24 months unless there is a needs- or context-based justification for a shorter duration. For Disaster Preparedness, justification is needed only for particularly volatile contexts. Follow-up actions, which continue/extend ongoing operations financed under a previous Humanitarian Implementation Plan, can be submitted as modification requests to extend the overall duration to a maximum of 48 months. Actions that are extended further to modification requests can be funded under a maximum of three successive Humanitarian Implementation Plans. The same approach may also be used to the extent appropriate in furtherance of any multi-annual strategies provided for by the HIP (see point e) of section 2 above)<sup>25</sup>
- e) Potential partners<sup>26</sup>: All DG ECHO Partners
- f) Information to be provided: Single Form or Modifications requests of on-going actions.<sup>27</sup>
- g) Indicative date for receipt of the above requested information: 29 Jan 2024

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<sup>21</sup> The eligibility date of the Action is not linked to the date of receipt of the Single Form. It is either the eligibility date set in the Single form or the eligibility date of the HIP, whatever occurs latest. In case of amendments to existing agreements, the eligible date will however be the eligible date set in the initial agreement.

<sup>22</sup> The eligibility date of the Action is not linked to the date of receipt of the Single Form. It is either the eligibility date set in the Single form or the eligibility date of the HIP, whatever occurs latest. In case of amendments to existing agreements, the eligible date will however be the eligible date set in the initial agreement.

<sup>23</sup> Maximum duration of an action is 48 months.

<sup>24</sup> See the factsheet on EU Humanitarian Aid Multi-Year Funding (November 2022) available on the DG ECHO Website ([DGEcho WebSite \(dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu\)](https://dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu))

<sup>25</sup> Additional guidance may be issued by DG ECHO in this respect, as appropriate

<sup>26</sup> Unless otherwise specified potential NGO partners refer to certified partner organisations.

<sup>27</sup> Single Forms will be submitted to DG ECHO using APPEL

### **Allocation round 4 Regional**

- a) Indicative amount: up to EUR 4 500 000
- Up to EUR 3 000 000 for all Humanitarian Operations
  - Up to EUR 1 000 000 for Education in Emergencies
  - Up to EUR 500 000 Disaster Preparedness Central Asia
- b) Description of the humanitarian aid interventions relating to this assessment round *if it does not cover all the funding*.
- c) Costs will be eligible from 01/01/ 2024<sup>2829</sup>. Actions will start from 1/01/2024 (as the earliest date).
- d) The initial duration for the Action may be up to 24 months or more<sup>30</sup> provided that the added value of a multi-annual duration is demonstrated by the partner<sup>31</sup>. Education in Emergencies actions do not need further justification and should have an initial duration of at least 24 months unless there is a needs- or context-based justification for a shorter duration. For Disaster Preparedness, justification is needed only for particularly volatile contexts. Follow-up actions, which continue/extend ongoing operations financed under a previous Humanitarian Implementation Plan, can be submitted as modification requests to extend the overall duration to a maximum of 48 months. Actions that are extended further to modification requests can be funded under a maximum of three successive Humanitarian Implementation Plans. The same approach may also be used to the extent appropriate in furtherance of any multi-annual strategies provided for by the HIP (see point e) of section 2 above)<sup>32</sup>.
- Quality proposals will be prioritized covering multi-sector support based on a needs approach with key policy highlights such as EiE, health, social protection. Of the EUR 2 500 000 allocation DP Asia, focusing on actions preparedness, climate change (Central Asia), shock response, social protection, anticipatory action.
- e) Potential partners<sup>33</sup>: All DG ECHO Partners

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<sup>28</sup> The eligibility date of the Action is not linked to the date of receipt of the Single Form. It is either the eligibility date set in the Single form or the eligibility date of the HIP, whatever occurs latest. In case of amendments to existing agreements, the eligible date will however be the eligible date set in the initial agreement.

<sup>29</sup> The eligibility date of the Action is not linked to the date of receipt of the Single Form. It is either the eligibility date set in the Single form or the eligibility date of the HIP, whatever occurs latest. In case of amendments to existing agreements, the eligible date will however be the eligible date set in the initial agreement.

<sup>30</sup> Maximum duration of an action is 48 months.

<sup>31</sup> See the factsheet on EU Humanitarian Aid Multi-Year Funding (November 2022) available on the DG ECHO Website ([DGEcho WebSite \(dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu\)](https://dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu))

<sup>32</sup> Additional guidance may be issued by DG ECHO in this respect, as appropriate.

<sup>33</sup> Unless otherwise specified potential NGO partners refer to certified partner organisations.



- f) Information to be provided: Single Form or Modifications requests of on-going actions.<sup>34</sup>
- g) Indicative date for receipt of the above requested information: 29 Jan 2024

#### **4.1. Operational requirements:**

##### *4.1.1. Assessment criteria:*

- 1) Relevance
  - How relevant is the proposed intervention; is it compliant with the objectives of the HIP?
  - Has a joint needs assessment been used for the proposed intervention (if existing)? How have the local partners been included in the needs assessment efforts? Have other recent and comprehensive needs assessments been used?
  - Has the proposed intervention been coordinated with other humanitarian actors and local and national actors?
- 2) Capacity and expertise (including in support to the localisation approach)
  - Does the partner, with its implementing partners, have sufficient expertise (country / region and / or technical)?
  - How does the partner contribute to developing/strengthening local capacity?
- 3) Methodology and feasibility
  - Quality of the proposed response strategy, including intervention logic / logframe, output & outcome indicators, risks, and challenges.
  - Feasibility, including security and access constraints.
  - Quality of the monitoring arrangements.
  - Quality of the proposed localisation approach, and measures taken to minimise the transfer of risks.
- 4) Coordination and relevant post-intervention elements
  - Extent to which the proposed intervention is building on ongoing local response and in coordination with other humanitarian actors and actions (including, where relevant, the use of single interoperable registries of beneficiaries).
  - Extent to which the proposed intervention contributes to resilience and sustainability, including the sustainability of locally driven responses.
- 5) Cost-effectiveness/efficiency/transparency

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<sup>34</sup> Single Forms will be submitted to DG ECHO using APPEL.

- Does the proposed intervention display an appropriate relationship between the resources to be employed, the activities to be undertaken and the objectives to be achieved?
- Is the breakdown of costs sufficiently documented/explained, including the information on percentage of funding to be implemented by local actors and the share of overhead costs transferred to them?<sup>35</sup>

In case of actions ongoing in the field, where DG ECHO is requested to fund the continuation thereof, a field visit may be conducted by DG ECHO field expert (TA) to determine the feasibility and quality of the follow-up action proposed.

No award will be made to NGO partner organisations which have not complied with their obligations concerning the submission of audited financial statements (i.e., which would not have submitted those in due time to the Commission without a proper justification) or which would appear not to offer sufficient guarantee as to their financial capacity to implement the proposed actions (in light of their liquidity and independency ratios as appearing from their latest available annual statutory accounts certified by an approved external auditor).

All awards made using EU Funds must respect the Conditionality Measures<sup>36</sup> issued under any Council Implementing Decision adopted in accordance with Article 6 of EU Regulation 2020/2092 on a general regime of conditionality for the protection of the Union budget<sup>37</sup> (“Conditionality Decision”).

The Commission hereby notifies applicants under this HIP/TA of the following Conditionality Decision (valid at the date of publication of this HIP/TA):

- **Council Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/2506 of 15 December 2022 on measures for the protection of the Union budget against breaches of the principles of the rule of law in Hungary<sup>38</sup>.**

This Conditionality Decision, in particular its Article 2.2, prohibits legal commitments under direct and

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<sup>35</sup> In accordance with the relevant section of the Single Form guidelines (section10)

<sup>36</sup> Conditionality Measures against a Concerned Entity, may, for example, include, amongst others, the requirement to: suspend payments or the implementation of the legal commitment to/with the Concerned Entity; and/or terminate the legal commitment with the Concerned Entity; and/or prohibit entering into new legal commitments with the Concerned Entity. Conditionality Decisions and Measures issued under Council Implementing Decisions may impact the implementation of grants, contributions and procurement contracts awarded, as the Commission is required to ensure the application of these Conditionality Decisions and Measures in the implementation of the EU budget via both direct and indirect management.

<sup>37</sup> Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2020/2092 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2020 on a general regime of conditionality for the protection of the Union budget OJ L 433I , 22.12.2020, p. 1–10

<sup>38</sup> OJ L 325, 20.12.2022, p. 94–109

indirect management with any public interest trust established by Hungarian Act IX of 2021<sup>39</sup>, including those entities listed in Annex I to Hungarian Act IX of 2021<sup>40</sup> and other affiliated entities maintained by them (“Concerned Entities”). The Commission will further notify when the above-mentioned Conditionality Measures are lifted.

#### *4.1.2. Specific operational guidelines and operational assessment criteria:*

This section outlines the specific operational guidelines that DG ECHO partners need to consider in the design of humanitarian operations supported by DG ECHO. It also lists and explains the assessment criteria – based on those outlined in section 4.1.1 - that DG ECHO will apply in the specific context of the HIP to which this Technical Annex relates when assessing proposals submitted in response to the related HIP.

The HIP Policy Annex should be consulted in parallel.

#### **For all country operations, the Single Form should ensure:**

- All interventions must be evidence-based and built on robust and continuous needs assessments, to enable agile response to sudden onset of needs.
- Actions must be based on a solid comprehensive all risk analysis (threats, hazards, vulnerabilities, and capacities) and adequate preparedness plan. Protection, gender, age and disability analysis should inform the response strategy.
- Interventions must respect humanitarian principles, and in particular the principle of impartiality and *avoid doing harm*.
- Mainstreaming of protection, gender, age and disability inclusion based on the comprehensive all-risks analysis, will be a pre-condition for selection. This includes considering strategies to prevent risks of Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) and Protection against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, and appropriate measures ensuring inclusion of people living with disabilities in proposed actions.
- To that end, the actions, must include independent complaints and follow-up mechanisms accessible to all beneficiaries, to allow for adjustments of projects so that the quality of assistance can meet the expectations of beneficiaries.
- DG ECHO partners should demonstrate synergies to identify common methodologies for data collection, analysis, and response. Effective and transparent coordination remains crucial.
- Humanitarian advocacy must be addressed through coordinated and evidence-based actions in all proposals.

#### **Localisation**

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<sup>39</sup> Act IX of 2021 on public interest trust foundations with a public service mission (entry into force 01/01/2023).

<sup>40</sup> Available (in Hungarian) at: <https://njt.hu/jogszabaly/2021-9-00-00>

In line with the DG ECHO guidance on **localisation**<sup>41</sup>, and unless duly justified, DG ECHO will expect that proposals are based on partnerships with local actors, including through the participation and leadership of local and national actors in the project cycle, giving them space in the governance process, allocating an appropriate share of funding to local partners. In case of proposals of similar quality and focus, DG ECHO will give priority to proposals where at least 25% of DG ECHO's contribution will be spent on activities implemented by local and national actors. DG ECHO also expects partners to provide an adequate share of overhead cost to their local implementing partners. In addition, DG ECHO will prioritise proposals where the locally led action constitutes a central element and which are designed bottom up, and where DG ECHO partners provide relevant support to local partners' response (technical training, institutional support, peer learning).

### **Education in Emergencies**

For **Education in Emergencies actions**, priority will be given to funding projects which target at least 50 % girls, unless there is a context-based justification for different targeting.

For cash in education projects, particular attention should be paid to sustainability of the interventions and, when possible, linkages to longer-term livelihood solutions.

### **Humanitarian Logistics**

Regarding **logistics (meaning the entire supply chain)**, DG ECHO will support strategic solutions such as shared and / or common services, joint procurement, etc. if their cost-efficiency and benefit in increasing effectiveness and timeliness of the response is demonstrated, in line with DG ECHO's Humanitarian Logistics Policy. DG ECHO also encourages the application of the Humanitarian Logistics Policy more widely, in particular the key considerations set out in Annex 1: Framework for Operations.

The majority of organisations' environmental footprint comes from their logistics/supply chains, and as such these offer an opportunity to minimise environmental impacts. Preference should be given to procurement, distribution, and use of environmentally sustainable items, reducing and optimising secondary and tertiary packaging, avoiding procuring single-use items, and favouring products with greater durability and high recycled content.

### **Transfer modalities**

Modality choice should be informed by a needs-based response and risk analysis, incorporating joint and timely market analysis, operational and environmental analyses. The use of cash should systematically be considered, across the variety of response mechanisms (anticipatory action, rapid response mechanisms, emergency responses, crisis modifiers, and shock-responsive social protection) funded by DG ECHO. All cash

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<sup>41</sup> Preference should be given to procurement, distribution, and use of environmentally sustainable items, reducing and optimising secondary and tertiary packaging, avoiding procuring single-use items, and favouring products with greater durability and high recycled content.

interventions should comply with [DG ECHO's cash thematic policy](#), including the sector-specific considerations in Annexe 3 of that document. In addition, programmes above EUR10 million should comply with the large-scale cash guidance note.

DG ECHO promotes a common system and/or coordinated programming approaches to reduce fragmentation and avoid duplication and parallel ways of working. This includes better operational coordination, coordinated approaches to vulnerability-based targeting, data interoperability (which respects data protection requirements) to facilitate deduplication and referrals. DG ECHO will systematically assess the cost-efficiency of different modalities, using the Total Cost to Transfer Ratio (TCTR), alongside the analysis of effectiveness. The principles laid down in the Cash Thematic Policy <sup>42</sup>, will form the basis for the assessment and selection of partners. Partners will be expected to demonstrate a satisfactory efficiency ratio (and should ensure that it is maintained throughout the action, unless otherwise approved by DG ECHO. To the extent possible and considering the operational context, partners will be assessed on their ability to work based on common vulnerability targeting criteria, single or interoperable beneficiary registries, a single payment mechanism, a common feedback mechanism and a common results framework. The large-scale cash guidance note (Annex 1 of the cash thematic policy) includes specific considerations for large-scale cash transfers: segregation of functions, cost-efficiency (including indirect costs), and full transparency on the costs to calculate the efficiency ratio.

DG ECHO promotes, wherever appropriate, a single multipurpose cash (MPC) payment to meet recurrent basic needs, through a common payment mechanism, and timely referral pathways to meet specific multi-sectoral outcomes based on a solid analysis.

DG ECHO promotes a harmonised approach under the coordination of the Cash Working Group (CWG) to define the Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) and Transfer Values (TV) for harmonised response. DG ECHO always requires justifications on how the TV is defined to adequately cover or contribute to household emergency basic needs and if it should be complemented by other relevant sectoral interventions which cannot be met through cash. Providing an additional transfer (cash or other modality) for particularly vulnerable individuals or households shall be considered.

Cash assistance should be risk informed and targeted based on socio-economic vulnerability, and the protection concerns of individuals and groups.

The sectoral and multisectoral outcomes of cash programmes should be monitored against defined objectives in a consistent way. The monitoring of MPC interventions should comply with the cross-cutting and sector-specific Grand Bargain MPC outcome indicators. Multi-sectoral market analysis and monitoring should be ensured, in real time, to inform and adapt assistance, irrespective of the modality. In contexts of high inflation and currency depreciation, partners should put in place sound trigger mechanisms to adapt assistance based on market monitoring data, and design programmes from the outset to anticipate potential inflationary shocks. DG ECHO maintains its commitment to providing cash, even in contexts of high inflation, provided that programming can be adequately adapted, in line with the [Good Practice Review on cash in inflation/depreciation](#). Whenever duly justified, to cope with market price volatility, partners are encouraged to

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<sup>42</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/thematic\\_policy\\_document\\_no\\_3\\_cash\\_transfers\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/thematic_policy_document_no_3_cash_transfers_en.pdf)

include contingencies to adapt the TV, increase coverage, to preserve household purchasing power capacity.

DG ECHO expects CWGs, under the leadership of the inter-sector/inter-cluster, and in collaboration with relevant sectoral working groups, to provide leadership on the above.

**Utilisation of cash in protection programming** must have a clear protection outcome and will not be supported unless embedded within legal assistance, case management or accompaniment, and within a wider comprehensive and/or integrated protection response.

**Applying cash in healthcare and nutrition programming** will only be considered on a case-by-case basis and if justified by in-depth assessment and analysis of the availability of healthcare in the proposed area of intervention. Potential cash application in healthcare and nutrition intervention will need to have clear healthcare and nutrition outcomes, with the application of associated indicators in the proposal.

When responding through MPC, alongside DG ECHO Sectoral Key Outcome Indicators, DG ECHO recommends the use of the Grand Bargain Cash Workstream indicators to measure the extent basic needs are met.

At Specific Objective level:

- ❖ **Protection mainstreaming** using the [guidance](#): “% of beneficiaries (disaggregated by sex, age and diversity) reporting that humanitarian assistance is delivered in a safe, accessible, accountable and participatory manner”.
- ❖ **Livelihood Coping Strategy** “% of HH no longer in Livelihood Coping Strategy Index Phase Crisis or Emergency”. (LCS) using the WFP methodology outlined in its [Essential Needs Assessment guidance \(see p20\)](#).

Given that large percentages of the MPC assistance is used to cover food needs, it is recommended to also systematically use the **Food Consumption Score (FCS)** and the **reduced Coping Strategy Index (r-CSI)**.

At result level, DG ECHO recommends the use of:

- ❖ *Percentage of households who report being able to meet their basic needs as they define and prioritise them* measured using the standardised scale (all/most/half/some/none) as per guidance provided by the Grand Bargain MPC Indicators.

Partners are also encouraged to systematically examine the distribution of expenditure within and across households, the extent to which actual expenditures align with MEB, and if a HH's total monthly expenditure is above or below the threshold of the MEB value and to which extent the TV was adequate. To this extent, the Grand Bargain has developed two indicators. Option 1: “*Percentage of households with total monthly expenditure which exceeds the MEB*”. Option 2: “*Total monthly expenditures by sector relative to MEB sectoral components/amounts*”

### **Climate change adaptation and environmental considerations**

All partners are expected to include context-specific measures to reduce the environmental footprint of the proposed actions, while preserving their effectiveness, in compliance with the minimum environmental requirements set out in DG ECHO's Guidance on the

operationalisation of the Minimum Environmental Requirements and Recommendations for EU-funded humanitarian aid operations<sup>43</sup>.

The minimum environmental requirements should be applied through a ‘mainstreaming’ approach with environmental impacts mitigated across sectors, projects and programmes with the aim to consider the environment holistically when designing and implementing actions. The requirements will apply to all sectors with special attention on mitigating the negative environmental impacts in protracted, chronic situations.

### **Sector-Specific Priorities**

#### **Strengthening early response capacity**

(1) Emergency/Rapid Response Mechanisms (ERM/RRM) as standalone actions:

Emergency/Rapid Response Mechanisms (ERMs/RRMs) are stand-alone actions pooling capacities of different partners for improved and more coordinated preparedness and early response, guided by early warning and contingency plans. ERMs/RRMs are designed to provide initial lifesaving multipurpose assistance when other response mechanisms are not yet in place. ERMs/RRMs are mostly used for rapid onset crises. For slow onset crises, objective indicators with thresholds for engagement / disengagement should be defined in coordination with other stakeholders including the State Authorities.

(2) Flexibility embedded into the actions:

Whenever relevant, partners should introduce flexibility to mobilise resources from on-going actions and swiftly respond to and/or act in advance of any new emerging shocks occurring and/or forecasted in the area of their operations (a crisis within a crisis). Flexibility measures can be triggered to provide initial lifesaving multipurpose response in the aftermath of a rapid onset crisis, as well as to act in advance of an imminent shock; the three main scenarios are: i) to fill the time gap while waiting for additional resources; ii) to respond to small scale humanitarian needs which would otherwise remain unattended; iii) to provide assistance in advance of an imminent shock to prevent or reduce its acute humanitarian impact, according to a pre-agreed plan with defined triggers and actions.

The application of flexibility measures should be based on a multi-risk analysis and the development of worst and most likely scenarios. Partners should develop a detailed plan considering prepositioning of stocks, surge staff, triggers, and sectors of intervention.

ERM/RRM and flexibility measures are complementary and do not exclude each-other; flexibility measures enable to act in advance and to bridge the time gap between the shock and the time needed to mobilize ad-hoc resources through the ERM/RRM or additional funding. Timeliness of response is a key element for effectiveness of both flexibility measures and ERM/RRM. Partners should adopt indicators to measure the time required to deliver the first assistance (e.g., lifesaving response for xxx persons, and/or need assessment within xxx days from the displacement/disaster/alert/exceeded triggers).]

(3) European Humanitarian Response Capacity (EHRC):

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<sup>43</sup> [https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/humanitarian-aid/climate-change-and-environment\\_en](https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/humanitarian-aid/climate-change-and-environment_en)

DG ECHO can decide on the activation of the EHRC should operational and logistical gaps emerge. The use of the EHRC support is described in the relevant EHRC Humanitarian Implementation Plan and its Technical Annex.

Under this HIP, DG ECHO can propose directly to one or more partners to receive and be in charge of the distribution of emergency relief items or hosting an EHRC humanitarian expertise. The choice of the partner will be taken by DG ECHO based on a set of criteria, such as presence in the affected area, and experience. The EHRC inputs will be part of the partner's response action and will, where relevant, be included in existing grant agreements.

(4) Disaster Preparedness actions:

During the last years, an increasing number of countries and regions have been implementing targeted Disaster Preparedness actions, stretching the limited resources assigned to Disaster Preparedness to the maximum. In order to adapt to this increased demand in Disaster Preparedness, while ensuring an efficient use of the limited funds, and with the recommendation for actions to have an initial duration of 24 months, starting from 2024 the Disaster Preparedness budget line will be allocated on a biennial basis. This means that a given country/region will receive Disaster Preparedness funding every two years, unless exceptional circumstances would require otherwise. Two-year allocations will allow more predictability and sustainability of the DP strategy in the relevant countries/regions, with expected higher impact and effectiveness of its objectives.

In order to ensure a smooth transition from the previous annual allocation of funds to the current biennial frequency, a limited envelope has been established in 2024 to facilitate the shift between modalities and address specific gaps in some countries impacted by the transition. These “bridge funds” will be typically allocated for the extension of ongoing actions that, based on strategic and programmatic considerations, are considered eligible for a top up to ensure expected objectives are met, and to mitigate any identified gaps resulting from the shift to the new allocation frequency. This measure will be applied only in 2024 to avert discontinuity and it is not meant to be repeated in 2025.

### **Humanitarian Food Assistance**

Improving availability of and accessibility to food shall be considered in the contexts of displaced populations and people affected by both human and natural hazard induced disasters. As needs are multiple, food assistance shall be part of a basic needs approach. In the context of global food and basic commodities crisis, needs and future risks shall be identified through a combination of food security analysis and multi-disciplinary multi-level early warning systems (e.g climate outlook, price trends, population movement tracking) so to allow to prepare for and act early.

Unconditional cash is the default modality for meeting food / basic needs. Restricted cash assistance might be considered using vouchers, if specifically designed to facilitate access to fresh foods and if it makes sense from a cost-efficiency and effectiveness standpoint, can ensure better food diversity outcomes than other modalities, and hence reinforce the nutrition outcomes of food assistance.

Labour intensive conditionalities (Cash for Work/Food for Work) are never acceptable if the purpose of the assistance is to meet food and basic needs.



Despite challenges of the global inflation of food and basic commodities, DG ECHO renews its commitment to using cash for food assistance. To continue to maintain cost-efficiency and meet outcomes in contexts of high inflation and currency depreciation, partners should design from the outset of the Action Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to adapt TV and frequency to the price of the food basket, including: i) increase frequency, number of items and coverage of market monitoring and develop modalities to share analysis; ii) analysis of impact of inflation on different modalities; iii) monitoring of official and parallel exchange rates; iv) change frequency and number of distribution to preserve the purchasing power of TV; v) switch from unrestricted cash assistance to either value vouchers, commodity vouchers or in-kind assistance, or a combination thereof. None of these options are mutually exclusive and their feasibility also depends on regulatory environment.

Under the lead of the CWG and Food Security Cluster/Working Group, partners are expected to collectively agree on triggers and share approaches on the above.

Partners are expected to consider minimum environmental arrangements adapted to the context (urban/rural, recent/protracted crisis) to reduce the environmental footprint of food assistance, while preserving its effectiveness: e.g: i) Cooking stoves that are energy-efficient and reduce in-door air pollution; ii) Alternative fuels for cooking that reduce the impact on forests and natural resources; iii) Food varieties with shorter cooking time; iv) Locally-purchased and sustainably-produced food and food supplements vs international procurement; v) Reduced use of plastic for packaging; vi) Farmers' markets; vii) Livelihoods interventions to prevent negative coping mechanisms (e.g. cutting wood for sale) and/or contributing to the protection against extreme weather events.

### **Zoonotic diseases and new emerging communicable diseases with epidemic and pandemic potential.**

Asia is prone to the emergence of zoonotic diseases and of diseases caused by new variant viral strains. Diseases that through their epidemic potential pose threats not only to the communities and countries of origin, but also regionally and even globally. Such communicable diseases emerge regularly, as exemplified by seasonal influenza and by the COVID-19 pandemic, fuelled by population density, an intense human-animal interface, and by climatic favourable conditions, including higher environmental temperatures as seen with ongoing global climate changes. Anticipating that such favourable conditions and events will increase possibly significantly in the years to come, it is pertinent that we intensify preventative and response efforts aimed at mitigating the impacts of such events. Reducing transmission of pathogens from animals to humans, strengthening of early warning systems, reinforcing rapid response instruments, and investment in the generation of effective and safe medicines and vaccines, are crucial strategic elements in the outlining of epidemic preparedness and response mechanisms that effectively address the threats associated with new emerging communicable diseases.

### **Nexus: Humanitarian Development Peace**

DG ECHO strives to achieve more coherent and complementary planning, programming and financing, through increased cooperation and coordination between humanitarian, development and peace actors. A shared analysis of risks, needs, vulnerabilities, dynamics

and cross-shared information on field realities is the basis of DG ECHO's programming and is systematically developed and updated. In order to achieve the most effective use of resources, DG INTPA and DG ECHO multiply their efforts to promote rationalisation and operational coordination, within our own institutions and with other donors and partners, e.g. UN, INGOs and the World Bank. DG ECHO will ensure that Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) policies work together while protecting our mandate, principles and perception. Actions, when applicable and pertinent, should focus on operationalising the HDP nexus, in particular the nexus between operations in the realm of humanitarian and development funding. Partners should display the (potential) complementarity of the proposed action.

### **Environmental Requirements**

The minimum environmental requirements should be applied through a 'mainstreaming' approach with environmental impacts mitigated across sectors, projects and programs and therefore not implemented as stand-alone or parallel actions to the response activities with the aim to consider the environment holistically when designing and implementing actions. The requirements will apply to all sectors with special attention on mitigating the negative environmental impacts in protracted, chronic situations; responses linked to humanitarian settlements or sites and activities that cause natural resource depletion, including deforestation; exploitation of water sources; air/water/land pollution (e.g., uncontrolled waste disposal linked to humanitarian settlements/sites as well as to communal facilities such as schools, health centres and distribution centres). WASH and Shelter & Settlements programming carry one of the highest risks of negative environmental impacts among humanitarian activities, while at the same time representing an opportunity to minimise potential environmental impacts, (which should be mitigated from the onset) by thorough assessments/screenings and robust environmental management.

The environment and disasters are inherently linked and therefore integrating environmental considerations in the disaster risk reduction and preparedness frameworks and response tools at local and regional levels should be considered to improve their efficacy with the aim to minimising hazards and increase the resilience of the local communities. Environmental degradation affects natural processes, increases vulnerability, lessens overall resilience, and challenges traditional coping strategies. The DP trainings, workshops and other tools should therefore integrate environmental screenings, risk-mitigation exercises and/or environmental aspects relevant for a specific context and needs, especially the ones that directly aggravate disaster risk aspects (e.g., deforestation of slopes leading to an increased landslide hazard, removal of mangroves increasing the damage caused by storm surges, solid waste accumulation in drainage systems increasing flooding risks, etc.).

## **ALLOCATION ROUND 1 AFGHANISTAN**

**Prioritisation - Actions in remote hard to reach areas** will be prioritised when based on needs assessment and providing the partner demonstrates capacity to implement and play an active role in information sharing and other coordination mechanisms at field level. Particular attention is paid to the situation evolving in the context of forced returnees from

Pakistan, as stipulate in the HIP. **Support** logistics, access, safety, and security are understood to be **essential to proper management of safe and accountable implementation** in Afghanistan. DG ECHO will support efficient use of these resources and address gaps in humanitarian infrastructure. Additional support lines such as parallel supply routes and/or buffer stocks including storage will be considered where their use in the reach of most vulnerable populations and in line with Do No Harm practices is demonstrated soundly.

**Requirements for all actions (regardless of the sectors of intervention)** – The following elements are **prerequisites for funding** to be considered, and must be demonstrated in every proposal – in the eSF and/or its annexes:

- i. **Integration of protection mainstreaming** in all aspects of the action; use of the DG ECHO Protection Mainstreaming Key Outcome Indicator (PM KOI);
- ii. Operationalisation of: **accountability to affected populations; gender, age and disability** sensitivity, and **PSEA-H** protocols.
- iii. **Timely localised needs assessments** that demonstrate **operational capacity** to respond to **identified needs in target locations**.
- iv. Relevant **technical, and operational presence** in country and in the targeted areas.
- v. **Detailed targeting approach** specifying how inclusiveness will be reflected and discrimination avoided e.g., right approach for the affected group with the tailored response.
- vi. Risks informed analysis and assessment, reflecting **seasonality**, climate change, recurrent outbreaks, agricultural and educational calendar etc.; and winterization **plans** (extended to winter 2025 when relevant).
- vii. **Alignment with relevant clusters/working groups/inter-cluster strategies and plans**; and demonstrated active role in both **decentralised and centralised coordination structures**.
- viii. **Negotiation capacity**: The use of standardized/common multi-sectoral needs assessment tools should be enhanced, should be grounded in comprehensive **assessments at community level** to be accompanied by a real time and proactive **engagement protocols with stakeholders** operationalising humanitarian principles.
- ix. The **choice of the intervention modality** (cash, vouchers, in-kind, service provision) must be informed and **justified by a robust response analysis** reflecting the context, expected results and feasibility to deliver assistance safely.

Principled humanitarian engagement and needs-based interventions are central to the DG ECHO response, in line with the **guiding principles agreed by donors on 14 February 2023**, at the Senior Officials Meeting hosted by the DG ECHO.

The principles were agreed given the dilemma between avoiding a deterioration of the humanitarian situation while providing a clear reaction to the discriminatory Taliban decrees. Women are absolutely central to humanitarian operations. Unless they are able to participate in aid delivery in Afghanistan, humanitarian organizations will be unable to reach the country's most vulnerable people. Meaningful participation by female humanitarian personnel is the only way to ensure that women beneficiaries actually receive or access the aid provided.

**Multi-sector rapid response to sudden onset crises** - DG ECHO aims at strengthening rapid response to any type of “new crisis/shock” in Afghanistan (natural-induced hazards,

epidemics, human-induced – including but not limited to/ new displacement). Referral mechanisms and protection elements should be strengthened from the initial assessment stage. The use of standardized/common multi-sectoral needs assessment tools should be enhanced.

**Flexibility should be embedded into proposed actions to strengthen preparedness for early response capacity:** partners are encouraged to integrate DG ECHO Crisis Modifier<sup>44</sup> in their actions, based on their areas and sectors of expertise. The probability/scenarios of sudden onset crises must be determined based on a comprehensive risk-informed analysis demonstrated with thresholds, scenarios and corresponding monitoring in proposals. Humanitarian preparedness prepositioning and stockpiling can be considered from the perspective of resource pooling or specifically localized in remote/isolated areas. Various modalities of intervention can be used (in cash, in kind, logistical) depending on community preferences and timeliness of the response. For cash-based modalities, assessment of market functionality will be essential.

#### **Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH):**

- **Pillar one:** Underserved and remote areas focusing on population groups for whom lack of sustainable access to sufficient and good quality water and sanitation may lead to life-threatening consequences and who adopted risky coping mechanisms. Targeting will include risk analysis and response should present the foreseen designs, bills of quantities and human resources skills dedicated to its delivery.
- **Pillar two:** Natural-hazards induced disasters (flood, earthquake) response which will include support to WASH items prepositioning and deployment capacity. Support to core pipelines and deployment contingencies (capacity building, crisis modifier) are seen as key response modalities.
- **Pillar three:** High fatality rate WASH-related infections outbreaks response will be integrated within the emergency health response aiming at preventing the spread of the disease through a Case Area Targeted Intervention (CATI) methodology.
- **Pillar four:** WASH sector capacity strengthening will be considered prioritising coordination platforms to ensure the consistency, the relevancy and the liability of data collection, treatment and analysis aiming at documenting sector coverage, gaps & needs predictability. Support to cholera response capacity building is considered as relevant provided it is based on the CATI methodology and provided through proper field simulation exercises.

Due to its structural nature, drought cannot be a standalone entry point for ECHO supported WASH interventions. It can nevertheless complement other sectors interventions (such as Health, Education in Emergencies).

#### **Shelter and Settlements:**

- **Pillar one: Natural-hazards induced disasters (flood, earthquake) response which** will include seasonality-adapted support to emergency shelter and housing items

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<sup>44</sup> Annex 2 of the DG ECHO Disaster Preparedness Guidance Note (2021) [https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2022-02/dg\\_echo\\_guidance\\_note\\_-\\_disaster\\_preparedness\\_en.pdf](https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2022-02/dg_echo_guidance_note_-_disaster_preparedness_en.pdf)

prepositioning and deployment capacity. Support to core pipelines and deployment contingencies (capacity building, crisis modifier) are seen as key response modalities.

- **Pillar two:** Shelter sector capacity strengthening through the support to the diversification of know-how and techniques among humanitarian actors that includes (but not limited to) the use of local design and the upgrading of emergency shelter for cold winters.

**Protection:** DG ECHO will prioritise activities that facilitate **meaningful access, safe and dignified programming**, needs based activities at community level. Submissions should reflect holistic responses including prevention and mitigation of protection risks and violations (e.g., displacement, violence, sexual exploitation, or abuse) as part of a package of response activities to prioritise vulnerable groups in needs of urgent response whilst capitalising on any opportunities to prevent further cases in real time. All actions should be grounded in a comprehensive analysis of protection risks, and essential mapping (validated by Protection or relevant sub-clusters) of protection service providers to inform response analysis. Integrated designs should include as a minimum a package of protection led **screening and referrals, and at least two sectors of service delivery** delivered at the same time to an individual/community i.e., a complimentary sector (e.g., WASH, Health, Education in Emergency, Nutrition). Integrated or standalone on proposals must include a package of actions that encompass screening of protection cases, **all stages of case management**, focus on high-risk cases and their criteria, inclusiveness mechanisms, and coordination. Prevention activities must be structured, in line with international standards and with clearly articulated intentional protection outcomes. Actions can include protection monitoring, legal assistance/Housing Land and Property rights, explosive ordinance risks (Explosive Ordinance Risk Education, non-technical surveys, clearance, victim assistance). DG ECHO's response to returns of displaced populations will be contextualised, and guided by the humanitarian principles, a protection approach, and a vulnerability focus.

**Education in Emergencies (EiE):** Any out of school child is a priority where they face barriers to access quality learning. Actions should be needs driven based on primary assessments including specific child protection needs analysis and responses. Appropriate accelerated education measures should be integrated within project designs, aligned to Conflict Sensitive Education principles grounded in an integrated education and **child protection** response i.e., child safeguarding in any location used for education, ensuring all adults present are accountable to a code of conduct, the provision of Psychological First Aid and Psychosocial Support as learning and teaching aid for students and teachers, and referral and responses to child protection needs of learners, in line with both DG ECHO MHPSS global and country level guidelines. Training actions for any teacher can include Community Based Education Policy minimum standards for literacy to teach grade 1-3, conflict or high stress pedagogic methods etc. Teachers and students should be provided with the relevant materials and skills to progressively learn towards a realistic and meaningful outcome. Learning outcomes and transition plans to full time schools must be clearly articulated (i.e., enrolment is **not** a sufficient outcome). Follow-up strategies to mitigate absenteeism and drop-out once students are transitioned are essential. Capacitation of hub schools (school improvement plans) are feasible where they are directly linked with supporting the transition and retention of students transferred from Community Based Education Classes. This activity should be designed and implemented

in coordination with hub schools. Modalities should reinforce inclusion strategies to prioritise any excluded group (e.g., children who cannot access without proper sanitation facilities; notably considering how to include any groups who have yet to begin or continue their education). DG ECHO is flexible in terms of national NGOs acting as implementing partners, but the process of partners' selection should be transparent, independent, and based on a clear due diligence. Further, the financial stewardship should remain with the DG ECHO principal partner.

**Food assistance & livelihoods protection:** Targeting for food assistance (in-kind or cash-based) shall be based on localised risk profiling and contingency plans and prioritise populations facing the most acute levels of food insecurity (IPC 3 and above, with priority to IPC 5, IPC 4 and female/child headed households), aiming at avoiding life-threatening effects and consequences of food insecurity and malnutrition, including worsening of extreme coping strategies and/or displacement. DG ECHO will further prioritise prepositioning of food assistance under winterisation. The preferred modality for food assistance is cash (whenever relevant and possible) to respond to food needs as part of basic needs approach where food needs are joined with other basic needs of the households. In-kind assistance will remain relevant in many situations. DG ECHO will also consider emergency livelihood protection and restorative actions, including critical agricultural and livestock assets, with a particular focus on vulnerable farmers and pastoralists about to abandon their agropastoral livelihoods and migrate to urban areas. Seasonality and agropastoral calendars should guide the choice of intervention to ensure effective and timely assistance. Type, duration, amount, and modality of the assistance shall be coordinated and harmonised among actors and based on markets assessments, land access and protection mainstreaming. Emergency livelihood-support interventions may include (examples, not limited to): i) livestock support (feeds, vaccination, and animal husbandry); and ii) agricultural inputs to vulnerable farmers; iii) rehabilitation and reclamation of existing assets. **Labour intensive conditionalities (CfW/FfW) are never accepted by DG ECHO if the assistance is intended to meet food and basic needs;** “soft” conditionalities might be considered when intended to achieve specific sectoral outcomes and the equity of the proposed activity is well defended.

**Health and Nutrition:** Priority will be given to projects which ensure continuity to access in health care, from lifesaving and emergency response to critical primary health care including a holistic approach that addresses sudden shocks and their consequences, building on a resilience approach. Immediate life and quality of life-saving actions should include a comprehensive package of support including where relevant surgery, rehabilitation, malnutrition screening and management, immunisation, maternal and infant healthcare, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) and sexual and reproductive healthcare. Comprehensive responses are assumed to build on community-based mobilization, surveillance, chain supplies and reinforcement of **functional referral pathways (complicated malnutrition caseloads, psychiatric needs, physiotherapy and rehabilitation, etc.)**. Services may be delivered via any modality once demonstrated to be best suited in terms of safe, and equitable access for the population. Approaches should be **coordinated within the broader national healthcare system**. Outreach services implemented through mobile modalities must be designed as part of a transition period with defined timeframes, aiming to establish sustained and comprehensive healthcare services through development of direct service delivery, capacity building, rehabilitation, minor reconstruction. Actions should consider how to strategically avoid pull factors away

from quality functioning services. Hybrid outreach services are preferred for communities without any other means of access to healthcare and mobile outreach immediately following a crisis where healthcare physical infrastructure has been impaired or destroyed with the aim to avoid disrupted services following a humanitarian crisis. All actions should seek to trigger health seeking behaviours using for example active referrals to the health infrastructure. Pre-positioning and essential supplies and commodities focusing on nutrition, trauma, and epidemic kits can be supported by DG ECHO.

As regards multi-purpose cash assistance (MPCA), the use of the services by legally registered cash transfer agents in Afghanistan can be approved as eligible expenditure in the framework of DG ECHO grant or contribution agreements (including costs extension) to be signed within 12 months as of the date of publication of this HIP TA, and with the application of a maximum of 5% of each transferred through the concerned cash transfer agent, in line with the principles of reasonable and justified cost and of sound financial management, in particular regarding economy and efficiency. At the latest in the final report, the Partner shall provide a justification for the use of such cash transfer agents as a temporary and last resort option as well as information as to internal control measures in place to mitigate the risks associated with the use of such agents, such as risk of diversion of funds to persons or entities designated under the EU sanctions or to entities engaged in illicit activities. Beyond cash programmes, such agents can also be used under the same conditions as above where cash transfers are necessary on a last resort basis to meet partners' organisational and operational needs (such as paying staff or suppliers).

## **ALLOCATION ROUND 2 PAKISTAN**

**Access:** DG ECHO Potential partners will be required to have a Memorandum of Understanding with the Government of Pakistan. For Partners working for the welfare of Afghans regardless of their status, the 'Allowed to Work' status is required. All Partners are recommended to provide an outline of an access strategy in Annex, which shall include an analysis of access constraints and mitigation measures proposed.

**Accountability to affected persons (AAP) and synergies:** Partner assessments and response strategies need to demonstrate solid methodologies ensuring AAP throughout the project cycle. While maintaining the integrity of principled humanitarian actions, partners are strongly encouraged to coordinate with government and development stakeholders to seek synergies in support of mid-/long terms strategies.

**Protection:** Protection remains central to all programmes. Strengthening protection services including referral pathways as well as access to justice and legal assistance for Afghans. Prevention of and response to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), child protection and case management will remain a key priority. Attention should also be paid to detention, arbitrary arrests, refoulement, border monitoring, protection monitoring of Afghans and linked to joint advocacy to safeguard the protection space for Afghans regardless of their status in country as well as issuance of key documents (birth certificate, driving licenses, etc) as envisioned under the Solution Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SSAR) workplan for Pakistan.

**Health and Nutrition:** With a focus on refugee hosting areas, the strategy foresees the continued access to integrated primary health care and nutrition services for both Afghans

and host population. Support to the provision of health services in refugee settlements will remain a priority, when and if handover to Government-led services is not yet operationally feasible. Hereto, Partners are requested to submit a joint up rationale which includes mapping of services by Partners or else, combined with a joint health strategy.

**Education in Emergencies (EiE):** Access to education for Afghan children will remain a key priority. DG ECHO's support will target out-of-school children (OOSC) and children already enrolled in formal education but at risk of dropping out with the aim to promote their (re)integration, attendance, and retention in formal education, while ensuring a safe and effective access to schools. Partners must propose tailored Non-Formal Education (NFE) activities which are adapted to each child specific learning and academic needs to provide the most relevant pathways (in terms of type and duration of the support) to enter, re-enter or stay in the formal education system, while also focusing on ensuring effective quality learning outcomes. EiE actions should encompass the objectives of access to learning, ensuring quality learning and ensuring a protective learning environment. EiE proposals are expected to integrate child protection activities (case identification, case management, PSS, referrals, etc.) either in the form of direct service delivery or through referral to specialised services. Partners are encouraged to consider innovative and sustainable learning frameworks in their design and response strategies and adhering to DG ECHO's Thematic policy on Education in Emergencies.

**Disaster Preparedness:** Building on the experience and previous investments undertaken in 2022 and 2023 under the dedicated DP Budget Line on institutionalizing multi-hazard approaches for risk-informed preparedness, the targeted 2024 DP strategy is to strengthen preparedness for and (anticipatory/forecast based) early action that are integrated in contingency plans and/or existing Government of Pakistan social protection systems.

Hereto 3 operational priorities are to be considered:

- 1) **Coordination & capacity building:** Influencing the definition of evidence-based training curricula, manuals, guidelines for the Pakistan Administrative Service and the Provincial Administrative Service of targeted provinces with regards to delineation of roles, functions and technical competency, that lead to strengthened inter-departmental coordination to detect earlier and respond faster, based on adopted EWS and contingency plans, should be fostered.
- 2) **Inter-operability and adaptive, flexible social protection systems:** More efficient response to be informed by layered, inter-linked, real-time data, which combines hydro-meteorological and socio-economic vulnerability, so that disaster triggers are integrated inter-departmentally within (existing) governmental systems. Investment in targeted preparedness interventions such as strengthening the inter-operability of departmental institutions' tools and systems, and adaptivity/flexibility of social protection systems of the Government of Pakistan, that build on multi-hazard risks analysis combined with socio-economic vulnerability, remains critical. This would ultimately contribute to achieve better preparedness and (anticipatory/forecast based) early action.
- 3) **Preparedness for humanitarian cash:** Amid escalating economic hardships and multi-faceted effects of increasing inflation, combined with climate and natural-hazards induced disasters, those most vulnerable are both in need and at risk. A no-regrets strategy focusing on preparedness for cash to meet basic needs should



be proposed by Partners to address cascading risks accordingly. Hereto, Partners are expected to integrate preparedness for cash which is cognizant of risk analysis, integrated with Early Warning Systems/SoPs and a dynamic definition of vulnerability-based targeting. Multi-sectoral market analysis and monitoring should be ensured in real time to define triggers, parameters, inform and adapt assistance in order to maintain overall programme efficiency and effectiveness. Priority will be given to proposals that ensure a tailored, joined up dynamic vulnerability targeting system and define a simplified/unified model including financial service providers so for the system to act early and allow for cash preparedness pathways that could be gradually taken over by district/provincial level stakeholders. Nexus consideration should be always explained in details by Partners, noting that the foreseen strategy is intended to be complementary to existing social protection systems.

Please note Pillar 1 & 2 of above-mentioned activity / component should be proposed by detailing how they aim to tackle relevant gaps and bottlenecks, so that these investments can be owned, replicated, and sustained financially by the Government of Pakistan. Substitutive approaches and/or activities, as well as those not sufficiently detailed as above in proposals, will not be considered as eligible. Partners are recommended to ensure joined-up analysis and harmonized models inclusive of all relevant stakeholders and partners, fostering a humanitarian-development nexus.

Geographic targeting for **Pillar 1 and 2 priority** will focus on consolidating the work undertaken to date in Sindh. **Whilst Pillar 3**, will focus on the most vulnerable districts in Balochistan and northern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Chitral) that are characterised by multi-layered risks (food insecurity, nutrition, climate and natural hazard induced disasters, conflict and fragility as well as are impacted by inflation).

### **ALLOCATION ROUND 3 IRAN**

DG ECHO's operational strategy will continue to focus on the most vulnerable protracted caseload as well as of and response to SGBV and child protection will likewise be a key priority. **Protection** and basic services including advocacy on the protection space for new refugee influxes are strongly encouraged.

**Health/Nutrition:** Priority will be given to health interventions that enable access to Primary Health Care system (PHC) for vulnerable Afghans and host communities in refugee hosting areas. DG ECHO will not support the premiums for registered Afghan refugees to access the national health insurance scheme. However, support measures to assist the most vulnerable refugees that are not eligible for the national health insurance scheme or are unable to afford medical treatment will be considered.

**Basic Needs:** Cognizant of the impact of the current economic situation on refugees, integrated multi-sectoral or cross-sectoral approaches that aim at meeting basic needs of Afghans will be pursued. Multi-purpose cash transfers (MPCT) to meet the basic needs of the most vulnerable Afghans in complementarity with referral to services and protection, is favoured. MPCT shall be coordinated by the cash working group (CWG). Given the

high inflation and currency depreciation in Iran, partners shall continuously monitor the cost of the Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) and market accessibility to proactively adjust the value and periodicity of the cash transfer and adapt the assistance to the evolving context.

**Education in Emergencies (EiE):** Access to education for Afghan children remains a key priority. DG ECHO will support education activities that assist vulnerable refugees to enter, re-enter and be retained in formal education (FE). This may involve non-formal education (NFE) to provide pathways for children to transition into formal education, or support to children to directly enter and be retained in FE (including remedial education). Appropriate accelerated education measures<sup>43</sup> must be part of the strategy. EiE actions should encompass the objectives of access to learning, ensuring quality learning and ensuring a protective learning environment. EiE proposals are expected to integrate child protection activities (case identification, case management, PSS, referrals, etc.) either in the form of direct service delivery or through referral to specialised services. When protection activities are proposed towards an education outcome, the relation between education and protection must be clearly explained, starting from a sound intervention logic, which includes demonstrated effort towards sustained educational participation and quality learning outcomes.

Cash for education will only be considered based on sound, contextualised technical analysis, coordination with relevant working groups, consideration of avoid doing harm, and effective referral to livelihoods and/or other assurance of sustained educational participation with phase-out.

**Disaster Preparedness:** Partners are strongly encouraged to ensure disaster preparedness mainstreaming in all humanitarian actions.

## **ALLOCATION ROUND 4 REGIONAL**

The funding envelope covers human-induced disasters like refugee crises affecting multiple countries. To qualify, partners will have to demonstrate operational capacity, capabilities and presence in more than one country. Multi-sectoral operations informed by, and demonstrating cross border dynamics and inter-linkages, must be proposed. Priority will be given to common response frameworks and strategies in line with ECHO policies. Proposals should specify detailed breakdown of allocations between different countries and sectors. Prioritised will be multi-country actions in response to forced expulsions in the region, in particularly focusing on Iran and Pakistan.

**Specifically for Central Asia,** in light of the Russian war of aggression on Ukraine, and the regional implications of the Afghan crises, and the risk of further cross border conflict (i.e. Tajikistan/Kyrgyzstan), combined with the rather weak protection environment for refugees and asylum seekers and the lack of reception capacity and protection willingness; protection monitoring (IDPs, refugees or other types of large-scale movements) and building reception and protection capacities are deemed highly relevant areas of focus.

Iran faces intensifying climate change challenges, alongside multiple human and as well natural hazards induced risks. The overlap between disasters, conflict and fragile situations further compounds pre-existing vulnerability and risks. Building on earlier targeted DG ECHO Disaster Preparedness investments, the financing envelope should ensure the definition of a no-regrets strategy, to prepare for and respond to sudden onset shocks.