

## TECHNICAL ANNEX

### NORTH AFRICA

#### 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

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<sup>1</sup> Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO)

<sup>2</sup> Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO)

## 2. FINANCIAL INFO

Indicative Allocation<sup>3</sup>: EUR 18 000 000 of which an indicative amount of EUR 2 150 000 for Education in Emergencies.

### Programmatic Partnerships:

Programmatic Partnerships have been launched in 2023 with a limited number of partners. A maximum amount of EUR 5 000 000 will be dedicated to ongoing Programmatic Partnerships in 2024. New Programmatic Partnerships will not be considered under this HIP<sup>4</sup>.

Indicative breakdown per Actions as per Worldwide Decision (in euros)<sup>5</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
ALGERIA	9 000 000				9 000 000
EGYPT	7 000 000				7 000 000
REGIONAL	2 000 000				2 000 000
<b>TOTAL</b>					<b>18 000 000</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 it to be carried out. In such a case, justification must be provided in the Single Form (section 10.4)<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>3</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>4</sup> More information can be found in the 'Guidance to Partners – DG ECHO Programmatic partnerships 2023' <https://www.dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu/programmatic-partnership/programmatic-partnership>

<sup>5</sup> For flexibility and fast responsiveness purposes, this breakdown can be adjusted within certain limits based on newly arising needs.

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

## b) Financial support to third parties (implementing partners)

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.

## c) Alternative arrangements

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.

## d) 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 Programmatic Partnerships<sup>7</sup>

Funding under this HIP may be used to finance actions implemented in the framework of multi-annual strategies (Programmatic Partnerships), as and when provided for in the HIP. Programmatic Partnerships can be at country, multi-country or regional level. If multi-country/regional, the proposals should specify the breakdown between the different country allocations.

## f) Regional and multi-country actions (non-Programmatic Partnerships)

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<sup>7</sup> See the dedicated [guidance](#) on Programmatic Partnerships.

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Regional/multi-country actions can be supported under this HIP (and where relevant in conjunction with other HIPs<sup>8</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.

#### 4. ADMINISTRATIVE INFO

##### **Allocation round 1 ALGERIA (The Sahrawi crisis)**

- a) Indicative amount: up to EUR 9 000 000.
- b) Costs will be eligible from 01/01/2024.
- c) 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 through 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).
- d) Potential partners<sup>11</sup>: All DG ECHO Partners.
- e) Information to be provided: Single Form or Modification Requests of on-going actions<sup>12</sup>
- f) Indicative date for receipt of the above requested information: by 31/01/ 2024<sup>13</sup>.

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<sup>8</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.

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

<sup>12</sup> Single Forms will be submitted to DG ECHO using APPEL.

<sup>13</sup> The Commission reserves the right to consider Single Forms transmitted after this date, especially in case certain needs/ priorities are not covered by the received Single Forms.

**Allocation round 2 EGYPT (the Syrian and sub-Saharan refugees) and the REGIONAL PROGRAMMES related to protection needs in North Africa**

- a) Indicative amounts: up to EUR 5 000 000 for Egypt and 2 000 000 for the regional programmes.
- b) Costs will be eligible from 01/01/2024<sup>6</sup>.
- c) The initial duration for the Action may be up to 24 months, including for Actions on Disaster Preparedness. Follow-up actions, which continue/extend ongoing operations financed under the 2021-2027 Multi annual Financial Framework, can be submitted as modification requests for the ongoing action with a time extension of up to 24 months and a total duration of the modified action of up to 48 months. The same approach may also be used to the extent appropriate in furtherance of any multiannual strategies provided for by the HIP (see point 3e)<sup>7</sup>. Education in Emergencies actions should have an initial duration of at least 24 months unless there is a need- or context-based justification for a shorter duration.
- d) Potential partners<sup>8</sup>: All DG ECHO Partners.
- e) Information to be provided: Single Form or Modifications requests of on-going actions<sup>9</sup>.
- f) Indicative date for receipt of the above requested information: by 15/02/2024<sup>10</sup>.

**Allocation round 3 EGYPT (Refugees)**

- a) Indicative amounts: up to EUR 2 000 000 for Egypt.
- b) Costs will be eligible from 01/01/2024<sup>6</sup>.
- c) The initial duration for the Action may be up to 24 months, including for Actions on Disaster Preparedness. Follow-up actions, which continue/extend ongoing operations financed under the 2021-2027 Multi annual Financial Framework, can be submitted as modification requests for the ongoing action with a time extension of up to 24 months and a total duration of the modified action of up to 48 months. Education in Emergencies actions should have an initial duration of at least 24 months unless there is a need- or context-based justification for a shorter duration.
- d) Description of the humanitarian aid interventions related to this assessment round:
  - Priority 1*: immediate humanitarian response to basic needs through multi-purpose cash assistance
  - Priority 2*: reinforce Education in Emergencies efforts.
- e) Potential partners<sup>8</sup>:
  - Priority 1*: UNHCR as international mandated agency for refugees already contracted for multi-purpose cash assistance.
  - Priority 2*: UNICEF as international mandated agency for education which was put on a reserve list in the first allocation round and which has immediate operational capacity in the above-mentioned priority sector.

- f) Information to be provided: Single Form or Modifications requests of ongoing actions<sup>9</sup>.
- g) Indicative date for receipt of the above requested information: by 24/05/2024<sup>10</sup>.

#### **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
  - 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>14</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.

In case of a Programmatic Partnership, the proposed action shall be assessed under the same criteria as listed above. However, a Programmatic Partnership proposal must also demonstrate a clear added value (e.g. efficiency gains; longer term outcomes, scaling up of innovative approaches; contribution to a specific policy; etc.). See dedicated guidance to partners for more details.

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>15</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>16</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>17</sup>.**

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

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<sup>14</sup> In accordance with the relevant section of the Single Form guidelines (section10)

<sup>15</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>16</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>17</sup> OJ L 325, 20.12.2022, p. 94–109

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indirect management with any public interest trust established by Hungarian Act IX of 2021<sup>18</sup>, including those entities listed in Annex I to Hungarian Act IX of 2021<sup>19</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.

In line with the DG ECHO guidance on localisation<sup>20</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).

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.

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<sup>18</sup> Act IX of 2021 on public interest trust foundations with a public service mission (entry into force 01/01/2023).

<sup>19</sup> Available (in Hungarian) at: <https://njt.hu/jogszabaly/2021-9-00-00>

<sup>20</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.



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.

Where assistance is to be delivered in the form of cash transfers, particular attention will be paid to the principles laid down in DG ECHO's cash thematic policy<sup>21</sup>, which 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 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.

Specific implementation of the following elements in the proposal should be demonstrated as appropriate:

- Mainstreaming of protection, gender, age and disability inclusion based on a comprehensive needs and risk analysis
- Strategies for effective prevention of and response to Gender Based Violence (GBV);
- Strategies for effective prevention of and response to Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (SEAH), including adequate and victim/survivor-centred response approaches and reporting channels.

### **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>22</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.

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<sup>21</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)

<sup>22</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)

The HIP Policy Annex should be consulted in parallel.

### **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):**

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.

#### 4.1.2.2. Country-Specific Priorities

**For 2024, DG ECHO operational guidelines for the Sahrawi crisis (Algeria) are as follows:**

##### **I. Horizontal mandatory requirements**

- ✓ Disaster Risk Reduction and environmental impact mainstreaming: all project proposals submitted to DG ECHO should be in line with the Grand Bargain commitments. They should be risk informed (cf. the resilience marker). The latter means that they should systematically integrate risk assessments and monitoring of potential hazards as well as anticipate their impacts. Humanitarian actors have a collective responsibility to ensure that their work does not contribute to the deterioration of the environment. This calls for taking all necessary measures to reduce the environmental footprint of humanitarian aid as specified in the HIP Policy Annex. Activities aiming at reducing the environmental footprint of humanitarian aid should be present in all DG ECHO funded actions and applied through a ‘mainstreaming’ approach, across sectors, projects, and programs with special attention on mitigating the negative environmental impacts in protracted, chronic situations and responses linked to humanitarian sites and settlements. The activities that cause natural resource depletion. Uncontrolled waste disposal linked to humanitarian settlements/sites as well as to communal facilities such as schools, health centres and distribution centres, should be addressed by providing sustainable waste management solutions. Please refer to the DG ECHO ‘Guidance

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on the operationalization of the minimum environmental requirements and recommendations for EU-funded humanitarian aid operations’.<sup>23</sup>

- ✓ The four dimensions of protection mainstreaming (access, accountability, safety/do no harm/dignity, participation/empowerment) should be integrated into all actions (see the policy annex for details).
- ✓ Coordination among humanitarian actors, advocacy and visibility remain important to raise the profile of this forgotten crisis and to attract development/stabilisation as well as non-traditional donors. DG ECHO will consider specific reference to humanitarian advocacy initiatives within all proposed actions.
- ✓ Humanitarian-Development Nexus: DG ECHO partners will be required to adopt more efficient, qualitative, effective and sustainable approaches, in line with the multi-annual sectorial strategies, developed by the different sectorial coordination groups. Local ownership of essential services should be promoted as well. Nevertheless, advocacy for operationalising the nexus with development donors should continue.
- ✓ For any partner proposing the provision of incentives or any similar approach, a strong justification must be provided to mitigate the risk of non-eligibility of the incentives, such as: i) a clear analysis and demonstration that the incentives are essential and critical for the proposed action; ii) the likely impact on the proposed action if incentives were not provided. Indeed, the conditions of eligibility for salary costs of the personnel of national administrations are set in the DG ECHO Financial Regulation. Art 186.4 (e) of the Financial Regulation specifies that “*Salary costs of personnel of national administrations may only be considered as eligible costs, to the extent that they relate to the cost of activities that the relevant public authority would not carry out if the action was not undertaken.*” This requires a coordinated approach across sectors (education, health, Wash...), between humanitarian organisations and an agreement with the Sahrawi camps authorities. Additionally, the engagement of development actors would help ensuring the sustainability of the system.
- ✓ VAT issues: In line with section 9.3. of the FPA guidelines, partners are expected to coordinate with the relevant authorities for an effective VAT exemption as granted by the Ministry of Finance since 2016. Only if this exemption is not granted and partners demonstrate that they had taken all the necessary steps, VAT could be considered eligible.
- ✓ Security: DG ECHO acknowledges the security risks for humanitarian workers in the Saharan context. Security-related costs will therefore continue to be eligible.

## II. Sectorial specific requirements

### Food Assistance

The focus should be on the provision of nutrition sensitive food assistance for the most vulnerable refugees taking into consideration the high burden of micronutrient deficiencies and important nutritional demands amongst the most vulnerable groups (children, pregnant and lactating women). In that regard, the provision of fortified vegetable oil, and fortified

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<sup>23</sup> <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/f6d2240b-2d94-11ed-975d-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>

wheat flour is important. The food assistance should be in line with local dietary preferences, and nutritionally balanced to meet the kilo calories and micronutrient needs of the population. Enhanced access should be ensured, in line with DG ECHO food assistance and nutrition policies. Food assistance should be complemented with contextual nutrition awareness sessions and continued monitoring of food security and nutritional trends. DG ECHO might consider supporting the access to fresh food to improve the dietary diversity for the most vulnerable food insecure refugees with poor food consumption scores (FCS).

Food security vulnerability targeting rather than blanket status-based coverage will be the preferred approach to be included and progressively implemented in all project proposals. Partners should take into consideration the reduced coping strategy index and food consumption score to target the most vulnerable. Strict monitoring of inclusion and exclusion errors and measurement food security key outcome indicators will be required.

The introduction of cash transfers is encouraged. Modality choice should be informed by a needs-based and people-centred response analysis, incorporating timely market, operational and environmental analyses. The use of cash should systematically be considered, across the variety of response mechanisms funded by DG ECHO. All cash interventions should comply with DG ECHO's cash thematic policy, including the sector-specific considerations as specified in Annex 2 of that document<sup>24</sup>.

For efficiency and effectiveness of the assistance, and proper aid accountancy, DG ECHO will encourage digitalization of aid, harmonised vulnerability-based targeting, enhanced complaints and feedback mechanism and a sound results framework. As the latest Food Security Assessment dates back to 2018, it will be important to publish the results of such an assessment in 2024, so that the assistance is well tailored to the needs.

## **Nutrition**

Preliminary results from the Joint Assessment Mission and from the nutrition survey conducted, show concerning trends of child undernutrition and feeding practices coupled with poor household food security indicators. The economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and most recently the secondary impact of the Ukraine crisis have likely been cofactors in this trend in addition to the varying quantity and content of food basket distributed.

Proposed nutrition assistance should sustain the stabilisation or further reduction in the prevalence of acute malnutrition, among children under 5 years old and pregnant and lactating women. Focus intervention will include specific measures for improved quality of service delivery for management of acute malnutrition, provision of adequate supplementary feeding to children under 5 years old as well as lactating and pregnant women. Active community MUAC screening and referral and improved nutritional follow-up of infants and children in health facilities are also required. All activities proposed to DG ECHO should take into account the results of the nutrition causal analysis and be strictly in line with the Interagency Nutrition Strategy (in development) and its action plan. DG ECHO supports the finalisation of this strategy and its roll-out that will consider the entire nutrition spectrum. Education on nutrition good practices and specific approaches for reinforcement of infant and young child feeding approach (1000 days)

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<sup>24</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)

targeting specifically mothers and families should be included as a complementary activity. All actions in this regard will have to be in line with the Social Behavioural Change Communication Strategy 2020-2025 for the Sahrawi Camps.

### **Water, Sanitation and Hygiene**

There is a need to improve access to safe water and upgrade management and sustainability of WASH facilities/services. Any action will have to be strictly in line with the guidance and priorities set by the interagency Water strategy and its multi-annual action plan.

DG ECHO will support operations aimed to secure and preserve the water resources, increase water production and distribution, and improve water management. Project proposals designed to improve access to safe water will have to integrate cost analyses and address only the most acute needs. Monitoring of the supplied services will have to guarantee the respect of minimum standards in terms of water quantity and quality. Facilitating a progressive transition of the water supply management to the Sahrawi water department will be of the essence.

All partners submitting WASH proposals are required to take into account the risks linked to natural hazards. Risk mapping of construction sites is mandatory. Activities that can strengthen wash preparedness for response to waterborne diseases or to react rapidly to “unpredictable” or latent events are also recommended.

### **Health**

Needs analysis of new proposals should be based on Health Information System data. Proposals should reflect lessons learned from previous projects in the sector of health. The list of problems that need to be addressed includes but is not limited to (1) the gaps in preparedness in case of spread of communicable diseases (including COVID-19), (2) the existing prevalence of non-communicable diseases resulting from poor nutritional status such as obesity, (3) safe disposal of medical hazard, (4) prevention and promotion of healthy lifestyle and adequate nutrition (5) Advocacy on health infrastructures maintenance plan could be consider, seeing the context specificity.

DG ECHO will consider project proposals guaranteeing the provision and management of drugs, including those for non-communicable diseases and small equipment, based on the needs of the refugees and as determined in the National List of Essential Medicines (NLEM). The NLEM should be updated as its dates back to 2017/2018 and should consider lessons learnt from COVID-19 response. Local purchases of drugs and medical equipment need to respond to the quality criteria as described in the Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA). Cost effective local purchases are encouraged, whenever appropriate.

Emergency preparedness and response will have to be included, and particularly support to immunization campaigns, including COVID-19.

On medical waste management, locally relevant and durable solution could be explored for eco-friendly options.

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

Through the Education in Emergencies policy, DG ECHO promotes access to safe, inclusive, quality education for girls and boys affected by crises. In Algeria, DG ECHO will support project proposals which:

- i. Target children/adolescents who are out of school or at risk of dropping out, with the objective of their successful integration into formal education. Innovative approaches to encourage motivation for retention, progression may be considered.
- ii. Provide capacity development for teachers and other education staff.
- iii. Provide materials to improve teaching and learning outcomes. Rationalized approaches, such as cluster resource centres, may be considered.
- iv. promote a contextualized and holistic approach through integration of relevant sectors, contributing to education outcomes.

All proposed actions should strictly be in line with the 5-year Education strategy and contribute to the roll-out of the strategy in demonstrated coordination with the Education Working Group and in alignment with the sector. Generation of evidence, together with efforts to strengthen coordination, strategic planning, programming and resourcing will be supported.

Unless there is a need- or context-based justification to do otherwise, ensure that the initial duration for actions on Education in Emergencies is at least 24 months and covers full academic year(s). The results framework will need to reliably demonstrate outcomes and the Work plan include milestones.

## **Shelter & Settlement**

Project proposals providing shelter and the provision of Non-Food Items (NFI) will be considered *only* in case of response to an impact of severe natural hazard. They need to be in line with DG ECHO Shelter and Settlement thematic policy.

### **For 2024, DG ECHO operational guidelines for the Syrian and Sub-Saharan refugees in Egypt are as follows:**

#### **I. Horizontal mandatory requirements**

- ✓ All actions will have to ensure a meaningful and equitable “One Refugee approach”. Beneficiary selection should be based on sound vulnerability analysis and not status.
- ✓ Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus: DG ECHO partners will be required to follow and support in-country discussions on operationalising the Nexus, including the initiatives launched by the Government of Egypt. Partners are encouraged to include Nexus related activities in their proposals.
- ✓ Coordination among humanitarian actors, advocacy, and visibility remain important to raise the profile of the humanitarian dimension of the refugee situation in Egypt and to attract development/stabilization donors. DG ECHO will consider including specific humanitarian advocacy within all proposed actions. Enhanced coordination and advocacy shall aim at redressing the overall inequitable response

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based on nationality. Coordination will also be of the essence to promote the operationalization of the Nexus framework.

- ✓ Partners in all sectors should ensure compliance with protection mainstreaming elements in project design and implementation.
- ✓ Inter-sectoral coordination should be strengthened to ensure timely and appropriate referrals across sectors.

## II. Sectorial requirements

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

DG ECHO will support interventions that help vulnerable refugee children/adolescents to successfully enter and be retained in accredited, formal education. This may involve non-formal education to provide pathways for out of school children or support to directly access accredited, formal schools, based on sound analysis of education need linked to outcome. DG ECHO will support initiatives aimed at increasing the inclusion of refugees within the Egyptian education system (starting with refugees' access to information); such approaches will need to strictly demonstrate do no harm.

Support to refugee community schools will be considered, with focus on enhancing quality in line with Working Group standards and school improvement planning approaches, including attention to learning outcomes, completion, progression. Support to Working Group coordination will be considered, as justified. An exit strategy, for impact and sustainability, is to be included in all proposals. The intervention duration should respect the school year and be in line with defined project objectives.

Coordination with development partners, other EU and donor instruments, the Egyptian Ministry of Education and relevant line ministries, the Joint platform for Migrants and Refugees, together with sector and refugee working groups, must be specifically addressed in proposals, as well as due attention paid to meaningful consultation process with the beneficiaries and key Education stakeholders.

All proposals shall be in line with the interagency Education Strategy for refugees and asylum seekers and its action plan and contribute to its implementation, in coordination with the Education Working Group and following a 'joint programming' approach. Participation in thematic working groups, including piloting, modelling of approaches, is to be considered. Partners will be required to conduct joint advocacy activities and participate to the joint resource mobilisation strategy.

Integration of child protection can be considered in proposals.

### **Basic Needs Approach**

Considering the continuing socio-economic crisis, and the recent large and continuing arrival of people fleeing the conflict in Sudan, DG ECHO will continue to fund multipurpose cash transfers (MPCT) to address the basic needs of the most socio-vulnerable beneficiaries based on a full-fledged one refugee approach and robust needs analysis. The targeting criteria must delink from the status-based approach and strictly follow the socio-economic vulnerability criteria.



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Innovative pilot projects promoting venues to initiate the formulation of a Nexus approach in linking refugee cash transfers to the Government-led social protection system shall be considered.

Where assistance is to be delivered in the form of cash transfers, 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, a common payment mechanism, a common feedback mechanism and a common results framework. DG ECHO will systematically assess the cost-efficiency of different modalities, using the Total Cost to Transfer Ratio (TCTR), alongside the analysis of effectiveness. All cash interventions should comply with the new DG ECHO cash thematic policy, including the sector-specific considerations in Annex 2 of that document.

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. The transfer value of cash assistance should be adequate to cover or contribute to emergency basic needs and should be complemented by other relevant sectoral interventions which cannot be met through cash. Cash assistance should be risk informed and targeted based on socio-economic vulnerability and take into consideration the protection concerns of individuals and groups.

The sectoral (e.g., protection, education, Food Security and Livelihoods) and multisector outcomes of cash programmes should be monitored against internationally accepted norms in a consistent way and should comply with the cross-cutting and sector-specific Grand Bargain MPC outcome indicators<sup>25</sup>. Markets should consistently be monitored in real time to inform and adapt assistance. In view of the rise in market prices, under the leadership of the Cash Working Group and in collaboration with other sectors, 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](#)<sup>26</sup> in order to preserve household purchasing power.

DG ECHO will assess proposals paying particular attention to the Cash Guidance note's principles of coordination, harmonization, and multi-partner approach.

Any delivery of cash assistance for specific sectoral purposes must demonstrate:

- sound technical justification (grounded in contextualized evidence), including exit/continuity strategy to sustain access to services, as appropriate,
- due coordination within the sector, and with the Cash Working Group, and ensuring do no harm principles,
- lessons learnt from previous actions.

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<sup>25</sup> <https://www.calpnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/CALP-MPC-Outcomes-EN-final.pdf>

<sup>26</sup> [https://www.calpnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/good\\_practice\\_review\\_final\\_edited.pdf](https://www.calpnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/good_practice_review_final_edited.pdf)

In 2024, **DG ECHO will continue to support ongoing targeted, regional programmes** focusing on the following protection challenges that affect several countries in North Africa and beyond:

- Reinforcing protection and compliance with IHL by Armed Groups and De facto Authorities (AGDA)
- Empowering local responders and local protection networks
- Mechanism for the protection of humanitarian workers