

TECHNICAL ANNEX**PALESTINE****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 ¹ /C3
Contact persons at HQ	Team Leader: Dina Sinigallia Dina.Sinigallia@ec.europa.eu Desk Officer: Aldo Biondi Aldo.Biondi@ec.europa.eu
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2. FINANCIAL INFO

Indicative Allocation²: EUR 187 201 166 of which an indicative amount of EUR 13 855 710 for Education in Emergencies.

Programmatic Partnerships:

Programmatic Partnerships have been launched since 2022 with a limited number of partners. An indicative total amount of **EUR 2 000 000** will be dedicated to ongoing Programmatic Partnerships in 2024. New Programmatic Partnerships or extension of ongoing could be funded under this HIP³.

¹ Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO).

² 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.

³ 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>

Indicative breakdown per Actions as per Worldwide Decision (in euros):

Country(ies)	Action (a) Human-induced crises and natural hazards	Action (b) Initial emergency response/sm all-scale/epidemics	Action (c) Disaster Preparedness	Actions (d) to (f) Transport / Complementary activities	TOTAL
Palestine	185 201 166				185 201 166
Programmatic Partnership Communication & Coordination	2 000 000				2 000 000
TOTAL					187 201 166

3. PROPOSAL ASSESSMENT

Proposals (single forms) can be submitted at any time during the year. However, no formal request for proposals can be made before the publication of the HIP. Agreements can only be signed after adoption of the Worldwide Decision and release of the HIP to partners (both conditions need to be satisfied cumulatively).

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)⁴.

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

⁴ Single form guidelines: <https://www.dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu/ngo/action-proposal/fill-in-the-single-form>

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 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.

f) Regional and multi-country actions

Regional/multi-country actions can be supported under this HIP (and where relevant in conjunction with other HIPs⁵), 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.

g) Multi-year funding actions⁶.

⁵ 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.

⁶ For more information - See the factsheet on EU Humanitarian Aid Multi-Year Funding available on the DG ECHO Website ([DG ECHO Website \(dgeocho-partners-helpdesk.eu\)](https://dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu)) Additional information can be found here: Grand Bargain Quality funding commitments: [Grand Bargain Caucus on Quality Funding -](#)

- h) HIPs may be used for multi-year funding actions, which should have a duration of minimum 24 months and the full budget is committed upfront. Specific policy areas for multi-year funding may be mentioned in the respective HIP. Multi-year funding actions aim at generating additional efficiency gains and improve design and delivery of humanitarian assistance. The submitted proposals should demonstrate these gains, which should be monitored during the implementation of the action and will have to be reported in the final reports of the action.

It is possible to request multi-year funding in the context of a Programmatic Partnership to be concluded with DG ECHO. In this situation, see section 3.e.

4. ADMINISTRATIVE INFO

Allocation round 4

- a) Indicative amount: up to EUR 480 000⁷.
- b) Costs will be eligible from 01/ 01/ 2024⁸.
- c) The initial duration for the Action may be up to 24 months or more⁹ provided that the added value of a multi-annual duration is demonstrated by the partner¹⁰. 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).
- d) Preselected partner ¹¹: The ExAR will be allocated to NRC, in its capacity as the grant holder for the West Bank Protection Consortium.
- e) Information to be provided: Single Form or Modifications requests of on-going actions ¹²

Outcome Document - final - 11Jul22.pdf (interagencystandingcommittee.org) and Grand Bargain definitions: Multi-year and flexible funding - Definitions Guidance Summary - Narrative Section January 2020.pdf (interagencystandingcommittee.org)

⁷ This allocation is conditional upon the payment of a contribution by Finland of EUR 500 000 to the EU budget as externally assigned revenue, minus a 4% management fee.

⁸ *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.*

⁹ Maximum duration of an action is 48 months.

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

¹¹ Unless otherwise specified potential NGO partners refer to certified partner organisations.

¹² Single Forms will be submitted to DG ECHO using APPEL.

- f) Indicative date for receipt of the above requested information: 24/04/2024.^{13]}

Allocation round 3

- g) Indicative amount: up to EUR 61 500 000.
- h) Costs will be eligible from 01/ 01/ 2024¹⁴.
- i) The initial duration for the Action may be up to 24 months or more¹⁵ provided that the added value of a multi-annual duration is demonstrated by the partner¹⁶. 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).
- j) Preselected partner ¹⁷: Based on their comparative advantage, expertise and presence, the following partners have been pre-identified: ICRC, IRC, NRC (in its capacity as the grant holder for the West Bank Protection Consortium), Relief International, UNICEF, UNRWA, WFP, WHO. Other applications will not be considered under this round.
- k) Information to be provided: Single Form or Modifications requests of on-going actions ¹⁸
- l) Indicative date for receipt of the above requested information: 24/04/2024.¹⁹

Allocation round 2

- m) Indicative amount: up to EUR 39 221 166.
- n) Costs will be eligible from 01/ 01/ 2024²⁰.

¹³ 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.

¹⁴ *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.*

¹⁵ Maximum duration of an action is 48 months.

¹⁶ See the factsheet on EU Humanitarian Aid Multi-Year Funding available on the DG ECHO Website ([DG ECHO Website \(dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu\)](https://dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu))

¹⁷ Unless otherwise specified potential NGO partners refer to certified partner organisations.

¹⁸ Single Forms will be submitted to DG ECHO using APPEL.

¹⁹ 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.

²⁰ *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.*

- o) The initial duration for the Action may be up to 24 months or more²¹ provided that the added value of a multi-annual duration is demonstrated by the partner²². 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).
- p) Potential partners²³: All DG ECHO Partners
- q) Information to be provided: Single Form or Modifications requests of on-going actions²⁴
- r) Indicative date for receipt of the above requested information: 28/01/2024.^{25]}

Allocation round 1

- a) Indicative amount: up to EUR 86 000 000.
- b) Emergency response aimed at the provision of life-saving aid and/or services into Gaza or to quickly restore key pipelines for the fast delivery of aid to the most in need.
- c) Costs will be eligible from 01/ 01/ 2024²⁶.
- d) The initial duration for the Action may be up to 24 months or more²⁷ provided that the added value of a multi-annual duration is demonstrated by the partner²⁸. 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

²¹ Maximum duration of an action is 48 months.

²² See the factsheet on EU Humanitarian Aid Multi-Year Funding available on the DG ECHO Website ([DG ECHO Website \(dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu\)](https://dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu))

²³ Unless otherwise specified potential NGO partners refer to certified partner organisations.

²⁴ Single Forms will be submitted to DG ECHO using APPEL.

²⁵ 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.

²⁶ 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.

²⁷ Maximum duration of an action is 48 months.

²⁸ See the factsheet on EU Humanitarian Aid Multi-Year Funding available on the DG ECHO Website ([DG ECHO Website \(dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu\)](https://dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu))

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).

- e) Preselected partner ²⁹: Based on their comparative advantage, expertise and presence, the following partners have been pre-identified: ICRC, IFRC, UNICEF, UNRWA, WFP, WHO. Other applications will not be considered under this round.
- f) Information to be provided: Single Form or Modifications requests of on-going actions³⁰.
- g) Indicative date for receipt of the above requested information: 08/01/2024 ³¹].

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

²⁹ Unless otherwise specified potential NGO partners refer to certified partner organisations.

³⁰ Single Forms will be submitted to DG ECHO using APPEL.

³¹ 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.

(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 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?³²

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 Measures³³ 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 budget³⁴ (“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):

³² In accordance with the relevant section of the Single Form guidelines (section 10).

³³ 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.

³⁴ 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.

- **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 Hungary³⁵.**

This Conditionality Decision, in particular its Article 2.2, prohibits legal commitments under direct and indirect management with any public interest trust established by Hungarian Act IX of 2021³⁶, including those entities listed in Annex I to Hungarian Act IX of 2021³⁷ 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**³⁸, 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.

³⁵ OJ L 325, 20.12.2022, p. 94–109.

³⁶ Act IX of 2021 on public interest trust foundations with a public service mission (entry into force 01/01/2023).

³⁷ Available (in Hungarian) at: <https://njt.hu/jogszabaly/2021-9-00-00>

³⁸ 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.

The current crisis in Gaza has required the establishment of a logistic hub in Egypt to coordinate and support all aid pipelines transiting via Egypt before entering Gaza. DG ECHO will ensure a complementary use of its instrument to strategically support the Gaza operation.

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.

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 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 EUR10m 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, a common payment mechanism, a common feedback mechanism and a common results framework.

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 expects that the Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) and Transfer Values (TV) are defined under the coordination of the Cash Working Group (CWG) for harmonised response. The 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, facilitated through multi-sectoral referral pathways. Cash assistance should be risk informed and targeted based on socio-economic vulnerability, and the protection concerns of individuals and groups.

Partners should invest in preparedness measures for cash assistance, as a key enabler of timely response (e.g., through anticipatory action or rapid response mechanisms).

Partners will also be assessed on their ability to explore possible contributions to existing social safety nets and propose feasible entry points for linking humanitarian assistance and social protection at different levels (policy/governance, strategic/institutional level, program design, and implementation/delivery). In line with the nexus agenda, DG-ECHO encourages approaches that contribute to the delivery of a needs-based, coherent, and coordinated assistance package from both humanitarian and development funding sources, whilst respecting humanitarian and protection principles.

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 (under the leadership of Cash Working Groups) should monitor markets and define inflation and currency-related triggers; design programmes and budgets from the outset to anticipate inflation and depreciation; and adapt programmes and budgets based to maintain purchasing power and programme effectiveness. 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 include contingencies to adapt the transfer value, increase coverage, and/or change to an alternative modality to preserve household purchasing power capacity. Irrespective of the modality, partners are expected to invest in robust due diligence processes and tracking capacity to minimise the risk of diversion.

DG ECHO systematically assess the cost-efficiency of different modalities, using the Total Cost to Transfer Ratio (TCTR), alongside the analysis of effectiveness.

DG ECHO may support Cash Working Groups, under the leadership of the inter-sector/inter-cluster, and in collaboration with relevant sectoral working groups, to provide leadership on the above, in line with the IASC coordination model and [CWG ToR](#).

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 operations³⁹.

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.

The HIP Policy Annex should be consulted in parallel.

Sector-Specific Priorities

Protection

The scale and severity of the conflict which started in and around Gaza in October 2023, along with the forced displacement of over 1.8 million people and widespread IHL violations have generated massive protection needs in Gaza and have had severe repercussions in the West Bank – with some 15,000 people displaced as a consequence of demolitions – where an increased coercive environment and a spike in settler-related violence, have seriously impacted basic services, protection services and access to humanitarian assistance. This has placed people at increased and acute protection risk.

³⁹ https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/humanitarian-aid/climate-change-and-environment_en

Protection programming should be based on protection risk analysis whenever possible recognizing that the fluidity of the situation and the scale of the conflict that might hinder immediate comprehensive/in-depth protection assessments. The design of the response should include the identification of emergency referral pathways and prioritise pressing and emerging protection needs. Activities to prevent and mitigate identified protection risks might be considered when targeting specific protection risks with a clearly demonstrated impact. Integrated protection programming shall be considered, and protection interventions can be provided through static and mobile modalities based on needs.

In the West Bank, the protection response will continue to focus on reinforcing prevention, mitigation, and response to settler-related violence, military incursions, demolitions and forcible displacement. Support to MHPSS will continue to be critical in light of the pre-existing psychological distress aggravated by the effect of the escalation and increased violence and movement restrictions. Moreover, given the sustained risks and protracted needs under this sector of intervention, DG ECHO will consider some actions for multiannual programming.

In view of the evolving situation in West Bank DG ECHO will support projects designed to address exacerbated and emerging protection risks and violations identified through a comprehensive risk analysis, encompassing all aspects of protection to determine the most appropriate response package, including child protection, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV), Housing, and MHPSS services.

All the above should include evidence-based advocacy plans focused on reducing International Humanitarian Law (IHL) violations.

In Gaza, DG ECHO will support activities aiming to prevent and address the most urgent and acute protection risks faced by conflict-affected populations and other protection needs as they arise. Prioritised support for core emergency protection interventions includes family separations, risks linked to UXO, psychological distress, abuse and violence against women, men, children and adolescents, as well as any other acute protection risks identified. As such DG ECHO will consider supporting the following interventions:

- Activities providing information on functional basic services, emergency hotlines and information linked to specific needs identified as well as on specific protection issues.
- Activities to preserve family unity and to address family separation through identification, registration and tracing mechanisms, with particular consideration for the needs of unaccompanied and separated children ensuring safe and adequate temporary care arrangements.
- Provision of life saving specialized protection services for GBV survivors, children at heightened protection risks and/or victims of other protection violations, including individual case management, legal aid, medical services and MHPSS.
- Provision of MHPSS to children and their caregivers as well as communities through most appropriate modalities across the IASC MHPSS pyramid.
- Awareness raising on Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) and Mine risks Education.

- Strengthening mechanisms for monitoring and documenting grave violations against children and IHL violations.
- Protection monitoring.
- Mitigation/prevention of exacerbation of pre-existing protection risks.

Capacity building activities on protection and Psychological First Aid (PFA) as per the needs. DG ECHO will support activities to strengthen coordination capacity across the protection cluster and relevant AoR to ensure coordination remains fit for purpose and that urgent protection needs are prioritized and addressed in a coordinated manner. Emergency referral pathways should be established within the protection clusters and with other sectors/services. In both the West Bank and Gaza, clear referral pathways to specialised protection services should be made available to address the range of protection needs such as child protection, GBV, detention and other acute protection needs. Use of cash in protection programming will not be supported unless it contains clear protection outcomes and is embedded within legal assistance, case management or accompaniment, and within a wider comprehensive and integrated protection response.

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 Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) and abuse and neglect against children.
- 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.

Health

The escalation of hostilities during in the last quarter of 2023 has deeply disrupted the healthcare system in Palestine. During wartime and its immediate aftermath, ensuring access to care is paramount for saving lives and alleviating suffering. Therefore, access to care becomes the main entry point. The primary focus is on achieving immediate outcomes, such as saving lives today, while also working to reduce the long-term risk of disability. According to WHO, mental health is an integral component of overall health. Equally, the health sector will play a vital role in monitoring the nutritional status of the Palestinian population.

In this context, access to care entails access to functioning primary and secondary health services. In the occupied territories efforts should be directed towards re-establishing functional health services, with parallel systems considered exceptions as short-term investment opportunities diminish rapidly.

Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) will be considered as an emergency response intervention integrated with other health activities and / or mainstreamed in the proposed action.

Given the volatile context, each action should embed a preparedness and anticipatory component, including support for trauma pathways, by building on the strategy and related actions supported under previous HIPs.

Areas of critical attention would include access to primary Health care (e.g. acute and chronic diseases); Emergency secondary health care (e.g. medical, surgical, and obstetric); Early Mental Health interventions to mitigate long-term impacts and trauma response encompassing life and limb saving measures, early reconstructive surgery, post-op care, devices, and rehabilitation.

In the West Bank, uneven access and fragmentation necessitate multiple access points (with at time overlapping geographic coverage overcoming field/local constraints) and a robust functional referral pathway for trauma and other illnesses.

In Gaza, the focus is on acute/direct response (incl. medical evacuations), with a parallel coordinated investment aimed at re-building all pillars of the health system, following the WHO framework.

WASH, Shelter and Settlements (S&S)

WASH interventions should aim to maintain or restore a minimum level of service delivery of water, sanitation and hygiene services for the affected population, facing severe environmental health risks and/or water insecurity.

S&S interventions should aim to preserve life and alleviate suffering, for conflict -affected populations in need of basic shelter, in secure and appropriate settlements, where conditions have significantly deteriorated and fallen below commonly accepted minimum humanitarian standards.

While DG ECHO will not consider stand-alone WASH or S&S responses addressing structural and chronic needs, it may consider light rehabilitation of WASH and S&S services where and when deemed necessary and properly justified. Particular attention should be paid to the coordination of the proposed intervention amongst all actors in a nexus logic. Activities related to WASH services should be conceived with a sensitivity to water scarcity and environmentally sustainable solutions.

DG ECHO will also prioritise interventions which aim is to mitigate the impact of IHL violations, armed offensives, and sudden onset disasters on critical WASH and S&S services.

Food assistance, Livelihoods/basic needs

As needs generated by the most frequent shocks are often multiple, food assistance and emergency livelihood shall be part of a basic need approach.

Improving availability of and accessibility to food shall be considered in the context of ongoing conflict, displacement, and natural induced disasters. Key elements of the response should include:

- Actions using an integrated approach aiming at reducing prevalence of food insecurity (Food Consumption Score, consumption, and livelihood Coping Strategy Index)

- Where humanitarian access is limited by active conflict or blockade, partners shall make best use of temporary access to deliver food and basic needs to the beneficiaries in the most effective way. This might include a blanket approach and adapting the periodicity of distributions and composition of food parcel.
- Close coordination with FSC and CWG for targeting and to contribute to the development of comprehensive referral pathways (including feedback loops) especially for livelihood, protection, nutrition and health services.
- Contribution and use of market monitoring data.

Modality choice for food assistance should be informed by a needs-based response and risk analysis, incorporating joint and timely market analysis, operational and environmental analyses. 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 shock and vulnerability-based targeting, data interoperability to facilitate deduplication and referrals, a common payment mechanism, a common feedback mechanism, a common results framework and a common monitoring framework. In Gaza, DG ECHO's response will be tailored to respond to the needs generated by the hostilities started in October 2023 and specific, well-identified protection concerns. In Gaza, the response to massive needs and destruction shall consider the highest level of flexibility in the choice of the modality to reduce risks for the beneficiaries and fast and safe access to food assistance.

When in-kind assistance is the only possible modality for food aid, partners are expected to consider minimum environmental arrangements, energy needs, and limited existing cooking spaces and options adapted to the context (crowded displacement sites): e.g.: i) considering the provision of ready-to-eat rations; ii) Fuel and cooking stoves that reduce indoor air pollution and fire hazards; iii) Food varieties with shorter cooking time; iv) Reduced plastic for packaging to limit garbage accumulation and health hazards around the displacement sites.

DG ECHO and like-minded donors remain committed to support the return to the use at scale of cash modality for food assistance and expects partners to maintain the capacity to switch-back to cash modality as soon as protection consideration, markets, services and financial service providers become operational again.

DG ECHO continues to promote a Multipurpose Cash Assistance (MPCA) programme of sufficient scale to address basic needs of the most vulnerable among shock affected people as soon as conducive conditions allow.

Key elements of the MPCA programme in Gaza include:

- Close coordination with the CWG and the national social protection system, i.e., the “National Cash Transfer Programme (NCTP) led by the Ministry of Social Development and supported by the EU - PEGASE instrument.
- Close coordination with CWG to support common, integrated and targeted approaches and inter-operable beneficiary platforms, to contribute to the development of comprehensive standardised and institutionalised referral pathways (including feedback loops) especially to protection, livelihoods, and health services.

- Improved emergency and preparedness response (EPR) capacity for shocks feeding into the work of the CWG on strengthening collective preparedness efforts.
- Improved interoperability among humanitarian and between humanitarian and development actors to facilitate layering, referrals and graduation.
- A Crisis Modifier (CM) with clearly defined shocks and triggers and in line with OCHA contingency plan.
- Contribution to and use of market monitoring data.

In the West Bank and in Gaza, DG ECHO may consider supporting the protection and recovery of livelihoods affected by punctual shocks within a defined timeframe, not exceeding 12 months, with a demonstrated added value and exit strategy. DG ECHO will prioritize livelihood with a direct impact on the food chain from production to local markets. Specific considerations include: a two-fold targeting framework balancing the present collapse of the local economy and the potential self-reliance capacity of households who lost their productive assets.

The choice of livelihoods and the modality shall be informed by: 1) a comprehensive market and risk analysis including the availability of technically sound equipment on the local market, spare parts and access to post-sale assistance; 2) a business plan with a timeframe to reach the self-reliance of the beneficiary; 3) a protection risk analysis including risks linked to the access to productive assets, destruction/confiscation by military. This should also be linked to a monitoring framework measuring the recovered economic capacity of the household compared with a reference level.

DG ECHO prioritizes a “cash+” approach that combines cash transfers with productive assets, inputs, and/or technical training to enhance the livelihoods and productive capacities of targeted households. Soft conditionalities might be considered for the payment of instalments.

Partners are strongly encouraged to include a detailed learning and documentation component, test different approaches (e.g., volume of assistance, beneficiaries’ livelihood profiles, productive contexts, return of investment of different types of livelihood support etc.), and document the impact of the intervention with an aim of future upscaling of successful approaches and transfer cases towards development operations.

Education in Emergencies (EiE)

DG ECHO will support EiE interventions with a focus on access to protective learning environments, including safe and violence-free schools, ensuring learning restoration and continuity in emergencies, and addressing the psycho-social support needs of children in highly vulnerable communities. Partners are encouraged to increase coordination and avoid duplicating efforts and activities. Partners are also strongly encouraged to integrate child protection services within their proposed EiE intervention, including psychosocial support (PSS) and referral to specialised child protection services: beneficiaries should be the same children, activities should be school-based and the purpose of the protection intervention should be to support the return or the retention of the affected children into education activities. In the West Bank, special focus should be on students and / or schools affected

by demolitions, settler violence and military incursions. Preventative and responsive advocacy efforts for safe access to education must be considered. Advocacy and legal support to schools under attack are key elements of the protection of education in Palestine. In Gaza, the initial phase of the EiE response should focus on establishing Child Friendly Spaces (CFS), with the primary goal of restoring a semblance of normalcy and catering to the psychosocial support (PSS) needs of children deeply affected by conflict. Creating safe, nurturing environments within these spaces is crucial, fostering activities promoting emotional healing, recreation, and education in a supportive atmosphere. Implementing trauma-informed practices and engaging in play-based learning activities are essential components in order to restore the provision of classical classroom education activities. As a second phase, transitioning into the setup of Catch-Up Programs (within Temporary Learning Spaces – TLS - where needed) will be pivotal. These TLS should offer a structured curriculum aimed at bridging educational gaps caused by disruptions, employing adaptive teaching methodologies to accommodate diverse learning paces and needs. Mobilizing qualified educators and resources and maintaining a flexible curriculum adaptable to changing circumstances would be crucial for successful catch-up programs in the area.

EiE interventions should demonstrate coordination with stakeholders, including the Ministry of Education, UNRWA, Education Cannot Wait, Joint Financing Arrangement, donors and the Education Cluster to optimize synergies, complementarities and avoid overlap.

Disaster Preparedness (DP)

All humanitarian actions must be risk informed. All projects should therefore include a risk analysis, identifying the main threats for both the targeted populations and the action. Anticipatory and contingency measures should be embedded in the action to anticipate and mitigate the identified risks to the best possible extent. Effective surveillance and early warning systems allowing for a timely detection of threats are encouraged. Conflict and escalation of violence remain the main focus of DG ECHO targeted disaster preparedness in Palestine. DG ECHO will continue to support mass casualty management and trauma preparedness in most at-risk locations of East Jerusalem (EJ) and the West Bank (WB), and to consolidate the investments in the Gaza Strip. Strengthening contingency planning mechanisms and services ensuring effective emergency health services in case of escalations of violence remains a priority. In addition, to support rapid responses where relevant, partners with demonstrated rapid response capacities are encouraged to include a Crisis Modifier (CM) in their project. A specific result should be dedicated to the CM under the DP sector. Partners are requested to briefly describe the main threats and hazards being tackled, limiting those to sudden and acute shocks, while defining the thresholds and protocols that will frame the rapid response.

Alignment with other response mechanisms and sectoral recommendations is essential to foster the use of standard and harmonised practices. Service mapping and referral pathways should be put in place to ensure additional acute needs are covered when relevant while continuity of services via other mechanisms is encouraged. Coordination with other sector leads, local actors and authorities is key to ensure access, timely and effective responses.

Humanitarian Advocacy

Advocacy, at all levels (both field level and international fora), can be supported when it is based on strong evidence and clear objectives: the causes of the on-going dramatic

deterioration of the humanitarian situation can only be addressed through effective advocacy, by calling all parties to respect International Humanitarian and Human Rights Laws (IHL and IHRL). Advocacy should primarily focus on key protection issues, such as violations of IHL and IHRL, a constantly shrinking humanitarian space affecting humanitarian workers and front-line staff, a prolonged blockade encompassing a variety of barriers and access restrictions, increased settler violence and intimidation, and increased attacks on education and health. Partners willing to carry out advocacy initiatives must share a detailed advocacy plan providing information on the activities to be undertaken and under which timeframe, resources required for implementation, expected outcomes, as well as potential risks and mitigation measures to be put in place. Partners should develop realistic, achievable and concrete advocacy plans and objectives, as well as specify the level at which advocacy activities would be undertaken.

Humanitarian – Development – Peace nexus

DG ECHO partners are encouraged to support the operationalisation of the Humanitarian Development-Peace Nexus as long as the proposed interventions are in line with a well-coordinated and well-founded analysis and response. Social protection, WaSH and health have been identified as a priority to implement the nexus by building complementarities and synergies, in particular with other EU services in alignment with the European Joint Strategy in support of Palestine 2021-2024. For the WASH sector, partners are encouraged to engage with longer-term actors to secure the sustainability of services after emergency interventions through operation and maintenance schemes and local capacity building. For the Health sector, short-term investments on health preparedness and emergency response capacity and capabilities need to be embedded into health reforms and the national health system architecture. Moreover, a new layer for a nexus approach is taken into consideration, where relevant/possible, using the area-based approach rather than a sector focused perspective. This approach is particularly appropriate for areas facing complex, inter-related and multi sectoral needs. Its strength is realised through building a deeper understanding of the affected populations' holistic needs and complex contexts, and by building on community cohesion, governance structures, markets, and service delivery mechanisms. DG ECHO aims also to further explore opportunities to increase efficiency and effectiveness of short-term multi-purpose humanitarian cash assistance by merging these aid streams into a fully-fledged shock responsive mechanism embedded into the Palestine wide social protection programme.

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 ongoing 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.

