

HUMANITARIAN IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (HIP) SYRIA REGIONAL AND LEBANON CRISES

The full implementation of this version of the HIP is conditional upon the payment of the Member State's contribution.

AMOUNT: EUR 220 790 000

The present Humanitarian Implementation Plan (HIP) was prepared on the basis of financing decision ECHO/WWD/BUD/2024/01000 (Worldwide Decision) and the related General Guidelines for Operational Priorities on Humanitarian Aid (Operational Priorities). The purpose of the HIP and its annexes¹ is to serve as a communication tool from DG ECHO² to its partners and assist them in the preparation of their proposals. The provisions of the Worldwide Decision and the General Conditions of the Agreement with the European Commission shall take precedence over the provisions in this document.

0. MAJOR CHANGES SINCE PREVIOUS VERSION OF THE HIP

1st Modification – December 2023

The humanitarian situation has deteriorated significantly over the past twelve months, mainly due to the unresolved political crisis, increasing food insecurity, ongoing conflict, the sharp economic downturn, and the severe water crisis affecting millions across the country. This is amplified by cyclical, intensifying droughts, poor environmental conditions, mismanagement of natural resources, and the earthquakes that hit northern Syria in February 2023.

Humanitarian needs remain high across all sectors, including WASH and shelter, while the food security situation has deteriorated drastically throughout the year. 12.9 million people across Syria need food assistance.

In light of the gaps in the sectors of Shelter, WASH and Food Security and Livelihoods (FSL), Belgium has pledged to transfer to the European Commission's budget a contribution to support the emergency response in Syria.

This Modification concerns **Syria** and consists of the following contribution, from external assigned revenue, to be added to the HIP: EUR 5 790 000.

1. CONTEXT

The protracted Syria crisis continues deteriorating, generating humanitarian needs unparalleled in scale, severity, and complexity. It represents one of the largest emergencies of our times, and one of the world's largest refugee crises. Inside Syria, the humanitarian situation has deteriorated significantly over the past twelve months, mainly due to the unresolved political crisis and ongoing conflict, the non-renewal of the UN Security Council (UNSC) Resolution

¹ Technical annex and thematic policies annex.

² Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO).

on cross-border assistance to Northwest Syria (NWS), the continuous economic downturn, and the severe water crisis affecting millions across the country (amplified by poor environmental conditions), and disease outbreaks including cholera.

The devastating earthquakes of February 2023 have further reduced access to safe and secure habitats and services. The number of people in need of life-saving assistance continues to rise sharply since 2020 and has reached an unprecedented 15.3 million people in 2023. Severe poverty is widespread in Syria, more than 12 million people are food insecure, 6.8 million people are internally displaced, and 2.45 million children remain out of school³. The context remains highly volatile and complex, broadly characterised by three sub-contexts: Northwest, Northeast, and Central/Southern Syria, each experiencing various levels of humanitarian needs, conflict intensity, access dynamics and constraints, with none of these contexts being conducive to principled refugee returns.

Following the non-renewal of UN Security Council Resolution 2672 (2023), humanitarian access to NWS remains highly constrained. The ceasefire agreed between Türkiye and Russia in March 2020 continues being violated on an almost daily basis. 4.1 million people need humanitarian assistance in Northwest Syria, while about 2.9 million people are Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), many of them forcibly relocated multiple times.

In Northeast Syria (NES), 1.8 million persons need humanitarian assistance, some 640 000 people remain displaced. Some 48% of these IDPs live in camps. Ongoing hostilities between multiple armed actors and growing insecurity continue to pose significant challenges to the provision of critical services.

The situation in Government-controlled Syria is marked by increased food insecurity, poverty, eroded coping capacities and deteriorating access to basic services. Continuous violence has been observed in the southern governorates of Dara'a and Sweida in 2023. The region hosts over 3 million displaced people and 8.4 million people in need of humanitarian assistance.

In neighbouring countries, some 5 575 000 Syrian refugees are registered, accounting for one of the largest refugee populations worldwide, including 3 630 000 in Türkiye, 765 000 in Lebanon, 660 000 in Jordan, 240 000 in Iraq and 130 000 in Egypt.

In **Lebanon**, the continuing severe political, socio-economic, and financial crisis has pushed an estimated half of the Lebanese into poverty, while 90% of the Syrian refugees cannot cover their needs as defined by the survival minimum expenditure basket (SMEB)⁴. Electricity outages are jeopardising the provision of healthcare and availability of safe drinking water. Access to healthcare has become unaffordable to large parts of the population. Inter- and intra-community violence linked to competition over goods and services, fuelled by statements against Syrian refugees by politicians and hate speech on social media, has increased significantly. Refugees remain subject to raids, curfews, evictions, arbitrary arrests, mass evictions, and movement restrictions, and have limited access to livelihood opportunities. In the absence of a regulatory framework, deportations of refugees without due process and procedural safeguards are occurring ever more frequently and can amount to *refoulement*. Lebanon also faces critical waste management and pollution issues.

In **Jordan**, the protracted crisis is characterised by the presence of refugee populations, both in camps and in urban settings. 66% of the refugees live below the poverty line⁵. Sexual and

³ Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO 2023).

⁴ WFP Market Monitor – Food Security Analysis Report, March 2023.

⁵ HNO 2023.

gender-based violence (SGBV) remains prominent and is further exacerbated by a deteriorating socio-economic situation. Forced relocations to Azraq camp/Village 5, where 9 000 refugees live with no freedom of movement, continue. The registration of non-Syrian refugees remains suspended since 2019, further restricting their protection space. While the number of people stranded in Rukban/the ‘Berm’ has further decreased to an estimated 7 500 people, their protection risks and lack of access to health services remain of particular concern.

DG ECHO's needs assessment for 2023-2024 identified extreme humanitarian needs for Syria, high humanitarian needs for Lebanon, and moderate humanitarian needs in Jordan. The vulnerability of the population affected by the crisis is assessed to be very high in Syria and Lebanon, and high in Jordan.

	SYRIA	LEBANON		JORDAN
INFORM Risk Index (0-10)⁶	6.9/10	4.7/10		4.2/10
Hazard and Exposure	7.8/10	3.2/10		6.2/10
Vulnerability	7.7/10	7.2/10		2.7/10
Lack of Coping Capacity	5.5/10	4.5/10		4.4/10
		Lebanese Socioeconomic Crisis	Syrian Refugee Crisis	
INFORM Severity Index (0-5)⁷	4.6/5	3.5	3.4	2.8/5
Impact of the crisis	4.7/5	3	7.7	3.2/10
Condition of people affected	4.5/5	4.1	3.8	10/10
Complexity of the crisis	4.7/5	2.7	2.5	2.6/5
Number of People in Need	15.3 million	3.9 million ⁸		740 000
Human Development Index (0-1)	0.577	0.71		0.729
Total Population⁹	22 125 000	5 490 000		11 286 052

2. HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

2.1. People in need of humanitarian assistance

The Syria crisis continues to generate massive levels of needs among the Syrian population across the region. Besides the large-scale displacement of populations internally and in neighbouring countries, as well as life-saving emergency needs in active conflict settings, there are also more protracted emergency needs in virtually all humanitarian sectors, both inside Syria and in places of asylum. The severe political, socio-economic, and financial crises in Lebanon and Türkiye severely affect both Syrian refugees as well as the host populations.

⁶ INFORM Risk is a global, open-source risk assessment for humanitarian crises and disasters

<https://drmkc.jrc.ec.europa.eu/inform-index/INFORM-Risk>

⁷ The INFORM Severity Index is a way to objectively measure and compare the severity of humanitarian crises and disasters globally. <https://drmkc.jrc.ec.europa.eu/inform-index/INFORM-Severity>

⁸ UNOCHA Escalating Needs Report (May 2023).

⁹ World Bank data 2022.

	SYRIA¹⁰	LEBANON¹¹	JORDAN¹²
People in need of humanitarian assistance	15.3 million, including: 4.1 million in extreme & catastrophic need, 11.2 million in severe need	3.9 million, including: 1.5 million displaced Syrians 2.1 million vulnerable Lebanese 0.1 million migrants 0.2 million Palestinian (incl. from Syria)	740 000 registered refugees
Refugees and IDPs	6.8 million IDPs, including: 2.9 million in Northwest Syria 0.65 million in Northeast Syria 3.45 million in Government-controlled areas 438 000 Palestine refugees from Syria	1.5 million displaced Syrians (765 322 registered Syrian refugees ¹³) 19 930 refugees of other nationalities 180 000 Palestinian Refugees from Lebanon (PRL) 29 000 Palestinian Refugees from Syria (PRS)	660 000 Syrians 80 000 refugees of other nationalities 2.3 million Palestinian refugees in Jordan 18 000 Palestinian refugees from Syria
People in need of health services	15.3 million	4.2 million (2.3 million Lebanese/migrants/PRL/PRS, 1.37 million Syrian refugees)	740 000 registered refugees
Food insecure people	12.1 million	1.41 million (871 000 Lebanese/migrants/PRL/PRS, 540 000 Syrian refugees)	1.7 million Jordanians and 549 000 refugees ¹⁴
People in need of WASH support	13.6 million	2.8 million (1.56 million Lebanese/migrants/PRL/PRS, 1.24 million Syrian refugees)	130 000 refugees
People in need of shelter support	5.7 million	870 000 Syrian refugees 912 000 Lebanese 210 000 PRL+PRS	365 000 Syrian refugees
Children in need of Education in Emergencies	6.9 million school-aged children, with 2.45 million out of school.	1.45 million school-aged children, including 715 000 Syrian refugees, 40% of school-aged Syrian refugees out of school	235 000 school-aged Syrian refugees ¹⁵ , with 84 000 out of school

2.2. Description of the most acute humanitarian needs

2.2.1. Food Security and Livelihoods (FSL)

Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine had a substantial impact on Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon, reducing the availability of, and accessibility to agriculture products, leading to sharply rising costs of basic goods and food products, with severe negative effects on large parts of the population, notably of the most vulnerable.

Syria: Food security remains of particularly serious concern, with an estimated 12.1 million people requiring food assistance to cover their daily needs, including all 2 million people living in camps, who are considered fully dependent on humanitarian assistance. Additionally, 2.9

¹⁰ HNO 2023.

¹¹ UNOCHA Escalating Needs Report 2023.

¹² Statistics for Registered Persons of Concern (UNHCR, June 2023).

¹³ UNHCR operations data portal (as of 30 June 2023).

¹⁴ FAO 'Jordan Food Security Update', 2021

¹⁵ Education Sector Working Group 2023 strategy document (May 2023).

million people are at risk of sliding into food insecurity if the crisis continues to worsen¹⁶. In Northwest Syria, some 1.3 million people rely entirely on WFP's general food distribution. There are wide-ranging needs for support, from emergency food assistance to targeted livelihood opportunities to help beneficiary households become self-reliant (e.g., agricultural inputs, cash grants, technical capacity-building). The situation is further exacerbated by the continuous economic and water crises, whose main consequences include the loss of livelihoods, and a massive reduction in purchasing power. Mounting food insecurity, eroded livelihoods, escalating debt, and continued displacement continue to erode the resilience of the population to repeated shocks and lead to negative coping mechanisms, such as child labour, early marriage, school drop-out, and the selling of household assets¹⁷.

Lebanon: Food insecurity continues to rise. With the Lebanese currency having lost 70% of its value between May 2022 and May 2023, and the cost of the food minimum survival basket (MEB) increasing 119%-fold between January and April 2023¹⁸, the purchase of staple foods has become unaffordable for many. As a result, 1.4 million of the people living in Lebanon are food insecure at crisis or at emergency level¹⁹. The economic collapse contributes to reduced livelihood opportunities in a strongly restrictive labour environment for refugees. Amongst Lebanese, unemployment almost tripled between 2018/19 and 2022 to 28%, and youth unemployment reached 49%²⁰. Those working without access to foreign currency see their salaries very significantly reduced in value.

Jordan: 66% of the refugee population live below the poverty line²¹, mainly due to a lack of access to livelihood opportunities. This has been further exacerbated by the effects of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine that has led to a deterioration of the food security of refugees. About 90% of refugee families employ at least one negative coping strategy, such as reducing food intake or buying household goods on credit²².

2.2.2. Health

Syria: The health system in Syria is seriously compromised with only about half of the Primary Healthcare Centres and hospitals functional. The main needs include comprehensive primary and secondary healthcare, trauma, post-operative care, physical rehabilitation, life-saving obstetric and reproductive health, and mental health and psychosocial services (MH/PSS). The spiralling costs of health services, lack of health staff, medicines, and supplies, constitute the main barriers to access health services. Disrupted water networks and waste management, displacement, insufficient shelter solutions and food insecurity contribute to exposing populations to epidemic-prone diseases. The number of people in need of nutrition support is increasing since 2016. Over 360 000 children under five are malnourished, close to 76 000 of them suffer from severe acute malnutrition (a 48% increase compared to 2021). It is estimated that in 2023-24, 5.9 million people will need nutrition assistance²³.

Lebanon: The public health system has nearly collapsed. The departure of qualified staff and excessive running costs caused many health departments and diagnostic services to close. The removal of subsidies on drugs and medical supplies led to severe shortages and caused a tenfold

¹⁶ HNO 2023.

¹⁷ HNO 2023.

¹⁸ WFP IPC updates, July 2023.

¹⁹ IPC 2023.

²⁰ OCHA Escalating needs report, 2023.

²¹ Chinedu Temple Obi 2023, UNHCR Jordan, World Bank 2023. Poverty Measurement for Refugees in Jordan.

²² UNHCR, socio-economic situation of refugees in Jordan, Q2 2023.

²³ HNO 2023.

increase in prices, making health services unaffordable for large parts of the Lebanese population. Subsidy schemes for Syrian refugees are increasingly insufficient, with patient cost shares unaffordable for the majority. Financial barriers among Lebanese are seriously aggravated by the complete disruption of public and private insurance schemes. The dire state of the health sector is reflected in the deterioration of health indicators, including routine immunisation rates, maternal and neonatal mortality, and frequent outbreaks of preventable diseases such as measles and HAV/hepatitis A.

Jordan: The provision of health services in refugee camps remains the sole responsibility of external aid donors, with acute gaps in primary healthcare and in sexual and reproductive health. While refugees living in urban areas can access healthcare services at a subsidised rate, this still represents an unaffordable cost, due to worsening economic conditions and a lack of livelihood opportunities.

2.2.3. Protection

Syria: Critical gaps and challenges remain for all population groups in Syria. More than 15 million people need protection assistance²⁴, and severe protection risks are reported at community level in all governorates. Violations of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) continue to be a major cause of human suffering for the civilian population in Syria. In areas directly affected by hostilities, attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure continue, including on markets and water facilities, causing displacement, loss of assets and livelihoods and contamination by explosive hazards. Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), early/forced marriage and child labour, arbitrary arrests, and detention, disappearance and forced conscription, as well as access to civil documentation and Housing, Land and Property (HLP) rights, remain of particular concern.

Lebanon: Most registered Syrian refugees do not have legal residency (83% in 2022)²⁵, exposing them to serious protection risks, including deportation without due process. Without the resumption of registration, obstacles to obtaining or renewing legal stay remain, including a reduced capacity of the General Directorate of General Security in processing legal residency requests. Equally, non-registered refugees and other stateless persons in Lebanon face grave protection risks, being subject to restrictions in movement, exploitative behaviour, limited access to basic services, livelihood, and education opportunities etc. For Lebanese, birth, and life event registration (e.g. marriage) is decreasing, enhancing the risk of statelessness²⁶. Among the stateless, high levels of child marriage to obtain citizenship are being observed. The anti-refugee rhetoric and the perception of an aid bias in favour of refugees against vulnerable Lebanese, are giving rise to increased social tensions between communities, and act as a push factor for the deportation and return of Syrians to Syria, as well as for host communities to demand greater access to humanitarian assistance. It has also resulted in refugees self-restricting their movement out of fear, adding to the deterioration of psychological wellbeing. Increasing poverty and accumulation of debt have led to an increase in severely negative coping mechanisms, as well as child labour, child marriages, trafficking, onward movements, and gender-based violence.

Jordan: The main priorities are access to basic services, and the preservation of asylum space, including through ensuring legal protection, and the monitoring of risks and needs of populations of concern. Over 7 000 non-Syrian asylum seekers live in Jordan without proper

²⁴ HNO 2023.

²⁵ Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees (VaSyR) 2022.

²⁶ Protection sector updates, Inter-Agency, July 2023.

documentation since 2019, putting them at risk of detention, forced relocation to camps or deportation.

2.2.4. Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

Syria: WASH systems have suffered from significant damage and destruction related to the conduct of hostilities, to lack of adequate maintenance, a continuous brain-drain of technical staff, a failing energy supply grid and poor water resources management. In many parts of Syria, these systems require significant repair and operational support. More than 13.6 million people are highly dependent on humanitarian assistance to access sufficient and affordable safe water, adequate sanitation, and solid waste management or hygiene supplies. In 2023, water insecurity has further deteriorated because of the February 2023 earthquakes, continuous drought, lower water levels in the Euphrates river and groundwater aquifers, and significant deterioration of the level of functionality of the main water systems.

Lebanon: Due to structural shortcomings and rising levels of poverty, more than three million people are at risk of losing access to safe water. Water shortages force households to increasingly rely on unsafe and more expensive alternatives such as collecting untreated water from springs or using water trucking, contributing to the spread of waterborne diseases. Access to water is jeopardised further by shortages in electricity and fuel for the generators that power water pumps²⁷. Needs in water and sanitation increased by at least 25% across the country²⁸.

Jordan: Around 7 500 Syrians stranded in Rukban/the ‘Berm’ need access to safe water and sanitation.

2.2.5. Shelter, Settlements and Non-food Items (NFIs)

Syria: 5.7 million people are estimated to need emergency shelter and settlement support inside Syria. Populations in earthquake affected areas, IDPs and returnees are disproportionately affected. Almost 5.7 million people live in substandard, damaged or inadequate shelter. The lack of emergency NFIs remains critical.

Lebanon: Reduced purchasing power puts a strain on accessing safe and affordable housing, notably for refugees and migrants. Some 870 000 Syrians in Lebanon live in inadequate conditions; out of whom 150 000 live in non-residential shelters and 330 000 in non-permanent informal tented settlements. Movements of vulnerable Syrians and Lebanese into Palestinian camps is noted, due to shelter being more affordable, though also substandard, causing tensions and increasing over-crowdedness, and protection risks.

Jordan: Following price increases combined with the new electricity tariff regulation, many refugees living in urban settings are facing difficulties paying their rent, leading to an increased number of evictions.

2.2.6. Education in Emergencies (EiE)

Syria: Access to education remains limited, with 2.45 million children aged 5 to 17 out-of-school. 6.9 million children and education personnel need emergency education services²⁹. A third of all schools have been either partially damaged or destroyed. Existing services are unable to meet the different learning needs. Many children in school continue to have reduced

²⁷ UNICEF report “Struggling to keep the tap on” (July 2022).

²⁸ UNHCR “Lebanon: 2022 End of Year Sector Dashboard - Water sector” (February 2023).

²⁹ HNO (2023).

learning time. The lack of schools, inadequate and unsafe learning environments, limited teacher availability and capacity, disruptions in learning, difficulty to meet costs, all affect education opportunities and learning outcomes of children, and their opportunities to live dignified lives in their future.

Lebanon: Due to the ongoing crisis the number of children out of school increased significantly. An estimated 57% of Syrian children remain out of school, and 59% of Syrians aged 15-24 have never attended school, training, or had an employment³⁰. 35% of the refugee households have halted their children's education, because they could no longer afford it, often resulting in child labour and early marriage for girls. Access, retention, and transition from non-formal education (NFE) to formal education all face bottlenecks. Education access was further hampered by widespread teacher strikes that have been sporadically ongoing for almost three years.

Jordan: The deteriorating economic conditions increase the risk of children to drop out of school and of being exposed to child labour and early marriage. Approximately 112 000 children have remained out of school, including almost 40 000 Jordanian children³¹.

2.2.7. Disaster Preparedness (DP)

Syria: Syria ranks among the countries most at risk, with active conflict still affecting the country, notably in North and South Syria. Large-scale displacement continues, while rapid response remains necessary to cater for localised emergency needs. Moreover, disasters caused by natural hazards are affecting local populations more frequently and with increasingly drastic impacts on the population. Seasonal floods, drought conditions, harsh winters, all largely linked to climate change, are increasingly limiting the availability of water, affecting agricultural production, and leading to the outbreak of largely preventable diseases such as cholera.

Lebanon: Lebanon is vulnerable to a wide range of natural and human-induced hazards, including the effects of climate change. The 2020 Beirut Port explosion demonstrated shortcomings regarding the response capacity and preparedness of Lebanese authorities, as well as concerning the humanitarian coordination and response structures. The main existing threats are forest fires, floods, disease outbreaks (e.g. cholera) and chemical hazards, as well as the increasing intra- and inter-communal violence.

Jordan: Jordan is vulnerable to recurrent flash floods, followed by landslides, between October and January. In addition, it is prone to drought in summer, further limiting water availability.

3. HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE AND COORDINATION

3.1. National / local response and involvement

Syria: The ability and willingness of public authorities to deliver public services remain very limited and biased, while outside Government-controlled areas, line ministries are almost entirely absent. The earthquakes of February 2023 have further decreased the capacity of Syrian communities to respond to the crisis. Humanitarian assistance is mainly implemented by over 200 national NGOs partnering with the UN and INGOs. National NGOs' capacities vary across the country. INGOs operating from Damascus continue to be subjected to politicisation and administrative limitations in partnering with local actors. Their access

³⁰ VaSyR 2022 (May 2023).

³¹ UNICEF annual country office report 2022.

remains suboptimal, subject to delays and denial by the authorities. In the Northwest, humanitarian assistance is provided by UN agencies and INGOs mainly via local organisations and continues being subject to intense politicisation and other constraints. In the Northeast, the response relies on international/local NGOs operating cross-border from Iraq (Kurdistan Region), and to a lesser extent on the UN/NGOs operating crossline from Damascus, with challenges particularly related to the security context and sustained access.

Lebanon: The lack of a functioning government and partial breakdown of the public sector has resulted in an inability to service the needs of the population. Given the depth of the crises, the caretaker government will face challenges to introduce the necessary reforms to build up capacity and address these needs. Lebanon has an active civil society and an extensive network of national NGOs. To capitalise on local actors' outreach, meaningful partnerships and complementarities with international NGOs and community networks are essential.

Jordan: The multi-year Jordan Response Plan (JRP) led by the government, renamed the Jordan Priority Response Plan (JPRP) in 2023, is the only national comprehensive plan through which the international community provides financial support for the short- to mid-term response for both refugees and vulnerable Jordanians, and for the coordination between government and more than 150 national and international partners. The Jordan National NGOs Forum (JONAF) regroups more than 40 civil society and community-based organisations involved in the humanitarian response and development efforts. JONAF representatives attend the Humanitarian Partners Forum meetings.

3.2. International Humanitarian Response

Syria: The Whole of Syria (WoS) coordination architecture is composed of the Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator in Damascus, the Regional Humanitarian Coordinator in Amman, and the Deputy Regional Humanitarian Coordinator in Gaziantep. Its objective is to ensure a coherent, efficient, and cost-effective multi-sectoral response in Syria, through direct, crossline and cross-border assistance. The main coordination fora (Humanitarian Country Team in Damascus, Humanitarian Liaison Group in Gaziantep, and Syria Strategic Group in Amman) regularly engage with the donor community through post-meeting briefings and ad-hoc discussions via the Syrian Donors Working Group (SYDWG). Similarly, clusters and sectors provide regular updates to donors. In addition, NGO coordination platforms exist in each operational hub and play a key role in terms of response, coordination, advocacy, and access. The yearly published Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) and Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) provide a comprehensive and consolidated analysis of the impact of the humanitarian crisis in Syria and constitute the key reference documents for humanitarian actors. Over the past years, the HRP has remained massively underfunded.

In neighbouring countries

The Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan, developed under the leadership of national authorities, aims to strengthen the protection, humanitarian assistance, and resilience of affected populations. It integrates and is aligned with existing national plans, including the Jordan Response Plan (JRP) and the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP) and country chapters in Egypt, Türkiye, and Iraq. The UNHCR leads the inter-agency coordination for the Syrian Refugee Response, while UNRWA is responsible for the coordination of the assistance to Palestine refugees in Syria (PRS). Despite the existence of coordination fora, the response remains fragmented.

Lebanon: The humanitarian response is led by the UNHC/RC, supported by OCHA, and overseen by the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT). It includes representatives from the UN, the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, donors, and the NGO platforms LHIF (Lebanon Humanitarian INGOs Forum) and LHDF (Lebanon Humanitarian and Development NGOs Forum). Until 2023, two response plans have been in place: the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP), targeting Syrian refugees and host communities, and the Emergency Response Plan (ERP), targeting vulnerable Lebanese, migrants, and Palestinian refugees. A Joint Country Framework (CF) combining the LCRP and the ERP is presently being established. Sectoral working groups are merged where possible and joint assessments and analyses are planned to streamline data and response. Policy works and coordination is ensured with the Lebanon Reform, Recovery & Reconstruction Framework (3RF) addressing the consequences of the Beirut Port blast, ensuring policy formulation that benefits a “Whole of Lebanon” crisis response.

Jordan: The overall humanitarian architecture changed in 2022 following the departure of the double-headed Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator (RC/HC), and the disappearance of the HC position in Jordan. The humanitarian coordination body was renamed “Jordan Strategic Humanitarian forum” (JoSH) and is chaired by UNHCR, while the RC focuses on liaising with development actors. A Humanitarian Donor Group (HDG) aims at facilitating the coordination between all donors and liaising with JoSH. The Jordan INGO Forum (JIF) brings together over 50 international organisations, representing them during the main in-country fora and exercising an advocacy role.

Donor contributions to humanitarian programmes amounted to:

- For Syria, the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) received USD 1.6 billion, or 29.6% of its funding requirements.
- The LCRP received USD 1.108 million, or 28% of its funding requirements.
- The JRP 2020-2022 appeal was extended to 2023, with a total requirement of USD 2.28 billion for 2023. It has so far received USD 373 million, or 16.4% of its funding requirements³².
- The Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) has received USD 923 billion, or 15.8 % of its funding requirements³³.

In June 2023, the EU hosted the seventh Brussels Conference on Supporting the Future of Syria and the Region, which resulted in pledges amounting to EUR 4.7 billion for 2023, and multi-year pledges of EUR 995 million for 2024 and beyond.

3.3. Operational constraints in terms of:

- a) access/humanitarian space:

Syria: There are concerns regarding humanitarian access, IHL violations, protection of humanitarian workers and duty of care in all parts of Syria. Frequent cases of aid-interference and restrictions of humanitarian access continue being reported across the country. In Government-controlled areas, administrative requirements continue to negatively affect movements of humanitarian actors and their capacity to implement activities independently. Crossline delivery of assistance from Damascus to Northern Syria remains marginal when

³² MOPIC statement – July 18, 2023.

³³ Syria Refugee Response and Resilience Plan (3RP) 2021 | Financial Tracking Service (unocha.org).

compared to the magnitude of needs. In Northwest Syria, insecurity continues to hamper access considerably. Continued negotiation is required to ensure the respect of humanitarian space, as remote management and implementation via national actors remain a main modality of delivery of humanitarian assistance. NGOs conducting cross-border operations also continue to face scrutiny and administrative challenges, while the principle of cross-border assistance remains overly politicised as observed with the non-renewal of the UNSC Resolution 2672 in July 2023. In the Northeast, the multiplication of active frontlines and armed groups, including the Islamic State group (ISg), affect the implementation of humanitarian assistance. Solid risk mitigation measures, including third party monitoring, risk management plans and the early identification of both risks and response strategies, are crucial in this operational environment and must continue to be promoted by all humanitarian actors. Despite all difficulties, humanitarian access is still possible.

Lebanon: The security situation is extremely fragile, with widespread social unrest, volatility in the Palestinian camps, and in areas of informal tented settlement (ITS). The restrictive regulatory framework, including the suspension of UNHCR registration of refugees in 2015, reduces access to legal residency. Restrictive border entry for Syrians and increased trends of evictions, raids and deportations contribute to limiting the effectiveness of the response and increase fear and self-restrictions among refugees. UN non-accessibility to the border leads to a gap in data on cross-border movements. Perception of aid bias towards refugees is further affecting humanitarian movements, as well as the provision of essential health and water services, and supply chains.

Jordan: Due to the closure of the Jordanian-Syria border, there is no humanitarian access to the population stranded in Rukban/the ‘Berm’ area, where about 7 500 people are still displaced with little or no access to the most basic assistance.

b) partners (presence, capacity), including absorption capacity on the ground:

Syria: While frequent and unpredictable administrative, access and operational limitations have contributed to reducing the effectiveness of the response, there is generally a good absorption capacity of partners in most humanitarian sectors. 37 INGOs are registered in Damascus, in addition to Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, a high number of local NGOs and most UN agencies. In Northwest Syria, cross-border assistance continues to be provided by NGOs based in Türkiye, working through more than 150 Syrian NGOs/CSOs through remote management, which requires stringent risk management. Cross-border assistance by UN agencies is seriously challenged following the non-renewal of UN Security Council Resolution 2672 in July 2023. Implementation through and support to local organisations (including capacity-building) actively contributes to the localisation agenda and to ensuring a timely and effective response. In Northeast Syria, international humanitarian actors have an established presence in Raqqa, Aleppo, Deir Ez Zor, and Hassakeh Governorates. Assistance is provided by NGOs operating cross-border from Iraq and by UN and NGOs operating from Damascus.

Lebanon and Jordan: There is a large presence of international organisations in both countries, in addition to a stable presences of civil society groups and NGOs.

c) other:

Syria: While the different operational areas and hubs significantly differ in terms of implementation modalities, the risk of instrumentalisation of humanitarian assistance and aid diversion exist in all parts of Syria.

Northwest Syria is one of the most challenging and risky environments for the delivery of assistance due to the presence of various Armed Non-State Actors (ANSAs) and the overwhelming humanitarian needs in all sectors. The widespread insecurity has driven humanitarian operations to be implemented predominantly through remote management. Under this modality, humanitarian actors work with local implementing partners as the most viable way to deliver assistance to an extremely vulnerable population that is heavily concentrated at the Turkish border.

Risk management policies, practices, protocols, and tools such as third-party monitoring, and the early identification of risks and response strategies, are well-developed in Northwest Syria and there is an important level of scrutiny of humanitarian operations by donors, the UN and INGOs.

In the Northeast, humanitarian actors are facing multiple challenges particularly due to insecurity, frequent outbreaks of armed violence, and direct attack on facilities, and the constant threat of large-scale military operations.

The main constraint for humanitarian assistance in Government-controlled areas is the limited choice of partners due to the NGO registration system that are to a significant extent entrusted by the Government to the Syrian Arab Red Crescent and the Syria Trust for Development.

While the risk of instrumentalisation of humanitarian assistance cannot be excluded, control mechanisms as well as risk analysis and risk mitigation policies and measures have been established by humanitarian actors and donors. The volatility of the exchange rate, the gap between official and informal rates, as well as delays in the transfer of funds to Syria represent additional constraints to humanitarian partners operating in Syria.

The multitude of armed groups in control of territory pose additional challenges for humanitarian logistics. While the border-crossing points to Jordan have re-opened at the end of 2021, insecurity in Southern Syria does not allow a scaling up of deliveries through this transit route. Delays in supply chains and increased costs for operating in the ports of Tartous, Lattakia and in Mersin is affecting supply lines of humanitarian partners on food and non-food items delivery. Cross-border access to Northeast Syria is depending on one single informal border crossing while crossline access by road is at times limited due to insecurity and restrictions by local authorities. Continuous UN cross-border access to Northwest Syria remains uncertain.

Lebanon: Rampant inflation risks eroding the value of external assistance. Inflation, increasing fuel prices and the global impact of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine affect local and international supply chains also used by humanitarian organisations.

Jordan: Long processes to obtain approvals from the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MoPIC) negatively affect the timeliness of the humanitarian response. A total review of the Jordan Response Information System for the Syria Crisis (JORISS) has been initiated in 2023 with World Bank support but is not expected to bear fruits before end of 2024.

4. HUMANITARIAN – DEVELOPMENT – PEACE NEXUS

Syria: Investments of development actors in longer-term support continue to face significant constraints and challenges inside Syria. Opportunities for stronger synergies and coordination with other EU instruments (notably with DG NEAR and the Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI)) have been identified and are intensifying in targeted sectors across the country with the aim of further enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of addressing the humanitarian emergency in Syria. Relevant sectors include food security and livelihoods, health (from emergency care/trauma to technical support and capacity-building), WASH, shelter, mine-action (including mine mapping, removal, and risk education), and Education in

Emergencies. In these sectors, existing needs remain largely under-funded and further coordination, with a particular emphasis on resilience and early recovery, will be promoted across donors and instruments, in line with the Strategic Objective 3 of the HRP 2023, and with a view to further promoting a coherent and integrated response between instruments.

Lebanon: The Joint Humanitarian-Development Framework (JHDF) governs the coordination and cooperation modalities of DG ECHO and other EU services, defines pathways to align and/or integrate programming into national frameworks and identifies durable solutions. Following the 2020 Beirut Port explosion, the EU achieved further synergies with actors such as the World Bank. After a Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment (RDNA), a recovery plan (3RF) and an associated governance structure were set-up under the auspices of the EU, the World Bank, and the UN. A coordinated approach to addressing the needs of vulnerable Lebanese should be ensured, always considering that additional humanitarian funds are meant to be time-bound and cannot alone provide a sustainable solution to the current situation. An agreement with the International Monetary Fund and the implementation of economic reforms are essential to trigger the necessary larger involvement from development donors, which will facilitate the envisaged exit strategy for humanitarian actors.

DG ECHO supports Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA) to address the needs of Syrian refugees and the most vulnerable Lebanese with a humanitarian entry point ensuring a “cash plus” approach including protection and with a clear focus on referral to essential services. DG NEAR supports cash and food assistance for refugees and vulnerable Lebanese and is working towards social protection for vulnerable Lebanese including disability allowances. In view of the rise in extreme poverty, DG ECHO will focus its advocacy on an expansion of cash assistance by donors until solid and sustainable government systems are put in place and socio-economic conditions have improved.

In the education sector, DG ECHO facilitates access to quality education for Syrian refugees through the provision of non-formal education (NFE) and improving pathways towards the formal education system, the latter being substantially supported by DG NEAR. The Ministry of Education and Higher Education launched a five-year strategy including NFE, and DG ECHO will focus on strengthening NFE models until the system reaches maturity.

DG ECHO addresses gaps in the health sector, providing for a minimum of continuity of care with a special focus on hospitalisation and (access to) sexual and reproductive health programming integrated in protection programming. Activities are time-bound and linked to capacity building. Emergency interventions may continue to be adopted if needed, while DG NEAR continues to support the provision of long-term primary health care (PHC) under the auspices of the Ministry of Health.

Jordan: A Joint Humanitarian-Development Framework (JHDF) co-led by DG NEAR, DG ECHO and the EEAS is in place providing joint analysis and priorities for EU funding instruments. It establishes a division of labour within the main sectors of intervention (health, WASH, education, protection and rule of law, social protection, livelihoods), and is exploring a further transitioning from humanitarian to development interventions of relevant segments of these sectors.

In the education sector, DG ECHO will continue focusing its support on refugee camps, while initiating a transitioning process of its supported actions towards longer term actors, including other EU instruments.

In the health sector, DG ECHO addresses primary health care as well as sexual and reproductive health care services in refugee camps, and DG NEAR the support to PHC and activities related to non-communicable diseases. Further transitioning of services supported at camp level, such as the clinics funded by DG ECHO in Azraq and Zaatari camps, to the state health system remains an objective.

In the protection sector, DG ECHO has enhanced its collaboration with DG NEAR to seek complementarities in areas of common interest such as GBV programming, defining potential exit strategies for protection assistance (especially for out-of-camp population) and preparing a possible transition of relevant activities.

5. ENVISAGED DG ECHO RESPONSE STRATEGY AND EXPECTED RESULTS OF HUMANITARIAN AID INTERVENTIONS

5.1. Envisaged DG ECHO response

5.1.1. Priorities

Syria: DG ECHO's response will be implemented based on the EU Strategy for Syria³⁴. DG ECHO will continue to primarily focus on responding to life-saving emergency needs and protection concerns of the most vulnerable. Support will also be provided to meet protracted needs with the objective to reach basic minimum standards and/or to those at risk of life-threatening situations, improving humanitarian outcome and promoting early recovery. DG ECHO will support activities that respond to specific shocks and needs with primary needs assessments and beneficiary targeting.

Assistance must be delivered through the most appropriate modalities and entry points, in a timely and principled manner, ensuring the provision of an integrated and flexible life-saving response and a coordinated, multi-sectoral life-sustaining response, according to the needs. Where necessary, DG ECHO will support logistics operations, such as temporary common storage, free-to-user transshipment services, coordinated procurement and air transport, with the aim to support and improve the delivery of principled humanitarian aid, including for areas with limited humanitarian access.

The strategy will apply to all operational hubs, in line with the Whole of Syria (WoS) approach, which DG ECHO will continue to support. Wherever possible and appropriate, DG ECHO will also look at supporting resilience-oriented activities in coordination with other EU instruments, in line with the Strategic Objective 3 of the Humanitarian Response Plan. Early recovery is one of the available humanitarian response modalities and it is to be implemented in line with humanitarian principles and IHL. Synergies across early recovery and emergency response should be identified and strengthened.

In line with the needs identified above, DG ECHO's strategy will prioritise the following key sectors and activities:

- **Emergency response and disaster preparedness and First Line Emergency Response (FLER):** The FLER approach aims at providing a localised, timely, flexible, targeted, and multi-sectoral response to urgent and emerging needs in the aftermath of a rapid onset crisis. In specific contexts, the Crisis Modifier could be considered. Essential elements include contingency plans, prepositioning of stocks, well-defined decision processes and triggers for engagement/disengagement. Innovative access strategies/contingency planning that prioritise continuity and complementarity of services remain the basis of DG ECHO's operational approach.
- **Humanitarian Food Assistance, Food Security and Livelihoods (FSL):** DG ECHO will consider food security interventions aiming at building an integrated approach from emergency response to early recovery and resilience programmes, particularly through

³⁴ EU strategy for Syria: Reinforcing efforts to bring peace (2017).

livelihood interventions that could benefit from multi-annual intervention strategies. FSL activities should prioritise the use of cash where feasible and appropriate, in line with DG ECHO policy and duly informed risk management.

- **Health:** Focus on improving access to quality essential health services and timely assistance, including basic and comprehensive primary health care services with management and treatment of malnutrition, trauma and post-operative care, physical rehabilitation, life-saving obstetric and reproductive health, MH/PSS, and response to disease outbreaks. Multi-annual intervention strategies could be considered to support the provision of essential services and to facilitate specialised procurements.
- **Protection:** Support to vulnerable groups including persons with disabilities and children based on a protection risk assessment; prevention and response to SGBV; PSS; case management; safe and equal access to services, including evidence-based humanitarian advocacy; protection trends and analysis; access to legal aid and civil documentation, in coordination with other EU instruments. Protection will also be considered as an essential component to be mainstreamed across all sectors.
- **WASH:** DG ECHO support will encompass duly justified emergency rehabilitation, extension repair, operation and maintenance of existing water supply and wastewater treatment services and infrastructure, particularly where no alternative water sources are available. Water trucking should remain a response of last resort. Multi-annual intervention strategies could be considered in this sector.
- **Shelter, Settlements and Camp Coordination Camp Management (CCCM):** Emergency interventions will be prioritised, with a balanced and context-specific approach between in- and out-of-camp settings and between emergency and transitional solutions. Rapid, cost-efficient, light repairs of individual dwellings aiming at accommodating the most vulnerable could also be considered. Provision of NFI and timely implementation of critical winterization assistance will be considered, as will CCCM interventions whose added value are clearly demonstrated. HLP considerations should be factored in.
- **Education in Emergencies:** DG ECHO will continue to support non-formal education for out-of-school children and children already enrolled in formal education but at risk of dropping out, with the aim to provide the most relevant pathways to enter, re-enter and stay in formal education. Multi-annual strategic interventions will be considered. Related actions such as light repairs of school facilities, the rehabilitation of basic WASH services as well as provision of hygiene supplies will also be considered. Child protection activities should form an integral part of relevant projects.

Lebanon: DG ECHO will continue to support life-saving interventions targeting the most vulnerable at-risk populations in Lebanon, notably Syrian refugees as well as vulnerable Lebanese, explicitly promoting models aimed at enhancing efficiency, effectiveness and accountability of the humanitarian response and coordination. The provision of assistance will be done in an integrated manner and provided solely based on needs, considering that overall, Syrian refugees still show the highest vulnerability levels.

- **Basic Assistance:** Addressing the needs, including food security, of people living below survival thresholds. Extremely vulnerable populations will be targeted with the intention to provide services in line with needs (“cash plus”) and to integrate them into longer-term assistance schemes.
- **Protection:** Strategic protection monitoring and identifying protection risks, refugee registration and verification, response to SGBV, child protection, legal assistance, and

support to access civil documentation. Integrated protection programming based on solid evidence while ensuring rigorous monitoring.

- **Emergency response / disaster preparedness:** Support to emergency response and preparedness; build humanitarian surveillance and response capacity; strengthen contingency planning including through crisis modifiers for medium-scale emergencies.
- **Education in Emergencies:** Access to inclusive quality education targeting vulnerable out-of-school children in line with relevant regulatory frameworks, with a focus on non-formal education with clear learning outcomes and pathways to the formal education sector and integrated child protection.
- **Health:** If required and avoiding any potential overlap with other EU-supported actions, support to lifesaving/emergency health interventions and continuum of care encompassing access to health services and medication, hospital services at a secondary/tertiary level, integrated health programming aimed at reducing protection risks, and acting as an entry point into protection cases.
- **Shelter:** If required, emergency rehabilitation for conflict affected individuals, including rubble removal and repairs of building, rehabilitation of collective centres and other damaged infrastructures.
- **Analysis & Advocacy:** Support to identifying critical structural and programmatic gaps in the response enhancing evidenced-based analysis for programming and advocacy.
- **Coordination:** Support to integrated coordination, enhancing the accountability towards affected populations, and improving access to services/referral systems.

Protection, prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA), accountability to affected populations (AAP), conflict-sensitive programming/ “do no harm”, localisation, and project “greening” (with particular attention to water scarcity and waste management issues, and to small-scale renewable energy installations) should be mainstreamed in all sectors.

Jordan: DG ECHO will continue providing humanitarian assistance to undocumented and unregistered refugees, to the most vulnerable within host communities, persons stranded in border areas and refugees living in camps. As per government regulations, humanitarian actors are required to include up to 30% of most vulnerable Jordanians within their interventions. This approach will continue to be coordinated with other EU instruments. DG ECHO, with the support of the EU Delegation, will continue to advocate with the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation to accelerate the approval process of DG ECHO-funded projects. Protection will remain a crosscutting component across all sectors and project “greening” (with particular attention to water scarcity) should be mainstreamed. DG ECHO support will focus on:

- **Health:** Advocating for continued access to health services for refugees in camps or host communities, and for re-establishment of access to health services for those stranded in Rukban/the ‘Berm’. Support will mostly focus on critical interventions and reproductive health care, with a priority on services within camps.
- **Protection:** Promotion of IHL and Refugee Law, provision of legal assistance, including support for documentation and enhancing the protection environment for the most vulnerable.
- **Education in Emergencies:** Activities at camp level that enable safe and inclusive access to quality education, including the provision of learning support, targeting out-of-school children and children at risk of dropping out.

- **WASH and Coordination:** activities might also be considered, specifically in response to emergencies or increased humanitarian needs.

5.1.2. Programmatic Partnerships

The ongoing Programmatic Partnerships with OCHA in Syria, and with OCHA and with IFRC in Lebanon are intended to be continued in 2024. No other opportunities for Programmatic Partnerships have been identified. However, in Syria and in Lebanon, partners are welcome to submit relevant proposals demonstrating i.e. the longer-term logic of intervention and its added value. Refer to HIPTA section 3.e for technical and administrative details.

5.1.3. Multi-Year Funding

Syria: Food security and livelihoods, health, WASH, and education in emergencies, as detailed in section 5.1.1 above, may benefit from multi-year funding.

Lebanon: All sectors mentioned in section 5.1.1 above may benefit from multi-year funding.

Jordan: Education in Emergency as well as protection interventions may benefit from multi-year funding as detailed in section 5.1.1 above.

Refer to the HIPTA sections 3.g and 4.d for technical and administrative details.

5.2. Other DG ECHO interventions

The Emergency Toolbox HIP may be drawn upon for the prevention of, and response to, outbreaks of Epidemics. Under the Emergency Toolbox HIP, the Small-Scale Response, Acute Large Emergency Response Tool (ALERT) and Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) instruments may also provide funding options.

Activities under this HIP might be complemented by the activation of the European Humanitarian Response Capacity (EHRC). The EHRC is a DG ECHO led global initiative, aiming at supporting humanitarian partners for the delivery of humanitarian assistance with a gap-filling approach. Under the EHRC the Commission has at its disposal several tools that can be activated in case of sudden onset disasters, e.g., a series of Common Logistics Services (including air operations, warehousing services, last-mile ground transportation, etc.), a stockpile of emergency items, and deployment of humanitarian expertise.