# Resilience Marker

**General
Guidelines**

**(2022)**

# 1. What is resilience and how to integrate it in humanitarian assistance?

*"Resilience is the ability of an individual, a household, a community, a country or a region to withstand, adapt and to quickly recover from stresses and shocks."*

(EU Joint Communication, *A Strategic Approach to Resilience in the EU's external action*, 2017)

The European Commission is committed to strengthening resilience and reducing vulnerabilities. Using different policy instruments, including humanitarian and development assistance, the Commission's approach to resilience aims at reducing the impact of crises and at strengthening the capacities of individuals, communities and countries (governments) to cope with them[1].

DG ECHO's mandate is to address the immediate needs arising out of natural and human-induced crises[2]. However, these actions can present opportunities for strengthening resilience. DG ECHO's approach to resilience, and the intent of its Resilience Marker, is to ensure that these opportunities are used to the greatest extent possible without compromising humanitarian principles.

**Four steps are key to anchor resilience in humanitarian programmes:**

- Conduct an analysis of risks – whether from natural hazards, human-induced threats, disease outbreaks/epidemics or environmental degradation - and an analysis of vulnerabilities and their causes;
- Be risk-informed (i.e. ensure that the activities are designed on the basis of existing risks and vulnerabilities and do not aggravate such risks or vulnerabilities);
- Contribute to building local capacities so that the most vulnerable can cope better with a future crisis or an after-shock; and
- Include a deliberate strategy to reduce future humanitarian needs and identify modalities to connect with ongoing/possible future development interventions (both government-led or of international organisations).

It is critical to note that for resilience, context matters. The abilities and opportunities of humanitarian actors to integrate resilience in their activities are different in sudden-onset and slow-onset disasters, in conflict settings, in protracted emergencies, and in situations with weak or strong local capacities. Therefore, the modality and degree to which resilience can be strengthened has to be adjusted to the local context.

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[1] See EU COM (2012) 586.

[2] See Council Regulation 1257/96 (1996).

# 2. What is the Resilience Marker and why do we need it?

To implement its commitment to resilience, DG ECHO systematically includes resilience strengthening objectives in its Humanitarian Implementation Plans (HIPs). Additionally, it has developed a Resilience Marker, which is a tool to assess to what extent humanitarian actions funded by DG ECHO integrate resilience considerations.

The Marker seeks to enhance the quality of humanitarian actions by ensuring a systematic consideration and inclusion of resilience considerations in context evaluation, project design and implementation. In so doing, the Marker also contributes to:

- Creating a platform for partners and DG ECHO staff to discuss how resilience can best be included in humanitarian programming;
- Encouraging reflection on what resilience means in practice in different contexts; and
- Allowing DG ECHO to monitor and report on its own performance in supporting resilience.

# 3. How does the Resilience Marker work?

Four key elements help to promote resilience through humanitarian programming:

- An analysis of the risks – whether from natural hazards, human-induced threats, diseases outbreaks/epidemics or environmental degradation - and an analysis of the vulnerabilities and their causes;
- Implementing risk-informed programming;
- Strengthening local preparedness capacities (directly or in cooperation with other actors); and
- Adopting longer-term strategies, possibly linking humanitarian activities to ongoing/future development interventions.

These elements are reflected in the four **criteria** or core questions of the Marker:

**1. Do the proposed project activities adequately reflect an analysis of risks and vulnerabilities – including conflict, environment and climate risks?**

☐ Yes     ☐ Not sufficiently

Provide details

**2. Does the project adopt a do no harm and conflict sensitivity approach and include specific measures to ensure that the identified risks and any environmental impacts of the project are addressed to the extent possible, and are not aggravated by the action?**

☐ Yes     ☐ Not sufficiently

Provide details

**3. Does the project include measures to strengthen local preparedness capacities (of individuals and national/local institutions/organisations) to respond or adapt to identified risks?**

☐ Yes     ☐ Not sufficiently

Provide details

**4. Does the project contribute to long-term strategies to reduce humanitarian needs, underlying vulnerability and risks or identifies modalities to link up with ongoing development interventions (national and/or international stakeholders)?**

☐ Yes     ☐ Not sufficiently

Provide details

The Marker records whether or not humanitarian actions meet each of these criteria sufficiently or not. Actions receive an overall resilience mark depending on how many criteria are met. This mark will be automatically calculated pending the number of "Yes" or "Not sufficiently" replies on the 4 questions above.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| The action meets none or 1 criterion | **=** | 0 |
| The action meets 2 or 3 criteria | **=** | 1 |
| The action meets 4 criteria | **=** | 2 |

In case of actions including a variety of activities, partners or implementation areas, these actions might integrate resilience considerations to varying degrees. If so, the answer for each of the four questions of the Marker should reflect the average performance of the action in terms of integration of resilience considerations and the differences should be noted in the text box provided in the electronic Single Form (eSF) under each question. The eSF contains a text box for each of the four questions so that partners can provide additional explanation on the approach and objectives of the action as well as a justification in case the action does not sufficiently address a specific question of the Marker.

# 4. How to fill in the Resilience Marker and how is it assessed?

When partners submit a proposal for funding to DG ECHO using the eSF, they include a self-assessment of the project. Subsequently, DG ECHO field staff enter their own assessment into the DG ECHO internal project appraisal form (FichOp – see Annex I), where it is validated by the responsible desk officers at Headquarters' level. DG ECHO staff update their assessment at mid-term as part of the FichOp's monitoring or mid-term report. They also respond to questions on the risk-informed nature of the assessed project. This assessment ensures that the Resilience Marker tracks the actual performance of the project (rather than only the proposal) and that changes in the context can be taken into account throughout the implementation period.

The final mark is determined by DG ECHO as part of the FichOp's final report, based on the overall resilience performance of the project. The mark is communicated to the partner through the information system APPEL, with a possibility for follow up discussion with responsible DG ECHO officers.

# 5. What if the context or the type of action makes it difficult to integrate resilience building activities?

Integrating resilience concerns into humanitarian interventions can be challenging in certain contexts and projects may not always be able to meet all the marker criteria fully. For example, it may not be appropriate to align project activities with government plans or strategies if the government is an active party to a conflict. Or it may be appropriate to solely focus on providing immediate relief in a very acute emergency, rather than including additional activities on how to prepare for a better response to future hazards or threats. In these cases, criteria 3 and 4 might not be fully met, not because of a low quality project, but because in this particular context there are limits to a real integration of resilience building activities.

While the possible limitations caused by the context are well acknowledged and the overall mark of the project does not constitute in itself a condition for funding (ref. question 5), it is expected that the project attempts to address the questions of the marker to the best possible extent, particularly regarding risk and vulnerability analysis as the basis for the intervention. Furthermore, as the context evolves, the project may be modified (if possible) to integrate further elements of resilience. In all these cases, partner organisations are expected to explain any constraints in integrating resilience in the text box under each question of the Resilience Marker.

For urgent actions and actions funded under emergency decisions[3] that use the simplified eSF, partners and DG ECHO staff do not have to fill out the Resilience Marker at proposal stage to speed up the process. However, even urgent actions are expected to take resilience into consideration. Therefore, it will be expected that partners explain how these elements were addressed and will be addressed at the interim report stage and final report stage.

It is to be noted that only in specific circumstances the Marker is **not applicable** in full. These include projects that do not deal directly with affected populations such as, for example, a research or study or a technical training programme for staff only. If this is the case, the partners can briefly explain the reason why the Marker is not applicable in the text box after each question.

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[3] For more on emergency decisions: www.dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu/ngo/financing-decision/emergency-and-ad-hoc-decisions

# 6. Does the mark determine whether or not DG ECHO funds a project?

**No.** Project proposals do not need to reach a pre-determined threshold in terms of a mark to be eligible for funding. **However, the answers provided will weigh into the appraisal of the project, particularly in relation to the environmental impacts of the project in line with the requirements set for partners starting from 2023[4].** The marker criteria reflect important quality indicators and allow for taking into account variations between different humanitarian contexts. Projects are therefore expected to meet the criteria of the Resilience Marker unless the context or the type of action do not allow it (for more information, see question 5).

# 7. Where to include or find relevant information in the e-Single Form?

The eSF is the format and tool for DG ECHO's partners to submit their proposed activities to DG ECHO. The information included in eSF proposals or reports therefore forms the basis for completing the Resilience Marker. The table below shows where in the eSF partners should include, and DG ECHO staff can find, information related to resilience and environmental concerns – beyond the Resilience Marker. However, DG ECHO field staff should also include additional information from discussions with partner organisations, experiences with previous projects, monitoring visits and other sources such as risk and vulnerability analyses in their assessment. This information will be included in the FichOp (more on the FichOp in Annex 1).

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[4] Launched at the European Humanitarian Forum (EHF) 2022, year 2022 is considered a transition year for the implementation of the environmental requirements, while full implementation will start as of 2023.

| CRITERIA | ⬆ RELEVANT SECTIONS IN THE E-SINGLE FORM |
|---|---|
| **(1) Analysis of risks and vulnerabilities** | Section 1.4: Executive summary of the action<br>Section 4.1: Assessments dates and methodology<br>Section 4.2: Problems, needs and risks analysis<br>Section 5.1: Beneficiaries – identification criteria |
| **(2) The project adopts a do no harm and conflict sensitivity approach, addresses and does not aggravate the identified risks and any environmental impacts** | Section 1.4 : Executive summary of the action<br>Section 3.2: Synergies, links, complementarities with your other actions<br>Section 4.3: Response analysis<br>Section 7: Logic of intervention<br>Section 10.3: Logistics |
| **(3) The project strengthens local preparedness capacities to respond or adapt to identified risks** | Section 1.4: Executive summary of the action<br>Section 4.3: Response analysis<br>Section 5.2: Involvement of beneficiaries in the design of and in the action<br>Section 7: Logic of intervention |
| **(4) A deliberate strategy to reduce future humanitarian needs, underlying vulnerabilities and risks and identifies modalities to link-up with ongoing development interventions** | Section 1.4: Executive summary of the action<br>Section 3.2: Synergies, links, complementarities with your other actions<br>Section 11.1: Operational coordination with other humanitarian actors<br>Section 11.3: Coordination with national and local authorities<br>Section 11.4: Coordination with development actors and programmes |
| **Additional comments or constraints concerning resilience** | Section 8: Resilience Marker, individual text box after each RM criteria |

# 8. How to assess the different marker criteria?

## 1. Analysis of risks and vulnerabilities

**Indicative elements for consideration:**

- The analysis identifies relevant existing and potential risks in the project area. These should include current and future climate-related hazards, both sudden (e.g. floods, hurricanes/cyclones/typhoons, forest fires, heatwaves, etc.) and slow-onset (droughts, sea level rise, desertification, coastal erosion, salinification of groundwater, etc.), geological hazards (landslides, earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions), environmental degradation (e.g deforestation, water pollution), food price hikes, epidemics or technological hazards (e.g. oil spill, industrial explosion) and equally threat of an outbreak or intensification of conflict or violence. The analysis should inform the design of the intervention by considering the identified risks and their impact on the target population/geographical area. The analysis should therefore also identify the exposure (what areas might be affected), and intensity and likelihood (i.e. the level of risk).
- The analysis identifies the vulnerability of different population groups (age, gender, and disability, as well as contextually relevant social, ethnic, religious and other diversity groups) to these hazards and threats (e.g. *which population groups will be most affected by the identified hazards and threats and why?*).
- The analysis identifies what causes and drives these vulnerabilities.
- Coping mechanisms and livelihood patterns/strategies are also identified to determine what capacities different population groups have to cope with shocks and how these could be leveraged.

Please refer to the Disaster Preparedness Guidance Note section 3.2.1 on Risk Assessment for more details.

**Examples for the application of criterion 1:**

**"Yes":** A humanitarian organisation operating in a protracted emergency conducts a detailed analysis of the root causes of vulnerability using existing information (e.g. what drives conflict or what livelihood strategies and coping mechanisms do affected populations have to deal with recurring droughts and floods, or whether any of the coping mechanisms are further contributing to environmental degradation) and co-ordinates this assessment with development actors.

**"Not sufficiently":** A health clinic operating in a refugee camp in a cyclone-prone region was initially not designed to resist high winds because there was no risk assessment. After a project review, the structure was strengthened and contingency plans put in place. The original proposal would have been marked not sufficient and the mark would have been revised following this change.

## 2. The project adopts a do no harm and conflict sensitivity approach, addresses and does not aggravate the identified risks and any environmental impacts

**Indicative elements for consideration:**

- The proposed activities are designed on the basis of the risk and vulnerability analysis conducted so that they respond to the identified risks and vulnerabilities. Additionally, the proposal identifies where the proposed activities may create or increase risks and vulnerability for the assisted population in order to mitigate such an event.

- The proposal identifies potential negative environmental impacts of the proposed activities, during and after the implementation of the action, using an existing (NEAT+[5], CEDRIG[6]) or an adapted methodology. The proposal mentions which methodology was used. Examples of negative environmental impacts by sector can be found here: www.ehaconnect.org/clusters/

- The proposal includes adequate measures to avoid or mitigate the **negative effects** identified *(e.g. targeting criteria or location of services are chosen in consultation with communities to prevent hostilities potentially leading to conflict and to safeguard access; clean energy is provided in camps to limit deforestation and therefore reduce the risk of landslides, fossil fuel use is replaced with renewable energy, e.g. solar power, use of plastic is reduced but ideally avoided, water over-abstraction is prevented, more environmentally sustainable relief items are procured, and proper waste management is integrated into the project)*[7].

- **Projects are able to adapt or scale up their activities since future hazards or threats as these have been identified in the risk analysis and hence interventions adjusted** (e.g. hospitals with mobile teams able to react to disasters or incidents of violence; systems enabling scale-up of operations during emergencies).

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[5] www.eecentre.org/resources/neat

[6] www.cedrig.org

[7] For more ways to mitigate negative environmental impacts consult the *Report on Environmental Footprint of humanitarian assistance for DG ECHO*, 2020. Available at: www.urd.org/en/publication/report-on-environmental-footprint-of-humanitarian-assistance-for-dg-echo-2020

- **The proposal includes adequate measures for protecting project outputs from risks** (e.g. choosing sites for warehouses and distributions that are not at risk of floods, landslides or earthquakes; providing tents that are storm-proof; continuity measures in case of escalation of risk or violence – so services can be maintained if access becomes limited).

## 3. The project strengthens local preparedness capacities to respond or adapt to identified risks

### Examples for the application of criterion 2:

**"Yes"**: A humanitarian organisation operating in a fragile context identifies a high risk for conflict to break out. It proposes to involve various communities when identifying water points in order to avoid aggravating tensions. It also adopts a decentralised approach to provide water to affected villages. In each village, local committees are trained to manage water points and distribution to avoid water over-abstraction and so that if violence escalates, water will still be available. Leaks in water distribution systems are identified and repaired to prevent water wastage.

**"Not sufficiently"**: A project providing emergency shelter, food assistance and WASH to temporary, tented settlements does not indicate if there will be protective shelter or drainage for the upcoming rainy and hurricane season. It also does not include management of the waste from the food packaging or from the shelters once they reach end-of-life.

### Indicative elements for consideration:

- The proposal include training or assets components that help communities, national/local institutions and other local relevant actors (e.g. civil society, private sectors, etc.) to respond and/or adapt in a timely and effective way to hazards and threats (e.g. strengthen the capacity of local institutions and communities; use cash-for-work for protective structures; support a multi-sectoral analysis of needs and response).

- The activities are geared towards establishing legal provisions, protocols and resources that support response operations (e.g. establish arrangements, protocols and/or operating procedures for and/or implementing anticipatory or early actions[8]; strengthen shock responsive social protection systems; contribute to sector contingency plans; development of contingency plans; strengthening of Early Warning Systems; etc).
- The proposal identifies if the proposed activities could undermine the capacities of individuals, communities, local governments and civil society to cope with future hazards and threats and includes adequate measures to avoid or mitigate negative effects (e.g. the provision of services by international actors could undermine the capacity of local institutions; the sustained delivery of relief goods could undermine livelihoods and create dependency among beneficiaries; providing relief could reduce incentives for local authorities to address root causes or prepare for disasters).

### Examples for the application of criterion 3:

**"Yes":** The project strengthens the capacities of disaster management structures to establish or strengthen multi-hazard preparedness and response systems to ensure effective Early Warning and Early Action. This includes development and operationalization of multi-hazard contingency plans, improving early warning systems and enhancing surge capacity, with a view to accessing and expanding anticipatory action mechanisms.

**"Not sufficiently":** An organisation operating in a protracted complex emergency proposes to provide free health services. It intends to hire and train local health practitioners. However, it does not explain how it would relate to existing community health committees and it provides no analysis of the effects the project could have on existing private health facilities or how these effects could be mitigated.

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[8] **Anticipatory or Early Actions** (AA/EA) are taken when a disaster is imminent (or, in the case of a slow-onset disaster, when it is about to reach a peak). Therefore, they are carried out before a crisis occurs, or before a significant development within a crisis. Early actions are implemented according to a pre-determined protocol, which describes the activities to be undertaken and pre-agreed triggers established on the basis of historical and current forecast analysis [Disaster Preparedness Guidance Note – for more information please refer to section 6.2 of the Guidance Note].

## 4. A deliberate strategy to reduce future humanitarian needs, underlying vulnerabilities and risks and to link up with ongoing development interventions

### Indicative elements for consideration:

- The risk and vulnerability analysis is developed in consultation with other actors and stakeholders (including humanitarian and development organisations, government, civil society and private sector – as appropriate).

- The project demonstrates a good understanding of the multi-sectoral assistance required and of who delivers it and complements or supports other assistance plans where beneficial (e.g. the proposal contains a mapping of humanitarian and development actors and their activities in relevant sectors; it uses existing mechanisms and systems avoiding duplication; funds are requested for international medical teams and supplies, while the need for strengthening local health systems is emphasised).

- As much as the context permits, the project links and contributes to relevant government plans or strategies (e.g. project activities use existing support channels; necessary information and updates are provided to relevant local actors).

### Examples for the application of criterion 4

**"Yes":** After responding with emergency interventions during a severe drought and food insecurity, an NGO partner continues to work with communities, building their resilience through water source development, livestock health services, income generation and improved drought early warning. In the intervention, different partners co-ordinate with local authorities in a programme that combines disaster risk management, livelihood building, improving basic social services and increasing access to Government safety nets.

**"Not sufficiently":** An NGO proposes to work in collaboration with a consortium of other NGOs to provide multi-sectoral support to an earthquake-affected district to meet immediate and anticipated needs for a six-month period. The proposal contains little information on how services provided will be sustainable or how pre-existing capacities (e.g. for water distribution, health) will be utilised or re-established. The NGO is new to the area and has not demonstrated an understanding of the context and has not established mechanisms for coordinating with local institutions.

# 9. Annex I: FichOp section on the Resilience Marker

The FichOp is a document internal to DG ECHO with all observations, comments, and initial appraisals, report of monitoring and final decision from field and desk staff on a project funded by DG ECHO. There is a dedicated section on the Resilience Marker as follows:

Is the marker applicable YES or NO/N.A. (Not Applicable)

Marker overall score on the basis of Technical Assistant answer to all questions: 0 – 1 – 2

[Scoring: None or 1 YES = 0; 2 or 3 YES = 1; 4 YES = 2]

If the mark differs from that self-assessed by the partner, please explain where the discrepancy is.

**The action:**

☐ is risk-informed

☐ is risk-informed and integrates one or more disaster preparedness result(s)

☐ is a targeted Disaster Preparedness action

☐ has embedded considerations of climate risks and contributes to climate resilience

☐ has embedded considerations of environmental impact and includes mitigation measures to this end

☐ has embedded considerations of conflict sensitivity (if applicable)

DG ECHO uses the information provided in the FichOp, particularly the checklist above, to track its performance against policy priorities.

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