COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT

COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION

of EU Humanitarian Aid, 2012-2016

{SWD(2019) 4 final}
Table of contents

1. INTRODUCTION ............................................................................................................. 4
  1.1. Purpose...................................................................................................................... 4
  1.2. Definitions ............................................................................................................... 4
  1.3. Scope ...................................................................................................................... 5

2. BACKGROUND TO THE INTERVENTION ..................................................................... 7
  2.1. Description of the intervention and its objectives .................................................. 7
  2.2. Intervention logic of the European Union’s humanitarian aid ................................ 11
  2.3. Baseline and points of comparison ....................................................................... 17

3. IMPLEMENTATION / STATE OF PLAY ..................................................................... 18

4. METHOD ....................................................................................................................... 22
  4.1. Description of methodology .................................................................................. 22
  4.2. Limitations and robustness of findings .................................................................. 24

5. ANALYSIS AND ANSWERS TO THE EVALUATION QUESTIONS ....................... 26
  5.1. Relevance .............................................................................................................. 26
  5.2. Coherence ............................................................................................................. 32
  5.2.1. Internal coherence ............................................................................................. 32
  5.2.2. External coherence ........................................................................................... 40
  5.3. Effectiveness ......................................................................................................... 49
  5.4. Efficiency ............................................................................................................. 56
  5.4.1. Cost-effectiveness ............................................................................................. 56
  5.4.2. Coordination .................................................................................................... 59
  5.5. EU Added Value ..................................................................................................... 60
  5.6. Sustainability ......................................................................................................... 62
  5.7. Global initiatives and developments ..................................................................... 67
  5.8. Potential for simplification and burden reduction .................................................. 68

6. CONCLUSIONS ........................................................................................................... 70
  6.1. Relevance .............................................................................................................. 70
  6.2. Coherence ............................................................................................................. 72
  6.3. Effectiveness ......................................................................................................... 74
  6.4. Efficiency ............................................................................................................. 75
  6.5. EU Added Value ..................................................................................................... 76
  6.6. Sustainability ......................................................................................................... 77
  6.7. Global initiatives ................................................................................................... 77
  6.8. Lessons Learned .................................................................................................... 78

ANNEX 1: PROCEDURAL INFORMATION ....................................................................... 82
ANNEX 2: STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION ................................................................. 89
ANNEX 3: ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK INCLUDING EVALUATION QUESTIONS ............ 99
ANNEX 4: RESULTS OF THE OPEN PUBLIC CONSULTATION .................................. 111
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Term or acronym</strong></th>
<th><strong>Meaning or definition</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AFD</td>
<td>Agence Française de Développement</td>
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<td>AGIR</td>
<td>Global Alliance for Resilience Initiative</td>
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<td>COHAF</td>
<td>Council Working Party on Humanitarian Aid and Food Aid</td>
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<td>DAC</td>
<td>Development Aid Committee</td>
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<td>DCI</td>
<td>Development Cooperation Instrument</td>
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<td>DFID</td>
<td>Department for International Development</td>
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<td>DG CLIMA</td>
<td>Directorate-General for Climate Action</td>
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<td>DG DEVCO</td>
<td>Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development</td>
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<td>DG ECHO</td>
<td>Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations</td>
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<td>DG HOME</td>
<td>Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>DG NEAR</td>
<td>Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations</td>
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<tr>
<td>DIPECHO</td>
<td>European Commission Humanitarian Aid department’s Disaster Preparedness Programme</td>
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<td>DRR</td>
<td>Disaster Risk Reduction</td>
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<td>EAR</td>
<td>Emergency Aid Reserve</td>
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<td>ECA</td>
<td>European Court of Auditors</td>
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<td>EDF</td>
<td>European Development Fund</td>
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<td>EEAS</td>
<td>European External Action Service</td>
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<td>ENI</td>
<td>European Neighbourhood Instrument</td>
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<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<td>EUAV</td>
<td>EU Aid Volunteers</td>
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<td>EUTF</td>
<td>EU Trust Fund</td>
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<td>ExAR</td>
<td>External Assigned Revenues</td>
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<td>FAFA</td>
<td>Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement</td>
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<td>FAO</td>
<td>Food and Agriculture Organisation</td>
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<td>FPA</td>
<td>Framework Partnership Agreement</td>
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<td>FTS</td>
<td>Financial Tracking Service</td>
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<td>GB</td>
<td>The Grand Bargain</td>
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<td>HIP</td>
<td>Humanitarian Implementation Plan</td>
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<td>IASC</td>
<td>Inter-Agency Standing Committee</td>
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<td>ICRC / CICR</td>
<td>International Committee of the Red Cross</td>
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<td>IFRC</td>
<td>International Federation of the Red Cross</td>
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<td>IHL</td>
<td>International Humanitarian Law</td>
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<td>INGO</td>
<td>International Non-Governmental Organisation</td>
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<td>IO</td>
<td>International Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>KOI</td>
<td>Key Outcomes Indicator</td>
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<td>KRI</td>
<td>Key Results Indicator</td>
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<td>LRRD</td>
<td>Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>MS</td>
<td>EU Member States</td>
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<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental organisation</td>
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<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development</td>
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<td>OFDA</td>
<td>US Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance</td>
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<td>SHARE</td>
<td>Supporting Horn of Africa Resilience</td>
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<td>SIDA</td>
<td>Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency</td>
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<td>TFEU</td>
<td>Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union</td>
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<td>UCPM</td>
<td>Union Civil Protection Mechanism</td>
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<td>UK</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
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<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<td>UNHCR</td>
<td>Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees</td>
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<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund</td>
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<td>UNOCHA</td>
<td>United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs</td>
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<td>USAID</td>
<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
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<td>WFP</td>
<td>World Food Programme</td>
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<td>WHO</td>
<td>World Health Organisation</td>
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<td>WHS</td>
<td>World Humanitarian Summit</td>
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<td>WWD</td>
<td>Worldwide Decision</td>
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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. PURPOSE

This Staff Working Document presents the results of a comprehensive evaluation of the European Union's humanitarian aid, which refers to Article 30(4) of the Financial Regulation. The evaluation examines how well the EU has conducted itself as a humanitarian donor and what results have been achieved in different contexts, while identifying what works and what doesn't. It provides inputs for shaping the EU's future approach to humanitarian aid in view of recent, major events and developments (such as the World Humanitarian Summit and the Grand Bargain), as well as current and future challenges to the provision of humanitarian aid. The evaluation is based on an external study carried out between January and December 2017, which builds on 27 other evaluations and is the sole source of evidence for this document.

1.2. DEFINITIONS

The humanitarian aid activities covered by this evaluation are those carried out under Article 214 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU). Given the different sources of funding for these activities (i.e. the original EU humanitarian budget plus ad-hoc contributions from other financial sources), ‘EU humanitarian aid’ in the context of the evaluation means all activities undertaken by the Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO) in the field of humanitarian aid, including both EU-funded humanitarian aid and the policy and implementation frameworks within which they take place.

The use of acronyms in this document is kept to a minimum. However, the following acronyms, which refer to particularly frequent terms, are utilised throughout the document without being spelled out in all instances.

DG ECHO  The European Commission's Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations

OCHA  United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

UNHCR  Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

ICRC  International Committee of the Red Cross

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1 The Financial Regulation is the main point of reference for the principles and procedures governing the establishment, implementation and control of the EU budget. It is accompanied by Rules of Application, which are more detailed and technical.

2 The World Humanitarian Summit, held in Istanbul, Turkey, on 23 and 24 May 2016, was organised by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA). The summit’s goal was to reform the humanitarian aid system so as to enable it react more effectively to today’s many crises.

3 The Grand Bargain is an agreement between more than 30 of the biggest donors and aid providers, which aims to get more resources into the hands of people in need. It includes a series of changes in the working practices of donors and aid organisations that would make available an extra billion dollars over five years for people in need of humanitarian aid. These changes include gearing up cash programming, greater funding for national and local responders and reducing bureaucracy through harmonised reporting requirements.

IFRC  International Federation of the Red Cross
UCPM  Union Civil Protection Mechanism
LRRD  Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development: to link short-term relief measures with longer-term development programmes in order to create synergies and provide a more sustainable response to crisis situations.

DRR  Disaster Risk Reduction: a systematic approach to identifying, assessing and reducing the risks of disaster. It aims to reduce socio-economic vulnerabilities to disaster as well as dealing with the environmental and other hazards that trigger them.

HIP  Humanitarian implementation plan: each year, the European Commission (‘the Commission’) adopts a ‘worldwide decision’ covering all the humanitarian aid actions the Commission expects to fund during a given period. In the context of this decision, the Commission prepares and publishes humanitarian implementation plans (HIPs) which provide more detailed information on the operational priorities identified.

1.3. SCOPE

The evaluation makes a comprehensive assessment of the EU’s humanitarian aid actions between 2012 and 2016, implemented under:

- Art. 214 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU);
- Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/96 of 20 June 1996 on humanitarian aid (‘the Regulation’); and
- the policy framework of the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid (the Consensus) and specific humanitarian sector policies.

It should be noted that the Regulation is not linked by duration to a specific EU Multiannual Financial Framework, nor does it provide an explicit schedule for evaluation.

The evaluation covers the policy and implementation frameworks which the Commission has put in place for humanitarian aid, and the delivery of this aid to the beneficiaries.

The period chosen refers first of all to the five-year perspective of the Commission’s evaluation programming. On that basis, DG ECHO developed an approach whereby all EU humanitarian aid actions worldwide are covered by external geographic and thematic assessments over a five-year period. These feed into an external comprehensive evaluation – like the current one – at the end of that period. Thus this evaluation is largely a meta-exercise, complemented by additional research to fill information gaps left by the set of existing evaluations. The comprehensive evaluation provides an opportunity to gain an overview of the main components of the EU’s framework for humanitarian aid, such as global priority setting, which is not feasible in individual geographic and thematic assessments.

The evaluation period chosen includes a number of significant developments and events at global level. The IASC® Transformative Agenda, agreed in 2011, triggered a number of changes within the

5  http://ec.europa.eu/echo/what/civil-protection/mechanism_en
global humanitarian system. These were designed to improve the effectiveness of humanitarian response through greater predictability, accountability, responsibility and partnership. The war in Syria built up at the beginning of the period, and had a considerable impact both on the structure of humanitarian funding and on approaches to delivery (e.g. the move towards cash-based assistance). Finally, the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit identified a number of new approaches in the delivery of humanitarian aid.

As outlined in the Roadmap established for this evaluation, the following criteria were to be assessed:

- relevance (including needs assessments and coordination with other donors and partners);
- effectiveness;
- efficiency (including cost-effectiveness and efficiency of partners, and an estimate of the potential for regulatory simplification and burden reduction);
- coherence/connectedness (including the contribution of humanitarian aid actions to resilience building and Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development – LRRD\(^7\); and cooperation with Civil Protection);
- EU added value; and
- sustainability.

This evaluation does not cover the other programmes managed by DG ECHO, i.e. the Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM), the EU Aid Volunteers initiative, and the (recently launched) Instrument for Emergency Support within the EU. However, it does examine complementarity and coherence with the first two instruments, which have been evaluated separately.\(^8\)

It should be noted that this evaluation is not part of the package of mid-term evaluations of the EU’s other external financing instruments, although it examines the coherence with some of those instruments.

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6 The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) is the primary mechanism for inter-agency coordination of humanitarian assistance. It is a unique forum involving the key UN and non-UN humanitarian partners. The IASC was established in June 1992 in response to United Nations General Assembly Resolution 46/182 on the strengthening of humanitarian assistance.

7 The basic idea behind LRRD is to link short-term relief measures with longer-term development programmes in order to create synergies and provide a more sustainable response to crisis situations.


   ESI: Not completed at this point.
2. BACKGROUND TO THE INTERVENTION

2.1. DESCRIPTION OF THE INTERVENTION AND ITS OBJECTIVES

Background

The concept of humanitarian aid stems from the establishment of the Red Cross movement and the first Geneva Convention in the 1860s. It encompasses aid and action designed to save lives, alleviate suffering and maintain and protect human dignity during and in the aftermath of man-made crises and natural disasters. In more recent years, prevention of and preparedness for such situations have been added to the definition.

The concept differs from other forms of assistance and foreign aid in that it is guided by the principles of:

- **Humanity**: saving human lives and alleviating suffering wherever it is found;
- **Impartiality**: acting solely on the basis of need, without discrimination between or within affected populations;
- **Neutrality**: acting without favouring any side in an armed conflict or other dispute where such action is carried out;
- **Independence**: the autonomy of humanitarian objectives from the political, economic, military or other objectives that any actor may hold with regard to areas where humanitarian action is being implemented.

Legal basis

The Lisbon Treaty contains a specific legal basis for humanitarian aid (Article 214 TFEU), making it a distinct part of the EU's external action, separate from the common foreign and security policy and development cooperation. At the same time, humanitarian aid is covered by Article 21 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU), which lays down the general provisions on which the EU's external action is based, including respect for the principles of the UN Charter and international law, respect for human dignity, and solidarity.

Responsibility for humanitarian aid is shared between the Member States and the EU, the idea being that measures taken by the EU should complement and amplify those taken by EU countries, and vice versa. Article 214 of the TFEU allows the Commission to take any useful initiative to promote coordination between EU measures and those taken by Member States, to improve the efficiency and the complementarity of EU and national humanitarian aid measures. Finally, Article 214 states that the EU is to ensure that its humanitarian aid operations are coordinated and consistent with those of international organisations and bodies, in particular those belonging to the United Nations system.

The main legal instrument governing humanitarian aid at EU level is Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/96 of 20 June 1996 on humanitarian aid (‘the Regulation’). This takes account of

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9 In addition to those listed, the Red Cross movement applies voluntary service, unity, and universality, which refer specifically to the Red Cross movement and are thus not applied by the EU.
humanitarian principles, and sets out the general objectives of the EU’s humanitarian aid and the framework for achieving them.

**Objectives**

The EU’s humanitarian aid objectives as stipulated in its regulatory and strategic framework, referred to in the humanitarian implementation plans (HIPs) and other strategic documents are: *to save and preserve life, prevent and alleviate human suffering and safeguard the integrity and dignity of populations affected by natural disasters and man-made crises, in accordance with the core humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence* (see Table 1). The objectives also include action to facilitate or obtain access to people in need and ensure the free flow of humanitarian aid. The objectives are formulated broadly, thus allowing for adjustment to take account of the volatile global context of humanitarian aid with its ever-changing needs.

**Table 1. Detailed strategic objectives as stated in the Consensus and HAR**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To provide a needs-based emergency response aimed at preserving life, preventing and alleviating human suffering and maintaining human dignity wherever the need arises if governments and local actors are overwhelmed, unable or unwilling to act. EU humanitarian aid encompasses assistance, relief and protection operations to save and preserve life in humanitarian crises or their immediate aftermath, but also measures designed to facilitate or obtain access to people in need and the free flow of assistance. EU humanitarian assistance is provided in response to man-made crises (including complex emergencies) and to natural disasters as needed. Local response to crisis and disaster risk reduction (DRR), including disaster preparedness and recovery, are essential to save lives and enable communities to increase their resilience to emergencies. Capacity-building activities to prevent and mitigate the impact of disasters and to enhance humanitarian response are also part of EU humanitarian aid.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(a) to save and preserve life during emergencies and their immediate aftermath and natural disasters that have entailed major loss of life, physical, psychological or social suffering or material damage;</td>
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<td>(b) to provide the necessary assistance and relief to people affected by longer-lasting crises arising, in particular, from outbreaks of fighting or wars, producing the same effects as those described in subparagraph (a), especially where their own governments prove unable to help or there is a vacuum of power;</td>
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<td>(c) to help finance the transport of aid and efforts to ensure that it is accessible to those for whom it is intended, by all logistical means available, and by protecting humanitarian goods and personnel, but excluding operations with defence implications;</td>
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<tr>
<td>(d) to carry out short-term rehabilitation and reconstruction work, especially on infrastructure and equipment, in close association with local structures, with a view to facilitating the arrival of relief, preventing the impact of the crisis from worsening and starting to help those affected regain a minimum level of self-sufficiency, taking long-term development objectives into account where possible;</td>
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<td>(e) to cope with the consequences of population movements (refugees, displaced people and returnees) caused by natural and man-made disasters and carry out schemes to assist repatriation to the country of origin and resettlement there when the conditions laid down in current international agreements are in place;</td>
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<tr>
<td>(f) to ensure preparedness for risks of natural disasters or comparable exceptional circumstances and use a suitable rapid early-warning and intervention system;</td>
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<td>(g) to support civil operations to protect the victims of fighting or comparable emergencies, in accordance with current international agreements.</td>
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**Scope of action**

The EU, together with its Member States, is the world’s leading humanitarian aid donor and plays an important role in shaping the global humanitarian landscape. The EU seeks to ensure that its humanitarian interventions are consistent with humanitarian principles, are relevant in targeting the most vulnerable beneficiaries, and are duly informed by needs assessments. EU humanitarian action also promotes resilience building among targeted populations as far as possible. When necessary, the EU also takes a leading role in shaping the response to crises, while respecting the overall coordination role of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA).

EU interventions have a focus on funding critical sectors and addressing gaps in the global response, mobilising partners and supporting the overall capacity of the humanitarian system. The
EU intervenes not only in large-scale humanitarian crises attracting widespread attention, but also in forgotten crises, i.e. severe, protracted humanitarian crises where affected populations are receiving insufficient international aid, or none at all, and where there is little chance of solving the crisis or no political commitment to do so. Media interest in such crises is often low.

Actions funded by the EU are relief and protection operations on a non-discriminatory basis to help people in non-EU countries who are victims of natural and man-made disasters, particularly the most vulnerable among them. These actions should last for as long as is necessary to meet the humanitarian needs resulting from these different situations.

EU humanitarian aid covers areas such as:

- food and nutrition;
- shelter;
- healthcare;
- water and sanitation;
- protection; and
- education in emergencies.

The EU also supports disaster risk reduction and management (DRR/DRM) action in regions prone to natural disasters. This helps local communities react fast and efficiently when disasters occur, thus helping to save many lives. DRR/DRM is designed to build capacities and strengthen resilience to shocks triggered by natural hazards. It also supports climate change adaptation. The Commission’s disaster preparedness initiatives often take the form of community-based demonstration projects (‘seed money’), designed to save lives by developing successful DRR models that can be handed over to other actors (governments, development bodies) for replication and scaling-up in a subsequent phase. The Commission must thus ensure vertical and horizontal links with relevant actors mandated to exploit the results and capable of doing so, which requires both technical and political advocacy.

Humanitarian advocacy is a complementary component, by which the EU strives to influence other actors on topics such as humanitarian access, respect for international humanitarian law, adherence to humanitarian principles and good humanitarian donorship, and uptake of project results of DRR.

**Implementation framework**

On the basis of the Humanitarian Aid Regulation (Article 15) and the Financial Regulation, the Commission adopts financing decisions which provide the legal basis for funding individual actions carried out by around 200 recognised partners. The main financing decision is the Worldwide Decision (WWD), adopted annually, which covers all the humanitarian crises described in DG ECHO's general guidelines and operational priorities. The WWD is supported by geographical or thematic humanitarian implementation plans (HIPs), which help partners draw up their proposals. They are a reference for humanitarian actions covered by the WWD and contain an overview of humanitarian needs to be addressed in a specific country at a particular time.
The Commission has developed a two-phase framework for assessing and analysing needs in specific countries and crises. This framework provides the evidence base for prioritising needs, allocating funding and developing HIPs.

The first phase is a global evaluation with two dimensions:

- **The index for risk management** (INFORM) is a tool based on national indicators and data which allows for a comparative analysis of countries to identify their level of risk of humanitarian crisis and disaster. It includes three dimensions of risk: exposure to natural and man-made hazards, population vulnerability and national coping capacity. The INFORM data are also used to calculate a crisis index that identifies countries suffering from a natural disaster and/or conflict and/or hosting a large number of uprooted people.

- **The forgotten crisis assessment** identifies serious humanitarian crises where the populations affected are not receiving any insufficient international aid, or where such aid is inadequate. These crises are characterised by low media coverage, a lack of donor interest (as measured in aid per capita) and a weak political commitment to resolve the crisis, resulting in an insufficient presence of humanitarian actors.

The second phase of the framework focuses on context and response analysis:

- The integrated analysis framework is an in-depth assessment carried out by the Commission's humanitarian experts. It involves a qualitative assessment of the humanitarian needs arising from individual crises, taking into account the population affected and foreseeable trends.

The EU funds humanitarian aid actions implemented by humanitarian partners on the basis of framework agreements. It is important for the EU to have a wide range of partners, as this allows it to cover a diverse list of needs in different parts of the world.

To date, the Commission has a worldwide humanitarian network spread over almost 40 countries that ensure adequate monitoring of projects funded, provide up-to-date analyses of existing and forecast needs in a given country or region, contribute to the development of intervention strategies and policy development, provide technical support to EU-funded operations, and facilitate donor coordination at field level. The network also comprises seven regional offices which support the country offices with sectoral expertise.

**Coordination**

Various mechanisms are in place to ensure coordination of the funds allocated by the Commission and those of other humanitarian actors in response to crises:

- EU Member States convene regularly for the Council Working Group on Humanitarian Aid and Food Aid (COHAF), chaired by the rotating EU Presidency. The group coordinates overall strategies and responses to specific crisis situations.

- Implementation of the Humanitarian Aid Regulation is supervised by the Humanitarian Aid Committee, comprising representatives of the Member States and chaired by a Commission representative.

- The Commission has regular exchanges of views with the European Parliament (DEVE Committee).
• Commission experts in the field keep abreast of funds being considered or made available by other organisations. They participate in formal or informal donors' coordination groups, and in various countries they also take part in meetings of the humanitarian country team.

• The Commission's Emergency Response Coordination Centre supports a coordinated and rapid response to disasters inside and outside Europe using resources from the countries participating in the UCPM. The Centre is a coordination hub facilitating a coherent European response during emergencies, as was the case during the response to the Ebola crisis in 2014-201610.

• Regular discussions take place with UNOCHA on the overall state of funding with reference to the UN Humanitarian Response Plans11.

2.2. INTERVENTION LOGIC12 OF THE EUROPEAN UNION'S HUMANITARIAN AID

The EU’s mandate has two main aspects:

1) Responding to humanitarian needs:
   (a) providing immediate / short-term emergency response in the form of life-saving assistance, protection and / or crucial basic services to populations affected by crisis;
   (b) building resilience in the medium to long term, ensuring stability while contributing to the humanitarian aid-development nexus, and reducing dependence on further external aid.

2) Undertaking advocacy, coordination and policy development, which covers measures designed to influence and shape the global humanitarian system and improve the overall effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian aid.

Description of Intervention Logic 1: Responding to humanitarian needs

The first intervention logic, presented in the figure below, covers the EU’s ‘core’ humanitarian functions. These are driven by Article 214 of the TFEU and the objectives of the EU humanitarian aid policies as set out in Article 2 of the Regulation. These original objectives focus on:

   (1) providing assistance and relief;
   (2) making sure people have access to the aid provided, including people affected by longer-lasting crises;
   (3) managing the consequences of population movements; and
   (4) protecting affected communities.

Crises are always shaped by their specific context and require a bespoke response. For crises that extend beyond the short term, circumstances – including the needs addressed – tend to change, meaning that the response approach must be regularly reviewed. Moreover, since overall funding is limited and cannot cover all needs globally, overall priorities may shift from one budgetary year to the next, depending on how crises worldwide develop. In the context of the annual budget

11 Humanitarian response plans are established for any humanitarian crisis requiring the support of more than one UN agency, and are prepared by UN humanitarian country teams on the basis of a humanitarian needs overview.
12 A graphical description of the logical relationships between the resources used, activities carried out, and the expected outputs and outcomes of a programme.
allocation process (needs assessment, priority setting, Worldwide Decision, HIPs), priorities and responses are reviewed. Thus, the first intervention logic applies to the level of specific crises, and mainly to a short-term perspective – i.e. to each specific, annual HIP.

The Regulation further states that long-term objectives should be taken into account for the specific context where possible. Accordingly, humanitarian aid objectives go beyond relief actions, encompassing short-term rehabilitation and reconstruction work and preparedness measures. These are the first steps towards the objectives relating to resilience and Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development (LRRD) which were confirmed by the Consensus. Their purpose is to help countries and communities recover and withstand future stresses and shocks.

The two different elements of the first intervention logic, i.e. the immediate / short-term emergency response and the medium to long-term resilience-building actions, are expected to bring about different types of change. Immediate and short-term emergency support comprises actions to save lives, provide crucial basic services and protect the affected populations, particularly the most vulnerable. Such actions help improve the physical and psychological safety and wellbeing of people hit by a disaster, helping in turn to reduce mortality, suffering and morbidity and give people more dignified lives.

The EU’s medium- to longer-term support consists of funding DRR and resilience actions, advocacy, awareness-raising and capacity building. This support is expected to increase the capacity, skills and knowledge of beneficiaries and the wider community and to bring about specific socioeconomic improvements that should achieve both systemic and behavioural change. This can ultimately be expected to help reduce mortality, suffering and morbidity and give people more dignified lives.

It is assumed that the right partners are available on the ground and that there is access to local communities that are receptive to the funded actions. As regards medium- to longer-term support, it is assumed that some actions referring to the humanitarian aid-development nexus can be established, and that host countries have receptive government structures. Factors which may prevent objectives from being achieved are:

- a lack of access to the people in need of humanitarian aid,
- security concerns,
- a worsening of the crisis, and
- delays in implementing EU-funded actions.

The figure on the next page explains the relationships between the needs (at the bottom), actions funded, outputs, results and finally the impacts (at the top).
Intervention logic 1: The EU’s response to humanitarian needs

**Assumptions**
- Timely response clearly linked to needs assessments
- Effective targeting of aid
- Availability of partners on the ground
- Local communities are receptive to ECHO funded action
- Coordination of effort among various actors
- Nexus to development funding can be established
- For longer-term actions, interaction with public authorities is possible

**Risks**
- Security and access
- Implementation delays
- Worsening of crisis

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**External factors influencing change**
- Actions of other humanitarian actors and non-humanitarian players
- Widder contextual developments such as political and economic developments, climate change

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**Rationale for intervention:**
- Humanitarian needs arising from natural disasters or man-made crises: the number of people in need doubled between 2012 and 2016 (rising from 62 million in 2012 to 125 million in 2016. Source: UNOCHA)
- Violence, coercion, deliberate deprivation and abuse for persons, groups and communities in the context of humanitarian crises
- Inability or unwillingness of national governments/local actors to respond to these humanitarian needs
- Lack of sufficient financing to meet humanitarian needs: the global humanitarian financing gap more than doubled between 2012 and 2016 (rising from US$3.4 billion in 2012 to US$7.8 billion in 2016. Source: FTS)
Description of Intervention Logic 2: Undertaking advocacy, coordination and policy development

The second intervention logic has to do with the EU’s role in influencing and shaping the global humanitarian system and improving the overall effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian aid.

This role is in part born out of ‘necessity’ (i.e. rather than by explicit provisions) as set out in the rationale below, given for example the increased breaches of international humanitarian law and other relevant elements of international law, the lack of a joined-up approach between humanitarian actors and relevant non-humanitarian actors, and the growing complexity and scale of humanitarian needs, as well as the changing nature\(^\text{13}\) of emergencies. It also illustrates the EU’s positioning as a policy actor, following the earlier establishment of ECHO as a directorate-general, the appointment of a commissioner responsible for humanitarian aid and civil protection, and the subsequent introduction of Article 214 in the TFEU, as well as the EU’s objective of playing a bigger role in steering and contributing to global humanitarian policy development and practices.

The second intervention logic is based on some key policy developments that began with the December 2012 consultation ‘The Union's humanitarian aid: Fit for purpose?’\(^\text{14}\), the joint work on the Transformative Agenda, the evaluation of the Consensus in 2014 and the EU’s active participation in international fora on humanitarian aid, such as the World Humanitarian Summit and the Grand Bargain.

There are two aspects to this intervention logic, the first one reflecting the EU’s efforts to increase the impact of the humanitarian aid it provides, while the second one reflects EU action with an impact on the global humanitarian system and the provision of humanitarian aid by other actors.

Specific internal measures taken during the evaluation period on the basis of the above include continuous adjustments to the Commission's needs assessment process, which informed budget allocations, and, in 2015, a move towards regional HIPs (in addition to country-specific ones), underpinned by staff training, consultation with partners and other stakeholders, and awareness raising and capacity building of partners (e.g. in the area of protection). These measures are expected to help equip internal staff better to manage the change and involve external stakeholders in supporting this process too, resulting in improvements in programming, partner and project selection, and field capacity. They also contribute to the development of joint strategies and other initiatives with non-DG ECHO stakeholders, such as:

- the UK’s Department for International Development (DFID), cooperating on DG ECHO’s humanitarian Sahel strategy,
- the Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development (DG DEVCO), for the joint development strategies,
- several Member States contributing to the EU trust funds (EUTFs),\(^\text{15}\) and

\(^{13}\) For instance, as a result of factors like climate change, rapid and unsustainable urbanisation, or declining biodiversity.


\(^{15}\) A trust fund is an innovative mechanism under the EU’s Financial Regulation used in development cooperation to pool large resources from different donors to enable a swift, common, complementary and flexible response to the various dimensions of an emergency situation.
• Member States as part of external assigned revenues (ExAR)\(^{16}\).

Together, these measures are expected to result in the Commission's humanitarian partners becoming more effective and relevant to the context where they are implemented, and in better coordination of action with Member States and other donors, UN agencies, the UCPM, etc. In the longer term, the measures would also help strengthen the needs-based approach to the provision of aid, improved coherence of aid and better links to other EU policies, ultimately resulting in more effective humanitarian aid.

Specific external measures taken include the Commission’s engagement with other stakeholders in the global policy discussions on humanitarian aid, by leading on / participating in relevant events, preparing initiatives or supporting those initiated by others, and undertaking advocacy at different levels, from beneficiary countries to international fora. Like the internal measures, these result in the Commission engaging in joint measures with other stakeholders, but also in producing specific policies and guidance (e.g. on cash, on protection) and committing to wider international initiatives such as the World Humanitarian Summit and the Grand Bargain. In turn, these should allow for some tangible changes in terms of improvements to key themes such as DRR, LRRD, more effective Commission humanitarian partners and also, importantly, uptake of the recommended practices by other donors and implementing agencies.

This would help create a better aid continuum while also developing the EU’s policy leadership. Ultimately this would boost the effectiveness of humanitarian aid actions in general, with a stronger impact on the global humanitarian system. A key assumption underpinning this intervention logic was that the Commission would have the capacity and ability, in terms of staff ‘ownership’, resources, skills and competences, to make the internal changes while also fully committing to the external changes. The EU would also need to be perceived as a ‘policy leader’ in the humanitarian sector, and to ‘lead by example’, especially on issues it wants to put on the agenda, to ensure wider buy-in. Possible obstacles to achieving the wider objectives include:

• possible political and contextual changes which could affect the direction taken,
• cooperation and coordination issues,
• an overall lack of capacity or incentives to implement change at all levels, and
• a low level of engagement on the part of external stakeholders.

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\(^{16}\) ExAR are financial contributions from Member States and/or third countries, including their public agencies, entities or natural persons, to certain external aid projects or programmes financed by the EU budget and managed by the Commission. Since the entry into force of the EU Financial Regulation in 2013, the EU is able to receive ExAR and use them for humanitarian aid activities.
Intervention logic 2: The Commission’s internal humanitarian operations and its role in advocacy, coordination and policy development

**Assumptions**
- Continuity of support to desired outcomes
- Political/contextual changes affecting direction taken
- Buy in of wider stakeholder groups
- Lack of capacity
- Cooperation issues
- Adequate incentives for change
- Insufficient engagement of external stakeholders
- Lack of a clear work programme
- Roles and responsibilities not defined

**Rationale:**
- Lack of joined-up approach between humanitarian actors and relevant non-humanitarian players
- Increasing access and security challenges in the delivery of humanitarian aid
- Growing complexity and scale of humanitarian needs
- Increasing tendency for International Humanitarian Law, Human Rights and Refugee Law being breached

**Increased impact of humanitarian aid**
- Strengthened needs-based approach and delivery of aid
- Setting adequate priorities and developing more relevant HIPs
- More effective and relevant partners
- Coordination of MS actions with MS, with civil protection, with other donors, with UN, etc.

**Increased impact on humanitarian global system**
- Enhanced coordination and coherence
- Improved aid linkages / the aid continuum
- Links to other EU actions
- Uptake of good practice by others
- Integrated DRR, improved LRRD
- Lead on certain themes (e.g. education)
- Commitments to international initiatives (e.g. WHS, GB, etc.)
- Introduction of specific policies and guidance

**Coordination with other stakeholders**
- Expert groups, stakeholder consultation, etc. led by ECHO
- Preparing initiatives / making contributions to those started by other stakeholders
- ECHO staff being trained / receiving guidance

**Improved capacity to select partners and projects**
- Improved and more strategic programming of actions
- Joint regional / geographical strategies, Trust Funds, other action with non-ECHO stakeholders
- Improved ECHO field capacity

**Changes to requirements for projects and partners**
- Changes to approach to needs assessment and budget allocations
- Changes to requirements for projects and partners

**Engagement with non-ECHO stakeholders**
- ECHO participation in global / regional events organised by other stakeholders
- Engagement with non-ECHO stakeholders

**Setting up feedback loops, regular monitoring, evaluation, identification of good practices, lessons learned, research**

**Internal restructuring / reorganisation of ECHO and external capacity building**
2.3. Baseline and Points of Comparison

Intervention Logic 1

The Regulation was adopted in 1996 and no prior ex-ante impact assessment was carried out, as this was not a part of the EU’s procedure at the time for establishing new legislation. Moreover, as mentioned in subsection 1.3 above, the timeframe of the evaluation was determined by other factors than, for instance, the introduction of a new policy direction that would have provided a reference point for this evaluation.

Thus, no clear baseline was defined in advance for the period under evaluation as regards the objectives set out in the Regulation. Although efforts are being made to establish indicators\textsuperscript{17} and targets, it does not seem particularly feasible to set general baselines and longer-term targets for EU humanitarian aid funding. This is because humanitarian aid depends overwhelmingly on external factors (i.e. disasters), the context of each intervention being essentially unique. Moreover, the contexts of humanitarian intervention are often highly volatile, requiring the humanitarian actors to be flexible and to constantly adapt their approaches to the ever-changing global landscape of humanitarian crises and the conditions under which aid is provided. Accordingly, it looks as though it would have been impossible in 2012 to quantify what would count as success in 2016.

Targets and baselines have been established for the commitments entered into in the context of the World Humanitarian Summit and the Grand Bargain. These will enable certain changes to be measured in the medium term from now on. These indicators will refer to changes that are important if humanitarian aid is to be provided more effectively and efficiently, but cannot be used to capture its overall relevance, efficiency and effectiveness. However, one of the commitments refers to extending funding cycles towards multiannual funding. This may require, and enable, funding to be based on strategies that build on a more comprehensive theory of change for the targeted area.

The feasibility of establishing a baseline and a longer-term theory of change looks more promising for some contexts, particularly in crises that are not based on conflict – which, however, are a smaller part of those addressed by EU humanitarian intervention. As regards the intervention in the Sahel (\textit{evaluated in 2015}\textsuperscript{18}), baselines and targets were defined for the reduction of malnutrition and infant mortality, enabling changes in these phenomena to be monitored and evaluated, and results to be attributed to some extent. Moreover, in contexts like Nepal (\textit{evaluated in 2017}\textsuperscript{19}) – where interventions focus on DRR and resilience – it looks as if it will be feasible to apply a theory of change in the uptake of EU-funded DRR projects and capacity building more explicitly in future.

\textsuperscript{17} Such as indicators used in DG ECHO’s annual activity report; DG ECHO’s key result indicators; and indicators and milestones used in the context of implementing the Grand Bargain commitments.

\textsuperscript{18} ICF 2016

\textsuperscript{19} ADE 2018
**Intervention Logic 2**

The aim of this type of intervention is to help ensure that the humanitarian system works well. This involves keeping the system flexible and up-to-date with new developments and emerging challenges. The evaluation provides evidence that the EU has done a great deal in this area. However, identifying and quantifying in advance what measures will need to be taken in response to future developments presents a huge challenge. For instance, the magnitude of the Syria crisis and its impact on the provision of humanitarian aid could not have been predicted before the period under evaluation. Thus, no baseline or targets were set at the time about what direction the EU should take in terms of policy development, coordination, partnerships, etc.

3. **IMPLEMENTATION / STATE OF PLAY**

This section provides an overview of EU-funded humanitarian aid over 2012-2016.

**Total humanitarian aid funding, 2012-2016**

During the period under evaluation, the EU funded 3,816 individual actions through the Commission, to a total value of EUR 7,400 million.

As Figure 1 below shows, the largest amount of aid was allocated in 2016 (EUR 2,084 million) and the smallest in 2014 (EUR 1,157 million). In 2016, the Commission signed fewer grants, but their value was higher on average. In fact 2016 was the year with the highest average funding per action (EUR 2.7 million) while 2012 had the lowest average of funding per action (EUR 1.5 million). In 2016, the average value was influenced by the Multi-Purpose Cash Transfer action 'Emergency Social Safety Net Assistance to refugees in Turkey', worth EUR 338 million.

Figure 1. **Total value and number of actions funded by EU humanitarian aid, 2012-2016**

![Figure 1](image)


As regards partners, UN agencies received 47% of the total EUR 7,400 million funding over the period under evaluation, 44% went to INGOs and 9% to the Red Cross family. Individually, the

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20 ICRC, IFRC and national Red Cross societies (AT, BE, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, LU, NL, NO and UK)
World Food Programme (WFP) received by far the most funding (EUR 1,667 million or 22.5% of the total), followed by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (EUR 655 million or 9%), the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) (EUR 565 million or 7.6%), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) (EUR 559 million or 7.5%) and Save the Children\(^\text{21}\) (EUR 320 million or 4.3%) as illustrated in Figure 2.

**Figure 2. Top 10 receiving partners, share of funding and number of actions implemented by type, 2012-2016**

Source: ICF, 2017. Analysis of the Commission's EVA database, data extracted on 18 December 2017. Note: STC (Save the Children), ACF (Action Contre la Faim), DRC (Danish Refugee Council).

The reason why UN organisations and the ICRC receive a large share of funding is that they have an internationally established mandate for matters such as food assistance, refugee protection or humanitarian assistance in war zones. Consequently, these public humanitarian organisations have a more extensive global reach than most non-public humanitarian bodies.

The EU funded humanitarian aid actions in 110 countries during the period under evaluation, with 53.3% of total funding going to the top 10 beneficiary countries (Figure 3). The top three were

- Syria (EUR 844 million, or 11.4% of total funding),
- Turkey (EUR 625 million, or 8.4%), and
- South Sudan (EUR 554 million, or 7.5%).

\(^{21}\) DK, ES, FI, IT, NL, NO, SE and UK.
Figure 3. Changes in funding to the top 10 countries, 2012-2016

As Figure 4 shows, the largest absolute rise in funding was in the Middle East (from 2014), owing to the massive humanitarian consequences of the Syria crisis, while there was a fall in funding to Central and South America, the Caribbean, South Asia, and the Pacific.

Figure 4. Changes in EU humanitarian aid funding by region (based on regions defined by the HIP), 2012-2016

Overview of funding by sector, 2012-2016

In absolute terms, health is the only sector in which EU humanitarian aid funding increased continuously throughout the period under evaluation. However, although the budget for food
security and livelihoods fell in 2016, it still remained the most-funded sector, with EUR 539 million. In 2016, the second largest amount (EUR 343 million) was allocated to the new sector of multi-purpose cash transfers, followed by health (EUR 260 million) and protection (EUR 248 million).

**Overview of funding by objective, 2012-2016**

The HIPs break down funding by specific objective. Analysing the latest versions of the HIPs, we see that the most prominent specific objective is (1) 'Man-made crisis', accounting for between 68% and 90% of funding, depending on the year. Objective 2, 'Natural Disasters', accounts for between 8% and 29%. EU-funded disaster preparedness projects (DIPECHO) attract 2-3% of allocations each year. Other objectives are currently allocated only minor shares. The small scale / epidemics objective received most funding in 2014, in response to the Ebola crisis.

**Figure 5. Breakdown of funding by specific objective and by year, 2012-2016**

2016 was the year in which most funding was allocated to man-made crises. This also reflects the increasing share of funding allocated to the Middle East, for the reasons explained above. All funding assigned to this region is for man-made crises.

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22 Emergency social safety net assistance to refugees in Turkey (EUR 338 million) accounts for most of the multi-purpose cash transfers.

23 Some HIPs indicate that disasters of human origin may have been aggravated by natural disasters.
4. METHOD

4.1. DESCRIPTION OF METHODOLOGY

Four complementary methodologies informed the external approach on which this evaluation is based:

- One **meta-evaluation**, comprising a meta-synthesis of the 27 evaluations\(^{24}\) of humanitarian aid completed by the Commission during the period under evaluation;
- Five **rapid evaluations** of dedicated themes and sectors selected based on: (1) the financial / strategic importance of the sector or theme; and (2) the need to address gaps in the evidence base. This resulted in the selection of three sectors (i.e. food security and livelihoods; water, sanitation and hygiene; and shelter and settlements) and two themes (i.e. advocacy and protection);
- A **retrospective evaluation**, which provided the answers to the evaluation questions identified by the Commission in the terms of reference. It was based on the detailed evaluation framework developed for this evaluation and informed by the meta-evaluation, rapid evaluations and all research tools put in place during the evaluation; and
- A **prospective evaluation**, which considered the implications of the changing context and landscape of humanitarian aid delivery for EU activities.

The evaluation approaches used by the external evaluator used a series of research tools specifically developed and tailored to the needs of this evaluation so as to capture the views and input of all the stakeholders relevant to EU humanitarian aid activities. The research tools included:

- an extensive literature review;
- the mapping of 183 EU-funded humanitarian aid actions;
- 73 semi-structured interviews\(^{25}\) conducted at different stages of the evaluation and involving one to four interviewees per interviewing session;
- field missions to the Democratic Republic of Congo, Tanzania, Myanmar and Mauritania, including interviews, focus groups, and project visits in each country;
- three online surveys targeting Commission field staff, Commission framework partners and local implementing partners;
- an open public consultation on the Commission’s website\(^{26}\) (July-November 2017); and
- a validation workshop organised with a sample of key humanitarian stakeholder groups.

The overall approach developed for this comprehensive evaluation is presented in Figure 6 below. It illustrates the links between the different evaluation approaches and the research tools and sources of information which informed each approach. Complementary research methods were used to improve the reliability and validity of the data collected and to provide the basis for cross-

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24 See table of Annex 1, point 6
25 European Commission staff, Commission framework partners, representatives of global forums and clusters, representatives of EU countries, academics, think tanks.
verification, corroboration and triangulation of the evaluation results. The vested interests of different stakeholder groups were taken into account to address potential bias and ensure objectivity.

**Figure 6. Links between evaluation questions, types of evaluations, research tools and stakeholder groups consulted in the course of the evaluation**

Cost-effectiveness assessment framework

The cost-effectiveness assessment framework was based on the following question included in the evaluation: *To what extent did the Commission achieve cost-effectiveness in its response?* In line with DG ECHO’s guidance, the framework assesses the following two dimensions: (1) cost-effectiveness of the Commission itself; and (2) cost-effectiveness of EU-funded actions. This framework closely follows DG ECHO's guidance, but some improvements were made by the external evaluator.

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27 For further information, see Annex 1 to the external report: [https://ec.europa.eu/echo/sites/echo-site/files/cha_final_report_annex_volume_1.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/echo/sites/echo-site/files/cha_final_report_annex_volume_1.pdf)
4.2. LIMITATIONS AND ROBUSTNESS OF FINDINGS

As with any evaluation, there were limitations inherent in the methodologies and research tools applied. This section summarises the various evaluation approaches and research tools. It also assesses their strengths and limitations, and the measures taken to mitigate the latter and ensure the validity of the evaluation results. The overall conclusion, based on the review of the methods and tools presented below, is that the evaluation results have high validity. They are confirmed by multiple sources of information, and the mitigating measures taken to address the limitations were adequate.

The Commission therefore agrees with the external evaluator's conclusions.
### Table 2. Limitations of evaluation approaches used

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach</th>
<th>Limitations</th>
<th>Measures taken to mitigate limitations</th>
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| Meta-evaluation   | • The questions to be answered and the indicators to be provided by this evaluation were not equally covered by existing evaluations, leading to information gaps.  
                   • It was generally difficult to assess trends and/or progress in certain areas during the period under evaluation, as mixed and sometimes conflicting views were reported in evaluations covering similar periods.  
                   • It was challenging to link successful outcomes to particular sectors or geographies, as it proved impossible to identify patterns or trends. Rather, the review identified a number of general factors that improved or hindered successful approaches. | • The research tools used in this evaluation were designed to address the information gaps identified by the meta-evaluation.  
                   • The meta-evaluation was used as one information source among several others informing the answers to the evaluation questions. The inputs from the meta-evaluation were triangulated with these other sources to identify patterns and/or trends. |
| Rapid evaluations | • The rapid evaluations, which are not full-scale evaluations, are based on limited evidence, which limits their level of detail and complexity.  
                   • The rapid evaluations, which cover only a sample of the evaluation questions, were based on a dedicated but lighter version of the evaluation framework. Consequently, they don’t provide an equal level of information about all the evaluation questions. | • Four of the five rapid evaluations were reviewed in detail by the Commission’s experts on the subject concerned. The main purpose of these reviews was to make sure the evaluation team had not missed any important developments or issues. |
| Retrospective evaluation | • Given the broad scope and strategic nature of the evaluation, it is difficult to fit all relevant information into 80 pages maximum. | • The evaluation must be read in conjunction with its objectives and scope to understand its structure and content.  
                   • The annexes to the external report provide details supporting the findings. |
| Prospective evaluation | • The vast number of EU commitments to address the WHS created difficulties in summarising the EU’s overall efforts in this area.  
                   • There is a lack of information on progress towards some WHS and GB commitments, as some documentation is not publicly available.  
                   • The proliferation of sources and reports on the changing nature of humanitarian interventions created some challenges in summarising the main issues. | • The analysis is structured by main core commitment areas, not individual commitments.  
                   • The Commission, interviewees and experts partially compensated for information gaps.  
                   • The study team focused the analysis on challenges and issues that might be relevant to the EU and its humanitarian mandate. |
5. ANALYSIS AND ANSWERS TO THE EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The evaluation was based on a total of 19 evaluation questions (see Annex 3), whereof 16 were developed by the Commission and three additional were proposed by the external evaluator and agreed with the Commission. The questions were organised around the five main evaluation criteria presented in the European Commission’s Better Regulation Guidelines complemented by a criterion focusing on the sustainability of the EU humanitarian aid intervention. An Analytical Framework (see Annex 3) was developed by the external evaluator, consisting of:

- 32 judgment criteria, each linked to an evaluation question;
- 84 indicators (quantitative and qualitative), each linked to a judgment criterion;
- Linking multiple sources of information (as described in Section 4) to each indicator.

The findings and triangulated conclusions linked to each of the above-mentioned evaluation criteria are presented in the following. As mentioned under Section 4 and shown by the Analytical Framework the evaluation results have overall a high validity, as they are confirmed by multiple sources of information.

Overall, overwhelmingly, evidence from the evaluation points at the EU’s very strong performance. The EU is considered to be a principled, needs-based donor with some unique features, such as its approach to partnerships, its field network and its role in shaping the humanitarian system. Consultations showed that all stakeholder groups want the EU very much to continue most of what it has been doing to date, while noting some areas for improvement and necessary changes to reflect contextual and other relevant developments which are affecting humanitarian aid delivery.

5.1. RELEVANCE

Objectives and strategies

Document reviews and consultation with stakeholders show that the EU's humanitarian aid objectives continue to be very relevant, given the persistent and increasing global humanitarian needs. The objectives are overall future proof and in line with the humanitarian principles.

The Commission became increasingly better at adapting its humanitarian strategies for protracted crises and broader longer-term challenges in the humanitarian contexts, which contributed to the relevance of interventions. From the country/region-specific perspective, efforts were invested in adapting country-specific strategies in the context of protracted crises, to better take account on the longer-term nature of such crises.

There was a marked shift during the evaluation period towards an increased use of regional HIPs, starting with the Horn of Africa HIP in 2012 and the Sahel strategy in
2013 and moving to developing predominantly regional HIPs by 2015 and 2016. On the one hand, this regionalised approach allowed for a coherent and efficient approach to addressing the humanitarian needs in an integrated and stable manner over the medium-term. On the other hand, some regional HIPs (e.g. Horn of Africa) were partly incohesive as the individual countries covered by such regional HIPs had very different humanitarian needs and hence required different approaches, although they had forced displacement and drought / food insecurity issues in common.

DG ECHO placed a great emphasis on promoting Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development (LRRD) and defining exit strategies in the regional strategies and the accompanying programming process (e.g. through inclusion of sustainability considerations in the project design, implementation and monitoring arrangements, consideration of exit scenarios in the country/regional HIPs). However, the extent to which this was successfully implemented in practice was inconsistent across themes and geographic areas. Nevertheless, it needs to be kept in mind that the main focus of the EU’s humanitarian mandate is on emergency response to address humanitarian needs, and less on longer-term support that aim at structural solutions. It is equally important to bear in mind that particularly in complex crises where a ‘solution’ seems to be impossible to reach, it is very difficult to envisage an exit and/or plan for LRRD.

At the level of global policy priorities, the key thematic issues of building resilience and supporting DRR as well as a combination of actions to improve the effectiveness of aid remained relatively stable over the 2012-2016 period. New priorities were introduced mainly in 2015 and 2016 in relation to previously globally under-funded cross-cutting themes and sectors such as protection mainstreaming and education in emergencies.

The World Humanitarian Summit and the Grand Bargain commitments are reflected in recent policy documents and funding decisions, however, with some remaining challenges, as further explained in sub-section 5.7 below.

It was highlighted consistently in the external stakeholder interviews that there is a need to move to multiannual programming approach to increase predictability and allow for improved planning, but also to put safeguards in place to ensure good performance of Commission partners if this would entail multiannual funding. This is confirmed by various studies, e.g. *The Value for Money of Multi-Year Humanitarian Funding*, which concludes that multiannual funding brings about gains in cost-effectiveness (e.g. allowing for purchases to be made at an optimal time). Furthermore, at the validation workshop organised in the framework of the external evaluation supporting the current report, all participating stakeholder groups confirmed the validity of this conclusion.

28 Commissioned by the UK Department for International Development (May 2017)

29 Commission staff, 10 framework partners (4 UN, 2 ICRC, 4 INGOs, 1 academic, 2 EU Member States and 2 networks of NGOs
Multiannual programming is also called for by the protracted nature of the majority of current humanitarian crises and the need for joined-up approaches with other policy areas such as development, which could be more explicitly addressed by the Commission's humanitarian strategies.

**Budget allocation**

EU humanitarian aid funding alone would never be sufficient to address all the humanitarian needs around the world. This being said, the EU humanitarian aid budget, after being topped up with reinforcements from the Emergency Aid Reserve and other redeployments within the EU budget, the European Development Fund and External Assigned Revenues from EU MS and others, was – based on literature review and stakeholder views – commensurate to EU objectives insofar as it allowed the EU to respond to the most pressing humanitarian needs. Thus a critical mass of funding was mobilised to create the desired impact on the ground (see further sub-section 5.3 Effectiveness).

The allocations of the EU humanitarian aid budget were driven by a comprehensive needs assessments framework\(^30\) organised at three levels (from local needs assessments in each geographical area covered, to national and regional needs assessments informing the HIPs, and the global needs assessment as articulated in the annual strategic documents). The framework takes account of interventions of other donors and funding sources at various stages of the process through a number of well-functioning channels which could be further supported and systematically applied.

At the sector level, EU funding has appropriately been concentrated in the sectors where the most humanitarian needs were identified globally. However, in the area of Education in Emergencies, the thematic evaluation\(^31\) indicated that a multiannual strategy to frame interventions was missing. As a result, in some contexts, The Commission's approach to funding Education in Emergencies was mainly project-based, whereas in others a more comprehensive approach was taken. Furthermore, the thematic study on Transfer Modalities\(^32\) found that a strategic approach was missing with regard to cash transfers, and called for a strategic analysis of the potential for using cash transfers at crisis level, with a dedicated chapter in each HIP.

The Commission made clear choices in terms of funding specific regions during the evaluation period, with an increasing focus on the Middle East and the European Neighbourhood (i.e. linked to the consequences of the Syrian crisis), leaving some regions with continuous needs with lower funding. This was particularly the case at the

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30 As further described under sub-section 2.1 above.
end of the evaluation period. While these choices were informed by needs assessments at different levels, they also reflect the limitations of the resources available. The choices triggered some strong reactions among key stakeholders, calling for better communication of the associated rationale to confirm that the needs-based approach is indeed maintained. Redistribution of funding towards the Middle East region away from other world regions took appropriately account of the Commission's needs assessment, as the region had the largest humanitarian needs during the evaluation period. These reactions appear partly based on a misunderstanding: while it is true that many humanitarian implementation plans are designed for a specific region, as opposed to a specific country, this is not a strategic policy choice but an implementation necessity avoiding unnecessary administrative impediments to efficiency. A regional programme allows a humanitarian response of a crisis originating in one country and triggering refugee flows into neighbouring countries. Since financing eligibility is based on geographical location (as opposed to geographical origin of beneficiaries), a regional framework is a more efficient way to account for the cross-border dynamics of a crisis than a collection of country-specific financing decisions. This approach is not exclusive to the European neighbourhood but has been extensively used in the past, e.g. in Africa for the Horn of Africa regions as well as the Great Lakes region.

Figure 7. Evolution of EU humanitarian funding (excluding Externally Assigned Revenues), by source, 2012-2016, EUR million


Partnerships

The Commission's framework partners that implement EU-funded actions are a concentrated group of major international humanitarian aid actors (UN agencies, Red Cross, International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGO)). The partnership ensures good and rapid communication, consistency and reliability of approach.
An analysis of the Commission's humanitarian project database shows that there has been an increased concentration of funding to larger-scale projects via UN agencies (in 2016 more than 50% of EU funding), in part explained by requirements of the crisis in Syria. Around 20% of the framework partners did not implement any EU-funded actions during the evaluation period, including 44 INGOs.

The external evaluation concluded\(^\text{33}\) that the involvement of local partners in the implementation of humanitarian aid activities, which is dependent on the specific geographical context, can have positive consequences, notably on the effectiveness and sustainability of the interventions. Local Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) are increasingly involved by framework partners in the implementation of EU-funded actions but challenges remain and local NGOs need further capacity building. There is scope for increasing the involvement of local implementing partners within EU-funded actions (even though 73% of the surveyed framework partners claimed to make use of local partners, the nature and extent of this involvement significantly vary across projects). This need for an even more systematic involvement of local implementing partners and reinforced cooperation of DG ECHO (especially at field level) with local actors was raised by at least seven geographical evaluations\(^\text{34}\) of DG ECHO 2012-2016 actions both in natural and man-made crises. The comprehensive evaluation identified several opportunities to ensure that this happens on a more systematic basis, where appropriate and feasible.

The evaluation also showed, based on the project mapping and discussions at the validation workshop, that DG ECHO will continue to need its diverse pool of framework partners, including those which are relatively small / medium sized, given their specific geographic presence and/or sectoral or thematic expertise.

While the choice of framework partners to implement EU actions ensures a fairly reasonable expectation of successful implementation, it can restrict access by new players whose capacity to grow within the Commission's system needs to be supported. The external evaluation proposes that the Commission assess functioning of partnerships regularly and seek to involve ‘new’ partners where this is possible.

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\(^{33}\) Based on the surveys among the Commission's humanitarian partners and of local implementing partners; project documentation; observations in the field, and geographical evaluations contributing to the comprehensive evaluation.

The Commission has selected appropriate partners given the humanitarian needs, partners’ expertise and capacity, the pool of available partners to work with and the local context. The choice of partners to implement EU-funded actions is appropriate insofar as the Commission's partners tend to be successful in carrying out the actions (see sub-section 5.3 below; Effectiveness).

**Field network**

The EU humanitarian field network is composed of regional, country, sub-country and antenna offices, with different staff categories and functions. The geographical coverage is deemed sufficient with only minor gaps noted. The level of the Commission staff knowledge at headquarters (HQ) and field is high, with minor gaps in terms of technical knowledge and awareness of local contexts.

The field network undertakes needs assessments appropriately, on a continuous basis or depending on the crisis context. The influence of the field network has been greater on the formulation and implementation of the EU’s regional/local strategies and sectoral strategies, and less on global strategies and funding choices. This reflects appropriately the field network mandate to provide technical assistance to HQ.

The Commission's field network made a strong contribution to the effectiveness of the EU-funded humanitarian aid actions, including contributions to the needs assessments at the HIP level and thus making the regional, local and sectoral Commission strategies more relevant. Furthermore, the coordination in the field between the Commission's field offices and the framework partners is working well. The network provided overall high-quality support with some capacity constraints and other challenges. The current configuration allows the EU to respond rapidly as crisis situations develop and new needs emerge. Thus, the architecture is fit for purpose but some improvements would also make it ‘future proof’ (e.g. by closing gaps in technical expertise).

All the evidence points towards the findings that the field network is key for the successful implementation of the EU-funded actions. The network is functioning well in delivering its core functions and is well recognised as one of the key assets and unique features of the Commission by the key stakeholders, which contributes to making the Commission more effective and efficient.

Some challenges for the maximisation of the field network impact were identified, e.g. in relation to heavy monitoring burden and high workload, further decentralisation of the network and ensuring adequate distribution of the available expertise across the globe. However, these are being appropriately addressed through the mechanism of the internal fitness checks of the field network.
5.2. COHERENCE

5.2.1. INTERNAL COHERENCE

1. EU humanitarian actions

There was a high level of coherence between EU-funded actions in different countries and regions, which was mainly guaranteed by the ‘portfolio approach’ of the Commission, applied in the project selection process and based on the local knowledge of the Commission field staff. Based on this approach, projects were not only assessed individually, but also considered together as part of a portfolio of projects aiming to tackle a particular crisis or answer a series of identified needs at country or regional level. The complementarity between different actions to be funded is therefore clearly assessed when and where relevant. Over the evaluation period, the Commission also ensured coherence by pushing for example for more multi-sectoral and integrated projects (i.e. projects with activities in one sector helping to achieve outcomes in at least one other sector – e.g. Nutrition and Water&Sanitation). Possibilities for improvements remain, however, for example concerning coherence across the years (i.e. in terms of continuity of interventions).

2. Other initiatives managed by DG ECHO

The Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM)35

Although the respective remits of civil protection and humanitarian aid are distinct, there are numerous links between the humanitarian aid activities and the UCPM. These links are recognised in the legislative texts underpinning civil protection and humanitarian aid activities, which also provide clarity on how these two fields should interact. From a humanitarian aid perspective, the Consensus states that:

- The use of civil protection resources in humanitarian aid contexts should always be needs-driven and complementary and coherent with humanitarian aid;
- Civil protection resources can provide an important contribution to humanitarian actions in natural disasters and technological and environmental emergencies especially given their possible advantage in terms of speed and specialisation, especially in the early phase of relief response.
- The use of civil protection in complex emergencies should rather be the exception. It is considered as delicate and sensitive as it risks compromising the perception of the neutrality and impartiality of the relief effort.

The Decision on the UCPM issued in 2013 led to an increased number of activations in the context of a humanitarian response. The Decision states that:

35 In terms of potential cooperation between EU humanitarian aid and the UCPM, the latter draws on assets from its Participating States – as opposed to funding humanitarian partner organisations – for humanitarian response activations in third-countries.
• The Commission and the Member States shall identify and promote synergies between the UCPM and EU humanitarian aid activities;

• When assistance is provided under the UCPM in the context of a humanitarian response, actions shall be based on the identified needs and shall be consistent with the humanitarian principles and the principles on the use of civil protection and military resources as set out in the Consensus.

• In the case of disasters in third countries, the transport support provided by the UCPM is conditional on the complementarity between the civil protection intervention and the overall EU humanitarian response.

The interim evaluation of the UCPM realised in 2017 noted some improvements since the evaluation of the mechanism performed in 2013, but still highlighted the need to enhance the relevance of the UCPM for response operations in the context of humanitarian crises. It also flagged a particular concern regarding the activation of the mechanism in contexts that are not considered to lend themselves to civil protection response operations such as complex humanitarian aid emergencies. These situations are currently not covered by the UCPM Decision and the flexibility shown by the mechanism so far in such contexts potentially opens the door for future activations, going against the recommendation of the Consensus set out above.

During the evaluation period the UCPM was activated 73 times outside the EU in countries where the EU also provided humanitarian aid assistance from a total of 159 activations during the same period. In 57 (78%) of the cases the disaster for which the UCPM was activated was also covered by the EU from a humanitarian perspective. As illustrated in Figure 11 below, the majority (51%) of these UCPM activations were linked to natural disasters. Activations linked to displacement, epidemics, conflicts and complex emergencies represent together 41% of the activations.

Figure 8. Overview of UCPM activations for disasters also covered by EU humanitarian aid activities

The activation of the UCPM in humanitarian contexts revealed however interesting lessons learnt both in terms of positive achievements and opportunities for improvements. Some examples of good cooperation are presented in the table below.

Table 3. Example of good cooperation between the UCPM and humanitarian aid activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Crisis</th>
<th>Nature of cooperation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chad</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Floods</td>
<td>The Monitoring and Information Centre contacted the local the Commission field in order to assess the situation and map the actual needs on the ground. The information collected by the local the Commission Technical Assistant concluded that no civil protection assistance was needed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Conflict</td>
<td>The Emergency Response Coordination Centre ('the Centre') deployed three liaison officers together with the Commission Technical Assistant to establish an antenna in Ukraine. The mandate of the mission was to liaise with national and international actors in order to assess the needs of the affected populations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Typhoon</td>
<td>The needs assessment of the local Commission field staff guided the decision to cancel the deployment of civil protection experts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Africa</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Ebola</td>
<td>The EU provided a coordinated response to the Ebola crisis channelling the delivery of material support from the Member States through the Centre and providing humanitarian aid funding to address the most urgent humanitarian needs. The large scale of this intervention also resulted in important lessons learned for future cooperation between the UCPM and humanitarian aid activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiji</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Typhoon</td>
<td>the Commission Technical Assistant on the ground informed the UCPM about local needs following a request for assistance from the national government.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Earthquake</td>
<td>The Commission field presence allowed the team of the Centre to quickly deploy and gain access to first-hand information. Vice versa, the UCPM intervention indirectly helped the humanitarian aid community as it showed to the local authorities that the Commission could also provide direct support to the government in the case of major crisis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Complex crisis</td>
<td>The UCPM deployed a small team to Erbil to assist the incoming in-kind shipments from Participating States. The team worked in close collaboration with the Humanitarian Operations Centre, the Commission field office in Erbil, the EU delegation and the Commission HQ.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


These examples show that there are good cooperation opportunities between the UCPM and humanitarian aid activities, and that in case of acute needs the UCPM can be a good tool for beneficiary countries to access additional resources, mainly in terms of in-kind support and expertise. However, there is room for an improved coherence, as mechanisms were found to be lacking to ensure a close cooperation from the very beginning of a UCPM activation. E.g. it was reported that in the context of the joint response to typhoon Haiyan, the UCPM completed its own needs assessment without consultation with the Commission’s humanitarian aid staff, before establishing lines of communication with the Commissions humanitarian field office.
EU Aid Volunteers (‘the Volunteers initiative’)

While the Volunteers initiative was established officially in 2014, based on Regulation (EU) No 375/2014, it was followed by a long start-up phase during which sending and hosting organisations had to be “certified” as well as, where necessary, benefit from grants to stimulate capacity building. This meant that the first set of volunteers could only be deployed end 2016 and that to date the total number of volunteers deployed is still rather limited, namely around 200 volunteers.

Whereas in theory there would be ample opportunities for coherence between humanitarian aid actions and the Volunteers initiative, especially when considering that most certified partners are also framework partners, in reality this potential has not yet been realised. The recent evaluation of the Volunteers initiative, as well as the evidence collected as part of this evaluation, points at several possible causes:

- Volunteers are not expected to work in emergency contexts, which means that framework partners consider that in the vast majority of humanitarian aid actions, they cannot be deployed. Whilst indeed volunteers cannot be deployed in high risk zones where framework partners provide a first response, there is certainly scope for allowing them to fulfil back-office functions as part of emergency response actions.

- The level of awareness of the Volunteers initiative is relatively low, especially amongst framework partners in the field. Several stakeholders interviewed had not heard of the initiative or had a partial understanding, but found it interesting in principle.

- The largest Commission partners (e.g. UN agencies, Red Cross) have not signed up, or signed up late, for participation in the Volunteers initiative.

As the evaluation of the Volunteers initiative has identified that hosting organisations benefit significantly from volunteers in terms of capacity building, there may be scope in further considering how the Volunteers initiative could be further promoted as one tool to enhance localisation.

At the level of the Commission, while HQ staff were aware of the Volunteers initiative, it seems that to date efforts to ensure coordination between humanitarian aid actions and Volunteers projects have been limited. This is in part due to the delayed start of the Volunteers initiative and possibly in part due to a clear vision on how the Volunteers initiative could be concretely linked to humanitarian aid actions.
3. EU’s other external financing instruments

The architecture of EU financing for external policies is composed of a variety of instruments pursuing different goals and managed by different regulations (e.g. European Development Fund, EU Trust Funds, European Fund for Sustainable Development). The external evaluation identified two main instruments as relevant for the EU humanitarian aid activities, i.e. the European Development Fund, which is considered alongside other policies implemented by DG DEVCO, and the EU Trust Funds.

Challenges in cooperation arise due to the distinct nature of humanitarian aid and development cooperation, as well as the major differences between DG ECHO and DG DEVCO conceptual and operational frameworks as well as diverging funding cycles, as shown in Table 4.
**Table 4. DG ECHO and DG DEVCO conceptual and operational differences**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>DG ECHO</strong></th>
<th><strong>DG DEVCO</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mandate</strong></td>
<td>DG ECHO is responsible for providing assistance, relief and protection operations on a non-discriminatory basis to help people in third countries, particularly the most vulnerable among them, and as a priority those in developing countries, victims of natural disasters, man-made crises or exceptional comparable situations.</td>
<td>DG DEVCO is responsible for formulating EU development policy and thematic policies in order to reduce poverty in the world, to ensure sustainable economic, social and environmental development and to promote democracy, the rule of law, good governance and the respect of human rights, notably through external aid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Principles</strong></td>
<td>International Humanitarian law. Follows the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence</td>
<td>Principles of country and democratic ownership, alignment and mutual accountability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Budget lines</strong></td>
<td>EU humanitarian aid budget (Council Regulation 1257/96)</td>
<td>Geographical instruments: European Development Fund, Development Cooperation Instrument</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Thematic instruments: Development Cooperation Instrument Thematic, European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Priorities</strong></td>
<td>Focus on individuals and communities and on certain specific themes such as protection, shelter</td>
<td>Focus on the wider picture and the society.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Objectives</strong></td>
<td>Save lives and protect civilians that are at risk. Focus on the most vulnerable.</td>
<td>Longer-term and multifaceted objectives including poverty reduction and sustainable development. Focus on poor people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Programming and funding cycle</strong></td>
<td>Annual strategies based on HIPs</td>
<td>5-7 year programming cycles based on consultation with national authorities and stakeholders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Timing</strong></td>
<td>Proposals developed quickly and funds disbursed quicker</td>
<td>Proposals developed over a longer period and disbursement of funding takes longer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Access</strong></td>
<td>Provide assistance in highly volatile environment and remote areas</td>
<td>Do not have access to certain areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Partners</strong></td>
<td>NGOs, UN agencies, International Organisations.</td>
<td>Governments, civil society organisations, private sector, International Organisations, UN agencies, peacekeeping operations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** ICF stakeholders’ interviews and European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM), 2016. Living Apart Together’ EU Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid in Situations of Fragility and Protracted Crisis.

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38 It is important to underline that the LRRD can be done during the preparation of the national programmes, but very hardly during implementation. Hence the importance of being part of the preparation.


There has been some coordination between DG ECHO and DG DEVCO at field and HQ level in the evaluation period. More specifically, DG ECHO has attempted to engage with DG DEVCO through policy and advocacy work at the HQ level and coordination has been increasingly happening over the years due mainly to the growing importance placed on LRRD and resilience. The ongoing piloting of the humanitarian-development nexus in different contexts should further improve the coherence between DG ECHO and DG DEVCO activities but this still needs to be operationalised. The EU Trust Funds (EUTF), addressing issues common to humanitarian aid and development – such as forced displacement – appears to provide a potential for better linkages between humanitarian and development activities. However, due to the limited use of the EUTF in humanitarian contexts during the evaluation period, the evidence collected during the evaluation does not allow assessing the extent to which DG ECHO’s contribution to the EUTF is pertinent and coherent with other actions financed as part of the EUTF.

Several good examples were identified in the external evaluation. In 2016 DG ECHO and DG DEVCO worked together to establish a roadmap towards resilience in Bangladesh and co-financing partners in Ethiopia to build local resilience against the next episodes of drought. DG ECHO also cooperated with DG DEVCO to develop a coherent joint humanitarian-development framework in Myanmar. In Haiti in 2016, cooperation was reported successful in response to Hurricane Matthew, with DG DEVCO and DG ECHO developing a joint strategy for response and recovery. In the Democratic Republic of Congo a transition programme was developed in the health sector in Ituri, where DG DEVCO is integrating health zones previously covered by DG ECHO in its work. One of the cooperation initiatives that was cited by several evaluations as being particularly effective in strengthening coherence with the development sector was the EU strategy for Supporting Horn of Africa Resilience (SHARE). In the framework of SHARE, the EU supported the recovery from the drought through close cooperation between humanitarian aid and long-term development.

Coping with the consequences of population movements has historically been one of the key objectives of the EU humanitarian aid interventions with limited interactions with other policy areas. Given the changing nature of displacement crises and the context of the evaluation period, the Commission developed a new Joint Communication on Forced Displacement and Development\(^4\) clearly stressing the need to develop a coherent approach involving all the relevant actors. This is being operationalised so as to actively engage in recent initiatives such as the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework and the EU trust funds. The Council conclusions on the EU approach to forced displacement and development (May 2016) commits the Member States to follow the EU approach and systematically include forcibly displaced persons and their host

communities in the design, programming and implementation of international cooperation and assistance interventions in a comprehensive manner.

Moreover, subsequent to the period under evaluation DG ECHO and DG DEVCO has engaged in cooperation on social protection across the humanitarian-development nexus – with an up-coming Guidance Package – which is a another sign of progress for operationalising the nexus.

At the international level, the New York declaration for Refugees and Migrants – agreed at the UN summit of September 2016 – is a major agreement that expresses the political will of world leaders to save lives, protect rights and share responsibility on a global scale.

Having the Consensus as a starting point, there is a relatively strong policy framework in place for the integration of climate change adaptation into the EU’s humanitarian aid interventions, especially in DRR activities. However, this is not applied systematically and scope for improvement was identified. The meta-evaluation found several good examples of coherent approaches in the field. In the Horn of Africa, the EU’s drought risk reduction interventions applied climate change adaptation principles into practice by helping communities to better cope with the impact of drought (and thus, adjust / adapt to one of the main effects of climate change in the region). Furthermore, the evaluation of the EU’s interventions to building resilience in Latin America and the Caribbean revealed that the implemented projects increasingly recognised the link between humanitarian aid and climate change. In other contexts, however, the level of integration was very limited or mainly pushed by the framework partners and not by the Commission itself. This was for example the case in Tanzania, where different partners flagged the importance to integrate environmental degradation aspects within the funded actions design as the refugee camps are both affected by and causing important environmental issues.

Finally, in the period under evaluation Horizon 2020 supported actions to fight outbreaks caused by emerging infections such as the Zika (EUR 45 million) and Ebola viruses (EUR 24 million). This is a good example of how cross-cutting cooperation areas, such as research and innovation, can be employed in response to crisis and emergency situations.

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44 Horizon 2020 is the EU financial instrument implementing the Innovation Union, a Europe 2020 flagship initiative aimed at securing Europe's global competitiveness.
5.2.2. EXTERNAL COHERENCE

1. Humanitarian Principles

Overall, the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence were consistently reflected in the Commission’s humanitarian policies and strategies and in the vast majority of EU-funded actions. The European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid provided clear definitions of the humanitarian principles and the Commission’s policies, strategies and implementation framework provided clarity on how to implement them.

Quantitative data on the share of EU-funded actions adhering to the humanitarian principles are not available but the qualitative evidence available suggests that the vast majority of EU-funded actions do. The adherence of The Commission’s policies to the humanitarian principles is recognised by the vast majority of its framework partners and local implementing partners (see figures 11 and 12 below). It should, however, be noted that the adherence of the Commission’s policies to the principle of independence is less supported than the adherence to other principles, possibly reflecting the above-mentioned perception among some stakeholders of – contrary to the conclusions of this evaluation – a political influence on recent funding decisions.

The evaluation of the Consensus published in 2014 showed that 21 out of 26 of the Member States surveyed stated that the EU as a whole had made progress on humanitarian principles in the past years. The Open Public Consultation conducted in the framework of the current evaluation confirmed this positive assessment, as 82% of the respondents confirmed that the EU humanitarian aid funded actions were consistent with the four humanitarian principles.

Donors and the Commission's framework partners sometimes experience ‘tensions’ between the principles (e.g. engagement with national and local authorities versus the principles of independence and neutrality or respect of the principles of neutrality, impartiality and independence versus humanity and humanitarian access in man-made and complex emergencies). Such tensions may pose challenges to striking a balance between ensuring compliance with the principles and avoiding negative impacts on the ground especially in complex crises. There appears to be scope for the Commission to provide guidance on ‘rules of engagement’ or consult with its framework partners on how to deal with possible ‘dilemmas’, integrating this also in its wider strategy for advocacy of a principled approach. There might also be a perception that there is tension between independent humanitarian aid and European interest in migration. By definition,

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45 In the field of humanitarian aid, the Commission works only with partners committed to the humanitarian principles. However, sometimes the circumstances in a complex humanitarian setting might create tensions between the humanitarian principles (e.g. for impartiality and independence, in cases where humanitarian workers rely on being granted access by government authorities). Thus, all funded projects are designed to adhering to the humanitarian principles, but sometimes compromises have to be made to reach the people in need. However, there is no way of measuring this in a quantitative way.
however, humanitarian aid will be provided in conflict zones that generate population movements. Such conflict zones have become larger and more numerous in the vicinity of the European Union. It is also clear that stabilisation, an anti-radicalisation effect and a reduction of population movements can be corollaries of humanitarian assistance. However, the evaluation shows that these are not objectives at the basis of humanitarian needs assessments and financing decisions, but possible indirect results of the humanitarian objectives to save lives and alleviate suffering.

**Figure 9.** Views of the Commission framework partners on the extent to which Commission policies are consistent with the humanitarian principles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle of Independence</th>
<th>N=351</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ECHO's policies</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principle of Impartiality</td>
<td>N=355</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECHO's policies</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principle of Neutrality</td>
<td>N=354</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Figure 10.** Views of the Commission local implementing partners on the extent to which Commission policies are consistent with the humanitarian principles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle of Independence</th>
<th>N=100</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ECHO's policies</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principle of Impartiality</td>
<td>N=101</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECHO's policies</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principle of Neutrality</td>
<td>N=100</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ICF, 2017. Survey of Commission local implementing partners completed from 07 July to 11 August.

2. **Member States**

External Assigned Revenues (ExAR) are financial contributions from Member States and/or third countries, including their public agencies, entities or natural persons, to certain external aid projects or programmes financed by the EU budget and managed by the Commission. Since the entry into force of the EU Financial Regulation in 2013, the
EU is able to receive ExAR and use them for humanitarian aid activities. The terms under which the contributions are provided are specified in ‘Contribution Agreements’, which can cover multiple years. In this case the funding is provided by the contributor in successive instalments. Each contribution is also associated with a ‘Description of the Action’ agreed among the parties. The contributor can choose to allocate its ExAR to a specific crisis as addressed in the HIPs or to a specific action. The Commission manages the ExAR in line with its overall portfolio, i.e. based on the Regulation, the Consensus and the EU Financial Regulation. The management of the ExAR falls under the responsibility of the Commission.

The objectives of the instrument are to:

- Diversify the portfolio and partnership of the contributors;
- Leverage the Commission’s expertise in implementing and delivering humanitarian aid;
- Increase the funding available to support EU activities or cover needs usually less covered;
- Ensure better coordination between different actors;
- Ensure economies of scale.

As summarised in Table 5, EUR 635.25 million were allocated to the EU humanitarian aid instrument in the form of ExAR since 2013, of which two thirds were allocated to the ‘Facility for Refugees in Turkey’ in 2016. The EU humanitarian aid instrument also contributed directly to the Facility (i.e. EUR 165 million in 2016 and EUR 145 million in 2017). For 2016-2017 the total contribution of Member States to the Facility amounts to EUR 2 billion, covering both humanitarian aid and other activities. This amount is distributed as follows: EUR 910 million to the Directorate-General European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR) for non-humanitarian activities, and EUR 1,090 million for humanitarian funding.

The UK (DFID) contribution of 178 million was allocated to the financing of humanitarian aid actions in the Sahel, notably through the PHASE programme (Providing Humanitarian Assistance to Sahel Emergencies). DFID’s main reasons for allocating its funding through the Commission – which is an illustration of EU Added Value – include:

- Increased leverage and efficiency of funding by pooling resources;
- Good value for money and reduction of DFID’s indirect costs;\textsuperscript{46};
- Trust in the Commission's management capacity and excellent transparency; and

\textsuperscript{46} Refers to DFID's own costs for implementing their own humanitarian actions, such as costs for having presence in the field.
• Key added value through the Commission’s strong humanitarian presence in the Sahel.

Table 5. Overview of ExAR allocated to humanitarian aid activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributor</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Amount (million EUR)</th>
<th>Objective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government of Ivory Coast and France (Agence Francaise de Développement (AFD))</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Restore the functioning and accessibility of basic public services (over a 3-year period) in Ivory Coast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>Contribution to the Children of Peace initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>Contribution to the Children of Peace initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK (DFID)</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>Contribution to the PHASE programme in the Sahel (over a 3-year period)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government of Ivory Coast and France (AFD)</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>Contribution to Ebola preparedness activities in Ivory Coast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ebola preparedness activities in Burkina Faso.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Member States</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>435</td>
<td>Contribution to the Facility for refugees in Turkey</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Commission, Explanatory note on ExAR and the EU’s humanitarian budget.

The interviews with different Member States on this topic revealed, as summarised in Table 6, that although the consulted Member State representatives recognised the theoretical added value of the ExAR mechanism, they also stressed their intention to continue financing directly humanitarian aid activities for visibility reasons and to support their national NGOs.

Table 6. Motivation and reluctance to use ExAR according to Member States

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motivation</th>
<th>Reluctance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Modest national humanitarian budget, financing via the Commission ensures efficiency</td>
<td>• National presence in the field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sectoral or geographical expertise missing at national level but present within the Commission</td>
<td>• Different approaches towards humanitarian aid, e.g. stronger focus on DRR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provision of multiannual funding</td>
<td>• National will to provide both earmarked and non-earmarked funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The Commission’s clear strategy and portfolio of funded actions</td>
<td>• Doubt regarding the Commission’s needs-based approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The Commission’s guaranteed good performance due to its presence on the ground</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Interviews with Member States

As for specific evaluations of the ExAR, the recently published evaluation of the EU’s humanitarian interventions in the health sector analysed the use of ExAR in Ivory Coast.

47 Austria, Belgium, Sweden, UK, Estonia
and concluded that the instrument was appropriate for the objectives of the agreement (i.e. reinforcing the healthcare system in a post-conflict context, as well as improving the link between humanitarian actions and development ones), which were best served through a multiannual action. In particular, the multiannual approach allowed for improved cooperation among the partners involved, favoured the integration of the partners’ activities into the national healthcare system and allowed monitoring practices and results over time. The case study showed, however, that the Commission’s working mechanisms were not adapted to this multiannual approach limiting the effectiveness of the project on the ground. If there is a will to make more frequent use of the ExAR by both the EU and the Member States, it would be necessary to identify sectors and/or regions where Member States want to intervene but do not have the capacity to do so while the Commission is able to channel the aid. The use of the ExAR in the context of the ‘Facility for Refugees in Turkey’ is still fairly recent and has not been evaluated to date.48

The evaluation of the Consensus covering the 2008-2012 period showed an increasing level of coordination between the Commission and the Member States at policy level but it resulted in a mixed assessment of their operational cooperation. Based on the evidence collected as part of this comprehensive evaluation, the situation improved over the 2012-2016 period as several very good examples of synergies and complementarities were identified in the field. These relate not only to the use of ExAR but also to the overall recognition of the Commission’s technical capacities at field level, which is considered as crucial to inform the Member States’ interventions. The alignment between the Commission’s and some of the Member States’ strategies in specific areas also reinforced these synergies (e.g. common push for the use of Multi-Purpose Cash Transfers (MPCT)). The Open Public Consultation confirmed this positive assessment (42% of the respondents considered that there was a large extent of coherence between the EU and the Member States humanitarian aid funded actions) but also nuanced it as 37% of the respondents considered that the level of coherence was moderate, highlighting the potential for further improvement – as further detailed below. On the positive side, the evaluation of the Sahel Strategy concluded that the EU had a major influence on the Member States’ intervention in the region, both in terms of modality and geographical focus. This resulted in the allocation of ExAR by DFID and a ‘gap-filling strategy’ from SIDA and the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation, which aimed at complementing the EU’s humanitarian interventions in the region. The field mission to the Democratic Republic of Congo – carried out in the context of the external evaluation – illustrated the crucial role of the Commission’s Technical Assistant in terms of donor coordination through the Good Humanitarian Donorship group, although this was not only directed to EU Member States. Different Member States’ representatives also praised the Commission’s willingness to share

48 An evaluation of the humanitarian aid part of the Facility was launched in 2018
insights on specific funded actions or framework partners contributing to a common approach to specific crises.

Despite these good examples of synergies and complementarity, the current external evaluation found that coherence and complementarity could be pursued more systematically, especially in places where the Commission has no local presence of humanitarian staff. In Tanzania, for example, framework partners called for the Commission to take a more prominent role in donor coordination efforts in view of the launch of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF).\textsuperscript{49}

Other factors which hamper further cooperation with Member States include:

- The fact that in some Member States the humanitarian aid budget is managed by the development aid department limiting their ability to actively engage in coordination fora dedicated to humanitarian aid, although some Member States manage to do so;

- Many Member States want to maintain their visibility in beneficiary countries through their humanitarian aid activities. This limits the scope of joint implementation efforts.

\textsuperscript{49} The New York Declaration signed in September 2016 sets out the key elements of the CRRF to be applied to large-scale movements of refugees and protracted refugee situations. The four key objectives of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework are to: (1) Ease pressures on host countries; (2) Enhance refugee self-reliance; (3) Expand third-country solutions; and (3) Support conditions in countries of origin for return in safety and dignity. The UNHCR is working with governments and other stakeholders to apply the CRRF in a number of countries – including Djibouti, Ethiopia, Honduras, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania (that withdrew from the CRRF in January 2018) – and through a regional approach to the Somalia situation.
3. Third country donors

There are many coordination mechanisms and structures to promote coherence among humanitarian aid donors (such as in the God Humanitarian Donorship forum; the IASC clusters; the ICRC Donor Support Group; the IFRC Donor Advisory Group). The EU is an active player in these fora and aims at coordinating its strategies and interventions with the ones of other donors.

During the evaluation period, the EU strengthened cooperation with other donors and was active at different levels and fora to promote complementarity and coherence between them. No major obstacles preventing coordination between the EU and other Development Aid Committee (DAC) donors were identified. However, the field visits carried out in the context of the external evaluation revealed low levels of engagement between the EU and the non-DAC donors in the field. It would therefore be beneficial if the Commission would continue its coordination efforts at high-level and analyse how to expand these efforts at field level.

4. UN

It is important to point out that – as recognised in the Consensus – the United Nations, and notably UNOCHA, is in charge of coordinating effective and principled humanitarian action in partnership with national and international actors. Based on its goal to support this lead role of UNOCHA, as well as on its ambition to help shaping the international humanitarian agenda, the EU has played a prominent part by supporting and getting involved in setting up coordination structures on certain occasions. A key example is the case of Syria, where the EU was able to set up the infrastructure for improving coordination amongst all humanitarian actors in the early stages of the crisis in 2012-2013. The EU contributed to setting up a regional response across five countries, including Syria, to improve conditions for refugees, internally displaced people and other affected populations.

Views on the EU’s ‘coordination role’ within the humanitarian landscape vary greatly within the humanitarian community, but can be broadly categorised into two groups:

- The first group supports the EU’s efforts to promote sound coordination, and even considers that the EU should do more to ‘challenge’ the humanitarian coordination structures and the UN agencies as a whole;
- The second group, rather on the opposite, considers that the EU goes beyond its mandate when taking a prominent operational coordination function. In the view of this second group, the EU should seek to better fit within the UN-coordinated international humanitarian system. Within this logic, the meta-evaluation revealed for example that the EU and the Member States seem to differently interpret the boundaries and inter-relationships between the operational coordination functions of the EU and the UN.

The composition of these two groups is very heterogeneous and some individuals and/or organisations actually defend both positions stating for example that although the EU
should aim to fit within the UN-led system, it should also challenge it in order to make it more transparent, accountable and efficient. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, some framework partners questioned, for example, the EU’s ability to challenge the UN cluster approach\(^{50}\) while others noted that it was not within the EU’s responsibility to do so. Others again stressed that the EU should have a clearer position towards some of the UN actors or communicate this position more clearly towards its partners as it was raised as an issue by many stakeholders.

Based on these observations it should be stressed that since the 2014 evaluation of the Consensus, which recommended the Commission to clarify its objectives in terms of humanitarian coordination and relations with UNOCHA and other UN agencies, good progress has been recorded, notably through:

- The development of regular strategic dialogues between the Commission and the UN agencies;
- The development of thematic discussion on key topics and sectors (e.g. in the area of Multi-Purpose Cash Transfers); and
- The establishment of close cooperation between the Commission and the UN in the case of new crises, implying considerable information exchange and the development of common approaches and messages.

During the evaluation period the EU further clarified its objectives in terms of contribution to, and involvement in, the humanitarian coordination structures and relations with UNOCHA and other UN agencies at policy and field level.

5. **Beneficiary countries**

As stipulated in Articles 7, 8 and 9 of the Regulation, the EU can only finance humanitarian activities implemented by humanitarian NGOs, International Organisations or agencies and potentially by specialised agencies from the Member States or the Commission. It can therefore never fund public authorities from third countries directly. The humanitarian principles of neutrality and independence, presented in section 3.2.1, also put limits on the level of cooperation between humanitarian aid actors and national authorities, especially in a situation of armed conflict. Based on these observations, a first distinction needs to be made between (1) technical cooperation to ensure the effective implementation of projects, which often occur at local level; and (2) coherence at policy level which is a much more complex and sensitive issue in which the Commission does not act on its own but in close cooperation with the EU Delegation.

- In the case of complex crises, implying a conflict involving the national and/or local authorities (or the lack of functioning authorities), the principles of independence and neutrality imply delivering humanitarian aid fully

\(^{50}\) A humanitarian sector-oriented system for ensuring a coherent and complementary humanitarian response.
autonomously from national and local authorities. In these contexts, the EU often limits its interaction with the host governments to advocacy activities promoting the humanitarian principles and safe humanitarian access. The EU, like other donors, sometimes faces an overall lack of receptiveness to humanitarian advocacy by host governments, as was for example the case in Sudan and Democratic Republic of Congo during the evaluation period.

- It should also be noted that the principle-based approach can create difficulties in countries with important regional differences. This is for example currently the case in Myanmar, where the Commission and its framework partners face protection and access issues with the government in Northern Rakhine, while in South-East Myanmar framework partners are cooperating with the government on DRR and development programmes.

- In other contexts, some degree of cooperation with the national and/or local authorities is ‘unavoidable’ because the national authorities are involved or even leading the humanitarian response. This can include authorities of countries which deal with the displacement effects of a conflict in a neighbouring country, or countries in which the (man-made) crisis on their territory is not caused directly by the state. Nevertheless, the host government may have strong views on how aid should be delivered or deal with the crisis in a way which is not fully in line with the humanitarian principles.

In these contexts, where a dialogue is possible, the EU, as other humanitarian donors, may wish to actively engage in advocacy to encourage the country to respect the humanitarian principles, as well as seek to secure cooperation at least at a practical level from the government (e.g. around camp security, access, transport, etc.). In the case of Tanzania, the Commission’s engagement, either directly or via the EU Delegation, with the national authorities has been very limited so far despite their crucial role in shaping the humanitarian response to the refugee crisis and some threats to the principle of humanity following the withdrawal of the prima facie recognition of Burundians as refugees and subsequent possible cases of refoulement at the border.

- Finally, in some contexts cooperation with national and local authorities is recommended because these authorities are key to ensure the success of the intervention (e.g. in the case of DRR interventions supporting resilience). The ‘Action Plan for Resilience in Crisis Prone Countries’ published by the Commission in 2013 supports this approach as it recognises that “aligning humanitarian and development aid to national resilience strategies and frameworks is a precondition for sustainable results”. The meta-evaluation showed however that DG ECHO was sometimes reluctant in engaging with local authorities on DRR activities based on the imperative of independence from national or local institutions. This reluctance was considered as counterproductive, especially in resilience initiatives requiring integration into local DRR and development initiatives. A closer alignment with national strategies was therefore deemed necessary in order to support project ownership and long term impact. This call for alignment is clearly stressed in the
Commission’s Single Form guidelines which require the framework partners to explain how the action will inform and influence relevant government plans or strategies, in line with the resilience strategy. The ongoing evaluation of the EU’s humanitarian interventions in Nepal showed a good level of improvement as it concluded that engagement with the government was an integral part of the design of the DRR and institutional strengthening projects.

Overall, the Commission is perceived as being overly cautious in some cases about cooperating with national and local authorities, due to a rigid interpretation of the principle of independence. Although humanitarian principles should remain at the centre of the EU’s approach towards humanitarian aid, in specific contexts, cooperation with national and local authorities is either unavoidable or even recommended. Thus, there is scope for developing an approach to frame this cooperation, setting clear boundaries but allowing for a more engaged cooperation with local and national authorities when the context permits it.

5.3. Effectiveness

As explained in sub-section 2.2, the Commission pursues two sets of humanitarian objectives.

Firstly, the EU core objectives are to reduce mortality, suffering and morbidity, and ensure the dignity of life of affected populations. These objectives are realised through (A) providing immediate / short term emergency response in the form of life-saving assistance, protection and / or crucial basic services to populations affected by crisis; and (B) building resilience over the medium to long-term, while contributing to the nexus to development and reducing dependence on further (external) aid. It is to be noted that the effectiveness in a humanitarian context relates to a large extent to outputs, i.e. to what funded actions deliver immediately to the targeted beneficiaries with reference to the said core objectives.

Secondly, at a system level the EU sets out to influence the global humanitarian system and the overall aid delivery for the purpose of increasing effectiveness and efficiency.

Effectiveness of EU-funded actions

The Commission has put in place a comprehensive monitoring framework at action level, with the purpose of ensuring an objective assessment of progress towards the objectives set for the actions. Partners are required to collect data on the implementation of actions, and analyse actual progress compared to the original planning.

Important changes were introduced during the evaluation period to the monitoring framework, such as Key Results Indicators (KRI) in 2014 to monitor the progress of

51 The Single Form is a living document that DG ECHO Partners must use to submit the project proposal, the intermediate report, and the final report.
specific results. The objective of the KRI is to “simplify project design and increase quality and policy coherence, and they will enable the Commission to aggregate data on the results of the actions it funded. In addition, since June 2016 partners should report on Key Outcomes Indicators (KOI). Due to the recent introduction of the KRI and KOI, they do not cover the full evaluation period and had not either come into full use at the end of the period. Thus, aggregated monitoring data on actions were not available, which would have allowed for a more consistent analysis in the current evaluation of effectiveness across actions.

Furthermore, a key component of the role of the Commission’s field staff is to carry out monitoring visits, which includes meeting the beneficiaries. At least one visit of the Commission should take place per funded action, with the purpose of verifying the progress of the action, detect issues to be addressed, and identify needs for adjustment of actions.

The Commission sets up external evaluations focusing either on specific sectors or themes, or on specific geographies. The evaluations completed during the 2012-2016 period were all reviewed as part of the meta-evaluation conducted under this comprehensive evaluation. The research carried out in the context of these evaluations largely consisted of – as for the current comprehensive exercise – in-depth studies of a representative sample of actions, field visits, and consultation with stakeholders. Thus, in the absence of aggregated data, the assessment relied on the triangulation of a variety of sources.

The EU (without its MS) accounted for 9% of the total humanitarian aid funding during the evaluation period, making it the second global donor (after the USA), and providing a critical mass of funding to address the humanitarian needs. The large scale of funding allowed the EU to be effective in the crises and sectors it targeted during the evaluation period. Key examples include:

- In Sudan and South Sudan the evaluation highlighted the significance of the EU’s work as the third largest donor and found overall that this level of funding enabled the EU to make positive changes, notably in the sectors of nutrition, health and water&sanitation&hygiene;

- The rapid evaluation (i.e. a component of the external evaluation, as explained in Section 4) of the food and livelihood sector, which benefited from the largest share of EU funding during the evaluation period, showed that the EU aid in the sector reached on average 16-17 million people per year. This is about 20% of the estimated 80 million people suffering from food shortages due to humanitarian crises. This is much higher than the 12% EU share of the total global humanitarian aid funding to the sector, indicating a higher reach of beneficiaries than the share of funding. The absolute number of people benefiting from EU food security and livelihood aid on an annual basis decreased, however, during the evaluation period despite an increasing budget allocation to the sector;

- The EU’s large scale response to the Syrian crisis and the associated refugee crisis, allowed having a real impact on the ground although many humanitarian
needs were left unmet. The EU also included innovative elements in its response by supporting the large-scale use of unconditional cash transfers to meet refugee needs in the largely urbanised, middle-income countries bordering Syria. In 2016, the EU allocated EUR 348 million to a single project to be implemented by World Food Programme, in cooperation with the Turkish Red Crescent and the Turkish Ministry of Family and Social Policies, in the form of Multi-Purpose Cash Transfers to provide emergency social safety net assistance to refugees in Turkey. An independent evaluation of the programme is currently ongoing but according to the latest quarterly bulletin, over 1 million refugees had received assistance by October 2017, representing half of the initial target. The programme will run until December 2018.

- In regions where the EU only allocated limited funding compared to its overall envelope, the evaluation showed that it was also able to have a positive impact on the ground by selecting projects with high leverage or multiplier effect. This was notably the case in the Latin America and the Caribbean, the Pacific regions and Nepal. These actions related to DRR or resilience initiatives and most of the time involved a certain level of cooperation with local authorities and/or local communities in order to improve the response led by these communities and/or authorities.

All evidence collected during the external evaluation pointed towards a high level of successful implementation of projects. This is largely due to the Commission’s strong and robust selection process which put a lot of attention on project quality and its expected impact. The project mapping completed during this evaluation revealed for example very positive outcomes of the activities implemented. Out of the 175 mapped projects, 144 had clear information on the level of results achieved. Among these, 52% had fully achieved their objectives and 42% had partially achieved their objectives with only 3% of the actions not achieving their intended results. The reasons for not having achieved the results were mainly of external nature, e.g. lack of access due to governmental restrictions or logistical obstacles. Those actions with no clear information (32 in total) were either ongoing (26) or the reporting was of poor quality inhibiting any analysis.

The overall conclusion, which was strongly supported by the surveyed Commission framework partners, the local implementing partners and by the respondents to the Open Public Consultation, is that EU-funded actions were indeed effective and positively contributed to saving lives, reducing morbidity and suffering as well as improving dignity of life of population affected by disasters.

The vast majority of framework partners positively rated the timeliness and flexibility of the Commission’s interventions. This timeliness and rapidity of intervention was also considered crucial to ensure an effective delivery of the aid, especially in the case of emergency situations. The evaluation of the shelter sector published in 2013 concluded for example that in primary emergency situations in the shelter sector, “the Commission’s funding can be available in three days, which places it among the most efficient humanitarian donors”. More recently the EU was also one of the first donors to react following the Burundian crisis in 2015, allowing the UNHCR and its partners to increase their level of aid and for example re-build the Nduta refugee camps, which was left abandoned following a previous refugee influx. The framework partners confirmed
this analysis as more than 84% of them considered that DG ECHO’s speed of response to emerging crises facilitated the effective delivery of their actions.

The timeliness of the Commission’s response beyond primary emergencies is, however, considered as sometimes lagging, negatively affecting its effectiveness. Paradoxically, one of the key examples also relates to the shelter sector, for which the rapid evaluation stressed that effective shelter interventions require a longer-term perspective, which the Commission does not appear to take into account systematically.

The external evaluation found the following factors inhibiting the effectiveness of EU-funded actions:

- Fixed and relatively short duration of the Commission's humanitarian aid funding cycle;
- Root causes of crises (which is at the border of the EU’s humanitarian mandate) are not taken into account in the Commission's humanitarian strategies, which has relevance particularly in complex protracted crises;
- Unanticipated budget variations limiting the predictability of the aid provided by the Commission and impacting negatively on the strategies followed by framework partners;
- The coordination between different EU and non-EU funding streams leaves room for improvement; and
- Technical expertise and capacity among framework partners could be further developed, particularly in the shelter & settlements and health sectors.

**Effectiveness at system level**

In the evaluation period, the Commission implemented a number of internal reforms and other internal initiatives to strengthen the impact and effectiveness of its humanitarian aid delivery. These included, for example: (1) the continuous improvements to the Commission's global needs assessment process and needs assessments at the level of funded actions; (2) the move towards regional from country-specific HIPs; (3) continuous development of sector guidelines; (4) the strengthening of the field network; and (5) increased engagement with other donors to undertake joint activities.

Overall, these developments have been useful and appropriate to their intended aims, and positively received by stakeholders. Some challenges were encountered, for example, as mentioned earlier, the perception among some stakeholders that the EU’s global funding allocations were not exclusively needs-based, the varying quality of local needs assessments and some regional HIPs lacking a cohesive strategic approach.

The Commission’s sectoral and thematic policies and guidelines provided an appropriate approach to be applied in the sectors concerned. They were developed in line with international standards and in close consultation with relevant partners. The choice of the Commission’s policies and guidelines was overall relevant, although evidence on their actual use was mixed. In some areas, the Commission could choose to rather ‘adopt’ the policies and guidelines prepared by other donors or implementing agencies, and possibly
provide a ‘Commission addendum’ to stress certain aspects, rather than developing its own guidelines.

At the global system level, the EU pursued its advocacy and policy objectives through several channels:

- The Commission’s prominent role in key initiatives (e.g. Transformative Agenda, World Humanitarian Summit, Grand Bargain);
- The Commission’s prominent role in key policies (e.g. Education in Emergencies, cash based assistance, protection); and
- Advocacy at different levels.

There have been several success stories of how the Commission took a leading role that resulted in the development of more effective humanitarian aid approaches, such as:

- The Commission’s promotion of multi-purpose cash changed the delivery of humanitarian aid in certain contexts and sectors, of which the response to the consequences of the conflict in Syria provides a prominent example;
- The Commission’s focus on specific sectors and themes drew attention and funding to these sectors. E.g. the Commission's actions in education in emergencies led to a demonstration effect and encouraged other donors to support this sector; mainstreaming of the protection agenda into the delivery of the humanitarian aid;
- The health sector provides numerous examples of how Commission influenced other actors to address gaps in their response, apply best practices and carry out follow-up actions;
- Successful advocacy resulted in:
  - better access to remote areas to address gaps in the humanitarian response;
  - upholding the key humanitarian principles;
  - better spent donor resources,
  - attention of other donors to new, changing and emerging issues and the changing nature of humanitarian crises (e.g. Sudan or Syria).

Thus, the Commission's advocacy efforts were largely effective during the evaluation period. Advocacy activities in the field have been individualised, flexible and responsive, reflecting the experience of the Commission's field staff. However, they were not always fully coherent, and a more strategic approach with clear priorities and actions would be beneficial.

**Effectiveness of the Commission's sectoral policies**

The evaluation concludes that the Commission’s sectoral and thematic policies and guidelines did reflect an appropriate approach in the sector concerned. They were developed in line with international standards and in close consultation with relevant partners.
The Sphere Project was launched in 1997 by key actors of the global humanitarian community to develop a set of minimum standards in core areas of humanitarian assistance. The aim of the project is to improve the quality of assistance provided to people affected by disasters, and to enhance the accountability of the humanitarian system in disaster response. One of the major results of the project has been the publication of the handbook, Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response\(^2\).

During the evaluation period, the Commission published eight policy documents to support the implementation of EU-funded actions humanitarian in the sectors of food assistance, nutrition, water&sanitation&hygiene, health, cash and vouchers, protection, gender and Disaster Risk Reduction. Each of these policies take account of standards and benchmarks provided by the Sphere handbook, and was developed in close consultation with the Commission's humanitarian partners active in a particular sector.

The choice of the eight sectors covered by the guidance issued by DG ECHO reflects the key trends in the humanitarian landscape in terms of:

- **Global needs**: The Commission published guidance on the six sectors identified by the Financial Tracking Service as in needs of the highest funding (i.e., multi-sector – which is covered by the cash and voucher guidance – food assistance, water&sanitation&hygiene, health, protection and shelter and settlements);

- **DG ECHO’s funding priorities**: The sectors listed above are also those that received the largest shares of EU funding during the evaluation period. Protection, which the Commission considers as a specific sector and received a large share of EU funding, also benefited from guidance;

- **Commission policy priorities**: As exposed below, the Commission also developed guidance for sectors which were identified as key policy priorities, i.e. Education in Emergencies, Disaster Risk Reduction and gender.

While in the survey of framework partners, a vast majority of the respondents partners (84%) confirmed to use the guidelines in the design and implementation of actions, during the field visits framework partners showed a broad knowledge of DG ECHO’s policies but a lower level of awareness of the specific guidelines developed as part of these.

Possibly, the difference between the two is that several of the partners met in the field were ‘leaders’ in their respective sectors, such as the World Food Programme with regard to food assistance and the UNHCR with regard to protection, with their own guidelines in place (which have often informed those developed by the Commission). Interestingly, framework partners that were leaders or at least very specialised in a certain sector did indicate to use the Commission policies and guidelines for the implementation of actions

\(^2\) [http://www.sphereproject.org/handbook/](http://www.sphereproject.org/handbook/)
in another sector. For example, in Myanmar, partners having substantial experience in implementing activities in technical sectors were not using the Commission's guidelines, however, they were consulting protection guidelines as they had less experience in implementing this component in their integrated actions.

Both in the field and in the survey, framework partners indicated to also make use of other international guidelines and standards. For example, of the 16% of the framework partners who indicated not to use the guidelines, 52% used internal guidelines or guidelines issued by other international organisations. Partners implementing actions with funding from multiple donors also saw the effectiveness hindered by the need to refer to various guidelines, depending on the donor.

For survey respondents, the Commission’s thematic guidelines were mostly effective for providing a useful framework for partner action (81% of framework partners and 98% of local partners strongly agreed and agreed). Framework partners saw them as less effective in contributing to the effective implementation of actions (68% strongly agreed and agreed).

The Commission’s policy guidance also supported the advocacy efforts of framework partners in these areas, as they gave a clear signal of the Commission’s willingness to invest and how it wanted these investments to be implemented, which could be used in discussions with authorities, other donors and implementing agencies.

**Achievement of visibility objectives**

The EU is funding initiatives to raise awareness about its activities within the EU through a dedicated HIP. Framework partners overall adhered to the visibility requirements, but visibility activities going beyond the minimum requirements were more successful in raising the EU's profile. Some obstacles limiting the effectiveness of visibility activities included a lack of capacity among the framework partners to develop communication activities.

Special Eurobarometer 453\(^53\), published in 2017 and covering the 2016 period, showed that 71% of respondents were aware that the EU funds humanitarian aid activities. The share has increased since 2012 when the awareness level was at 68% but a 5% decrease was observed between 2015 and 2016. Some large variations between Member States were observed. The highest levels of awareness were measured in the Netherlands and Luxembourg (88%) while the lowest levels were found in Hungary (55%) and Italy (59%). The Commission's framework partners were less positive regarding the level of awareness within the EU, with almost half of respondents to the survey (47%) considering that the level of awareness of EU humanitarian aid activities within the EU was low or extremely low (see Figure 11).

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Qualitative evidence suggests that the level of awareness of EU activities outside the EU is medium to high.

5.4. **EFFICIENCY**

5.4.1. **COST-EFFECTIVENESS**

Supported by the needs assessment framework as explained above, DG ECHO bases its funding allocations on the humanitarian needs, and did so far not have a comprehensive ex-ante process in place to weigh the costs and benefits and value for money of its strategic portfolio choices (e.g. in terms of types of partners, sectors, transfer modalities, consortium approaches, focus on DRR or linking relief, rehabilitation and development (LRRD)). However, DG ECHO assigned different studies in recent years illustrating its strategic thinking about portfolio choices, e.g. the evaluation on the use of different transfer modalities\(^5^4\) in EU humanitarian aid delivery. Furthermore, as mentioned under Section 4, DG ECHO has developed guidance for evaluating the cost-effectiveness of humanitarian action, which was applied and elaborated further by the external evaluator. This guidance focuses on the specific role of the EU as a humanitarian donor, its concrete tasks, its interface with the global system, and also on scope for improvement. It distinguishes between:

1) How the Commission ensures cost-effectiveness through the different steps of its 'donor process', which basically consists of partner selection, needs assessment, priority setting, budget allocation, project selection, monitoring, and follow-up (in terms of lessons learned, policy guidance, LRRD, etc.). Thus, an important part of the approach is to examine to what extent the Commission 'does the right things in the right way'; and

2) Cost-effectiveness of funded actions. This includes e.g. an assessment of the actual 'Total-Cost-Transfer-Ratio', i.e. the value of the output that arrives to the end-beneficiary, compared to the value of the input.

The approach takes account of the following issues:

- The EU has limited influence over the global humanitarian system, and has to focus on ensuring an interface to the system that provides an overall high efficiency and effectiveness. E.g. the EU does not itself procure emergency shelter. Instead it chooses implementing partners who deal with this, and the Commission may provide guidelines to be followed by the partner. This means for instance that unit costs play a lesser role in the approach to cost-effectiveness;

- The EU targets the most vulnerable people affected by crises, and the first step focuses on the very needs of these people. Accordingly, if the needs are the same, a person in the Middle East should in principle have the same chance of receiving assistance as a person in West Africa, irrespective of the costs involved. Thus, the cost considerations should come into play only at a next step. This means that the overall number of beneficiaries reached is not a major focus of the approach;

- As the various contexts of humanitarian aid intervention are vastly different – which strongly reflects on the level of costs – the approach does not build on comparators;

- The global humanitarian needs exceed by far existing resources. Thus, the approach does not consider marginal utility or an optimal funding level, as it is not expected that spending 'an additional euro' would affect the level of cost-effectiveness;

- Overall, and based on the above points, the approach consists mainly of qualitative assessments.

1. Cost-effectiveness of the EU as a donor

With reference to DG ECHO’s guidance, the external evaluation shows that the Commission exercises the EU’s role as a humanitarian donor in a way that overall strongly supports cost-effectiveness. Specifically:

- Budget allocations were appropriately based on robust needs assessments;
- The EU humanitarian aid budget was commensurate to EU objectives insofar as it allowed the EU to respond to the most pressing humanitarian needs;
- The choice of humanitarian partners was appropriate, although there is some room for improvement e.g. with reference to the localisation agenda;
- The project selection process was relevant and took account of local knowledge of the Commission field staff, as well as the overall portfolio of actions funded;
- The monitoring of funded actions was appropriate, based on a robust system, although the system did not allow for a consistent analysis of effectiveness across actions;
- Lessons learned were appropriately picked up by policy guidance and good practice.

Furthermore, there is evidence of the Commission adopting and promoting innovations and best practices driving cost-effectiveness. On the specific topic of cash transfers for instance, the EU is recognised as a key donor, which led the way to the ‘normalisation’
of the use of cash transfers. Cash and vouchers taken together were already at 27% of the EU-funding in 2015, while as a benchmark it was estimated to make up 8% of total assistance globally. There is also evidence of the Commission accepting a degree of risk in its activities with a view to increase their cost-effectiveness. The EU provided seed funding for new initiatives aimed at increased cost-effectiveness (e.g. in the sector of water&sanitation&hygiene, for the use of solar energy for sustainable water pumping). More could, however, be done around the scaling-up of successful ideas.

In some areas, notably in relation to the localisation agenda and multiannual funding, the evaluation noted that the Commission shows an ‘implementation deficit’, i.e. a lack of change or follow-up despite the existence of evidence pointing at the efficiency of these types of approaches under certain circumstances.

The effectiveness and efficiency of the EU as a donor depends largely on its ability to mobilise funding swiftly as humanitarian needs arise. At the beginning of the year, the Commission is generally under-budgeted but several sources to top-up the budget throughout the year exist, which allows covering emerging needs. The top-up process nevertheless appears to be sub-optimal, as repeated top-ups are burdensome and hinder efficiency.

2. Cost-effectiveness of EU-funded actions

Humanitarian actions funded by the EU are overall seen as being cost-effective but the assessment is mainly based on qualitative indicators and stakeholder views. There have been attempts by the Commission to provide quantitative evidence, for example, by calculating the share of assistance which reached the final beneficiary but only on rather small samples and benchmarks for comparison with other donors are lacking. It would be useful to further support this effort and make it more systematic.

There is evidence of cost-effectiveness being taken into account throughout the project cycle (e.g. budget submitted by the partners being closely analysed, promoting cost-effective solutions towards partners). Considerations are however not typically based on quantitative indicators (e.g. only a low share of projects refer to cost-per-beneficiary or cost-per-result). There would be scope for DG ECHO to follow a more pre-defined approach to the analysis of cost-effectiveness, e.g. produce a detailed checklist to be used as part of the appraisal process and while monitoring projects; this is partly answered by the FicheOp guidelines published by the Commission in 2016. Embedding cost-effectiveness into DG ECHO’s project cycle should not come at the expense of flexibility and due consideration should be given to the many factors that influence cost-effectiveness, such as the type of crisis, the geography, access and security matters, the


56 The FichOp is DG ECHO internal file with all observations, comments, and initial appraisals, report of monitoring and final decision from Field and Desk staff.
cost of living in the country, the presence of implementing partners, the need to recruit international staff, the level of innovation of the project, etc. The fact that DG ECHO is willing to accept variations of costs across projects when duly justified by the context is currently much appreciated by the framework partners.

Overall, it seems that the main factors influencing cost-effectiveness are well understood as similar lists of factors are identified across different sources of information. Despite being well known, enabling factors are however not always implemented and/or applicable depending on the context (e.g. cash, multiannual programming and funding, localisation). Furthermore, some obstacles impeding cost-effectiveness are external factors, making it harder for DG ECHO to address them (e.g. compartmentalisation of protection actors, rigid national laws limiting the scope of actions for framework partners).

Another area for improvement would be the reporting requirements. A positive aspect is that the Commission has a Single Form with the same template being used throughout the project cycle. However, reporting requirements are still considered as complex by partners and not harmonised with those of other donors, thereby affecting efficiency.

5.4.2. Coordination

There is evidence of synergies between EU humanitarian interventions and activities of other humanitarian actors. By definition, synergies and reduced duplication (including better communication and exchange of information amongst humanitarian aid donors and civil protection actors) should lead to savings. There is however very limited evidence on the quantification of savings made, in particular due to current information systems not capturing these costs. Qualitative evidence of synergies leading to cost savings is found with respect to the following:

- Common needs assessments: for instance, the Sahel evaluation\(^{57}\) showed that the main donors (e.g. USAID (United States Agency for International Development), World Bank, SIDA (Swedish International Development Agency)) have relied upon the evidence produced by the EU to help decide where and how to fund interventions and what type of practices to support.

- Sharing evidence of what works for whom and under which circumstances: an example quoted in the Sahel evaluation is the USAID OFDA (Office for Foreign Disaster Assistance) which made use of Commission’s research on blanket feeding, water&sanitation&hygiene and nutrition, and the World Bank which has taken up findings of the Commission linked to social safety nets.

- Creation of fora gathering humanitarian donors but also development donors and national governments. As exemplified by the case of the EU initiative AGIR (the

Global Alliance for Resilience Initiative) in West Africa, this kind of forum setting priorities for actions is a channel to avoid overlaps and share experiences. However, at least four evaluations of those analysed in the context of the meta-evaluation found that coordination left room for improvement, which resulted in missed opportunities for cost savings. In the Occupied Palestinian Territories and Lebanon, for example, evaluators indicated that “the EU could have a much stronger role in identifying areas for coordination between its partners and sharing best practices, in order to help avoid duplications and to improve efficiency”.

One of the main arguments in favour of using External Assigned Revenues (ExAR) as in the case of Sahel with the UK (Department for International Development) relate to efficiency/cost-effectiveness. By pooling resources, leverage can be increased and donors funding humanitarian aid through ExAR reduce their indirect costs. For the EU, ExAR is also a way to deliver on multi-year planning which in turn increases cost-effectiveness, as illustrated in the results of a case study undertaken as part of the evaluation\(^{58}\) of the EU funding in the humanitarian health sector. This evaluation shows that using multiannual actions was key to reinforcing the healthcare system in a post-conflict context, as well as improving the link between humanitarian and development actions. The multi-year approach also allowed for improved cooperation among the partners involved and favoured the integration of their activities into the national healthcare system.

The EU Trust Funds (EUTF) are another coordination instrument expected to have major benefits in terms of efficiency / cost-effectiveness, pooling resources from several donors for specific purposes. To date the potential benefits have not yet been fully realised. The evaluation of the Békou EUTF (to which the EU humanitarian aid instrument contributed 2% of the fund’s resources) for instance concluded that there were some shortcomings with regards to (i) coordination with other donors (e.g. donors increasing their activities outside the fund over the period); (ii) transparency and speed of procedures and the cost-effectiveness of delivering aid (e.g. management costs not fully transparent and already at the limit of the 5% without taking into account all cost incurred); and (iii) its monitoring and evaluation mechanisms (no systematic process in place to identify lessons from managing the trust fund).

Finally, through the stakeholder consultation it was reported that the use of consortia promotes the pooling of collective expertise of different organisations in complex crisis contexts requiring multi-faceted responses, thus contributes to efficiency as well as effectiveness.

5.5. **EU Added Value**

The added value has been assessed at three levels (analysed in turn below):

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1. Added value of EU humanitarian aid actions on the ground;
2. Systemic added value linked to the EU’s work within the overall humanitarian aid system;
3. Added value of EU level actions as compared to action by the EU Member States.

Multiple sources if the external evaluation confirm that EU-funded actions had a clear added value on the ground, which was primarily ensured through:

- The scale of EU funding: as shown in Figure 13 below, the EU was the second largest donor worldwide during the evaluation period, representing 9% of the global humanitarian aid. This translated into tangible results in the field contributing to saving lives;
- The EU’s focus on forgotten crises: in the 2012-2016 period 16% of EU funding was allocated to forgotten crises (natural or man-made crises) compared to 12% for all the remaining donors;
- The EU’s gap-filling in the global humanitarian aid, by addressing needs in areas which were difficult to access and providing a rapid response to several crises at their initial stage (e.g. Syria, Sudan, Burundian crisis); and
- The EU’s funding of sectors and themes that were underfunded by other donors (e.g. protection sector, education in emergencies).

**Figure 13 Share of top 5 donors, 2012-2016**

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Source: ICF analysis of Financial Tracking System database
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The EU taking a lead at the global system level on key issues led to a strong operational added value. By supporting operational improvements, the EU made the delivery of humanitarian aid more cost-effective (e.g. through cash-based assistance, involvement of

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59 As a single donor, i.e. without the individual funding of MS. Together, the EU and its MS are the largest humanitarian donor world-wide.
local communities, evidence-based needs assessments). The EU is widely recognised as a ‘reference donor’ pushing for a principled and needs-based approach. Finally, the EU also contributed to strengthening the coordination of the humanitarian landscape.

In the field of humanitarian aid, the EU has a clear added value for the Member States. This is ensured through different channels including:

- The Commission performed well the role of humanitarian coordination and information sharing with the Member States at the headquarter level, although potential for improvements has been identified (e.g. more coordination in terms of funding allocation). This was ensured through Commission’s access to first-hand information and expertise via its field network;
- The EU was a very strong and reliable donor and some Member States did not hesitate to use some of the Commission’s processes (e.g. Single Form), paving the way for even more process coordination;
- The mechanism of External Assigned Revenues also worked effectively during the evaluation period and has good potential but so far Member States have shown limited willingness to take part (see section 5.2.2 for more details); and
- Member States can benefit from the Commission's strong operational knowledge and technical expertise at both headquarter and field level.

5.6. SUSTAINABILITY

In the context of the Commission’s humanitarian work, sustainability is not clearly defined and is applied differently to the various aspects of the EU’s programming including sustainability of (1) the funding, (2) the activities implemented, (3) the immediate outcomes or (4) the impacts of EU-funded actions. To enhance sustainability, the EU has for example promoted the concept of resilience and introduced a resilience marker\(^{60}\) in 2014. In addition, the concept of LRRD has been on the agenda for decades and has evolved over time. Currently DG DEVCO and DG ECHO are working together towards the implementation of the humanitarian-development nexus in 14 pilot countries.

While some types of interventions are by nature ‘more sustainable’ (e.g. removal of landmines or activities funding documentation for refugees and internally displaced people, others do not have sustainability as an objective per se (e.g. food distribution).

The main ways identified to ensure a continuation of activities include:

- Handover/ continuation of the actions either by the partner itself or by other actors including local partners or development actors in a few cases;
- Transfer of responsibilities/ activities to the authorities; and,
- Handover of activities to the community.

\(^{60}\) A tool to assess to what extent humanitarian actions funded by ECHO integrate resilience considerations.
The external evaluation shows that the Commission was partially successful in implementing sustainable humanitarian interventions. Almost three quarters of the survey respondents held the view that most EU-funded actions are somehow continued by local communities or other donors after EU-funding has ended, but not in the same way. Approximately a third (29%) of the Commission actions reviewed as part of the project mapping contains consideration of continuation of activity in the final project report. However, reports only describe how the project activity might/will be continued beyond EU funding, but strategies are often not specific or high-level (e.g. the partner will look for other funding or the partner will maintain the activities for as long as needed) without including concrete steps on how to ensure continuity of activities.

Similarly, approximately a third (30%) of the Commission actions reviewed as part of the project mapping contains evidence of sustainability of outcomes, i.e. a description of which outcomes will be sustained beyond EU funding. Strategies to increase sustainability of outcomes were identified by the Commission framework partners and local implementing partners and mainly encompass:

- Community engagement and participation (selected by 27% of framework partners and implemented partners);
- Building capacity at the national and/or local level (selected by 27% of the Commission framework partners surveyed and by 23% of implementing partners surveyed); and,
- Integration of EU-funded activities with national/local systems (selected by 24% of the Commission framework partners surveyed and by 24% of implementing partners surveyed).

The project mapping corroborated the above and also includes the following approaches:

- Advocacy, policy dialogue and coordination;
- Investment in durable infrastructure; and
- Creation of livelihood opportunities (e.g. Income Generating activities).

The ultimate aim mentioned by the Commission framework partners is to increase the resilience of the community.

Measures to further increase sustainability have been identified by the Commission's framework partners and local implementing partners, and include:

- Clearly consider and develop a sustainability/resilience strategy at the proposal stage;
- Promote more coordination between humanitarian relief and development;
- Increase the role of local partners and encourage participation of local organisations to improve local response over time;
- Involve beneficiaries and local communities effectively in the design and delivery of humanitarian aid;
- Provide multiannual funding and longer-term planning; and,
• Ensure high levels of ownership and commitment of local and/or national authorities.

The external evaluation also identified a number of conditions that should ideally be in place for sustainability to happen and therefore a number of related difficulties hindering the development of a consistent approach to sustainability. Some of these elements are context specific and in most cases, out of the Commission’s control, such as the legal framework or political landscape, while other challenges relate to the EU’s humanitarian mandate (i.e. emergency response) and modus operandi and include:

• The absence of a formal definition of what sustainability entails and how it should be addressed in the context of EU-funded actions;
• DG ECHO’s relatively fixed annual programming and funding cycle;
• The limited strategic focus of DG ECHO on elements such as livelihood activities, disaster preparedness and DRR; and,
• The limited focus on ensuring that framework partners engage with local partners.

Over the evaluation period, DG ECHO placed greater emphasis on promoting LRRD approaches and defining exit strategies. However, DG ECHO encountered difficulties in ensuring a consistent approach to LRRD across its funded regions and sectors. While in theory the concept seems understood, its implementation remains challenging. There is limited evidence on complementary approaches and handovers between DG ECHO and DG DEVCO or with other development actors over the evaluation period. DG ECHO does not have a specific operational framework or guidelines in place on how to implement LRRD and transition / exit strategies. In addition, the limited cooperation between humanitarian and development actors is partially driven by the differences between the goals and objectives, mandate, programming cycle, basic principles, approach, and mechanism of the two types of donors. Lastly, some challenges are also inherent to specific sectors, contexts and types of crisis.
Figure 12. Change in DG ECHO’s approach to LRRD over the evaluation period

- Focus on LRRD across regions of intervention and sectors
- Some liaison and coordination with DEVCO and other development actors, e.g., in Kenya, the Sahel and the Ivory Coast
- LRRD and transition from humanitarian to development actors found to be a challenge in policy priorities
- Good progress in transitioning from humanitarian aid to development in health sector in Liberia

2012

- Continued focus on LRRD across regions of intervention and sectors
- Focus on transition from humanitarian aid to development actors, e.g., in Ivory Coast
- Focus on LRRD in Chad as development funds became available to support them
- Plans to ensure appropriate phase-out and handover to development actors, e.g., in South America
- Liaison and coordination with EU Delegation (e.g., in Kenya), DEVCO (e.g., in Bangladesh), and other development actors
- ECHO commitments to further strengthen LRRD strategies in Zimbabwe
- Implementation of an innovative LRRD initiative, the Partnership for Transition, in Ivory Coast
- EU programme for Millennium Development Goals in Haiti enabled ECHO to have an exit strategy

2013

- Continued focus on LRRD across regions of intervention and sectors
- Development of a ‘Joint Humanitarian Development Framework’ to serve as the basis for implementing more effective LRRD in Bangladesh
- Effective options of LRRD explored, e.g., in Central America
- Plans to place strong emphasis on building resilience of poorest households in Haiti through LRRD and by strengthening donor coordination

2014

- Continued focus on LRRD across regions of intervention and sectors
- Enhancement of LRRD, disaster and epidemics preparedness and rapid response in Chad
- Continued implementation of innovative LRRD initiative in Ivory Coast encouraged
- Reinforcement of link between LRRD and strategic coordination among humanitarian and development actors, including donors, in Haiti

2015

- Continued focus on LRRD across regions of intervention and sectors
- Strong LRRD framework in Chad
- Ensuring LRRD where possible, e.g., in Mali
- Continued implementation of innovative LRRD initiative in Ivory Coast encouraged
- Plans to ensure proper transition from humanitarian aid to public funding of health sector in Ivory Coast

2016

Figure 13 shows insufficient development funding in Yemen as well as limited funding in Central African Republic (CAR) and Lebanon although DG ECHO considered that there was scope for an LRRD strategy in these countries - but only in the medium or long term and under certain conditions (e.g. peace, political will). In the case of Lebanon, it might simply be due to the fact that development funding is not necessarily needed. On the other hand, in CAR and Yemen, the high volatility of the situation prevents intervention of development actors. In other countries, development funding appears sufficient but DG ECHO does not envisage an LRRD/exit strategy (e.g. India, DRC, Ethiopia, South Sudan). In India for instance, DG ECHO has de facto exited but the termination of EU funding was considered as too abrupt by the field to have time for a proper LRRD strategy. In DRC, DG ECHO field believes there is no potential for LRRD strategy at the national level given the persistence of conflict, LRRD would however be possible in specific zones where development actors engage. In South Sudan, there is no exit possible because of the corruption levels, which excludes possibility to hand over to government.

Figure 13. Potential for LRRD and possible exit scenarios

Source: DG ECHO, 2016. IAF and ICF calculation based on ODA and FTA data.

Legend:

- **No**
- **Yes, in the medium term (1-2 years)**
- **Yes, in the long term (+2 years)**
- **Yes, under the current HIP**

Note: the countries highlighted in dark (i.e. Yemen, CAR and Lebanon) indicates where development funding is insufficient or limited.
5.7. Global Initiatives and Developments

The evaluation considered major global initiatives and developments – i.e. the World Humanitarian Summit and the Grand Bargain – and their potential impact on the delivery of the EU’s humanitarian aid.

EU commitments for the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS)

The Commission is committed to strong progress on each of the seven core commitment areas put forward following the WHS. To this end, 100 individual commitments were elaborated by the Commission, outlining future actions. Overall, evidence shows that the Commission is progressing on all the WHS commitments and humanitarian actors are overall pleased with recently implemented activities going in this direction. This was also reflected by the results of the Open Public Consultation, where the majority of the survey respondents held the view that the Commission is largely contributing to progress on the commitments.

Delivering the Grand Bargain (GB)

The Grand Bargain covers a number of actions that are grouped into the following work streams:

1. Greater Transparency
2. More support and funding tools to local and national responders
3. Increase the use and coordination of cash-based programming
4. Reduce Duplication and Management costs with periodic functional reviews
5. Improve Joint and Impartial Needs Assessments
6. A Participation Revolution: include people receiving aid in making the decisions which affect their lives
7. Increase collaborative humanitarian multi-year planning and funding
8. Reduce the earmarking of donor contributions
9. Harmonize and simplify reporting requirements
10. Enhance engagement between humanitarian and development actors

Overall, evidence showed that the Commission is progressing on all work streams of the GB but that more efforts need to continue in particular with regard to improving transparency, implementing the localisation agenda and reducing duplication and management costs. The Open Public Consultation showed that almost two-thirds of the survey respondents were in full agreement that The EU should lead by example in implementing the GB. The majority of the survey respondents were also in full agreement that the EU should launch pilot initiatives relating to the implementation of the work streams (58%) and that it should use its leverage as one of the biggest humanitarian donors to encourage its counterparts to implement the GB (52%). Finally, the results of the Open Public Consultation also showed that the EU should further foster dialogue with co-conveners to ensure greater synergy among the work streams and that implementation should aim to foster complementarities between the global, national, and local level.
5.8. POTENTIAL FOR SIMPLIFICATION AND BURDEN REDUCTION

Administrative costs in the area of EU humanitarian aid stem to a large extent from the reporting and accountability requirements61 of, notably, the EU Financial Regulation. These are different by nature from administrative costs that are imposed by the EU on businesses due to the transposition of EU legislation, which is the main focus of the Action Programme for Reducing Administrative Burdens in the EU.

In 2016, the Commission endorsed the Grand Bargain, which is an agreement between more than 30 of the biggest donors and aid providers, with the aim to close the humanitarian financing gap and get more means into the hands of people in need. It contains 10 work streams that are all supporting this aim. Particularly, no. 4 focuses on the reduction of management costs, and no. 9 on streamlining reporting requirements. All Grand Bargain signatories have committed to undertaking an annual self-reporting exercise on their implementation status.

Furthermore, following the publication of the European Court of Auditors' report on the African Great Lakes region, the Commission set up a Working Group to identify the necessary actions to apply across EU humanitarian activities in order to (1) increase transparency in the funding selection procedure, (2) pay further attention to the cost-efficiency of the actions, (3) improve monitoring during their implementation, (4) better document the assessment of results achieved, and (5) draw conclusions and lessons learnt on the implementation of HIPs.

Overall, the external evaluation shows that the Commission has progressed significantly on the audit recommendations, mostly by introducing improvements to procedures, guidelines and templates. It also indicates that efforts were invested by the Commission to streamline reporting requirements. However, there is a conceptual challenge posed by the dichotomy between some of the recommendations that involve more rigorous and detailed reporting62, and the Grand Bargain work stream no. 9 that calls for a simplification of reporting requirements.

Limited information was found on progress made in relation to specifically reducing management costs as well as developing joint regular functional monitoring and performance reviews. In this context, the external evaluation found a need to:

- Explore ways to reduce management costs by further moving to multiannual programming with, where possible, an increased number of multiannual HIPs and longer-term projects – during the evaluation period none of the EU-funded actions lasted more than 24 months but this might change in the near future as the 2017 worldwide HIP allowed funded actions to last up to 48 months. This would be particularly important in the context of an

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61 The related costs are currently not specified and reported by the humanitarian implementing partners, although efforts are being made by the Commission and some other donors to improve the understanding of the overall cost structure of partners.

62 The external evaluation provides suggestions for developing DG ECHO's framework for assessing effectiveness and cost-effectiveness. This would involve requesting e.g. further, detailed information from partners regarding costs, whereas the Grand Bargain aims at "reducing the volume" of reporting.
increase in protracted/long-term crises, which receive the majority of humanitarian aid each year;

- Examine opportunities to reduce management costs, for example by signing agreements with a single organisation covering multiple countries at least in the same region (e.g. the UN agencies receive the lion share of funding for similar activities which are all covered under separate projects). Multiannual funding could possibly facilitate the implementation of multi-country interventions. This approach would reflect the trend towards an increasing regionalisation of the HIPs. However, two preconditions could be introduced, namely: 1) such contracts could be awarded only to ‘trusted’ or ‘strategic’ partners”; and 2) the Commission’s capacity to manage regional projects would need to be further developed, in particular to take account of the different pace of developments and implementation by framework partners within the countries in question; and

- Further support the integration of technology and innovation in humanitarian aid operations to reduce costs and measure the gained efficiencies.

In addition, a recent study on funding flows through the humanitarian aid system 63 included a first attempt to calculate the share of EU humanitarian funding that reach the final beneficiary. It concluded that 38% of the EUR 300 million of funding analysed reached beneficiaries directly (cost of commodities, cash grants and any tangible items delivered to beneficiaries, or cost of staff directly involved in service delivery). A further 43% enabled the direct delivery of goods and services (delivery costs, logistics), thus potentially meaning that the aid was delivered with an overhead of about 19%. There would be scope to further examine the extent to which the ‘enabling’ costs could be further reduced, for example through local procurement and cooperation with local partners.

There is no benchmark as yet to compare the EU against other donors. The progress report on the Grand Bargain notes that: “Despite efforts to track humanitarian aid financing through the Financial Tracking Service on a voluntary basis since 1992, it remains impossible to find out how many cents of every dollar spent by donors actually reaches aid recipients.” The above-mentioned study on funding flows concludes that, to have benchmarks it would be more appropriate to fund research analysing all flows reaching a partner in a particular country or all flows reaching a beneficiary community. Should benchmarks become more widely available, the analysis of ratios should still be made with caution so as not to give wrong incentives / encourage detrimental actions to improve ratios (e.g. deliver higher-cost products to beneficiaries to increase share of funding reaching beneficiaries, reduce appropriate delivery costs e.g. linked to security below limits, or focus on areas with easier access but less persons in need).

6. CONCLUSIONS

6.1. RELEVANCE

Objectives and strategies

1. EU humanitarian aid objectives are very relevant to continuing global humanitarian needs. Overall, they are future-proof and in line with humanitarian principles.

2. The EU humanitarian aid response was comprehensive, appropriate and timely overall, given the needs identified and operational contexts. The Commission adapted its strategies, including emphasis on particularly relevant sectors and themes, to local contexts and changing needs. The regional approach taken was appropriate, but there is scope for improvement in regions where the national contexts are not well aligned with each other.

3. The EU could further clarify its overall strategic directions, e.g. providing support for the EU neighbourhood, and acknowledge the increasing number of complex crises requiring appropriately calibrated support.

4. During the period under evaluation, medium to long-term perspectives were increasingly considered. However, more could be done to boost the link between humanitarian aid – as a rapid response measure in crisis situations – and more medium and long-term development action.

5. The evaluation suggests that there would be benefits in developing a multiannual strategy presenting the Commission's overall vision and planned policy and its practical approach to providing EU humanitarian aid. Where possible, this strategy would be accompanied by a multiannual programme setting out the key priorities, by region and by sector, of both the multiannual and annual cycles, along with a more specific work programme. The strategy would also highlight links with other strategies (e.g. development, resilience) and those involved in their implementation.

Budget allocations

6. Budget allocations were relevant to the needs of the targeted populations and to the humanitarian aid objectives. They were based on high-quality, comprehensive, robust and participatory needs assessments. As resources were limited in relation to overall humanitarian needs, the EU was obliged to make strategic choices during the period under evaluation. Increasingly, it focused on the Middle East and the European neighbourhood, in connection with the Syrian crisis. In some cases, these choices triggered strong reactions among key stakeholders, which called for the rationale for these choices to be communicated more effectively, to confirm that the EU was still following the needs-based approach.

7. Overall, the EU humanitarian aid budget was considered commensurate with the EU's objectives and the expected results. It enabled the EU to respond to the most pressing humanitarian needs effectively and efficiently and to maximise the impact of the resources available. In some cases, a longer-term funding approach
would have been useful. One reason is that this would have made it easier for the Commission’s framework partners to predict what was going to happen.

**Partnerships**

8. The Commission selected appropriate partners given the humanitarian needs, partners’ expertise and capacity, the pool of available partners to work with and the local context. Funding was increasingly focused on larger-scale projects through UN agencies (over 50% of EU funding in 2016), partly because of the demands of the Syrian crisis. About 20% of framework partners, including 44 INGOs, implemented no EU-funded actions during the period concerned. The Commission needs to assess how partnerships are working at regular intervals, and to seek to involve ‘new’ partners wherever possible. The evaluation also suggested that, in the case of large framework partners, there may be scope for the Commission to consider possible ways of moving towards a system of ‘trusted’ or ‘strategic’ partners. This could help reduce the administrative burden on both the Commission and its framework partners, and allow for a more linked-up, coherent approach. On the other hand, the evaluation also showed that the Commission will continue to need its diverse pool of framework partners, including those which are relatively small or medium-sized, given their specific geographic presence and/or sectoral or thematic expertise.

9. The external evaluation concluded that involving local partners in the implementation of humanitarian aid activities, the potential for which depends on the operational context, can have a positive impact, especially on the effectiveness and sustainability of the interventions. There is scope to involve local implementing partners more in EU-funded actions (although 73% of the framework partners surveyed claimed to work with local partners, the nature and extent of this involvement vary significantly across projects). The evaluation also identified several opportunities to ensure that this is done more systematically, where appropriate and feasible.

**Field network**

10. The Commission’s humanitarian field network did a good deal to make EU-funded humanitarian aid actions more effective. This included contributing to needs assessments at the HIP level, thus making the Commission's regional, local and sectoral strategies more relevant.

11. Overall, the field network provided high-quality support, though with some capacity constraints and other challenges. Stakeholders consider it a unique feature which makes the Commission more effective and efficient. It enables the Commission to respond rapidly as crisis situations develop and new needs emerge. Its architecture is fit for purpose, although some improvements would also make it ‘future-proof’ (e.g. by closing some gaps in technical expertise).
6.2. COHERENCE

Internal coherence

12. There was a high level of coherence between EU-funded actions in different countries and regions. The main reason for this is the Commission’s ‘portfolio approach’, applied in the project selection process and based on the local knowledge of Commission field staff. This involves assessing projects not just individually, but also as part of a portfolio of projects designed to tackle a particular crisis or meet a number of needs identified at country or regional level. The complementarity between different actions to be funded is therefore clearly assessed when and where relevant. However, there is scope for improving coherence across the years.

13. There was a clear legal and conceptual framework in place to improve synergies and coherence between EU humanitarian aid and civil protection activities during the period under evaluation. There are also plenty of examples of good cooperation between the UCPM and humanitarian aid activities. However, more could be done to systematically improve overall complementarity and coherence in the field.

14. In theory, there are ample opportunities for links between humanitarian aid measures and the EU aid volunteers initiative, especially as most certified partners are also framework partners. However, this potential remains unrealised so far, mainly because the volunteering initiative was not fully up to speed by the end of the period under evaluation.

15. Historically speaking, coping with the consequences of population movements has been a key objective of EU humanitarian aid which has had few interactions with other policy areas. Given the changing nature of displacement crises and the context of the period under evaluation, the EU developed a Joint Communication on Forced Displacement and Development\(^64\) in April 2016, stressing the need to develop a consistent approach among the relevant aid organisations. This is being operationalised so as to actively engage in recent initiatives such as the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework and the EU trust funds.

16. There is a relatively strong policy framework for integrating adaptation to climate change into EU humanitarian aid, especially disaster risk reduction (DRR) activities. However, this is not done systematically, and there is room for improvement.

17. There was some coordination between DG ECHO and DG DEVCO at field and headquarters (HQ) level during the period under evaluation. DG ECHO sought to engage with DG DEVCO through policy and advocacy work at HQ level.

Moreover, coordination was stepped up over the years, mainly because of the growing emphasis on LRRD and resilience. The ongoing piloting of the humanitarian-development nexus in different contexts is expected to further improve coherence between DG ECHO and DG DEVCO activities. The EU trust funds are also an interesting approach which could strengthen links between humanitarian and development activities.

**External coherence**

18. The principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence were consistently reflected in the Commission’s policies and strategies and in the vast majority of EU-funded actions. The European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid provided clear definitions of humanitarian principles, while the Commission’s policies, strategies and implementation framework clarified how they were to be implemented. There was, however, no guidance on what approach to take in the event of challenges to respecting these principles or of tensions between them (e.g. engaging with national and local authorities versus the principles of independence and neutrality, or respecting the principles of neutrality, impartiality and independence versus humanity and humanitarian access in man-made and complex emergencies). The Commission could consider the possibility of discussing how to cope with such dilemmas with its framework partners.

19. The evaluation of the Consensus for 2008-2012 showed increasing coordination between the EU and its Member States at policy level, though the assessment of their operational cooperation was mixed. Evidence collected as part of the external evaluation indicates that the situation improved over this period, as several very good examples of synergies and complementarities were identified also in the field, in addition to at the policy level. These had to do not only with the use of external assigned revenues, but also with overall recognition of the Commission’s technical capacities at field level, considered crucial in terms of its influence on the Member States’ interventions. The evaluation noted that coherence and complementarity could be pursued more systematically, especially in places where the Commission has no local humanitarian presence.

20. During the period under evaluation the EU stepped up its cooperation with other donors and was active at different levels and fora to promote complementarity and coherence between them. No major obstacles preventing coordination between the EU and other Development Aid Committee (DAC) donors were identified, although there is room for improvement. The EU should continue its engagement with non-DAC donors at the policy level and analyse how to expand these efforts at the field level.

21. During the period under evaluation the EU clarified its objectives in terms of contribution to global humanitarian coordination structures and relations with UNOCHA and other UN agencies. It should continue its efforts to reinforce its relationship with the UN agencies and, where needed, challenge them in cooperation with its key partners.

22. The EU is cautious in its level of humanitarian cooperation with the national and local authorities of beneficiary countries, given the need to uphold humanitarian principles. However, within these boundaries there is some potential
for further developing context-specific approaches to involving national and local authorities whenever possible.

6.3. Effectiveness

23. There is ample evidence that EU-funded actions were effective, helping to save lives, reduce morbidity and suffering, and enabling disaster-affected populations to live under more dignified conditions. The scale of funding for humanitarian aid enabled the EU to have a real impact, tackling the needs of significant numbers of beneficiaries in many areas. In regions where EU funding was limited in relation to the overall aid budget, the evaluation showed that it nonetheless had a positive impact, as the projects selected had a high leverage or multiplier effect.

24. During the period concerned, the Commission implemented a number of internal reforms and other initiatives to make its humanitarian aid more effective. Some of these were triggered partly by the recommendations set out in the European Court of Auditors’ report on the African Great Lakes, notably as regards improvements to procedures, guidelines and templates.

Improvements included:

- a. continuing to make adjustments to the EU global needs assessment process and needs assessments at the level of funded actions;
- b. moving from country-specific HIPs towards regional ones;
- c. continuing to develop sector guidelines;
- d. strengthening of the field network; and
- e. working together more with other donors on joint activities.

Overall, these developments were useful and appropriate to their intended aims, and they were welcomed by stakeholders. Some challenges were encountered, such as some stakeholders’ perception that the EU’s global funding allocations were not exclusively needs-based (although the evaluation found that budget allocations were in fact based on needs), the varying quality of local needs assessments, and the fact that some regional HIPs lacked a cohesive strategic approach.

25. The Commission’s sectoral and thematic policies and guidelines promoted an appropriate approach in the sectors concerned. They were developed in line with international standards and in close consultation with relevant partners. However, the evidence about their actual application was mixed. In some areas, it might be better for the Commission to accept policies and guidelines drawn up by other donors or implementing agencies and, possibly, provide a ‘Commission addendum’ to emphasise certain aspects, rather than developing its own guidelines.

26. There were several success stories where the Commission played a leading role on specific issues, resulting in more effective approaches to humanitarian aid being developed. For example, the Commission’s insistence on multi-purpose cash helped change the way in which humanitarian aid is provided in certain contexts and sectors. In other cases, the EU’s focus on specific sectors and themes
drew attention and funding to these sectors. For instance, its attention to education in emergencies had a demonstration effect, encouraging other donors to support this sector. Another example is mainstreaming protection for disaster victims into the provision of humanitarian aid.

27. The EU’s humanitarian advocacy efforts were largely effective during the period concerned. They included advocating the upholding of the key humanitarian principles, lobbying for more donor resources, to be spent more effectively, and drawing attention to new, changing and emerging issues and the changing nature of humanitarian crises (e.g. Sudan or Syria). Advocacy activities in the field were individualised, flexible and responsive, reflecting the experience of Commission field staff. However, a more strategic approach, with clear priorities and measures, would be beneficial.

6.4. Efficiency

28. Qualitative indicators and stakeholder views indicate that EU humanitarian actions are cost-effective overall. There have been attempts by the Commission to provide quantitative evidence, for example, by calculating the share of assistance which reached the final beneficiaries, but only on rather small samples, and benchmarks for comparison with other donors are lacking. This effort needs to be further pursued and made systematic.

29. There is evidence of cost-effectiveness being taken into account throughout the project cycle (e.g. budget submitted by the partners being closely analysed, promoting cost-effective solutions towards partners). However, reporting requirements are still considered to be complex and not harmonised with those of other donors.

30. There is evidence of the EU adopting and promoting innovations and of best practices driving cost-effectiveness. As regards cash transfers, for instance, the EU is widely acknowledged to be a key donor. This has helped normalise cash transfers. There is also evidence of the EU accepting a degree of risk in its activities with a view to making them more cost-effective. For instance, the EU provided seed funding for new initiatives designed to improve cost-effectiveness. One example is using solar energy for sustainable water pumping in the water, sanitation and hygiene sector. However, more should be done to scale up successful ideas.

31. In some areas, notably in relation to the localisation agenda and multiannual funding, the evaluation noted that the Commission shows an ‘implementation deficit’, i.e. a lack of change or follow-up, despite evidence about the efficiency of certain approaches. Some factors impeding cost-effectiveness are external, making it harder for the Commission to address them. Examples include the compartmentalisation of actors that provide protection, and rigid national laws in beneficiary countries that limit what framework partners can do.

32. The evaluation noted that DG ECHO's management and monitoring systems could be adapted to make them better able to analyse the effectiveness and value for money of its humanitarian interventions. This would respond to various calls to make more and better use of existing data to improve effectiveness and value for money in the global humanitarian system, in the Commission in general, and
within DG ECHO. A lot of information is already readily available from DG ECHO, but gaps have been identified in (1) how DG ECHO can use these data to inform its choices and activities; and (2) the effectiveness of DG ECHO’s assessment framework. However, any adaptations made would also need to take account of the simplification agenda and the Grand Bargain commitments to improve transparency and harmonise reporting requirements.

6.5. EU Added Value

33. EU-funded actions had a clear added value, achieved primarily through:

- The scale of EU funding: the EU\textsuperscript{65} was the second largest donor worldwide during the period under evaluation, providing 9\% of global humanitarian aid. This produced tangible results, helping to saving lives.
- The EU’s focus on forgotten crises: in 2012-2016, 16\% of EU funding was allocated to forgotten crises (natural or man-made crises) compared to 12\% for all other donors.
- The EU filling gaps in global humanitarian aid, by addressing needs in areas which were difficult to access and responding swiftly to several new crises (e.g. Syria, Sudan, Burundi).
- The EU funding sectors and themes that were otherwise underfunded (e.g. protection sector, education in emergencies).

34. The EU’s lead on specific issues at global system level led to strong operational added value. By supporting operational improvements, the EU made the provision of humanitarian aid more cost-effective (e.g. through cash-based assistance, involvement of local communities, evidence-based needs assessments). The EU is widely acknowledged to be a ‘reference donor’ pushing for a principled and needs-based approach. Finally, the EU also helped coordinate the humanitarian landscape.

35. The EU coordinated humanitarian aid and shared information with its Member States at headquarters level. However, there is room for improvement (e.g. more coordination of funding allocation). The Commission’s access to first-hand information and expertise through its field network enabled it to play an effective coordinating role;

36. The EU was a very strong and reliable donor. Some Member States made use of some of the Commission’s processes (e.g. the Single Form\textsuperscript{66}), paving the way for even more process coordination;

\textsuperscript{65} As a single donor, i.e. without funding from individual Member States. Collectively, the EU and its members are the world’s largest humanitarian donor.

\textsuperscript{66} The Single Form is a living document that DG ECHO’s partners are required to use to submit their project proposal, intermediate report, and final report.
37. Member States can benefit from the Commission's strong operational knowledge and technical expertise at both headquarters and field level. The mechanism of external assigned revenues, which are financial contributions from Member States and/or third countries, including their public agencies, entities or natural persons, to certain external aid projects or programmes financed by the EU budget and managed by the European Commission, also worked effectively during the period in question and has good potential.

6.6. SUSTAINABILITY

38. The EU was partially successful in making its humanitarian interventions sustainable, although there was little clear evidence that activities continued and outcomes remained sustainable after EU funding ended. While some types of interventions are ‘more sustainable’ by nature (e.g. landmine clearance or activities on documentation for refugees and internally displaced people), others do not include sustainability among their objectives (e.g. food distribution).

39. DG ECHO has placed great emphasis on promoting LRRD approaches and defining exit strategies. However, it encountered difficulties in ensuring a consistent approach to LRRD across the regions and sectors it funds. While in theory the concept seems to be understood, its implementation remains challenging. There is limited evidence of complementary approaches and handovers from DG ECHO to DG DEVCO or other development actors during the period under evaluation. DG ECHO has no specific operational framework or guidelines for how to implement LRRD and transition / exit strategies. In addition, the limited cooperation between humanitarian and development actors is partially due to differences between their goals and objectives, mandate, programming cycle, basic principles, approaches, and mechanisms.

40. The evaluation suggested that there might be scope for DG ECHO to consider stepping up its approach of improving sustainability through resilience and cooperation with development actors. While acknowledging that humanitarian interventions are not always sustainable, given their short-term nature and core mandate (saving lives), in certain cases the wider context and longer-term goals could also be usefully considered when developing humanitarian interventions, in line with the contiguuum aspect of LRRD (which focuses on parallel complementarity of humanitarian and development aid, instead of one type of aid following the other).

6.7. GLOBAL INITIATIVES

The World Humanitarian Summit

41. Evidence shows that the EU is making progress on all the World Humanitarian Summit commitments, and humanitarian actors are generally pleased with recent activities in this area. This was also reflected by the results of the open public consultation. Most survey respondents thought the Commission was making a major contribution to progress on EU humanitarian commitments.
The Grand Bargain

42. Evidence shows that the EU is progressing on all work streams of the Grand Bargain, but that more efforts need to continue, especially as regards improving transparency, implementing the localisation agenda and reducing duplication and management costs. The open public consultation showed that almost two-thirds of survey respondents fully agreed that the EU should lead by example in implementing the Grand Bargain. Most respondents also fully agreed that the EU should launch pilot initiatives relating to the implementation of the work streams (58%) and that it should use its leverage as one of the biggest humanitarian donors to encourage its counterparts to implement the Bargain (52%). Finally, the results of the open public consultation also showed that the EU should further foster dialogue with co-conveners, to ensure greater synergy among the work streams, and that implementation should aim to foster complementarities between the global, national, and local levels.

6.8. LESSONS LEARNED

The evaluation provides clear evidence of the EU’s strong performance during the period under evaluation. The EU is considered being a principled, needs-based donor with some unique features, such as its approach to partnerships, its field network and its role in shaping the humanitarian system. Consultations at all levels showed that stakeholders want the EU to continue most of what it has been doing to date. Meanwhile, the policy environment is continuously developing with new challenges that need to be closely considered.

This section presents those challenges and the lessons learned from the evaluation on how to adapt future EU humanitarian aid to ensure that it remains fit for purpose.

Humanitarian needs and funding

Humanitarian needs are unlikely to abate, and humanitarian crises are becoming increasingly complex and protracted. The Global Humanitarian Overview, published annually by UN OCHA, describes matters including humanitarian needs, funding requirements, and trends. The 2018 report\(^\text{67}\) highlights the following issues relating to the development of humanitarian needs:

- Conflict – especially protracted crises – will continue to be the main driver of needs in 2018. All but two of the 2018 Humanitarian Response Plans (HRP) relate to situations that have a major element of conflict.
- Climate change will increase the number of extreme weather events and make drought in some regions chronic. The risk of droughts, floods, earthquakes, hurricanes and typhoons and other seismic and meteorological events will remain high in 2018.
- In 2018, the overall number of people in need is more than 5% higher than in the 2017 Global Humanitarian Overview.

\(^{67}\) [https://www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/GHO2018.PDF](https://www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/GHO2018.PDF)
• In 2018, 136 million people will be in need of humanitarian aid in 25 countries. That is more people than ever before.

• 91 million (67%) of these 136 million people, can be helped by UN-coordinated response plans costed at $22.5 billion.

• A set of large-scale protracted crises (primarily the Syria crisis, Yemen and South Sudan) has pushed up funding requirements steeply, and donors have not been able to fully keep up. Thus, a financing gap has emerged and is widening, as illustrated by the figure below. In 2017, for instance, appeals coordinated by the United Nations amounted to $24 billion (originally $22.2), but only $12.6 billion (52%) had been received by November 2017.

Rapid and unsustainable urbanisation, resource scarcities and protracted armed conflicts are some of the challenges facing humanitarian actors. The EU will need to take these challenges into account when designing and planning its humanitarian interventions, to maintain their relevance and effectiveness.

As also underlined in the Grand Bargain, there is a general need for improved efficiency of humanitarian aid to contribute to bridging the funding gap, and to ensure that interventions are well adapted to the crises with a protracted nature, which are presently the main cause of global humanitarian needs. Keeping in mind that the EU already funds some actions on a two-year basis and that there in many cases are a high degree of continuity between the (annual) humanitarian

Source: Global Humanitarian Overview, 2018 (UN OCHA)
implementation plans, emphasising multiannual programming and funding could have the following benefits:

- Reducing the transaction costs associated with purely annual programmes;
- Increasing predictability for the humanitarian partners, allowing for better planning and improved efficiency;
- Providing more time for DG ECHO to advocate for and connect to development funding;
- Allowing partners to plan and implement resilience activities and prepare their exit / transition strategy, thus strengthening sustainability of humanitarian action.

Moreover, the external evaluation concluded that there is scope for the Commission to move towards a deeper and strategic cooperation with key partners, to simplify procedures and allow for a more linked-up, coherent approach to humanitarian aid, especially if this is accompanied by a move towards multi-annual programming and funding. In parallel, the Commission will continue to need its diverse pool of framework partners, including those which are relatively small / medium sized, given their specific geographic presence and/or sectoral or thematic expertise.

To underpin the efforts to promote efficiency, the evaluation also makes a case for further developing the Commission's humanitarian aid management and monitoring systems to ensure accurate analysis of the effectiveness and value for money of its humanitarian aid.

**Changes in the donor landscape**

As the distribution of global power shifts towards a more multipolar world, new donors are becoming more visible players on the humanitarian global stage. Evidence shows that these emerging donors bring added value to the humanitarian system, for example by:

- filling funding gaps,
- paying special attention to the basics of relief, including the provision of food and large-scale disaster response (benefiting from their own experience with poverty and humanitarian crises),
- influencing national authorities, especially in countries where humanitarian access is severely restricted.

In the light of the above, the external evaluation noted that the EU should continue its engagement with new donors at policy level and work towards further engagement at field level.

**Involvement of the private sector**

Greater private sector involvement in humanitarian aid interventions could make for a stronger response by injecting disruptive thinking, including business insight and
innovation. Coordination is needed to avoid less effective or less principled responses, gaps in and duplication of response, and to ensure learning. The external evaluator noted the need for the EU to advance discussions on how to best coordinate and take this partnership forward (evidence showed this is already under consideration). Overall, the EU would need to:

- assess how humanitarian actions should capitalise on the experience and assets of the private sector;

- assess which sectors and interventions could benefit from a stronger partnership; and

- explore possible ways to encourage businesses to make relevant skills and capacity available for providing life-saving assistance in the context of EU-funded interventions.
ANNEX 1: PROCEDURAL INFORMATION

1. LEAD DG, DECIDE PLANNING/CWP REFERENCES

European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO)

2. PLANNING REFERENCE

2017/ECHO/614

3. ORGANISATION AND TIMING

The evaluation was supervised by an Interservice Steering Group (ISG), with members from DG BUDG, DG CLIMA, DG DEVCO, DG NEAR, SG, and DG ECHO. In total, five meetings were held with the ISG during the overall process of the evaluation, and one written consultation (on the draft SWD).

Timetable

- 1st meeting of ISG (ToR): 19 October 2016
- Start of evaluation contract: 2 January 2017
- Launch of OPC: 16 August 2017
- Close of OPC: 21 November 2017
- ISG meeting on draft Final Report: 23 November 2017
- Publication of external report (Europa): 9 March 2018
- ISG consultation of draft SWD: 9 March 2018

4. EXCEPTIONS TO THE BETTER REGULATION GUIDELINES

The Better Regulation Guidelines were applied in full.

5. CONSULTATION OF THE RSB

<table>
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<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Point raised by RSB</th>
<th>Comment</th>
<th>Section of SWD</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>The report should better explain the evidence base and how it balances stakeholder views against other information sources to corroborate findings and delivers robust conclusions.</td>
<td>Evidence base has been further clarified in the document for key conclusions. The external evaluator triangulated multiple sources for each conclusion, taking account of e.g. project data and views of different stakeholder groups. At the validation workshop of the external evaluation, representatives of main stakeholder groups (apart from end-beneficiaries) agreed across the board on the key conclusions.</td>
<td>Subsection 5.1 has been amended for topics like multiannual funding; budget allocations (needs-based); and partnerships. Annex 2 clarifies the basis for each conclusion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>The report could better distinguish 'insider' from 'outsider' stakeholders to test for possible 'group thinking'</td>
<td>The risk of 'group thinking' (in terms of bias of conclusions) is very low, since: • The underlying evaluations were provided by six different consortia, each</td>
<td>The methodology is described in Section 4 and in Annex 2.</td>
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<td>No.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>thinking'</td>
<td>using different teams of experts for each exercise.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• The methodology for the evaluation is thorough. 16 stakeholder groups were consulted through various means of consultation, which were not reduced to those who might be “suspected” of having a dependent relationship with the Commission (i.e. partners and beneficiaries). Member States were also largely positive and had a proactive input.</td>
<td></td>
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<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>84 indicators were used for responding to the 19 evaluation questions, each using multiple sources of information that was triangulated by the external evaluator. Furthermore, relevant case examples are referred to in the Effectiveness section to illustrate the performance. The Commission's humanitarian sector policies are based on the Sphere standards, and provide benchmarks for the implementation of the EU-funded actions. The evaluation confirms that the implementation of the EU-funded actions largely followed the Commission's policies.</td>
<td>The analysis framework is provided in Annex 3. Sub-section 5.3 provides examples for the effectiveness assessment, and has been amended concerning Commission sector policies and references to the Sphere standards.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Trade-offs and challenges**

| 3   | The report should be clearer on the benchmarks it uses to judge performance. These could include best-practice, standards or aggregate indicators. Where this is not possible, relevant case examples and indicators can illustrate the performance of humanitarian aid. | Clariﬁcations have been made in the document to show that funding decisions are fully based on the needs assessment framework. | Sub-sections 2.1 and 5.1. |
|     | 84 indicators were used for responding to the 19 evaluation questions, each using multiple sources of information that was triangulated by the external evaluator. Furthermore, relevant case examples are referred to in the Effectiveness section to illustrate the performance. The Commission's humanitarian sector policies are based on the Sphere standards, and provide benchmarks for the implementation of the EU-funded actions. The evaluation confirms that the implementation of the EU-funded actions largely followed the Commission's policies. | Explained in sub-sections 5.1, 5.3 and 5.5 |

| 4   | It could better present and analyse the main trade-offs and implementation challenges in humanitarian aid policy over the evaluation time period. It should clarify how the needs-based approach was made operational, including how prioritisation took place. | Being nimble, pragmatic and adaptable is demonstrated in the document under 1) Relevance: Having a fit-for-purpose implementation framework, including annual needs assessments that provide a basis for budget allocations; 2) Effectiveness: Having processes in place that ensure a timely response to emergencies; Having policies in place that are based on good practice and support effectiveness of funded actions; 3) EU Added Value: To take leadership on addressing emerging challenges within the global system to ensure an overall efficient and effective response. | Explained in sub-section 2.1, 5.1, 5.3 and 5.5 |
| 5   | To the extent that effectiveness and efficiency place a premium on an organisation that is nimble, pragmatic and adaptable, the evaluation should show how EU aid administration has demonstrated these features. | Concerning possible tensions between humanitarian aid and immigration policy, it should be stressed that humanitarian aid is there to save lives and alleviate suffering. If this can be done for people in their | Explained in the document as follows: Objectives: Sub-section 2.1 Needs-based: Sub- |
| 6   | It could further analyse the relationship and perceived or apparent tension between independent humanitarian | | |

83
<table>
<thead>
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<th>No.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>aid and European interest concerning migration.</td>
<td>homeland, they are more likely to stay there. A reduced refugee flow might be a positive side-effect of humanitarian aid, but it should not be confused with the main objective. E.g. if in a country like Syria a large part of the population is displaced, the EU will provide significant assistance. But the EU also provides significant assistance in Haiti and in Afghanistan, in Bangladesh for Rohingya refugees, etc. In other words: The EU has recently been very active in the EU's neighbourhood because of heavily increased humanitarian needs. But there is no major humanitarian crisis where the EU would be absent because of a focus on the neighbourhood. The evaluation confirms that EU humanitarian funding is needs-based, and that humanitarian principles are being respected, which then is being linked to the evaluation criteria of relevance and effectiveness. This also provides a case – according to the Open Public Consultation – for keeping humanitarian aid separate from other EU instruments addressing the refugee crisis.</td>
<td>section 5.1 (in particular explanation of relation humanitarian aid and migration) Humanitarian principles: Sub-section 5.2.2 Keeping humanitarian aid separate: Annex 4, section 3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>It could further analyse how humanitarian support interfaces with other aid in protracted crisis situations, which involve elements of disaster risk reduction, rehabilitation, and development. This includes the appropriateness and effectiveness of demarcating humanitarian aid, civil protection, and development cooperation.</td>
<td>As for the demarcation of humanitarian aid, civil protection, and development cooperation, it should be mentioned that all contexts are not conducive to cooperation and links between Humanitarian Aid, on the one hand, and Development and Civil Protection LRRD on the other, and less so in conflict-based crises. DG ECHO has minimum direct contacts with governments for the design and implementation of actions, and work directly with the beneficiaries (crisis-affected people). However, in contexts where a dialogue with a government is possible, a hand-over to national and development actors can take place. The lead for such activities lies with development actors. Table 4 of the document clearly explains the conceptional and operational differences of DG ECHO and DG DEVCO. At an operational level, the specific dividing line is the speed of action. Furthermore, in many contexts (e.g. war zones) the opportunities for development aid is limited, and in others (politically stable contexts with slow-onset crises) humanitarian aid may be less relevant than development aid. At a conceptual level, national governments should be in the driving seat of national development while humanitarian actors and beneficiaries should in the driving seat of humanitarian assistance, in particular in conflict zones. As mentioned in the document, several good examples were identified in the external evaluation. I.e. in 2016 DG ECHO and DG DEVCO worked</td>
<td>Differences between Humanitarian Aid – Development are explained in sub-section 5.2.1 point 3, table 4. Differences between Humanitarian Aid – Civil Protection are explained in sub-section 5.2.1 point 2.</td>
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<tr>
<td>No.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>The report should justify and explain the extent to which humanitarian aid is spent within the EU (see figure 3 on page 21).</td>
<td>Regarding spending of humanitarian aid budget within Europe. Figure 3 of the previous draft document was incorrect and was taken out. Thus, under the instrument evaluated there is no spending of humanitarian aid budget within the EU.</td>
<td>Removed from section 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>It could further analyse evidence regarding the emergency nature of the</td>
<td>The issue of multiannual vs short-term emergency funding is picked up by the Grand Bargain and discussed in the report. It</td>
<td>Evidence is provided under sub-sections 5.1 (regional appproach),</td>
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<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Point raised by RSB</td>
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<td>needs-based policy vis-à-vis the advantages of further long-term and regional programming and predictability.</td>
<td>will be one of the focal issues for the follow-up of the evaluation results.</td>
<td>5.2.2, 5.6.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>It could further analyse evidence regarding the need for adaptability and flexibility in working through different channels and with different methods, while trying to consolidate relationships with ‘trusted’ and ‘strategic’ partners. This includes the rationale for channelling substantial amounts of funds through the UN system, the efficiency of this approach, and the value added of the EU when doing this.</td>
<td>As for the channelling of funds through the UN, it must be stressed that all grants are based on specific conditions as outlined in the humanitarian implementation plans. The EU added value is ensured by The Commission’s policies, needs assessments, HIPs, budget allocations, project monitoring and follow-up actions (aiming at targeting, efficiency, effectiveness, etc.). The Commission has also successfully encouraged the UN to use more efficient approaches such as cash-based aid as opposed to physically delivered food assistance. It is also clear that the UN is an internationally mandated and perfectly legitimate actor: one cannot work for refugees without working with UNHCR or with migrants without working with the International Organization for Migration.</td>
<td>Explained under subsections 2.1, 5.1, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 6.8.2, specific relevance of UN and ICRC explained in section 3</td>
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### Lessons learned

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<th>No.</th>
<th>Comment</th>
<th>Sub-section 6.8.2 has been added.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>The conclusions section should better highlight those findings that merit attention from policy makers for policy action. This could be achieved by adding a short section on lessons learned.</td>
<td>A section on Lessons Learned has been added.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 6. EVIDENCE, SOURCES AND QUALITY

The evaluation relies entirely on an external evaluation carried out by ICF Consulting Services Ltd, which included the use of a series of research tools specifically developed and tailored for the purpose of capturing the views and input of all relevant stakeholders of the EU humanitarian aid activities, and providing solid, triangulated conclusions. These research tools included:

- A large literature review, including a set of 27 existing evaluations (see table below);
- The mapping of 183 EU-funded humanitarian aid actions;
- 73 semi-structured interviews conducted at different stages of the evaluation and involving one to four interviewees per interviewing session;
- Three field missions to Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Tanzania, Myanmar and Mauritania. The missions included interviews, focus groups, and project visits in each of the visited countries;
• Three online surveys targeting: the Commission field staff, the Commission framework partners and local implementing partners;

• An Open Public Consultation (OPC) on the Commission’s website from July to November 2017; and

• A validation workshop organised with a representative sample of the Commission’s key stakeholder groups.

Overall, it is considered that the evaluation results are valid, as in the vast majority of cases they are confirmed by multiple sources of evidence. As to the strength of each source of evidence, further details are provided in Table 2 of the SWD main document, and Table A1.3 of the SWD Annex 2.

Evaluations reviewed as part of the meta-evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of evaluation</th>
<th>Publication month-year</th>
<th>Name of the evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thematic</td>
<td>Feb-18</td>
<td>EU Approach to building resilience to withstand food crises in African Drylands (Horn and Sahel), 2007-2015 – joint DEVCO and ECHO evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thematic</td>
<td>Jan-16</td>
<td>Evaluation of the use of different Transfer Modalities in ECHO Humanitarian Aid actions (2011 – 2014)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thematic</td>
<td>Mar-15</td>
<td>Evaluation of DG ECHO’s Approach to Communication under the Humanitarian Implementation Plans (HIP between 2010 and 2013)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thematic</td>
<td>Oct-14</td>
<td>Mid-term evaluation of Enhanced Response Capacity Funding</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thematic</td>
<td>Sep-14</td>
<td>Joint Evaluation of Drought Risk Reduction in the Horn of Africa and DIPECHO Central Asia and South Caucasus (2009 - 2013)</td>
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<td>Thematic</td>
<td>Jun-14</td>
<td>Evaluation of the implementation of the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid, 2008-2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thematic</td>
<td>Aug-13</td>
<td>Evaluation of the European Commission’s Humanitarian Action in the Shelter Sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thematic</td>
<td>Jul-13</td>
<td>Food security and nutrition: Evaluation of European Commission integrated approach of food security and nutrition in humanitarian context (2009-2012)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thematic</td>
<td>Mar-13</td>
<td>Evaluation of DG ECHO’s Fleet Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thematic</td>
<td>Jan-13</td>
<td>Working directly with local NGOs: Evaluation of the potential effectiveness and efficiency gains of working directly with local NGOs in the humanitarian interventions of the Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>Type of evaluation</td>
<td>Publication month-year</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thematic</td>
<td>Jul-12</td>
<td>Evaluation and review of humanitarian access strategies in DG ECHO funded interventions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thematic</td>
<td>Jun-12</td>
<td>Need Analysis, Review and Design of DG ECHO’s Training in Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thematic</td>
<td>May-12</td>
<td>Review of existing practices to ensure participation of Disaster-affected communities in Humanitarian aid operations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thematic</td>
<td>Mar-12</td>
<td>Evaluation and review of DG ECHO financed livelihood interventions in humanitarian crises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geographic</td>
<td>Oct-16</td>
<td>Evaluation of DG ECHO’s Actions on Building Resilience in the LAC Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geographic</td>
<td>Jun-16</td>
<td>Evaluation of the ECHO intervention in Pakistan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geographic</td>
<td>Feb-16</td>
<td>Evaluation of ECHO’s interventions in the Sahel (2010-2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geographic</td>
<td>Dec-13</td>
<td>Evaluation of the European Commission's Humanitarian and Disaster Risk Reduction Activities (DIPECHO) in Indonesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geographic</td>
<td>Nov-12</td>
<td>Evaluation of European Commission’s Humanitarian Activities in Colombia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geographic</td>
<td>Mar-12</td>
<td>Evaluation of DG ECHO’s interventions in the occupied Palestinian territory and Lebanon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ANNEX 2: STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

1. Objective and scope of the stakeholder consultation

The objective of the stakeholder consultation was to provide all stakeholders with the opportunity of expressing their views on the main topics of the evaluation.

The consultation, which included a number of different components as specified further below, covered the following topics:

- The **relevance** of the EU’s humanitarian aid activities to evolving humanitarian needs and context;
- The **coherence** of the EU’s humanitarian aid activities (both in terms of design and implementation) with globally accepted humanitarian principles and standards as well as the activities of other actors at EU, Member State and international level;
- The **EU added value** of the EU’s humanitarian aid activities compared to activities implemented by other humanitarian actors (including bilateral humanitarian aid provided by EU Member States);
- The **effectiveness** of the EU’s humanitarian aid activities in achieving or contributing to the EU’s overarching humanitarian objectives;
- The **efficiency** of the EU’s humanitarian aid activities;
- The **sustainability** of the EU’s humanitarian aid activities and the extent to which they were successful in linking relief, rehabilitation and development; and
- The implications of the changing humanitarian aid context and landscape for the EU’s humanitarian aid actions and operational framework, as well as its role in the global humanitarian system.

2. Stakeholder mapping

Figure A1.1. provides an overview of all relevant stakeholder groups, identified through independent desk research and exchanges with the Commission. Beneficiaries or communities affected by humanitarian crises are at the centre of the EU’s humanitarian actions. Other relevant stakeholders can broadly be categorised as follows:

- Core humanitarian actors and stakeholders that the EU typically coordinates or engages with, at an operational level, in the delivery of its humanitarian aid;
- Stakeholders that may play a role in research, advocacy or aid delivery, but are not directly involved in EU operations. Some of these groups may be involved in the delivery of EU-funded actions as local implementation partners in which case they would fall under the first category of stakeholders;
- Stakeholders that have an influence on EU policy choices and/or funding decisions.
The topics and consultation tools were tailored for each stakeholder group.

The choice of specific methods and tools was based on the following factors: the size and diversity of the stakeholder group, the nature of information we expected to collect from each group and the expected interest, influence, impact, awareness and accessibility of each stakeholder group.
3. Methods and tools

A range of methods and tools were used to ensure a comprehensive and well-balanced consultation process. The table below provides an overview of the methods that were used to consult each stakeholder group. To be stressed is that the 27 existing evaluations – that fed into the meta-evaluation included in the current evaluation – also contained substantial, targeted stakeholder consultation activities.

*Table A1.1  Overview of consultation tools used to collect primary data from different stakeholder groups*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Online surveys</th>
<th>Semi-structured interviews</th>
<th>Open Public Consultation (OPC)</th>
<th>Fieldwork interviews, focus groups</th>
<th>Validation workshop</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Affected communities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commission staff– HQ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commission staff – Field</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other EU entities</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other donors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commission framework partners</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local implementing partners</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Host governments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academics and think tanks</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Private sector</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Military forces</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>European Parliament</td>
<td>✓*</td>
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<tr>
<td>European Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>Member States</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>EU citizens</td>
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<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global forums and clusters</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Note: * The external evaluation team reached out to different members of the European Parliament but none of them accepted to discuss this evaluation.
As shown in the table below, the quality of evidence provided by the consultation was ‘Strong’ on 5 out of 7 of the research tools, and ‘Medium to Strong’ on 2 tools, among which one was the Open Public Consultation (for further details, see Annex 4).

Table A1.2  Overview of the strength of the evidence collected through the consultation tools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research tools</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Strength of the collected evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Primary data collection tools</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Semi-structured interviews | • Commission HQ staff: 27  
• Commission field staff: 8  
• Other EU entities: 5  
• framework partners: 18  
• Member States: 5  
• Academics: 2  
• Global forums and clusters: 8 | **Strong quality.** 73 semi-structured interviews were completed involving one to four interviewees per interviewing session. The interviews were organised in three rounds reflecting the stages of the evaluation and the data needed at each stage (i.e. scoping interviews with Commission HQ staff and a few other DGs to identify the key issues to be tackled during the evaluation; interviews with sectoral experts to inform the rapid evaluations; a third round of interviews organised at the end of the evaluation to validate the emerging findings, discuss the prospective evaluation and fill in potential data gaps). Annex 2 of the external evaluation presents the detailed list of interviewed stakeholders. |
| Field missions  
*Interviews, focus groups, project visits* | Three field missions covering four countries were conducted during the evaluation (DRC, Tanzania, Myanmar and Mauritania). Annex 6 of the external evaluation provides the field reports associated with these missions. They include a detailed overview of the approach adopted to conduct the field missions and the stakeholders interviewed. | **Strong quality.** The field missions lasted two to three weeks and allowed the evaluation team to meet with a large number of stakeholders including end beneficiaries and local implementing partners. Representatives from the host governments were only consulted to a limited extent given the context of the visited countries, they were only consulted in Tanzania and Mauritania. The main limitation to the field work was the tense security context in some of the visited countries (notably DRC and Myanmar), which limited the scope of the visit. But this was well taken into account and did not jeopardise the strong quality of the evidence collected. |
| Survey of  
Commission field staff | 130 responses on a sample of 225 (58% response rate) | **Strong quality.** Representative sample of respondents composed of both experienced and new staff and well spread geographically with over representation of countries hosting a regional office (i.e. Kenya, Jordan, Turkey and Senegal). The profile of the respondents to the survey is presented in Annex 4 of the external evaluation. |
| Survey of  
framework partners | 361 responses on a sample of 900 (40% response rate) | • **Strong quality.** Representative sample of respondents from 88 different organisations (some overrepresentation: Oxfam, CARE, Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), Save the Children). Good geographical spread with 80 different countries represented (36% based in Europe, 64% based in the third |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research tools</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Strength of the collected evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Survey of implementing partners</td>
<td>103 responses on a sample of 450 (23% response rate)</td>
<td><strong>Medium to Strong quality.</strong> A good sample representing 74 different local implementing partners (overrepresentation: CARE network, Islamic Relief, Red Cross national organisations). Good geographical spread covering 49 countries but strong overrepresentation of Pakistan (12%), Ethiopia (8%), Nepal (7%) and Sudan (7%). Good level of experience with EU-funded actions with 63% of respondents involved in more than one project during the evaluation period. Covers all the sectors of interventions covered by the EU. The profile of the respondents to the survey is presented in Annex 4 of the external evaluation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OPC</td>
<td>The OPC was open from July to November 2017 (14 weeks in total) and gathered 38 responses (30 responses from organisations and 8 responses from individuals).</td>
<td><strong>Medium to strong quality.</strong> The OPC allowed to collect additional feedback on the EU humanitarian aid in a structured format but also in the form of position papers. The limited number of response however did not allow us to perform advanced analysis of the responses, e.g. in terms of geographical or sectoral patterns.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Validation workshop</td>
<td>The validation workshop was organised on 14 December 2017 and gathered a group of 18 stakeholders representing the framework partners (including INGOs, UN agencies and ICRC representatives), the EU Member States, Commission, and external experts.</td>
<td><strong>Strong quality.</strong> The sample of stakeholders who took part to the validation workshop was representative of the EU’s main stakeholders groups (i.e. 3 Commission staff, 10 framework partners (4 UN, 2 ICRC, 4 INGOs, 1 academic, 2 EU Member States and 2 networks of NGOs – the full list of participating organisations is provided in Annex 2 of the external evaluation) and the set-up of the workshop allowed the evaluation team to collect very good feedback on the key findings of the evaluation. The workshop also allowed to have a detailed discussion on the five recommendations stemming out of the evaluation and test their relevance, feasibility, practical implementation and desirability. This was a key source of information to revise the draft recommendations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Summary of results of the stakeholder consultation activities

The inputs from the consultation process to the evaluation are provided in the following, per evaluation criterion.

RELEVANCE

OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

- DG ECHO’s independent position within the Commission, separated from development, neighbourhood policy and foreign policy as part of the EEAS, also ensures, albeit to a certain extent, its independence from political influence.
- The EU objectives are very relevant to the global context.
- The need to move to a multiannual programming approach was highlighted consistently, but also to put safeguards in place to ensure good performance of Commission humanitarian partners if this would also entail multiannual funding.
- The Commission improved over the period in adapting its strategies to protracted crises and broader longer-term challenges in the humanitarian contexts, which was seen as a positive and crucial factor by the stakeholders to ensure the relevance of the EU’s interventions. However, there is a lack of systematic anticipation capability and exit planning within the Commission, especially in countries where the EU has been engaged for some time.
- Over the 2012-2016 period, the EU has improved in adapting its regional strategies to better address the changing local needs and priorities and through the possibility to amend and top-up the HIPs to adapt to fast evolving needs. While on the one hand this was seen as a positive and important factor for ensuring a higher relevance of the Commission’s interventions by stakeholders in the Commission HQ and external partners, concerns were on the other hand also expressed as to the additional burden of processing top-ups.
- A more fundamental criticism of the recent HIPs and their technical annexes by the stakeholders in the field was that their wording has been quite generic and left significant flexibility in terms of geographical and sectoral coverage.
- During the evaluation period, the Commission published eight policy documents to support the implementation of EU-funded actions, which were developed in close consultation with its partners. This consultation process was considered by stakeholders to be an effective way to ensure the relevance and appropriateness of the documents, which were overall also seen to be reflecting international standards.

BUDGET ALLOCATION

- The Commission’s approach to needs assessments had been made more robust and scientific by the strengthened global needs assessment methodology, manifested through the introduction the use of the INFORM tool and the IAF.
- The quality of the Commission’s global needs assessments and their articulation through the GGOPHA documents is high.
• The vast majority of stakeholders consulted in the evaluation considered that the Commission’s strategies as defined in the HIPs and the associated technical annexes answered to the most urgent humanitarian needs on the ground and that the needs assessment processes had been robust and participatory. Many framework partners insisted on the fact that they would like to be involved in those processes to leverage their field knowledge, add value to the HIPs, and ensure the buy-in of the framework partners into the Commission’s strategy.

• Some Commission partners, especially Non-Governmental Organisation (NGOs), have perceived an increased politicisation of the Commission’s approach driven by political priorities in the EU. Five OPC position papers also highlighted an opinion, that a coherent humanitarian funding allocation was hindered by political priorities. ICRC highlighted an issue concerning the variation of funding available, referring to discrepancies of the allocations versus the number of people in need.

• There were strong external stakeholder views expressed about being realistic about the EU objectives and expected results insofar that EU funding alone would never be enough to address all the humanitarian crises around the world, but needs to provide an adequate response to most pressing needs and address those humanitarian contexts where it can provide most added value (e.g. in forgotten crises). Nevertheless, there was also a strong view that more EU funding would have brought better results in addressing the humanitarian needs. Stakeholder views expressed in the OPC also showed that the funding available was not always seen as commensurate to the needs on the ground.

• The lack of humanitarian access was pointed out as a main challenge in the delivery of the humanitarian aid.

PARTNERSHIPS

• Consortia were considered a positive development, allowing the pooling of collective expertise of different organisations in complex crises contexts requiring multi-faceted responses. However, the consortium approach should continue to be a voluntary aspect in EU-funded actions, and a continuing flexibility in the partnerships is desired.

• Some good examples of working with local partners were identified on the ground during the field visits and a large majority of local implementing partners surveyed (90%) judged that the Commission had played a role in supporting the use of local partners in the implementation of humanitarian aid activities. Nonetheless, such cooperation should be further encouraged and promoted.

FIELD NETWORK

• The field network is considered a unique feature making the Commission more effective and efficient.

• The field network has the right profiles for their mandate, i.e. combining a set of relevant skills such as monitoring, supervision, advocacy and operational roles.

COHERENCE AND COMPLEMENTARITY

• Approximately half of the framework partners surveyed reported that there was a joined-up approach between the Commission's approach to humanitarian aid and development aid. Although the need for such cooperation is widely recognised
and agreed upon, cooperation was judged as not optimal at the field level by many stakeholders consulted.

- It was recognised that the EUTF constituted an interesting approach, which should allow for better linkages between humanitarian and development activities.

- Commission staff recognised the evolution from a continuum approach (which focuses on continuity of funding between DG ECHO and DEVCO) – to a contiguum approach (which focuses on simultaneous complementarity), through the increasing focus on resilience and the follow-up of the EU commitments to the GB. It was felt that, although the principle is well understood at HQ level, the continuum approach still prevails in the field.

- It was stressed that the Commission should have a clearer position towards some of the UN actors or communicate this position more clearly towards its partners as it was raised as an issue by many stakeholders.

- It was recognised that while the Commission (DG ECHO) should not be expected to do everything, it should play a role in advocating for longer term funding and coordinating with development actors.

- In the existing evaluations from the 2012-2016 period the stakeholders called on the Commission to further promote the respect and compliance with IHL (and step up the coordination, leadership and accountability efforts within the global humanitarian system).

**EFFECTIVENESS**

- Consultations at all levels showed that stakeholders want the Commission very much to continue most of what it has been doing to date, while noting some areas for improvement and necessary changes to reflect contextual and other relevant developments which are affecting humanitarian aid delivery.

- The majority of stakeholders recognised the high quality of EU-funded actions.

- The field presence is perceived to be a reason for the flexibility in addressing changing needs, as highlighted by stakeholders consulted for WASH, S&S and FSL sectors. Stakeholders consulted for WASH sector also highlighted that EU is usually the first donor to respond to emergencies as a result of its local presence. On the other hand, some stakeholders also stressed that the EU’s speed of intervention has been decreasing over the years, potentially threatening one of its key advantages.

**EFFICIENCY**

- Overall the Commission's approach to monitoring and evaluation was considered robust, and of a very high quality. In the WASH and shelter sectors, the stakeholders consulted also highlighted the value of the monitoring visits undertaken by Commission staff, which were considered useful to identify the critical elements for improvement, especially from a technical point of view (when these visits involved technical experts). This was especially useful as other donors do not provide technical inputs in the same systematic way as the Commission does.

- Overall, the quality of the support of the Commission’s field network to the operational implementation of EU actions has been identified as good. This was
an aspect highlighted in the stakeholder interviews in the the Commission HQ. The network is functioning well in delivering its core functions and is well recognised as the key Commission asset and unique feature by its key stakeholders and global and local partners. However, the coordination between the Commission’s field offices and local NGOs was rated as less effective by the consulted stakeholders (rated as very and somewhat effective by only 43% of field network respondents.

EU ADDED VALUE

- The key added value of EU contribution to the development of the humanitarian aid system was EU global stance as a strongly principled donor. This was a dominating perception in the stakeholder interviews, where EU advocacy of the humanitarian principles was seen as adding value to the global humanitarian system where such principles are not always universally supported. This was also valued by stakeholders in complex emergencies where the potential for the principles to be eroded is high. For example, in its response to the Syrian crisis, the EU reputation as a principled donor helped it engage with the different host country governments on issues such as protection. The fact that the EU is purely a humanitarian donor gives the freedom to take a strong stand on humanitarian principles, although as described under the coherence section, it is sometimes difficult to ensure respect for each principle at the same time.

- the Commission implemented a number of internal reforms and other internal initiatives to strengthen the impact and effectiveness of its humanitarian aid delivery, which were positively received by stakeholders. These included: (1) the continuous adjustments to the EU global needs assessment process (e.g. INFORM and the IAF) and needs assessments at the level of funded actions; (2) the move towards regional versus country-specific HIPs; (3) continuous development of sectoral guidelines; (4) the strengthening of the field network; and (5) increased engagement with other donors to undertake joint activities.

- There was wide agreement amongst the OPC respondents that EU-funded actions have added value to actions financed by other donors, including Member States. This is mostly because the EU has inspired Member States and donors alike to develop their own policies and engage partners in collective reflection on thematic issues.

- In the forgotten crises, which received less global funding in absolute terms (like Algeria, Bangladesh or India) the EU provided the majority of funding in some specific years. This added value has been widely recognised by external stakeholders who saw the EU systematically addressing in the 2012-2016 period this type of crises which receive little or no funding from other donors.

- The leading role of the Commission within the humanitarian coordination structures at global and local level was recognised by most of the interviewed stakeholders, which noted the Commission’s ability to lead and bring technical expertise to the discussions.

SUSTAINABILITY

Measures to further increase sustainability have been identified by the Commission’s framework partners and local implementing partners, and include:
➢ To clearly consider and develop a sustainability/resilience strategy at the proposal stage as well as a viable exit strategy;

➢ Increased coordination between humanitarian relief and development;

➢ To increase the role of local partners, encourage participation of local organisations in an attempt to reduce administrative costs, and improve response time;

➢ To involve beneficiaries and local communities effectively in the design and delivery of humanitarian aid;

➢ Multiannual funding and longer-term planning; and,

➢ To ensure high levels of ownership and commitment of local and/or national authorities.

However, stakeholders consulted emphasised again the importance of devising context specific approaches.
ANNEX 3: ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK INCLUDING EVALUATION QUESTIONS

Relevance

EQ 1: To what extent did the allocation of the EU humanitarian aid budget consider the needs, actions of other donors and the EU humanitarian aid objectives?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Sources of information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Judgement criteria (JC): the allocation of the EU humanitarian aid budget is based on needs, actions of other donors and the EU humanitarian aid objectives.</td>
<td>Literature and document review; Review of DG ECHO’s approach to needs assessment; Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, DG ECHO field, other key donors to understand their approaches to needs assessment; Surveys: DG ECHO field, FPA partners; Expert opinion, OPC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence that the allocation of the EU humanitarian aid budget is based on needs</td>
<td>Literature and document review; Review of DG ECHO’s approach to needs assessment; Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, DG ECHO field, other key donors to understand their approaches to needs assessment; Surveys: DG ECHO field, FPA partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence that the allocation of the EU humanitarian aid budget considered the actions of other donors</td>
<td>Document review; Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, DG ECHO field; Surveys: DG ECHO field, FPA partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of the EU humanitarian aid funding allocated to each sector and compared to needs</td>
<td>Literature review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence that EU humanitarian aid budget’s size was commensurate to EU objectives and expected results</td>
<td>Literature review; Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, DG ECHO field; Surveys: DG ECHO field, FPA partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of changes in budget allocation over the evaluation period (across sectors / geographies)</td>
<td>Document review (e.g. review of HIPs) and HOPE data analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

EQ 2: To what extent does the Commission have appropriate, comprehensive and context-adapted strategies in place for addressing regional humanitarian needs and different challenges, including medium and longer-term objectives, where applicable?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Sources of information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JC: ECHO has made clear strategic choices in terms of funding regions</td>
<td>Literature review; Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, DG ECHO field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of needs assessments informing priority setting as to funding allocations to selected regions/ countries</td>
<td>Literature review; Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, DG ECHO field; Surveys: DG ECHO field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of regional strategies being based on assessment of the regional context and needs</td>
<td>Literature review; Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, DG ECHO field; Survey: DG ECHO field; Fieldwork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of the needs assessment having addressed all relevant aspects (e.g. sectors, vulnerable groups, gender, etc.)</td>
<td>Desk literature; Project mapping; Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, DG ECHO field, other donor and aid providers, Surveys: DG ECHO field, FPA partners, local implementing partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence that needs assessment are based on robust methods involving participatory approaches and are regularly updated</td>
<td>Desk literature and project review; Project mapping Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, DG ECHO field, other donor and aid providers; Surveys: DG ECHO field, FPA partners, local implementing partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DG ECHO’s response is comprehensive, appropriate and timely given the identified needs and context</td>
<td>Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, DG ECHO field, other donor and aid providers; Surveys: DG ECHO field, FPA partners, local implementing partners; Fieldwork</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
JC: The strategies put in place by DG ECHO for addressing regional needs take account of medium and longer-term objectives

| Evidence of the regional strategies including provisions for entry – exit and LRRD | Literature review; Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, DG ECHO field |
| Evidence of the regional strategies taking account of (the possibility of) protracted crises and other longer-term challenges | Literature review; Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, DG ECHO field |
| Evidence of regional strategies being adapted to local contexts and evolving needs | Literature review; Interview: DG ECHO field; Surveys: DG ECHO field, local implementing partners; Fieldwork: local authorities, beneficiaries, other relevant actors |

**EQ 3: To what extent is the Commission’s choice of partnerships appropriate? How could the Commission improve in the choice of partners?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Sources of information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JC: DG ECHO chooses partners which are appropriate to respond to the needs identified in the HIPs</td>
<td>Review of project documentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence that DG ECHO chooses appropriate partners given the humanitarian needs, partners’ expertise and capacity, pool of available partners to work with and local context</td>
<td>Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, DG ECHO field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Surveys: DG ECHO field, local implementing partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fieldwork: relevant local NGOs not involved in DG ECHO actions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of successful implementation of projects by DG ECHO partners (linked to effectiveness criterion)</td>
<td>Review of project documentation; Interviews: DG ECHO field, other donor and aid providers; Surveys: DG ECHO field, FPA partners, local implementing partners; Fieldwork: local authorities, beneficiaries, other relevant actors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of the role of local implementing partners in the implementation of DG ECHO's interventions</td>
<td>Review of project documentation; Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, DG ECHO field; Surveys: DG ECHO field, local implementing partners; Fieldwork: beneficiaries, other relevant actors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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EQ 4: To what extent does the configuration of the Commission’s field network ensure an added value in terms of efficiency and effectiveness of the Commission’s actions?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Sources of information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JC: The way in which DG ECHO’s field network is set up contributes to the effectiveness and efficiency of DG ECHO’s actions</td>
<td>Interviews: DG ECHO field and DG ECHO HQ; Survey: DG ECHO field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of the field network successfully feeding into the needs assessment and HIP development</td>
<td>Review of project documentation; Surveys: DG ECHO field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of the field network successfully contributing (in terms of monitoring, providing support, etc.) and providing support to implementation of DG ECHO actions</td>
<td>Review of project documentation; Surveys: DG ECHO field, FPA partners, local implementing partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DG ECHO’s internal architecture is fit for purpose for addressing needs in today’s crises</td>
<td>Review of project documentation; Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, DG ECHO field, other EU, other donor and aid providers; Surveys: DG ECHO field, FPA partners, local implementing partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence that current configuration allows DG ECHO to respond rapidly</td>
<td>Review of project documentation; Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, DG ECHO field, other donor and aid providers; Surveys: DG ECHO field, FPA partners, local implementing partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence that network of Regional offices, country offices, sub-country offices/ antennas provide sufficient geographical coverage</td>
<td>Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, DG ECHO field, other donor and aid providers; Surveys: DG ECHO field, FPA partners, local implementing partners; Analysis: mapping of DG ECHO locations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is adequate capacity and expertise at field offices</td>
<td>Surveys: DG ECHO field, FPA partners, local implementing partners; Analysis: Ratio of field staff to funding in the field</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

EQ5: To what extent are the objectives of the Commission’s humanitarian aid still relevant to the global humanitarian needs and context?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Sources of information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JC: The EU’s humanitarian aid objectives are relevant to the global humanitarian needs, context and recent developments (WHS and GB)</td>
<td>Document review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence that objectives set in recent DG ECHO policy statements, funding decisions, etc. are aligned with the EU’s humanitarian aid objectives.</td>
<td>Interviews: DG ECHO HQ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of recent / arising needs and contextual changes in global humanitarian aid reflected in recent policy documents and funding decisions</td>
<td>Literature review; Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, DG ECHO field, other EU, other donor and aid providers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence that WHS and GB commitments are reflected in recent policy documents and funding decisions</td>
<td>Document review; Interviews: DG ECHO HQ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**EQ6:** To what extent were the EU-funded actions (particularly considering the challenges posed by restricted humanitarian access in conflict-related crises) consistent with the four humanitarian principles in their design and implementation?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Source of information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>JC:</strong> The principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence (grounded in IHL) were overall consistently reflected in the design and implementation of EU humanitarian actions</td>
<td>Desk research: literature review, project review Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, DG ECHO field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share of strategies reflecting the four humanitarian principles</td>
<td>Desk research: literature review, project review Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, DG ECHO field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of strategies clarifying a common EU approach towards the humanitarian principles and how these have to be applied during funded actions</td>
<td>Desk research: literature review, project review Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, DG ECHO field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share of interventions where EU funded actions adhered to the humanitarian principles (or failed to do so)</td>
<td>Desk research: literature review, sample based project review Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, DG ECHO field, other donors and aid providers Surveys: DG ECHO field, FPA partners Fieldwork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>JC:</strong> In a limited number of interventions (particularly in complex contexts where humanitarian access was restricted), the tension between humanitarian principles and practicalities of delivering humanitarian assistance were successfully resolved</td>
<td>Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, DG ECHO field, other donors and aid providers Fieldwork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of different approaches and positions taken in applying the humanitarian principles in specific situations/interventions</td>
<td>Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, DG ECHO field, other donors and aid providers Fieldwork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of how DG ECHO was able to strike a balance between ensuring compliance with the principles and avoiding negative impacts on the ground (e.g. insufficient ownership of projects’ results by national authorities, burdensome application and reporting requirements, etc.)</td>
<td>Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, DG ECHO field Surveys: DG ECHO field, FPA partners, local implementing partners Fieldwork (depending on choice of countries ultimately selected)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**EQ7:** To what extent are EU humanitarian aid actions coherent and complementary, and avoiding overlaps with those of the Member States?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Sources of information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>JC:</strong> An overall trend towards improved coherence and consistency between EU and Member States humanitarian aid policies/strategies/priorities was identified</td>
<td>Literature review Interview: DG ECHO HQ, select MS humanitarian agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of synergies (or lack of them) between EU and Member States humanitarian aid policies/strategies/priorities</td>
<td>Literature review Interview: DG ECHO HQ, select MS humanitarian agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification of factors overall influencing coherence and consistency (policy and coordination instruments and tools established and implemented, external and internal factors, etc.) of EU and Member States humanitarian aid policies/strategies/priorities</td>
<td>Literature review Interview: DG ECHO HQ, select MS humanitarian agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>JC:</strong> Intra-EU humanitarian (i.e. between EU and the Member States) synergies and coordination at the field level have improved</td>
<td>Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, DG ECHO field, select MS humanitarian agencies Survey: DG ECHO field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of synergies (or lack of them) between EU and Member States humanitarian aid actions at the field level</td>
<td>Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, DG ECHO field, select MS humanitarian agencies Survey: DG ECHO field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification of factors overall influencing coherence and consistency (policy and coordination instruments and tools established and implemented, external and internal factors, etc.) of EU and Member States’ humanitarian aid actions at the field level</td>
<td>Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, DG ECHO field, select MS humanitarian agencies Survey: DG ECHO field</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Internal coherence

**EQ8 – Part A: To what extent were the Commission’s humanitarian aid actions coherent and complementary among themselves?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Sources of information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JC: There is coherence at conceptual, policy and operational level between the EU-funded actions</td>
<td>Literature review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification of possible conflicts or overlaps between EU-funded actions (in terms of objectives, activities implemented across the themes/sectors, etc.)</td>
<td>Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, DG ECHO field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Survey: DG ECHO field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of complementarity and coordination efforts between EU funded actions</td>
<td>Literature review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, DG ECHO field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Survey: DG ECHO field</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**EQ8 – Part B: To what extent were the Commission’s actions coherent and complementary, and avoiding overlaps, including with the UCPM and EUAV?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Sources of information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JC: There is coherence at conceptual, policy and operational level between the EU humanitarian aid activities and the UCPM</td>
<td>Literature review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification of possible conflicts or overlaps between EU humanitarian aid activities and the UCPM (in terms of objectives and activities implemented)</td>
<td>Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, DG ECHO field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Survey: DG ECHO field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of complementarity and coordination efforts between EU humanitarian aid and the UCPM, including success stories</td>
<td>Literature review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, DG ECHO field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Survey: DG ECHO field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JC: The deployment of EUAV added value to EU humanitarian aid actions and operations globally</td>
<td>Literature review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of links between the EU Aid Volunteer Initiative and wider DG ECHO policies and actions</td>
<td>Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, DG ECHO field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Survey: DG ECHO field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of complementarity and coordination efforts within DG ECHO</td>
<td>Literature review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, DG ECHO field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Survey: DG ECHO field</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**EQ9:** To what extent were EU humanitarian aid actions coherent and complementary, and avoiding overlaps, with the EU’s other external financing instruments?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| JC: While recent positive examples of synergies were highlighted by past evaluations, there is a need to further develop a more consistent, clear and common approach (in terms of planning, positioning and coordination) between DG ECHO and DEVCO/NEAR. | Literature review  
Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, other EU  
Survey: DG ECHO field  
OPC |
| Evidence of inter-service collaboration within the HQ in the area of:      | Desk research: literature review, project review  
Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, DG ECHO field, other EU, other donors and aid providers  
Surveys: DG ECHO field, FPA partners, local implementing partners  
OPC  
Fieldwork: local authorities, other relevant actors |
| - Humanitarian aid / development aid (LRRD, etc.)                         |                                                             |
| - Humanitarian aid / climate change adaptation                            |                                                             |
| - Humanitarian aid / displaced populations                                |                                                             |
| Level of satisfaction with the level of coordination (i.e. is it considered as sufficient and optimal?) |                                                             |
| Evidence of collaboration at country level in the area of:                |                                                             |
| - Humanitarian aid / development aid (LRRD, etc.)                         |                                                             |
| - Humanitarian aid / climate change adaptation                            |                                                             |
| - Humanitarian aid / displaced populations                                |                                                             |
| Level of satisfaction with the level of coordination (i.e. is it considered as sufficient and optimal?) |                                                             |
| Evidence of obstacles to improved coherence and/or factors hindering coherence in the area of: | Desk research: literature review, project review  
Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, DG ECHO field, other EU, other donors and aid providers  
Surveys: DG ECHO field, FPA partners, local implementing partners  
OPC  
Fieldwork: local authorities, other relevant actors |
| - Humanitarian aid / development aid (LRRD, etc.)                         |                                                             |
| - Humanitarian aid / climate change adaptation                            |                                                             |
| - Humanitarian aid / displaced populations                                |                                                             |
| Level of satisfaction with the level of coordination (i.e. is it considered as sufficient and optimal?) |                                                             |
| Extent to which funds contributed by the EU humanitarian aid instrument to the Trust Funds are pertinent and coherent with other actions financed as part of the EUTFs. | Desk research: literature review  
Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, NEAR, DEVCO  
OPC |
NEW EQ1: To what extent were the Commission’s actions coherent and complementary, and avoiding overlaps, with actions implemented by other donors?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Sources of information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JC: There is a good level of coherence and complementarity between DG ECHO actions and the actions of other donors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Evidence of mechanisms put in place by DG ECHO to ensure coherence and complementarity | Literature review  
   Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, DG ECHO field, other donors and aid providers  
   Survey: DG ECHO field, FPA partners  
   Fieldwork: local authorities, other relevant actors |
| Evidence of DG ECHO’s participation to mechanisms put in place by others/or in collaboration with others such as Donors coordination set-up, e.g. GHD initiative. | Literature review  
   Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, other donors and aid providers  
   Survey: FPA partners |
| Evidence of obstacles to improved coherence with other donors              | Literature review  
   Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, other donors and aid providers  
   Survey: DG ECHO field, FPA partners  
   Fieldwork: local authorities, other relevant actors |

NEW EQ2: To what extent were the Commission’s actions coherent and complementary, and avoiding overlaps, with actions implemented by UN agencies?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Sources of information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JC: There is a good level of coherence and complementarity between DG ECHO actions and the actions of UN agencies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Evidence of DG ECHO’s participation to mechanisms put in place by others/or in collaboration with the UN agencies (e.g. through the cluster approach and the Humanitarian Country Teams). | Literature review  
   Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, other donors and aid providers  
   Survey: FPA partners |
| Evidence of obstacles to improved coherence with the UN agencies (e.g. through the cluster approach and the Humanitarian Country Teams). | Literature review  
   Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, other donors and aid providers  
   Survey: DG ECHO field, FPA partners  
   Fieldwork: local authorities, other relevant actors |

NEW EQ3: To what extent were the Commission’s actions coherent and complementary, and avoiding overlaps, with national policies from beneficiary countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Sources of information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JC: There is a good level of coherence and complementarity between DG ECHO actions and the national policies of beneficiary countries</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Evidence of direct dialogue with national authorities in the selection of priorities and activities for DG ECHO-funded interventions (linkages with need based approach) which led to good level of coherence | Literature review  
   Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, DG ECHO field  
   Survey: DG ECHO field  
   Fieldwork: national / local authorities |
| Evidence of sectors and/or geographies which suffered from an insufficient coordination with national and/or local authorities | Literature review  
   Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, DG ECHO field  
   Survey: DG ECHO field  
   Fieldwork: national / local authorities |
**EU added value**

**EQ10: What was the added value of EU humanitarian aid interventions? How could EU added value be maximised? What would happen if the EU stopped providing humanitarian aid?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Sources of information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| JC: Actions financed by EU on the ground have a clear added value compared to actions financed by other donors | Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, DG ECHO field, other donors and aid providers  
Surveys: FPA partners, local implementing partners  
OPC  
Fieldwork: local authorities                                           |
| Illustrative examples of results that could not have been achieved without a coordinated effort at the EU level | Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, DG ECHO field, other donors and aid providers  
Surveys: DG ECHO field, FPA partners, local implementing partners  
OPC                                                                 |
| Identification of specific aspects contributing to the development of EU added value | Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, DG ECHO field, other donors and aid providers  
Surveys: FPA partners, local implementing partners  
OPC                                                                 |
| Identification of factors giving a particular added value of EU action compared to other donors | Interviews: other donors and aid providers  
Surveys: FPA partners, local implementing partners  
Fieldwork: local authorities, beneficiaries, other relevant actors |
| Identification of instances where the EU added value was not fully exploited | Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, DG ECHO field, other donors and aid providers  
Surveys: FPA partners, local implementing partners  
Fieldwork: other relevant actors |
| Evidence of factors hindering the maximisation of EU added value | Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, DG ECHO field, other donors and aid providers  
Surveys: DG ECHO field, FPA partners, local implementing partners  
OPC                                                                 |
| JC: Stopping EU-funded activities would lead to increased fragmentation, increased risks of duplication of efforts, ineffectiveness and/or inefficiencies, reduced adherence to IHL | Assessment based on evaluation evidence gathered (under effectiveness, efficiency, relevance and coherence) and stakeholders’ views  
Interviews: other donors and aid providers  
Surveys: FPA partners, local implementing partners  
OPC  
Fieldwork: local authorities, other relevant actors |
| JC: Some measures and approaches should be put in place in the future in order to maximize the added value of EU humanitarian aid interventions | Assessment based on evaluation gathered (in particular see I10.1.2 and I10.1.3 above) and stakeholders’ views  
Interviews: DG ECHO HQ, DG ECHO field, other donors and aid providers  
Surveys: FPA partners, local implementing partners  
OPC  
Fieldwork: local authorities, other relevant actors |
**Effectiveness**

**EQ11: To what extent has the EU achieved its humanitarian aid objectives?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Sources of information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JC: There is evidence to demonstrate that humanitarian aid actions met identified humanitarian needs and significantly contributed to: (i) Saving lives (ii) Reducing morbidity and suffering (iii) Improving dignity of life (iv) Influencing and shaping the global humanitarian system (v) Making humanitarian aid more effective</td>
<td>Literature review and review of project documentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of the type and volume of activities / interventions / measures implemented supporting each of these objectives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of effectiveness of activities / interventions / measures implemented, i.e. how the identified activities / interventions / measures contributed to achieving the objective, more specifically, in terms of results and outcomes produced, impacts achieved, success factors, good practices, lessons learnt, etc.</td>
<td>Review of project documentation, Interviews and online survey with DG ECHO field officers, Online survey with FPA and local implementing partners, Fieldwork interviews with local authorities, beneficiaries and other relevant actors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of obstacles encountered/improvements to be introduced</td>
<td>Review of project documentation, Interviews and online survey with DG ECHO field officers, Online survey with FPA and local implementing partners, Fieldwork interviews with local authorities, beneficiaries and other relevant actors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JC: DG ECHO monitoring, evaluation and reviewing mechanisms allow for an effective assessment of progress made in achieving the objectives</td>
<td>Literature review and review of project documentation, Interviews with DG ECHO HQ and field officers, Online survey with FPA and local implementing partners, Fieldwork interviews with relevant actors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification of mechanisms, indicators, benchmarks, KRIIs, etc. established</td>
<td>Review of project documentation, Interviews with DG ECHO HQ and field officers, Online survey with FPA and local implementing partners, Fieldwork interviews with relevant actors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of effectiveness of the identified mechanisms, indicators, benchmarks, KRIIs, etc. in assessing the extent to which objectives are being achieved, including monitoring of outputs and results, identifying problems and informing revisions / redesign of actions, as well as evaluating the extent to which and how outputs and results contribute to the achievement of objectives.</td>
<td>Review of project documentation, Interviews with DG ECHO HQ and field officers, Online survey with FPA and local implementing partners, Fieldwork interviews with relevant actors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EQ12: To what extent do the Commission’s sectoral policies contribute to the effectiveness of the Commission’s operations?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Sources of information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JC: DG ECHO’s sectoral/ thematic policies and guidelines:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) reflect an appropriate approach in the sector concerned</td>
<td>Interviews with DG ECHO HQ and field officers, other donors and aid providers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) have improved the quality of EU-funded actions</td>
<td>Online survey with DG ECHO field officers, FPA and local implementing partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification of main factors and elements of DG ECHO’s policy approach</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>which made implementation more effective</td>
<td>Interviews with DG ECHO HQ and field officers, other donors and aid providers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Online survey with DG ECHO field officers, FPA and local implementing partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of specific impacts generated by the above factors and elements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on DG ECHO’s humanitarian aid operations.</td>
<td>Interviews with DG ECHO HQ and field officers, other donors and aid providers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Online survey with DG ECHO field officers, FPA and local implementing partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of use of DG ECHO’s standards and guidelines and feedback on</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>utility/ quality</td>
<td>Interviews with DG ECHO HQ and field officers, other donors and aid providers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Online survey with DG ECHO field officers, FPA and local implementing partners</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

EQ13: With reference to the Commission’s visibility manual, to what extent do Commission activities achieve proper visibility through funded actions?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Sources of information</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JC: The extent to which EU-funded actions effectively promote visibility</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for the EU</td>
<td>Literature review and review of project documentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of the type and volume of activities/ interventions/ measures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>implemented supporting the visibility objective</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Literature review and review of project documentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of the level of awareness of EU humanitarian aid activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>within and outside the EU</td>
<td>Interviews with DG ECHO field officers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interviews with other donors and aid providers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Online survey with FPA and local implementing partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fieldwork interviews with other relevant actors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of effective use of the communication and visibility manual</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>within EU-funded actions</td>
<td>Interviews and online survey with DG ECHO field officers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Online survey with local implementing partners</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Efficiency**

**EQ14: To what extent did the Commission achieve cost-effectiveness in implementing the EU's humanitarian aid response?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Sources of information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cost-effectiveness of the EU as a donor</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JC: DG ECHO balanced cost in relation to effectiveness and timeliness in making strategic choices about its portfolio of assistance</td>
<td>Literature review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of DG ECHO considering cost effectiveness in making portfolio choices related to partners, sectors, approaches, geographical locations, beneficiaries and transfer modalities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cost-effectiveness of EU-funded actions</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JC: DG ECHO and partners took appropriate actions to ensure cost-effectiveness throughout the project cycle</td>
<td>Review of project documentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The extent to which cost data and quantitative indicators of efficiency (e.g. administrative costs as a % of total budget, cost per unit/ beneficiary), are available and used to drive efficiency</td>
<td>Interviews with DG ECHO and partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of DG ECHO and partners considering economy, efficiency and cost-effectiveness throughout the project cycle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are feedback and learning mechanisms (examples of efficient delivery are identified and disseminated)</td>
<td>Literature review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Review of project documentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Online survey with FPA and local implementing partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fieldwork interviews with other relevant actors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JC: Humanitarian actions funded by the EU via DG ECHO were cost-effective</td>
<td>Interviews with DG ECHO HQ and field officers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence that actions funded by the EU via DG ECHO were cost-effective</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JC: Obstacles to / success factors for cost-effectiveness are clear and appropriate adaptation strategies are put in place as a response</td>
<td>Review of project documentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of success factors / obstacles to cost-effectiveness and of adaptation strategies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**EQ15:** How successful has the Commission been in coordinating its operations with other major humanitarian actors, and with its civil protection actions, e.g. by promoting synergies and avoiding duplications, gaps and resource conflicts?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Sources of information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JC: DG ECHO’s coordination processes with other main humanitarian and civil protection actors have helped to reduce the costs of actions / increase their outputs / outcomes</td>
<td>Literature review, Interviews with DG ECHO HQ and DG ECHO field officers, Interviews with other donors and aid providers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informed by I15.1.1. Evidence of coordination leading to cost reductions / enhanced outputs and results</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sustainability**

**EQ16:** To what extent have EU humanitarian aid actions been successful in LRRD, considering both the continuum and contiguum aspects?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Sources of information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JC: There is evidence of continuation of some activities even after EU humanitarian aid funding has ended, however, difficulties in ensuring a consistent approach to sustainability and linking EU-funded actions and longer-term development processes have been identified</td>
<td>Online survey with DG ECHO field officers, FPA and local implementing partners, Open public consultation, Fieldwork interviews with local authorities and other relevant actors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of continuation of activities and success factors leading to increased sustainability</td>
<td>Interviews with DG ECHO HQ and field officers, Online survey with DG ECHO field officers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of difficulties hindering the development of a consistent approach to sustainability</td>
<td>Interviews with DG ECHO HQ and field officers, Online survey with DG ECHO field officers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification of measures and approaches to increase sustainability such as advocacy, policy dialogue and coordination; integration of EU-funded activities with national/local systems e.g. health systems, education systems; building capacity at national and/or local level; community engagement and participation</td>
<td>Interviews with DG ECHO HQ and field officers, Online survey with DG ECHO field officers and local implementing partners, Fieldwork interviews with local authorities and other relevant actors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence that partners are systematically considering sustainability issues in projects</td>
<td>Review of project documentation, Online survey with FPA and local implementing partners, Fieldwork interviews with relevant actors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The extent to which LRRD approaches/exit strategies adopted by EU-funded projects are plausible and sensible</td>
<td>Literature and project documentation review, Interviews with DG ECHO HQ and field officers, Interviews with other aid donors and aid providers, Online survey with FPA and local implementing partners, Fieldwork interviews with local authorities and other relevant actors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ANNEX 4: RESULTS OF THE OPEN PUBLIC CONSULTATION

1. Introduction

Purpose and scope of the open public consultation

As part of the evaluation of the Commission’s humanitarian aid activities over 2012-2016, an open public consultation (OPC) was launched to collect the views of humanitarian aid stakeholders and the general public on the performance of the Commission between 2012 and 2016.

The OPC respondents were given the opportunity to provide their own assessment of the relevance, coherence, EU added value, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the Commission's humanitarian aid activities. Secondly, the OPC respondents were invited to share their views on the upcoming challenges for the Commission in the humanitarian aid field, and on how the Commission can best fulfil its humanitarian aid commitments in light of such challenges.

The results of this OPC are to feed into the evaluation aimed at shaping the future orientations of the Commission’s approach to humanitarian aid.

2. Overview of responses to the open public consultation

Number and distribution of replies received

There were 38 respondents to the open public consultation on the EU's Humanitarian Aid 2012-2016. Of the 38 survey respondents, 30 responded on behalf of an organisation (79%) and 8 as private citizens (21%).

Among the 30 responding organisations, there were:
- 23 NGOs
- 3 government agencies (from FR, NL and UK)
- 2 UN agencies (FAO and UNOCHA)
- 2 Red Cross branches

In addition nine position papers were submitted as part of the OPC.
Distribution by level of familiarity with the Commission humanitarian aid activities

Nearly all of the respondents declared having knowledge DG ECHO humanitarian aid activities, with 87% declared being largely or very familiar with them.

Figure A1.1 To what extent are you familiar with DG ECHO humanitarian aid activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Familiarity Level</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a large extent</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fully</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=38

3. Analysis of the survey responses

This section covers the analysis of responses to questions relating to:

- The Commission's performance from 2012 until end-2016
- The follow-up to the Commission's international commitments and global humanitarian challenges

The Commission's performance 2012-2016

The survey questions about the Commission's performance between 2012 and the end of 2016 relate to the following evaluation criteria: relevance, coherence, EU added value, effectiveness, sustainability and visibility.
Overall, 71% of the responding stakeholders believed that the Commission’s budget allocations are based to a large extent on the most pressing humanitarian needs. The same view was shared by the Red Cross and UN respondents, half of the responding citizens, and two out of the three responding national authorities. The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs held the view that the Commission’s budget allocations are fully based on the consideration of the most pressing humanitarian needs.

However, several stakeholders expressed the view that there had been a recent shift in the prioritisation of the Commission's budgetary allocations to crises closer to the EU (e.g. Turkey and Syria) strongly linked to the EU’s geopolitical agenda to the detriment of other protracted humanitarian crises, for instance in Nepal or Sudan.

The funding available was not always seen as commensurate to the needs on the ground. ICRC highlighted an issue concerning the variation of funding available, referring to discrepancies of the allocations versus the number of people in need.
All five papers also highlighted an opinion, that a coherent humanitarian funding allocation was hindered by political priorities (e.g., migration). CARE in particular expressed an opinion that in the past two years, increasingly politicised decisions had been observed in ECHO concerning funding to Syria, Greece and Turkey. A similar change in 2017 was observed also by Trocaire. Serious concerns regarding the EU’s humanitarian aid shifting from a global needs-based approach towards a neighbourhood focus was also raised by VOICE.

Three position papers (UN, CARE, VOICE) recommended to maintain a balance of ECHO’s funding allocations and keep it global, equally taking into account the needs of all geographies – Europe, Europe’s neighbourhood, Africa, Asia and Americas. Two papers specifically called ECHO to remain principled and needs based in budget allocation. VOICE also called EU to ensure respect for the distinct mandate and priorities of ECHO. Greater transparency in humanitarian decision-making, in particular towards implementing agencies, was seen to be an important part of the solution.

One position paper (CARE) also recommended ECHO to refocus its attention to forgotten crises, and base its funding decisions on objective needs-based criteria.

The EU and ECHO’s efforts to strive towards a more coordinated analysis and joint needs assessment were recognised and supported in one position paper (CARE). However, concerns were raised over potential risks around “groupthink” and political manipulation of needs analyses. The paper called ECHO to ensure that the connection between identification of the most vulnerable and the programming and independence of humanitarian aid agencies was respected.

Coherence

Coherence with the four humanitarian principles

Figure A1.3 To what extent are DG ECHO’s funded actions consistent with the four humanitarian principles (humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence) in their design and implementation?

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a large extent</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fully</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=38
Overall, 74% of the responding stakeholders considered that the EU’s funded actions were to a large extent consistent with the four key humanitarian principles in their design and implementation. The three responding national authorities shared the same view as well as half of the responding citizens, one UN respondent (the other UN respondent did not provide an answer) and one Red Cross respondent while the other Red Cross respondent believed that EU-funded actions are fully consistent with key humanitarian principles.

Of the nine submitted position papers, five acknowledge ECHO’s consistency with the humanitarian principles. All agree to say that ECHO is known for attaching importance to International Humanitarian Laws (IHL) including the four principles of Humanity, Independence, Neutrality and Impartiality. As CARE mentions, ECHO’s commitment to IHL, humanitarian principles and needs-based decision making is recognised by both donors and partners. However, all the position papers also expressed the view that if the humanitarian principles are well embedded in ECHO’s humanitarian action, there is an increasing perception that ECHO is currently shifting towards a more politicised approach. As stated by the UN agencies, the increase in funding allocated to the EU neighbourhood in reaction to the migration flows, created an imbalance with respect to other regions which have seen their budget support decreasing. Trocaire pointed out it’s concern about the increased politicisation of humanitarian aid for 2017 and the years to come. Hence, both CARE and Voice advise that these humanitarian principles remain at the heart of the EU’s humanitarian action. ECHO should cherish and maintain these values that are well established. The Red Cross adds that the principle should be constantly reaffirmed to avoid the instrumentalisation of the humanitarian assistance for political purposes.

Coherence with the Member States

Figure A1.4 To what extent are DG ECHO’s funded actions coherent and complementary with those of Member States?

![Bar chart showing the distribution of responses to the question of coherence with Member States.]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coherence Level</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a large extent</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fully</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=38

While being positive overall, the overall results reflect a split among stakeholders' views as to whether the Commission actions are to some extent or to a large extent coherent and complementary with those of Member States. Among the three responding national authorities, the United Kingdom's DFID indicated that ECHO actions are to some extent
coherent and complementary with those of Member States while the Foreign Affairs Ministries of France and the Netherlands indicated that this was to a large extent the case. One respondent on behalf of the Red Cross indicated that DG ECHO’s actions were fully complementary and coherent with those of Member States. Private citizens were more likely to indicate that ECHO actions are only to some extent coherent and complementary with those of Member States.

From the nine position papers, only the UN agencies mentioned the lack of information exchanges between EU services and the Member States who are working separately. The other stakeholders have not made any comments on ECHO’s consistency with member states’ humanitarian aid actions. However, four have added comments on ECHO’s consistency with other international donors.

**Coherence with other international donors**

*Figure A1.5  To what extent are DG ECHO’s funded actions coherent and complementary with those of other international donors?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a large extent</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fully</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*N=38*

Half of the respondents overall believed that the Commission actions are to a large extent complementary with those of other international donors. Both UN respondents taking part in this survey shared the same view. No respondents indicated that the Commission actions were fully or not at all coherent and complementary with those of other international donors.

The respondents were asked to explain how they saw the Commission actions as complementing and being coherent with those of other stakeholders and donors and what could be improved in this regard. Overall, several NGOs appreciate the fact that the policy link between humanitarian aid and development is a lot more coherent today, with progress made in Resilience and Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development.

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69 OPC Question: With reference to the above questions on coherence, please elaborate on your rating, including a suggestion (if applicable) for other possible themes for collaboration with other actors and stakeholders.
(LRRD) since 2012. On the other hand, it was pointed out that procedures for cooperation and coordination between humanitarian assistance and development donors and stakeholders could be further improved and streamlined.

The general views expressed through the position papers suggest that ECHO could do more to ensure consistency with other humanitarian donors. Four partners suggested that ECHO should agree on common strategies with other donors. The UN agencies took as an example the lack of coordination and joint approach at the field level on forced displacement issues between ECHO, DEVCO and the EU delegations. Lumos, for its part, recommends ECHO to forge stronger links with other humanitarian donors in the sector of child protection and child support in emergencies. VOICE even called on ECHO to play a leading role in encouraging more synergies among workstreams, in order to avoid contradictory approaches and duplication. However, the Red Cross remains more cautious, stating that more joined up analysis and programming has the potential to put humanitarian action at risk. Their concern is that a more integrated approach with non-humanitarian actors could undermine the humanitarian principles, because of their differences in mandates, purposes and values.

Coherence with other EU services and financial instruments

Figure A1.6 To what extent are DG ECHO’s humanitarian aid policies and funded actions coherent and complementary with the policies and actions of other parts of the European Commission, such as DG DEVCO and DG NEAR?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a large extent</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fully</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=38

While being positive overall, the results show that the majority of respondents believe that the Commission's humanitarian policies are only to some extent coherent and complementary with other EU Commission policies (e.g. DG DEVCO and DG NEAR). Two out of the three responding national authorities (NL, UK) however indicated that there was complementarity and coherence between the Commission policies and other EU Commission policies to a large extent. None of the respondents indicated that the Commission's humanitarian policies were fully or not at all coherent and complementary with policies from other Commission services.
Figure A1.7  Please assess the extent to which DG ECHO needs more collaboration with other Commission services and EU institutions to increase policy coherence related to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Humanitarian aid and forced displacement</th>
<th>5%</th>
<th>8%</th>
<th>47%</th>
<th>29%</th>
<th>11%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disaster risk reduction, resilience, early warning</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanitarian aid and development aid</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*N=38*

Overall, a majority of the respondents agree that DG ECHO needs to largely or fully collaborate with other Commission services and EU institutions to improve the coherence of their humanitarian aid policies. This is particularly the case in relation to humanitarian aid and development aid and disaster risk reduction. Across the three areas selected, UN and Red Cross respondents tended to be in favour of improved cooperation between DG ECHO and other Commission services and EU institutions.

The respondents were then asked what they thought were the main factors supporting a coherent approach to humanitarian aid at EU level (i.e. with other Commission services, EU institutions, international donors and Member States)70. The main response trend was that humanitarian aid policy should be independent from national policy priorities and that DG ECHO decision making should be similarly independent, but that joint planning and programme between various Commission DGs (and a wider range of humanitarian stakeholders) was needed to ensure a fully needs-based approach in humanitarian interventions.

In turn, the survey respondents were asked what they thought were the main barriers to a coherent approach to humanitarian aid at EU level. Several recurring reasons were given, including the poor articulation and alignment of the financing cycles and procedures of DG ECHO and DG DEVCO, conflicting political interests which can sometimes run counter to humanitarian principles, lack of financial flexibility, lack of information sharing and planning at an early stage between Commission DGs and Member States.

Two partners (UN agencies and AVSI) share the opinion that there is, in theory, a joined up approach at the policy level on the part of the EU. However, this does not consistently

70 OPC Question: What are, in your view, the main factors supporting a coherent approach to humanitarian aid at EU level (i.e. with other Commission services, EU institutions, international donors and Member States)?
translate in practice in the field. The UN gives as an example the lack of implementation of the humanitarian-development nexus. This idea is backed by AVSI who warns that the humanitarian and development actions are still perceived as two different areas and so, treated with different approaches, which endanger their complementarity. When it comes to LRRD they both agree that there is a need for an improved collaboration among EU services.

The Red Cross, for its part, note that they perceive a correlation between the decreasing EU humanitarian assistance and the increasing EU Trust Funds financing. They warn ECHO that humanitarian assistance should not be replaced by EU Trust Funds. Feeling that this separation is not clear at present, the Red Cross is concerned about the lack of transparency and accountability mechanism for Trust Funds. In the same way as humanitarian assistance and the EU Trust Fund should remain separated, the Red Cross also recommends to keep civil protection separated from humanitarian aid. Although synergies could/should be established between the two instruments, the Red Cross believes that each should be specialised in its own domain in order avoid duplication and so, ensure efficient regional and local response mechanism.

**Coherence between ECHO and the humanitarian system in the field**

Both the Red Cross and CARE recognise in their position papers the importance that ECHO gives to the coordination of humanitarian action with other actors. CARE acknowledged the importance that ECHO places on participation in Humanitarian Country Teams and global and national clusters. These enable better coordination among donors but also allow for a sharing of first-hand information on the needs. For instance, CARE finds ECHO’s engagement with the Global Shelter Cluster and the UK shelter forum useful in aligning the programming of actors with the expectations of donors. However, CARE also highlights that inconsistencies remains from country to country on how ECHO implements its shelter and settlements funding and, between ECHO’s and other donor’s policies. The Red Cross, for its part, recognise ECHO’s active role in the development of policy guidelines on funding, advocacy and coordination with other actors. However, they recommend ECHO to further strengthen dialogue with Civil Society Organisations and international organisations. The guidelines need to be better based on field experience, lessons learned, and a more frequent consultation with the Civil Society Organisations.
EU added value

Figure A1.8 To what extent do you agree that actions financed by DG ECHO on the ground have a clear added value to actions financed by other donors, including Member States?

Overall, there was wide agreement that EU-funded actions have had clear added value to actions financed by other donors, including Member States. Similar response patterns were observable across the various groups of respondent. Both respondents on behalf of the UN indicated that the Commission were particularly positive in this regard. Only one responding NGO and one citizen disagreed with the fact that Commission actions have added value to other actions.

According to CARE, a general comparative advantage that ECHO has developed over the years is its focus on forgotten crisis. This is an added value that Member States, who have always been more driven by particular historic connections and political positioning, can’t assume. 71

The most common reason given by the respondents in the survey with regard to the EU added value generated by the Commission72 was that it has inspired Member States and donors alike to develop their own policies and engaged partners in collective reflection on thematic issues. VOICE, in its position paper, adds that ECHO has a strong influence on other donors; it’s standards and expertise, as well as the assessments of partners are trusted.

Another frequently given reason is that thanks to its outreach and global network of field experts, the Commission is driving humanitarian aid forward, including in specific areas such as cash and food security and gender- and age-sensitive aid. ECHO’s field network added value has been further developed in the Red Cross position paper, where it says

71 2017, CARE, position paper.

72 OPC Question: Please elaborate on your rating relating to EU added value
that the efforts of the field network to regularly consult humanitarian partners and include them in assessments that form the basis of Humanitarian Implementation Plans is highly appreciated.

Figure A1.9  To what extent do you agree that policies developed by DG ECHO have added value to the international humanitarian aid political agenda over the last years in the following areas?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Don't know</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>To some extent</th>
<th>To a large extent</th>
<th>Fully</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash &amp; vouchers</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disaster risk reduction</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education in emergencies</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelter and settlements</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food security and livelihoods</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender and aid sensitive</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nutrition</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refugees and internally displaced</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resilience</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WASH</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[N=37\]

Overall, a significant majority of respondents agreed that the Commission policies have recently added significant value to the international humanitarian aid and political agenda across a wide area of issues, in particular on cash and vouchers (72% largely or fully agree), resilience (70% largely or fully agree), disaster risk reduction (67% largely or fully agree) and education in emergencies (65% largely or fully agree). National government agencies, UN and Red Cross respondents indicated in most cases significant contributions made by the Commission across all the policy issues as listed in the table above. The results were slightly more mixed among the responding citizens.

The UN agencies, CARE and AVSI, all recognize in their position papers ECHO’s efforts and guidance to promote the use of Multipurpose Cash Transfer. However, all three of them call on ECHO to remain cautious with the use of cash and vouchers. As highlighted by CARE, ECHO needs to bear in mind that the success of cash transfer programmes depends on different factors: the inclusion of the financial services, the constant adaptation to the fast changing environment and, the coordination with all the concerned sectors. AVSI confirms this statement, adding that cash transfer should be chosen based on the context, the needs and the dialogue with partners and market

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73 The same respondent did not answer this series of questions
analyses for the particular response. Donors have to be cautious with the general idea that cash transfer is the best response.

The survey respondents were asked to share their views on the key factors contributing to the EU added value of the Commission\textsuperscript{74}. The most commonly cited factors were the diversity of partnerships between the Commission and other worldwide organisations (e.g. UN, Red Cross) and with various NGOs to identify and address diverse needs, as well as the field presence of the Commission. Respondents also frequently identified needs-based programming and the delivery of activities monitored by field experts as the key aspects of the Commission's EU added value\textsuperscript{75}.

Some respondents gave examples of projects which could not have been achieved without a coordinated efforts at EU level\textsuperscript{76}, these include: the EU Consensus on Humanitarian Aid, EU strong and common position at the World Health Summit, field visits for the Council working party on Humanitarian Aid and Food Aid, the Békou Trust Fund; Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the RESET and AGIR programmes, and the coordinated response to the Ebola crisis in Africa.

Finally, the UN agencies and CARE acknowledge in their position papers that ECHO’s attention to several innovative topics makes it a frontrunner and a recognized leader. Such topics are education in emergencies, the focus on gender issues in emergencies and the efforts put on disaster risk reduction and resilience (in particular thanks to the DIPECHO programme). Indeed, these calls present a strategic direction and encourage applicants to maintain and/or mainstream these thematic areas (UN).

\textsuperscript{74} OPC Question: What are the key factors contributing to the added value of ECHO’s funded actions?

\textsuperscript{75} OPC Question: What specific aspects contribute to the added value of DG ECHO (for example, programming through a needs-based approach, programming focussing on specific sectors / regions, delivery through ‘certified’ framework partners, delivery monitored by DG ECHO field experts, etc.)?

\textsuperscript{76} OPC Question: Do you have any examples of projects or policy results that could not have been achieved without a coordinated effort at the EU level?
**Effectiveness**

*Figure A1.10 To what extent do you agree that ECHO funded actions have met identified humanitarian needs and significantly contributed to:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>No answer</th>
<th>Don't know</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>To some extent</th>
<th>To a large extent</th>
<th>Fully</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saving lives</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reducing morbidity and suffering</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving dignity of life</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influencing and shaping the global humanitarian system</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making humanitarian aid more effective</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* N=38

Overall, there was wide recognition among the respondents that the Commission interventions have fully or significantly contributed to saving lives, reducing mobility and suffering, improving dignity of life, influencing the global humanitarian system, and making humanitarian aid more effective. Respondents on behalf of national government agencies, and the UN and Red Cross consistently held the same positive views. The views of NGOs reflect the overall results while responses from private citizens may have been less positive than average.

Several survey respondents stated that the main objectives of saving lives and reducing suffering has been achieved through the Commission policies and funding and recognised the effectiveness of the Commission as a global player, donor and policy maker, able to influence the humanitarian international system and constantly striving to improve. On the other hand, certain respondents pointed out that the Commission's administration, albeit relying on an effective needs-based approach, could be more flexible, less prescriptive and less bureaucratic.

Although the general views from the surveys reflect a positive picture of ECHO’s effectiveness, in their position papers, CARE and Handicap International have partly contested ECHO’s capacity to reduce morbidity and suffering in two specific areas. According to CARE, while the needs and demand are high on this matter, ECHO is currently not providing sufficient attention to sexual and reproductive health and rights. There is a missed opportunity from ECHO to implement this as a core sector of response. CARE recommends ECHO to promote Sexual and Reproductive Health from the onset of every crisis and to ensure the delivery and continuity of services related to family planning and sexual violence against women and girls. Handicap International, for its part, regret ECHO’s lack of resources allocated to the inclusion of people with

77 OPC Question: Please elaborate on your rating relating to effectiveness
disabilities and their representative organisations in the programme cycle. They suggest that ECHO increases its attention to this issue and increase funding to humanitarian projects inclusive of person with disabilities.

**Sustainability**

*Figure A1.11 To what extent do you agree that most humanitarian aid activities / approaches financed by DG ECHO continue even after DG ECHO humanitarian aid funding has ended (e.g. continued by the local community or another donor)?*

N=38

Almost three-quarters of the survey respondents held the view that most EU-funded activities were somehow continued by local communities or other donors even after EU funding has ended, although none considered that they continued in the same way. Response trends were similar among the different respondent categories, with the exception that respondents on behalf of the UN thought that most EU-funded activities continued to be supported by local communities and donors to a large extent after EU funding has ended.

Respondents frequently stated that the sustainability of Commission actions lied in their focus on the capacity building of frontline respondents and on the early engagement of local and development stakeholders. A few respondents also recognised that closer DEVCO-ECHO collaboration and coordination has in practice contributed to the sustainability of actions, but that there was still room for improvement in this regard. Indeed, as stated by VOICE in its position paper, although ECHO is contributing to positive improvements in the field of LRRD, VOICE emphasizes that ECHO should improve its coordination with other relevant actors; clarifying the roles and responsibilities, articulate the different funding instruments and ensure that closer cooperation and coordination between humanitarian and development policies does not undermine timely humanitarian response.

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78 OPC Question: Please elaborate on your rating relating to sustainability
Some respondents also mentioned that more long-term funding mechanisms would further improve the sustainability of Commission actions.

*Figure A1.12 To what extent do you agree that most humanitarian aid activities / approaches financed by DG ECHO transition into the next phase of development after DG ECHO humanitarian aid funding has ended?*

![Bar chart showing survey responses](image)

*N=38*

Two-thirds of the survey respondents held the view that most Commission humanitarian activities evolved into the next phase of development after EU funding had ended (e.g. transition from relief to rehabilitation or from humanitarian aid to development). The respond trends were relatively consistent among the different respondent categories.
Visibility

Figure A1.13  How would you rate the level of awareness of DG ECHO's activities?

Differences in response patterns emerge regarding appreciation of the level of awareness of Commission humanitarian activities within and outside the EU. The majority of the survey respondents believe that awareness of Commission humanitarian activities outside the EU is "medium", i.e. Commission humanitarian activities are well known by a relatively small part of the general public. On the other hand, the majority of the survey respondents consider that awareness of Commission humanitarian activities within the EU is either "low" or "extremely low", i.e. Commission humanitarian activities are only well known by a specialised audience with an interest in humanitarian aid. Differences also emerged among the respondent categories with all three national government agencies expressing the view that the level of awareness of Commission humanitarian activities within the EU is "medium" and respondents on behalf of the Red Cross concerned that awareness of Commission humanitarian activities is "extremely low" within the EU. Perhaps more tellingly, most of the responding citizens also thought that awareness of Commission humanitarian activities was "low" or "extremely low", not only within the EU but also outside the EU.

In terms of visibility, several respondents acknowledged that EU citizens know about the humanitarian aid dimension of the EU but not necessarily about the work of the Commission directly. They tended to agree that only specialised audiences have knowledge of the specific role and strategies of the Commission in the humanitarian aid field.

Follow-up to the Commission's international commitments and global humanitarian challenges

[79] OPC Question: Please elaborate on your rating relating to visibility
This section of the OPC focused on assessing the implications of the World Humanitarian, and other international commitments for the Commission’s strategic direction and Summit the Grand Bargain operating framework.

*Figure A1.14 Based on your knowledge and experience, to what extent is DG ECHO contributing to progress on the EU commitments?*

The majority of the survey respondents hold the view that the Commission is largely contributing to progress on EU humanitarian commitments. Each of the three responding national government agencies had a different view, ranging from "to some extent" (UK) to "fully" (FR). Both respondents on behalf of the Red Cross believed that the Commission largely contributed to EU humanitarian commitments.

Very few respondents rated the progress of the Commission across its seven areas of intervention\(^{80}\). Nevertheless, "investing in humanity" was most frequently rated as the area where the Commission had made the most progress (37% of the respondents), closely followed by "addressing forced displacement" (34%). On the other hand, "upholding the norms that safeguard humanity" was most frequently rated as the area where the Commission had made the least progress (42% of the respondents).

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\(^{80}\) Political leadership to prevent and end conflict; Upholding the norms that safeguard humanity; Leave no one behind: A commitment to address forced displacement; Women and girls: Catalysing action to achieve gender equality; Changing people's lives: From delivering aid to ending needs; Natural disasters and climate change: Managing risks and crises differently; Financing: Investing in humanity
In terms of what role ECHO should or should not take in the global process of implementing the Grand Bargain, please rate your level of agreement with each of the below statements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DG ECHO should</th>
<th>No answer</th>
<th>Don't know</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>To some extent</th>
<th>To a large extent</th>
<th>Fully</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lead by example in terms of implementing Grand Bargain commitments</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Launch pilot initiatives to test how to best implement the Grand Bargain commitments</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use its leverage to encourage its counterparts to implement their commitments</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on working with EU Member States towards the implementation of the Grand Bargain</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concentrate on working with larger donors to advance the aid efficiency agenda</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrate the work on the Grand Bargain with other policy initiatives</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insist on the Grand Bargain being implemented as a package</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on specific work streams within the Grand Bargain</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=38

Almost two-thirds of the survey respondents were in full agreement that the Commission should lead by example in implementing Grand Bargain commitments. The majority of the survey respondents were also in full agreement that the Commission should launch pilot commitments relating to the implementation of the Grand Bargain (58%) and that it should use its leverage as one of the biggest humanitarian donors to encourage its counterparts to implement Grand Bargain commitments (52%). Response patterns were relatively similar among the different respondent categories.

Respondents were asked to rank in order of importance several proposed actions the Commission could take to drive forward the implementation of the Grand Bargain commitments. Again, very few survey respondents addressed this specific question. The results nevertheless show that 58% of the respondents held the view that the Commission should above all lead by example in this regard. Comparable trends were observed among the different respondent categories.

Similarly, few respondents expressed a view as to which upcoming issues were the most important for the Commission to address. The respondents most frequently thought that the changing character of crises (increasingly becoming protracted) and the increased need of protection among humanitarian workers were the most important upcoming issues the Commission should address (39% and 32% of respondents respectively). Several survey respondents explained their choice\(^1\): i.e. the long-term impact of humanitarian actions needs to be carefully considered given the changing character and protracted nature of crises; the increased need of protection among humanitarian workers is critical to respond to the needs of the most vulnerable.

\(^1\) OPC Question: Please explain your reasons for prioritising the five challenges as above and indicate how you feel these should be addressed by DG ECHO
The survey respondents were asked how, in their opinion, the Commission should ensure adequate follow up to the World Humanitarian Summit to transform its commitments into reality\textsuperscript{82}. A considerable number of respondents (on behalf of NGOs, international organisations and national government agencies) expressed the view that the EU should provide adequate and flexible funding – and increase the volume of funding in the next Multiannual Financial Framework – to continue to support a needs-based approach and local-level humanitarian workers. Several NGOs also pointed out that it was important to further engage Member States and other EU institutions in the respect of international humanitarian law.

Finally, it is worth mentioning, from CARE’s position paper, that the EU has made significant progress on the WHS commitments and, it is encouraged to continue on this path; ensuring a significant level of engagement in the years to come and working in balanced way on the different priorities.

On ways in which ECHO could provide added value regarding the implementation of the Grand Bargain\textsuperscript{83}, the most frequently given response (mainly among NGOs) was that the Commission should foster dialogue with co-conveners to ensure greater synergy among the work streams and that implementation should aim to foster complementarities between the global, national, and local level.

The survey respondents were also asked for their views on actions the Commission should take to carry out under the Great Bargain commitments\textsuperscript{84}. Responses were relatively varied, the most frequent one being that the Commission should engage proactively with its partners to implement the Great Bargain and should fulfil its commitment to building the capacity of frontline respondents. Other suggestions made by the NGOs include: making the decision-making process more transparent and accountable to the affected populations through the involvement of local-level stakeholders, add localisation as a key criterion for proposal selection, supporting tools for improving cost-effectiveness and simplifying the reporting procedure.

The localisation question has been addressed in five position papers (Red Cross, CARE, AVSI, VOICE and Trocaire). All five agree on the fact that ECHO should do more to promote localisation of the humanitarian action in order to increase efficiency and reduce costs. A better inclusion of the frontline responders would improve the delivery of aid on the ground (VOICE). The position papers suggest some elements that could improve localisation; add localisation as a key selection criterion, implementation of a localisation marker, allow for more flexibility in staffing including local staff, increase the funding to local capacity building, promote an internal culture on working with local actors, further encourage the participation of local and affected communities (CARE, AVSI, Trocaire). ECHO should find the right balance and ensure that the responses are as local as possible.

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\textsuperscript{82} OPC Question: What further initiatives should DG ECHO take to ensure adequate follow up to the WHS to transform the commitments into reality?

\textsuperscript{83} OPC Question: How should ECHO provide added value regarding the implementation of the Grand Bargain?

\textsuperscript{84} OPC Question: What specific actions should ECHO plan to carry out under the GB commitments? Please specify the commitment concerned and elaborate on the action?
but also as international as necessary. This is a commitment that requires creativity and genuine engagement with the actors (Trocaire).

As a consequence of increased localisation and further engagement with local partners, it is necessary that ECHO simplifies its administrative requirements. This has been called on by the UN agencies and Trocaire in their position papers who ask for more transparency in the decision-making (Trocaire) and claim that reducing the administrative burden (proposal, reporting, verification exercises, audits) could free up significant resources (UN agencies).

Finally, a last factor that would improve ECHO’s actions’ efficiency, mentioned by the UN agencies, VOICE and Trocaire in their position papers, is the shift from annual funding to multi-year funding. As defended by the UN agencies, the efficiency, the quality and the sustainability of the interventions would be improved. It would also encourage a more coordinated and harmonised approach to humanitarian actions (VOICE).

The survey respondents were asked which other global humanitarian challenges should be considered by the Commission. The most frequent response, coming mainly from NGOs, was that forgotten and neglected crises deserve more attention and that it is important to prevent donor fatigue when it comes to protracted crises.

Regarding any further policy areas or topics that should be covered by the Commission, the survey respondents proposed improving civil-military coordination, upholding international humanitarian law, strengthening community resilience, and addressing climate change. A recurrent answer among NGOs was that the Commission should strengthen its strategic partnerships with humanitarian organisations (NGOs and new donors) to enhance the diversity and improve the quality of humanitarian aid delivery.

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85 OPC Question: In addition to those listed above, are there any further global humanitarian challenges which are to be considered by DG ECHO?

86 OPC Questions: Are there any further adjoining policy areas, beyond those related to Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development (LRRD), with which DG ECHO should seek to further establish links? If yes, which are those? Are there any further topics that you feel should be addressed by DG ECHO in future?