HUMANITARIAN IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (HIP)

ENHANCED RESPONSE CAPACITY

AMOUNT: EUR 2,030,000

The present Humanitarian Implementation Plan (HIP) was prepared on the basis of financing decision ECHO/WWD/BUD/2019/01000 (Worldwide Decision) and the related General Guidelines for Operational Priorities on Humanitarian Aid (Operational Priorities)[1]. The purpose of the HIP and its annex is to serve as a communication tool for DG ECHO's partners and to assist in the preparation of their proposals. The provisions of the Worldwide Decision and the General Conditions of the Agreement with the European Commission shall take precedence over the provisions in this document.

1. CONTEXT

Across the world, millions of children are denied access to quality education due to conflict, forced displacement, violence, climate change and disasters. Nearly 75 million school-age children (3-18 years) experience the detrimental impacts of crisis on their education across 35 crisis-affected countries.[2] Among 24 million school-age refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs), only half of the children go to primary school and less than a quarter of adolescents attend secondary school. Access to safe, quality education can reduce vulnerability and – combined with the provision of lifesaving skills, social and emotional learning, and psycho-social support – can help children and young people to cope with, and recover from, crises.

Providing a rapid response to education disruption is critical. Every week, month or year a child spends out of school further disconnects children from their education pathway and reduces the likelihood of ever returning to school. The 2018 Communication on Education in Emergencies and Protracted Crises[3] provides commitments to support and promote proactive and rapid response mechanisms **to reach children and young people during emergencies and aim to return them to learning within three months.** This is an ambitious commitment which requires new and improved ways for humanitarian responders to reach children at the point of education disruption.

DG ECHO's Enhanced Response Capacity (ERC) is supporting initiatives which seek to increase the capacity of the humanitarian community to respond to crises in the most effective and efficient manner. The initiatives have to be global and strategic in their vision and inclusive in

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[1] SWD(2018) 486 final Commission Staff Working Document on General Guidelines on Operational Priorities for Humanitarian Aid in 2019

[2] Nicolai, S., et. al., (2016) *A common platform for education in emergencies and protracted crises: Evidence paper.* London, ODI. Retrieved from: https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/resource-documents/10498.pdf

[3] COM (2018) 304 Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on Education in Emergencies and Protracted Crises

their approach in order to contribute to eco-system wide change. The ERC focuses on initiatives which would not emerge or would not have the same systemic impact without dedicated funding, and which cannot be covered by DG ECHO's geographic funding envelopes.

2. HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

The humanitarian response architecture includes the establishment of specific mechanisms to respond to crises, including coordination mechanisms, needs assessments, response planning and implementation. In recent years, awareness of the need to include education in humanitarian needs assessments and responses has increased, but the inclusion of education actions in the initial phase of humanitarian responses is still not systematic. Furthermore, education responses are not capitalising on and build the capacities of local actors.

This leads to children missing out on the protective and resilience-building role of education often for months or years, while the response is unable to capitalise on the potential and universal nature of education to serve as an entry point for a number of services. By the time education service delivery kicks off within the humanitarian response, it is more challenging to identify and bring out-of-school children back into the system. At that stage, many children may never return to education and become trapped in a cycle of vulnerability, poverty and exclusion from basic services.

In general, systems of disaster preparedness, early warning systems, building surge capacity, contingency planning and crisis modifiers, but also of first response, are better developed for other sectors. One approach widely used in humanitarian responses is to establish Rapid Response Mechanisms (RRMs), also referred to as Emergency Response Mechanisms, which allow a network of humanitarian organisations to rapidly assess and respond to recurring localized emergencies. The use of RRMs has increased over the past five years, but the inclusion of education as a response sector is exceptional (such as in the Democratic Republic of Congo and South Sudan). Even when existing RRMs include education data collection as part of the initial multi-sector assessment, they do not incorporate responses to the education needs of children in the response mechanism.

Humanitarian responses to education face challenges establishing standardised rapid response components that go beyond setting up learning spaces and distributing materials, to deal with challenges of teacher compensation, learning continuity and accreditation and integration to formal systems. They also face challenges linking initial responses to longer-term support.

Returning children to education within three months of a crisis requires new ways of working among education actors, inter-sectorally, and in line with the Grand Bargain commitments such as the nexus and localisation. A more strategic approach is needed to respond to education needs within the humanitarian architecture, through increased investment both in systemic capacities and country-specific responses in education. Humanitarian efforts in turn need to link up with

longer-term development efforts to help increase education system capacity to prepare for and manage crises.

There are new opportunities to address some of these challenges. An important opportunity is the First Emergency Response investment window under the Education Cannot Wait fund, designed to support education programmes immediately in sudden-onset or escalating crises. Similarly, the UNICEF EMOPS work plan on multi-sectoral RRMs provides an opportunity to strengthen and systematise the inclusion of education. UNESCO's support to education ministries to address crises through conflict sensitive and risk-informed planning (International Institute for Educational Planning) is an example of support to a more linked-up approach.

3. HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

In line with the EU's commitment to reach children during emergencies and return them to learning within three months, DG ECHO will support initiatives that improve education service delivery and quality, and build the capacity of humanitarian actors, including first responders, in support of proactive and rapid response mechanisms and solutions to minimise education disruptions due to emergencies.

In order to ensure that initiatives are embedded in and deliver benefit for actual operational responses to education disruption, initiatives will
- be grounded in responses and needs at country level – preferably across a number of countries within and/or from different regions and contexts over the funding period;
- produce real-time learning and evidence building through applied research, case studies and learning events with key stakeholders involved in initial responses;
- identify challenges and opportunities to counter education disruption at each stage of implementation, in order to generate guidance on better ways of working within and among organisations.

Through a process of joint learning, development and dissemination of guidance and tools, as well as training carried out by education actors, initiatives will
- build on and document lessons learnt, evidence and recommendations for rapid education responses and how these can be linked with longer-term responses;
- produce practical guidance and tools to support implementation;
- strengthen capacities, in particular at country level, in line with the guidance and tools developed;
- improve coordination and quality of rapid education responses, while considering their linkages with longer-term responses.

The outcome of this process should be systemic and benefit all actors designing or implementing responses that reach children whose education is disrupted by crises within the first three months.

To achieve this, the approach to implementation will

- engage global initiatives, funding windows and ongoing initiatives to examine opportunities for collaboration and ways to avoid duplication;
- avoid establishing any new infrastructure, but instead examine and identify promising practice in rapid education responses through existing initiatives, funding windows and coordination mechanisms;
- be outward facing, engaging relevant actors across the humanitarian-development nexus, including governments, in relevant planning processes.

Initiatives will strengthen education service delivery within the humanitarian architecture. Coordination and leadership should be embedded in and work through existing coordination structures (e.g. linked with the country Inter-Agency structure and the Cluster system). To avoid duplication or overlaps, initiatives should be appropriately coordinated with other initiatives that seek to enhance responses to education needs in humanitarian crises, including funding and efforts by the Education Cannot Wait Fund.

Initiatives should not exclusively include education in emergencies actors but also bring in, as relevant, actors and solutions from other sectors. This is to ensure learning from the experiences and established systems of other sectors, to work through established processes and, importantly, to engage other sectors in planning for (and understanding the need for) humanitarian responses to education needs within first phase responses to crises.