

## **HUMANITARIAN IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (HIP)**

### **PALESTINE**

**The full implementation of this version of the HIP is subject to the adoption of the decision amending Decision C(2017) 8863**

**AMOUNT: EUR 24 000 000**

The present Humanitarian Implementation Plan (HIP) was prepared on the basis of the financing decision ECHO/WWD/BUD/2018/01000 (Worldwide Decision) and the related General Guidelines for Operational Priorities on Humanitarian Aid (Operational Priorities). The purpose of the HIP and its annex is to serve them 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.

### **0. MAJOR CHANGES SINCE PREVIOUS VERSION OF THE HIP**

#### **Modification 1 – May 2018**

Since early 2018, there has been a rapid deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Gaza with a particularly high impact on the health and WASH sectors.

The health sector in Gaza has been put under extreme strain as a result of years of blockade, of longstanding shortages of medical supplies, spare parts for medical equipment and back-up generators, of limited electricity and fuel, and of salary cuts for medical personnel. In addition, recent clashes on the Gaza side of the perimeter fence with Israel led to a mass influx of wounded requiring treatment inside Gaza. According to the Health Cluster, thirty-nine Palestinians were killed and over 5 000 injured, mostly from live ammunition, rubber-coated bullets and teargas. The large number of injuries is further straining an over-burdened and under-resourced medical system. The situation remains extremely tense and it can be expected that the upcoming Fridays will lead to further clashes with a heavy human cost and a corresponding increase in humanitarian needs. Additional funds are needed to urgently provide medicine, medical disposables, laboratory materials and other supplies for emergency care, as well as to strengthen the capacity of the health sector to respond to future shocks, which are likely to happen.

In the WASH sector, nearly 1.5 million people in Gaza are at risk of contracting waterborne diseases due to the consumption of unsafe water. Electricity shortage and import restrictions are impacting the operation of approximately 130 critical water and sanitation facilities, heavily relying on generators running on irregularly supplied emergency fuel. As a result, a large amount of untreated sewage ends up discharged into the Mediterranean Sea, causing environmental pollution.

Additional funding is needed to strengthen the capacity of the WASH sector, which is overly reliant on emergency fuel and on the brink of collapse. This sector would also be particularly hit in case of renewed escalation. The proposed response includes: purchase of chemicals for water disinfection and chlorination; repair and maintenance of WASH infrastructure in Designated Emergency Shelters (DES) and replenishment of spare parts to be used in case of emergency. An amount of EUR 3 000 000 is added to this HIP.

### **1. CONTEXT**

After fifty years of continuous occupation and ten years of blockade of the Gaza Strip, large parts of the Palestinian population face a protracted protection crisis with humanitarian consequences caused by restriction on access to basic services and recurrent violations of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and International Human Rights Law (IHRL).

Israeli occupation policies continue to be implemented unabatedly, including restrictions on the movement of people and goods (including water), limited access to land and natural resources, the denial of basic services, the construction and expansion of settlements, settler violence<sup>1</sup>, and the demolition of Palestinian structures, some of which are EU-funded humanitarian assets. The sum of these practices has created de facto a coercive environment with complex humanitarian and development needs. The Israeli occupation is considered to be the primary driver of poverty in Palestine.

In addition, Palestine remains highly fragmented politically with growing disparities and divisions between the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Gaza strip, further complicating the delivery of assistance in Palestine. The two-state solution, which remains the strategic objective of the EU, does not appear to be forthcoming any time soon. The absence of a clear political horizon, be it for the Middle East Peace Process (MEPP) or internal Palestinian reconciliation efforts<sup>2</sup> combined with recurrent waves of violence, are leading to increased frustrations on all sides and may contribute to a further deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Palestine.

DG ECHO's Integrated Analysis Framework for 2017-2018 identified low humanitarian needs for the West Bank and moderate humanitarian needs for Gaza. The vulnerability of the population affected by the crisis is assessed to be high in Gaza and low in the West Bank. Overall the Vulnerability Index is 6.3 (10 being the highest)<sup>3</sup>, the crisis index is 3 (3 being the highest), lack of coping capacity is 4.5 (10 being the highest) and the human development index is 0.7 out of 1.

## 2. HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

### 1) People in need of humanitarian assistance

As per the UN 2017 Palestine Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP), 2.3 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance out of a total population of 4.8 million in Palestine. Of these, 1 million are in the West Bank and 1.3 million in the Gaza strip.

### 2) Description of the most acute humanitarian needs

Although all parties to the conflict are bound by international law, there are repeated violations of IHL:

**In the West Bank:** The Palestinian population in Area C and East Jerusalem have been subject to economic deprivation with limited access to basic services. The population is subjected to displacement and dispossession of land and housing through forced evictions which is triggered by multiple factors, including: building restrictions; the destruction of homes and livelihoods due to the lack of building permits; conducting military training exercises near residential areas; settler violence; revocation of residency; restrictions on access to livelihoods; relocation plans; or any combination of these factors<sup>4</sup>.

The rapid advancement of plans by the Government of Israel (GoI) to transfer Palestinian Bedouins from their communities to other locations remains a grave concern. The relocation and

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<sup>1</sup> After a three-year decline, settler violence has been on the rise during the first half of 2017. On a monthly average, this represents an increase of 88 per cent compared with 2016, according to OCHA's July 2017 Humanitarian Bulletin.

<sup>2</sup> The implications of the recent reunification talks and return of control of Gaza to the Palestinian Authority from the de-facto authorities are still not clear. This may lead to improvement of the humanitarian conditions, notwithstanding Israel's ongoing occupation as the primary cause of humanitarian vulnerabilities.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.inform-index.org>

<sup>4</sup> UNOCHA Fragmented Lives. Humanitarian Overview 2015, June 2016.

mediation plans are likely to lead to large-scale forcible transfer of Bedouins. This is coupled with continued demolitions throughout 2017<sup>5</sup>.

**In Gaza:** The blockade and recent wars have led a state of de-development in Gaza, aggravating the overall socio-economic vulnerability of the population, with 1.2 million people in need of humanitarian assistance<sup>6</sup>. The recurrent hostilities compounded by the lack of governance has further deteriorated the living conditions of 2 million people in Gaza and increased aid dependency.

The escalation in the internal Palestinian divide over the control of Gaza in April 2017 exacerbated Gaza's chronic energy crisis and its compounding deteriorating health, WASH and livelihood sectors. This resulted in the even further reduction of essential lifesaving and diagnostic hospital services including medical referrals, the reduction in the provision of portable water to the population, the release of raw sewage into the sea, and the public health risks associated with this.

With the increasing poverty and unemployment, available food remains out of reach for the majority. In parallel, livelihoods remain fragile, especially in the fishing industry and the agricultural sector, as a result of access restricted areas (ARA) on Gazan land and the maritime restricted area of 6 nautical miles in the Mediterranean Sea.

The rehabilitation and reconstruction of the remaining inhabitable housing units totally or severely damaged during the 2014 conflict saw little progress in 2017<sup>7</sup>. This is due to the increased Israeli restrictions on the import of construction materials and the expansion of the dual use material list as well as the shortage of donors' funding. As a result, more than 31 000 Palestinians remain displaced three years after the conflict.

### 3. Humanitarian Response

#### 1) National / local response and involvement

According to specific provisions of International Law, Israel, as the occupying power, has a duty of good governance and the obligation to safeguard public order and public life<sup>8</sup>, and to ensure the wellbeing of the Palestinian population under occupation<sup>9</sup>. As Israel is not fulfilling many of its duties as an occupying power, and the Palestinian Authority (PA) has limited competences under the Oslo Accords to work in Area C, the international community continues to step in to alleviate the immediate consequences of the occupation. Until a political solution is found and in light of serious protection needs, support by DG ECHO is still required. In the meantime, incidents of obstruction of humanitarian access and space by the Israeli Government continued throughout 2017, affecting communities that are already at high risk of displacement<sup>10</sup>.

In the **West Bank**, the Government of Palestine continues to face restrictions in its service delivery in Area C (which represents 60% of the West Bank) and East Jerusalem. This is coupled with a fiscal crisis that further reduced their capacity in terms of service delivery in parts of the West Bank under partial control (Areas A & B). Nevertheless, and despite its inability to access Area C and East Jerusalem, the PA has stepped up its engagement over the past two years. The

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<sup>5</sup> During the first six months of 2017 approximately 252 structures were demolished, of which 57 structures were funded by the EU and the EU Member States. During the same period in 2016, 647 structures were demolished, of which 91 structures were funded by the EU and the EU Member States – UN OCHA, West Bank demolitions and displacement report.

<sup>6</sup> Gaza ten years later, UN Country Team, July 2017

<sup>7</sup> 2 770 uninhabitable units completed in 2017 compared to 6 800 in 2016 - Key findings from the Gaza Shelter Response Evaluation, NRC, June 2017.

<sup>8</sup> Article 43 of Hague Regulation (<https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/ihl/WebART/195-200053?OpenDocument>)

<sup>9</sup> Article 46 of Hague regulation (<https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/ihl/WebART/195-200056>)

<sup>10</sup> UN-OCHA reported that 23% of the Palestinian structures demolished in the first 6 months of 2017 were EU-funded structures (57 out of a total of 252 Palestinian structures), compared to 14% during the same period in 2016 (91 out of 647 structures).

PA has adopted a National Policy Agenda (2017-2022) that will guide Palestine's development strategy for the next six years. An inter-ministerial committee for Area C was established in 2015 with the aim of establishing the policies and priorities as well as overall monitoring of the work progress in Area C. At the same time a coordination office for Area C (ACCO) has been established (with support from a number of EU Member States). ACCO has been tasked to draft an Area C strategy for 2018-2020.

**In Gaza**, the inter-Palestinian political divide continues to paralyze the National Consensus Government from resuming its basic governance in Gaza, aggravating the already fragile situation. The decision to cut up to 50% of the salaries of some 58 000 Palestinian Authority civil servants and cut all contributions in Gaza has taken toll on the socio-economic situation of thousands of families as well as the local economy. The very recent announcement by Hamas to dissolve the administrative council should result in an improved situation in Gaza, but it is still too premature to judge.

## **2) International Humanitarian Response**

The 2017 UN Humanitarian Response Plan amounts to USD 547 million. USD 300 million (55%) is dedicated to food security and USD 104 million (18%) is dedicated to shelter and NFIs. At least 68% of the requested funds target needs in Gaza. This year's requirements are 5 % lower in comparison to 2016, primarily due to a slight reduction in the shelter request for Gaza.

In parallel, UNRWA released their 2017 oPt emergency appeal with USD 402 million (49% allocated to emergency food and cash assistance, cash for work and livelihoods, 43% for emergency shelter, health and education). In June 2017, the UN issued a Gaza Crisis Urgent Funding Appeal for USD 25 million in order to respond to the most urgent needs in Health, WASH and Food Security sectors for 0.6 million targeted people in Gaza. Most projects under the appeal are existing projects in the Gaza funding appeal where USD 4.4 million only represents new requirements.<sup>11</sup>

## **3) Constraints and ECHO response capacity**

Restrictions on humanitarian access to communities in area C of the West Bank, apply to areas representing 60% of humanitarian areas of intervention. The heavy legal and material pressure from the GoI, on assistance provided by humanitarian organizations in response to demolitions in Area C (a response considered illegal by the GoI) has continued over the past year. As a consequence, the humanitarian and operational space has continuously been challenged with increasing difficulties faced by DG ECHO partners in delivering humanitarian assistance (detention of beneficiaries, repeated seizure of post demolition assistance, harassment of personnel, B1 working visas), all of this to be seen in larger context of obstruction of humanitarian assistance in Area C.<sup>12</sup>

The blockade of the Gaza strip has been enforced through increased restrictions on access and movement of people and goods in and out of Gaza using the Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism (GRM) and the dual-use list. The approval rate of permits through Erez for UN and INGOs staff has reduced significantly since April 2017. In May alone, 71% of permits for UN Gaza-based staff were pending which means that the staff was not able to travel as intended<sup>13</sup>. Rafah crossing

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<sup>11</sup> Gaza Crisis Urgent Funding Appeal – UN OCHA – July 2017

[https://www.ochaopt.org/sites/default/files/gaza\\_urgent\\_humanitarian\\_funding\\_v5\\_3july2017\\_10am\\_1.pdf](https://www.ochaopt.org/sites/default/files/gaza_urgent_humanitarian_funding_v5_3july2017_10am_1.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> During numerous meetings of the "Judea and Samaria" subcommittee of the Israeli Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee (FADC), the involvement of international organizations in providing assistance to the communities facing imminent threat of forcible transfer was discussed and deemed "illegal" and "strategic": [https://www.knesset.gov.il/spokesman/eng/PRList\\_eng.asp](https://www.knesset.gov.il/spokesman/eng/PRList_eng.asp)

<sup>13</sup> Bi-monthly Bulletin of the EU Delegation, May-June 2017, No. 165.

remains closed since the beginning of the year, except for 16 days only. The closure regime makes the delivery of aid challenging and very expensive.

The situation further degraded due to de-facto authorities' constant restrictions imposed on humanitarian actors through new taxation regulations, audits and requests for information, access limitations to some areas, and other attempts to suspend humanitarian operations and close down offices.

#### **4) Envisaged ECHO response and expected results of humanitarian aid interventions**

##### **General:**

DG ECHO's strategy in Palestine will continue to focus on the protection of the most vulnerable population groups, by focusing on emergency preparedness, resilience-building, WASH, shelter, and multi-sectorial protection interventions, and humanitarian advocacy. DG ECHO will focus its assistance on, but not limited to, the following vulnerable segments of the population:

- In the West Bank, targeting will prioritize Palestinians<sup>14</sup> living in Area C, specifically vulnerable communities with little or no access to basic services, who are affected by demolition and confiscation of private property and whose livelihoods are at risk because of settlement expansions. This includes the communities at risk of forcible transfer including the Palestinian population affected by outstanding demolition orders in Area C<sup>15</sup>, Palestinian Bedouins<sup>16</sup> in the Jerusalem Periphery, the E1 block, as well as the residents in Southern Hebron, and Palestinians<sup>17</sup> residing in areas designated as “firing zones” (closed military zones for training) or living in the seam zone.

In East Jerusalem, Palestinians who are at risk of house demolitions and evictions, are families at risk of forcible transfer who could also lose their livelihoods<sup>18</sup>.

- In Gaza, targeting will prioritize segments of the most vulnerable families who are in the Access Restricted Areas (ARAs), families who remain displaced after the 2014 conflict and families who are living under the poverty line.

DG ECHO partners are expected to provide humanitarian assistance using needs-based evidence to **support emergency preparedness and resilience-building** so that vulnerable communities can better cope, adapt and recover from future shocks. Partners should ensure protection against violations of IHL and possibly prevent violations from happening, under the overall framework of IHL. In case of growing needs, partners are expected to scale up their emergency response with added emphasis on humanitarian advocacy.

Strategic partnerships are essential and will continue to be sought with DG ECHO partners who have the capacities and the mandate to cooperate consolidate efforts –*inter alia* in the form of consortia– to scale up emergency preparedness and response activities –as it has been done under the HIP since 2015.

In 2018, DG ECHO will continue to reinforce **integrated multi-sectorial approaches** and programmes to maximise systemic solutions in order to increase the overall value of the

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<sup>14</sup> Humanitarian Needs Overview, OCHA – November 2016.

<sup>15</sup> UN OCHA Fragmented Lives. Humanitarian Overview 2016, May 2017 <http://data.ochaopt.org/demolitions/index.aspx?id=311650>

<sup>16</sup> UNOCHA Humanitarian Needs Overview 2016, June 2016.

<sup>17</sup> UNOCHA Fragmented Lives. Humanitarian Overview 2016, May 2017.

<sup>18</sup> UNOCHA Key humanitarian concerns, Update August 2014.

interventions in terms of improving the technical quality of the service delivered, increasing synergies and the coverage of beneficiaries within the limited funding available.

Mainstreaming of protection (based on a protection risks and benefits analysis) will be a pre-condition for selection. DG ECHO will prioritise proposals which are able to demonstrate a thorough **protection**-sensitive targeting and selection of the most vulnerable beneficiaries based on primary, independent and recent needs assessments along with solid analysis of justification for a given approach or modality.

#### Humanitarian Advocacy:

Humanitarian advocacy remains a pre-condition for DG ECHO's partners in Palestine: the causes of the on-going deterioration of the humanitarian situation can only be addressed through effective advocacy, by calling all parties to respect IHL. To ensure the effectiveness of proposed interventions, partners are expected to integrate a dedicated advocacy result and activities in their action that aims at raising awareness and strengthening accountability of the humanitarian system targeting relevant audience.

#### Resilience

DG ECHO interventions in Palestine, both in Gaza and the West Bank, will aim to focus more on LRRD opportunities within EU and EU member states, targeting the most vulnerable segments of the population to empower. The development of Joint Humanitarian Development Frameworks tailored to the context of Gaza and West Bank should be considered.

#### Education in emergencies:

DG ECHO will provide further support to meet the mounting needs of children in conflict affected contexts that are out of school and risk education disruption. Within this HIP, projects addressing education and child protection will be funded, with a focus on highly vulnerable communities and safe access to education.

#### Communication/Visibility:

Partners will be expected to ensure full compliance with **visibility** requirements and to acknowledge the funding role of the EU/DG ECHO, as set out in the applicable contractual arrangements.

#### West Bank:

In the West Bank, DG ECHO's strategy is to continue to support the most vulnerable people in need, due to IHL violations.

It will be implemented by reinforcing the response to demolitions, preventive measures against destructions of Palestinian assets and increased resilience to IHL violations by providing targeted legal and material assistance to communities most vulnerable to protection issues such as settler violence and forcible displacements. Strengthening socio-economic resilience will also be sought to improve living conditions and allow communities to thrive in their current place of living. This will be implemented in full respect of the humanitarian principles and will remain guided by the humanitarian imperative.

The emergency response in the West Bank should follow a comprehensive needs-based approach relying on clear socio-economic and the protection-related vulnerability criteria at household and community levels. Complementarity and alignment with other programs that support transition strategies and sustainable programing are other key aspects to be embraced.

**Gaza Strip:**

DG ECHO will maintain a focus on emergency preparedness and response (in and out of Designated Emergency Shelters (DES) with a particular focus on soft components such as standard operating procedures, technical guidelines, and management plans), resilience-building, protection mainstreaming and advocacy as priorities for its strategy in Gaza in 2018. Proposed interventions need to be based on updated needs assessments and well identified targeting mechanisms. They must intend to address the imminent needs of the most vulnerable people in an efficient and effective way. Therefore, joint programming and an integrated approach in response are highly encouraged to maximize the outcome of humanitarian interventions. Resilience-oriented interventions targeting household, neighbourhood or community levels which extend for a multi-year period with specific yearly benchmarks of progress will also be considered.

Whilst the strategy in Gaza is not sector-based, DG ECHO will support interventions prioritising resilience, WASH, shelter and health with protection mainstreaming in all operations as a priority. Integrated WASH and Shelter joint programming aiming at addressing the water and sanitation crisis, emergency preparedness and response is strongly encouraged at household, neighbourhood and community levels. Also, DG ECHO will continue prioritising cash-based interventions over in-kind food aid. In Health, DG ECHO will continue to support interventions aiming at improving the response capacity of the health sector as well as responding to emerging, life-saving needs resulting directly from the conflict.

**Expected results of humanitarian aid interventions:**

Humanitarian assistance in Palestine is expected to address needs arising from policies of occupation, to improve the resilience of the population and to provide evidence-based advocacy through quality programming and promoting humanitarian advocacy which address IHL violations as the root cause of the humanitarian needs.

As IHL violations constitute the main trigger for humanitarian needs in other sectors, partners should ensure that the context analysis takes into account threats in addition to vulnerabilities and capacities. The analysis should bring out both external threats to the target population as well as the population's coping strategies adopted to counteract the vulnerabilities (enhancing community targeting in addition to enhancing targeting at the household level with the aim of balancing the analysis between a systematic response to IHL violations and socio-economic vulnerability criteria). Based on this analysis DG ECHO expects partners to design integrated programme responses, where protection actions will address needs in other sectors and where other sector actions will mitigate or increase resilience to protection risks. These responses must consequently demonstrate how risks are lowered by reducing the threats and vulnerabilities but also by increasing resilience.

All actions must mainstream gender, age, protection and disaster risk reduction, i.e. must ensure that protection principles are incorporated; that meaningful access, safety and dignity is promoted; that assistance is adapted to the needs and capacities of different gender and age groups; and that all beneficiaries and activities are appropriately protected from hazards and shocks. Most of the thematic priorities detailed in the Technical Annex 2018 envisage their mainstreaming into enhanced quality humanitarian interventions. Compliance of partners' proposals with thematic priorities is an assessment criterion which will be utilized by DG ECHO. All humanitarian interventions funded by DG ECHO must also take into consideration, together with other protection concerns, any risk of gender-based violence and develop and implement appropriate strategies to prevent such risks. Moreover, in line with its life-saving mandate, DG ECHO encourages the establishment of quality, comprehensive and safe



GBV response services since the onset of emergencies, in line with DG ECHO's 2013 Gender policy<sup>19</sup>.

Gaza is facing a steady deterioration in the living conditions manifested in increased vulnerability and aid dependency due to the cumulative impact of ten years of blockade and internal divide manifested in the continued violations of IHL and lack of accountability for such violations by all parties to the conflict. Therefore, proposed interventions should be designed in a way that addresses imminent needs of the most vulnerable populations whilst ensuring a longer term impact, coupled with a strong evidence-based advocacy component.

In the West Bank, a consolidated and systematic humanitarian response mechanism to demolitions under the inter-cluster framework that is transparent, coherent, accountable, cost-effective and reactive will continue under the framework of the current consortium with a guaranteed level of harmonisation between the consortia members and other stakeholders involved in the response to demolitions and settler violence. The nature of the response should be based on existing vulnerabilities, needs and risks, and remain flexible. A focus on advocacy and messaging, in parallel with contingency planning for the swift delivery of assistance, is fundamental.

As a key element of protection mainstreaming, increased scrutiny (i.e. risk/legal analysis) should promote “do no harm” in the delivery of assistance in order to ensure the safety and protection of beneficiaries rather than being counter protective and exposing them to further risk or danger. Proposed assistance should create a ‘pull factor’, motivating beneficiaries to return to their original place of residence or to reduce or cease seasonal movements.

Coordination: Effective coordination is essential. ECHO supports the Inter-Agency Standing Committee’s Transformative Agenda (ITA) and expects its partners to demonstrate their engagement in implementing its objectives and to actively take part in coordination mechanisms (e.g. Humanitarian Country Team, clusters and technical working groups).

#### **4. LRRD, COORDINATION AND TRANSITION**

Over the past seven years, the EU humanitarian funding to Palestine was progressively re-focused towards more support to the protection of the people affected by IHL violations (demolitions, eviction, the blockade, settlers' violence) and humanitarian advocacy, whilst transferring classical basic service delivery to development instruments. Prolonged occupation continues to constitute a strong challenge in promoting LRRD and the transition to development. Despite these constraints, DG ECHO encourages partners to consider a single framework proposing a strategy of transformational development assistance proposing different modes of implementation and a continuum of interventions relevant for different levels of risk. Such an approach from partners will further strengthen DG ECHO's efforts in trying to overcome the isolation in which humanitarian assistance is delivered in Area C of the West Bank and in Gaza Strip.

Long-term chronic vulnerabilities need to be addressed by development actors pending a just and comprehensive resolution of the conflict and the actual realization of the two-state solution, providing Palestinians with the sovereignty to meet their basic needs without restrictions or bias. Humanitarian aid however remains essential in addressing needs and vulnerability resulting from the policies and practices linked to the occupation and improving access of the population to

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<sup>19</sup> Gender Age Marker Toolkit, DG ECHO, 2013: [http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/gender\\_age\\_marker\\_toolkit.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/gender_age_marker_toolkit.pdf); Gender Sensitive Aid, DG ECHO, 2017: [http://ec.europa.eu/echo/what/humanitarian-aid/gender-sensitive-aid\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/what/humanitarian-aid/gender-sensitive-aid_en)



basic services during emergencies by supporting local structures and by developing emergency response capacities.

The DG ECHO strategy hinges upon the full and active participation in existing coordination mechanisms of all partners. DG ECHO supports the Inter-Agency Standing Committee's Transformative Agenda (ITA) and expects its partners to demonstrate their engagement in implementing its objectives and to actively take part in coordination mechanisms (e.g. Humanitarian Country Team, clusters and technical working groups). Close collaboration with other Commission services and Member States will continue to be sought in order to promote a transfer of some DG ECHO funded activities to more structural and sustainable funding mechanisms. This will be done in line with council conclusions on the operationalization of the humanitarian – development nexus<sup>20</sup> which stresses the need to coordinate humanitarian and development actions so as to address the root causes of vulnerability, fragility and conflict whilst simultaneously meeting humanitarian needs and strengthening resilience.

In Area C of the West Bank and East-Jerusalem, DG ECHO has pursued a joined-up approach with Member States in addressing the needs of the most vulnerable Palestinian populations in response to the above mentioned IHL violations. The EU Heads of Mission's report on Area C<sup>21</sup> confirms the continued need for EU interventions in this area promoting longer term and development-oriented activities complementary to humanitarian assistance. The January 2016 Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) conclusions reaffirmed the EU political position and approach set out in the May 2012 and July 2015 conclusions reconfirming the illegality of Israel's settlement policy, clearly stating that it considers Area C as the main land reserve for a future Palestinian state, and called on the occupying power to meet its obligations regarding the living conditions of the Palestinian population in Area C.

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<sup>20</sup> Council conclusions on operationalizing the humanitarian – development nexus – May 19, 2017

<sup>21</sup> EU HoMs report on Area C – July 2016. A report prepared by the Heads of Missions in Jerusalem and Ramallah will submit the report to the Political and Security Committee, including a set of recommendations for discussion to reinforce EU policy on Area C.