

HUMANITARIAN IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (HIP)

ENHANCED RESPONSE CAPACITY

The activities proposed hereafter are still subject to the adoption of the financing decision ECHO/WWD/BUD/2018/01000

AMOUNT: EUR 3,500,000

The present Humanitarian Implementation Plan (HIP) was prepared on the basis of 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 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

The number and severity of humanitarian crisis remain at an extremely high level. UN coordinated appeals estimate the number of 128.6 million people to be in need of assistance globally. The number of displaced people continues to increase, having reached 65 million in 2016. In addition to major protracted humanitarian crisis largely driven by conflicts, droughts have hit several already vulnerable countries.

Humanitarian appeals continue to be at a record high of over USD 20 billion. A large portion of these requirements are unmet, an indication of the global humanitarian response not being able to adequately address the humanitarian needs.

DG ECHO remains one of the largest humanitarian donors with a global reach and substantial capacity. Through its operational funding and technical expertise, DG ECHO seeks to ensure that its partners operate in the most effective and efficient manner to address humanitarian needs. New approaches which can improve the way of working are encouraged where possible and when the risk of doing harm is controlled. Through its technical and policy capacity, DG ECHO engages in dialogues with and convenes partners to exchange best practices, coordinate and identify challenges and opportunities on global, regional and crisis level.

With the Enhanced Response Capacity, DG ECHO is dedicating some of its budget to support initiatives which seek to increase the capacity of the humanitarian community to respond to crisis in the most effective and efficient manner. It focuses on initiatives which would not emerge or would not have the same impact without dedicated funding and which cannot be covered by DG ECHO's geographic funding envelopes. The initiatives have to be global in their vision and inclusive in their approach in order to contribute to eco-system wide change. The Enhanced Response Capacity focuses on specific priority areas to ensure maximum effect and for DG ECHO to actively engage and add value through its technical expertise and convening power.

2. HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

For the period 2018-2019, DG ECHO has identified three areas in which global capacity interventions are particularly likely to contribute to an overall improvement of humanitarian action. These are either emerging topics on which DG ECHO expects progress to accelerate through targeted funding or persistent problems on which DG ECHO considers support continuous to be required despite certain progress of existing initiatives.

a. Digitalisation/technology in humanitarian response

Humanitarian emergencies are reaching unprecedented levels. Strengthening the capacity of humanitarian actors to respond to natural disasters and man-made crises in an effective and efficient manner is a priority. Innovation and new technologies can play an important role in this respect.

Harnessing the technological innovation, technical skills and expertise of the private sector and research communities is determinant. DG ECHO will strive to ensure an increased involvement of a wide range of actors in humanitarian response. It will support the development of innovative solutions, products and approaches to optimise the efficiency and effectiveness of the humanitarian response, inter alia by exploiting opportunities offered by EU research and innovation programmes.

Particular attention will be paid to new technological solutions to support efficiency, improved transparency and accountability throughout the humanitarian programme cycle and accountability to affected populations. Synergies will be developed between technological developments and areas such as improved needs assessment, cash programming, identity management (including as regards forced displacement situations), education in emergencies and urban crisis response. DG ECHO will promote better ways of managing information in emergencies, including through the use of open-source data.

b. International Humanitarian Law and Protection

Disregard for International Humanitarian Law in armed conflicts, where a large part of EU-funded humanitarian operations are implemented, continues to be widespread. This results, among others, in significant challenges to the protection of civilians, delivery of principled humanitarian aid, humanitarian access and the safety and security of humanitarian and medical workers. Given today's predominance of non-international armed conflicts, the humanitarian consequences of the lack of IHL compliance by both states and armed non-state actors needs to be addressed.

c. Supporting system reform and Humanitarian Field Coordination

Coordination and leadership both at the level of individual crises and at the global level are key factors for efficient and effective humanitarian response. While successive structural reform efforts (notably the Humanitarian Reform of 2005 and the Transformative Agenda launched in 2011) have had a positive impact on the effectiveness of humanitarian assistance in many crises, serious shortcomings and a need to strengthen leadership persist, particularly at field level. In light of the renewed interest and reflections on system reform (also triggered by the potential impact of the UN reform on the humanitarian system) as well as increased efforts to implement the Grand Bargain on field level, it is important to support leadership and coordination both at field and at global level, both as regards the overall quality of humanitarian coordination and on topics such as cash coordination, the fight against gender-based violence, coordinated needs assessment and localization.

3. HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

a. Digitalisation/technology in humanitarian response

DG ECHO seeks to provide focused support to initiatives working on digital identities and data as a global public good.

Initiatives should focus on responsible engagement, improved data sharing and inclusiveness of big data analysis within the humanitarian community. Actors which collect and thus have access to substantial amounts of data, namely on crisis affected populations, and/or which are collaborating with research institutions, public bodies and private sector companies such as cell phone network providers should be cooperating with the wider community. The use and benefit of such data and data sharing in the humanitarian community for a better response, needs to respect concerns around data privacy and competition.

DG ECHO will also support initiatives which try to tackle the digital divide specific to crisis settings: the fact that the most vulnerable and the most severely affected populations might not have (anymore) a digital footprint in situations of crisis. This crisis-specific digital divide risks skewing big data analysis towards those who continue to have a access to digital services, but might not be the most in need.

Initiatives bringing together humanitarian actors, businesses and other relevant stakeholders to co-develop innovative solutions to address humanitarian needs in the most effective and efficient manner can also be supported. These initiatives should help combining the sectoral knowledge and expertise of humanitarian actors with the skills, innovative capabilities and technologies of businesses and other relevant parties.

Finally, initiatives which seek to harness technology for better, agile monitoring and management of operations will be supported. Initiatives should be integrated into coordination mechanisms such as (inter-)sector working groups or clusters to contribute to better coordination and accountability or explore and strengthen best practices in data sharing as a public good.

b. International Humanitarian Law

Initiatives should focus in particular on armed non-state actors (ANSA) which have emerged in the last decades as one of the driving forces of conflicts and have also shown in many instances a lack of respect for civilian protection and IHL. Tailoring of approaches to engagement with and messaging towards these specific actors and the context of their operation needs to be further developed. To mitigate the consequences of disregard for IHL by states and ANSAs, all aspects of the protection of civilians in time of conflict, from prevention to response and using the complete protection toolbox of assistance and advocacy need to be enhanced.

c. Supporting system reform and Humanitarian Field Coordination

There is a need to support humanitarian leadership and coordination both at the level of individual crises and at global level. This can take the form of support for overall efforts to support systems reform and better coordination of humanitarian assistance at the global level, as well as capacity building interventions to support coordination on a range of topics such as cash coordination, the fight against sexual and gender-based violence, coordinated needs assessment and localization.