



European  
Commission



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## European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations

### Needs assessment

#### What is it?

Through its humanitarian aid, the European Union seeks to address the needs of the most vulnerable people caught up in humanitarian crises and disasters. In line with the humanitarian principles, the EU's humanitarian funding is solely needs-based and follows a concrete needs assessment.

This exercise provides the information and data needed to decide if external intervention is required and the nature of the response. The European Commission has measurement tools that help it in its yearly exercise of determining where humanitarian needs lie.

#### Why is this important?

Humanitarian needs have increased massively over the past few years and humanitarian funds have struggled to keep up. The COVID-19 pandemic has also compounded already existing needs.

Countries, humanitarian organisations and other stakeholders strive to bridge the gap between needs and funding. They have committed to work more efficiently and effectively together through initiatives such as the "Grand Bargain" that was signed in 2016.

The issue is how to decide between the different needs and where to allocate limited funding resources. This is where needs assessments come in. The analysis provided:

- helps determine priorities
- informs funding decisions
- guides towards the best use of funds
- ensures that humanitarian assistance is delivered in a timely and targeted manner.

Constant assessment and monitoring enable humanitarian organisations to be better prepared and proactively intervene when there are rising risks of crises.

Some humanitarian crises slip away from global attention and that of international donors. These are "forgotten crises", which do not receive enough attention among the international community.

These "forgotten crises" need to be kept among assistance priorities. People affected by these humanitarian crises are often among the most vulnerable and cannot be neglected.

#### How are we helping?

The EU channels its humanitarian aid based on the principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence, as set out in the Lisbon Treaty and confirmed in the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid.

To make the most effective use of limited funds the funding allocation is based on sound analysis and evidence.

Every year, the European Commission's Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) assesses humanitarian needs. This is done through:

- the use of internationally recognised indices, namely:
  - the INFORM Risk Index identifies where the level of risk of humanitarian crises and disasters stands in countries, and
  - the INFORM Severity Index objectively measures and compares the severity of humanitarian crises and disasters worldwide
- assessments carried out by our humanitarian experts, including those present on the ground through its network of field offices across the globe.

Alongside this exercise, the European Commission also conducts a Forgotten Crises Assessment. Its purpose is to identify protracted humanitarian crises where there is an insufficient international response and a weak political commitment to solve the crisis.

All the information obtained through the efforts described above comes together in the European Commission's Humanitarian Implementation Plans. We publish these documents at the beginning of each year and update them throughout the year as needed.

The Implementation Plans contain the prioritisation of needs for the different regions where the EU provides assistance. It also includes subsequent funding allocations to them from the European Commission's yearly humanitarian budget.

We are also committed to improving the capacity, quality and coordination of its needs-assessment approaches. For this purpose, the Commission is part of and supports several international fora and initiatives active on the matter.

## Facts & figures

The European Commission assesses humanitarian needs based on an approach that combines:

- internationally recognised indices
- the continuous evaluation of the situation on the ground by the European Commission's humanitarian experts

Each year the European Commission publishes a list of "forgotten crises".