

HUMANITARIAN IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (HIP) LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

AMOUNT: EUR 103 834 000

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). The purpose of the HIP and its annex is to serve as a communication tool for DG ECHO's¹ 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

Third Modification – 29 November 2019 (Central America, Colombia, Haiti)

Central America

Access to food by poorest households has dramatically decreased in northern Central America as a consequence of repeated drought-related crop failures and of soaring staple food prices. According to the latest IPC analysis for 2019², 3 915 000 people are facing an acute food crisis in El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras (IPC 3 and 4) since April 2019, corresponding to 19% of the total population. A 30% increase in the number of cases of acute malnutrition is reported compared to the past two years. In contexts of extreme poverty, people in need of urgent food assistance and nutritional support are often also victims of pervasive organised violence, a situation which is fuelling large-scale forced migration across the region. The humanitarian situation of vulnerable populations in these countries is likely to deteriorate further in the months to come if no action is taken.

To address this crisis, and considering the current funding gaps, an amount of EUR 5 000 000 is added to the present HIP. The additional funds will allow providing immediate short-term, lifesaving assistance to at least 80 000 people in the most affected areas of Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala, with particular attention to situations of double vulnerability (to food insecurity and to protection threats). The additional amount will furthermore allow evaluating and responding to acute needs in Nicaragua, where food security assessments have so far been constrained by the political crisis.

Colombia

The Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) for Colombia highlights a 25% increase in people requiring humanitarian assistance (from 4.2 in 2018 to 5.1 million in 2019) linked to the resurgence of internal conflict. Armed attacks against civilians have intensified. Extreme violence in the south of Nariño and Putumayo departments has been triggering a massive influx of Colombian refugees into Ecuador. The effects of the conflict are also reflected in the increase in internal displacements and confinements: some 410 000 individuals suffer from mobility

¹ Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO).

² Regional IPC data consolidation for 2020 is expected in December 2019.

restrictions due to the activity of armed groups in and around their communities and cannot access basic services. These populations are in urgent need of humanitarian aid. Against this background, Colombia also hosts some 5.8 million Venezuelans, including circular migrants and people in transit. Illegal migrants are especially prey to forced recruitment by armed groups. The Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) 2019 worth USD 192 million is minimally funded.

To address this crisis, taking into account current funding gaps and the limited size of State and municipal assistance to the victims, EUR 5 000 000 is added to this HIP. The additional funding shall benefit at least 60 000 conflict-affected people, in particular new IDPs and people suffering from multiple vulnerability. The funds will be implemented to the extent possible in synergy with peace-building measures supported by the EU Trust Fund for Colombia, with particular attention to conflict areas which are also witnessing the arrival of Venezuelan migrants. To this end, part of the funds will be immediately used to ensure minimal continuity of actions ending in December 2019 in doubly affected areas of Colombia.

Haiti

Acute social unrest linked to the escalating political and economic crisis is paralysing all economic activities in Haiti. The import of food is getting increasingly difficult and most in-country commercial exchanges are stalled. As a consequence, food prices have become unaffordable for the poorest households. The results of the latest IPC (October 2019) show that 3.7 million people are acutely food insecure at present, and this population is projected to reach 4.1 million in April 2020, corresponding to over one third of the total country population. The latest IPC figures highlight a sharp and rapid deterioration of the situation (2.6 million were estimated to be food insecure at the end of 2018). Child nutrition is particularly worrying, as in most departments the estimated prevalence of GAM (Global Acute Malnutrition) has exceeded the WHO emergency threshold (15%).

Acute food insecurity is compounded by growing protection threats linked to organised violence which is spreading across the country, affecting the most vulnerable groups such as women, children, elderly, people with disabilities, as well as displaced populations and survival migrants.

Considering the lack of immediate government plans to tackle the situation and the insufficient international response, an amount of EUR 5 000 000 is added to the present HIP in order to respond to the crisis. The additional funds will cover essential food and non-food needs of some 66 000 people in most affected areas, complementing the ongoing nutrition-sensitive food assistance response. Life-saving nutritional support will also be provided to approximately 5 000 severely malnourished children under 5 years of age, in areas where the GAM rate exceeds 10%. Protection will be integrated in the response.

Disaster Preparedness

EUR 286 000 are furthermore added to this HIP from the DP budget line in order to support epidemics preparedness in dengue-affected Central American countries (notably Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua), where 228 653 cases have been recorded since April 2019, representing a 3.5-fold to 15.8-fold increase compared to 2018.

The additional funds will contribute to support PAHO's ongoing efforts to strengthen national capacities to prepare and respond to multiple shocks - including outbreaks - in targeted countries, through improved early detection, epidemiological and laboratory surveillance, and clinical management of severe cases.

Second Modification – 8 July 2019 (Haiti food crisis; Venezuelan crisis)

The humanitarian situation in Haiti has dramatically worsened in the last months, as a result of five consecutive years of drought, a deepening social-economic crisis and political turmoil.

According to the IPC food security study (February 2019), the number of people in IPC 3 and 4 has doubled since 2018 from 1.3 Million to 2.6 million people (around 25% of the total population). 571 000 people are in a food emergency situation (IPC phase 4). Over 2 million people are acutely food insecure (IPC phase 3). More than 37% of the rural population require emergency food assistance. According to meteorological forecasts, this situation is expected to worsen further in the coming months.

Child nutrition is particularly worrying, as in most departments the estimated prevalence of GAM (Global Acute Malnutrition) has exceeded the WHO emergency threshold (15%). In the North West, the GAM rate reaches 19.8%. The current SAM (sever acute malnutrition) caseload is of 39 000 under-five children.

To address this crisis, an amount of EUR 9 000 000 is added to the present HIP. The additional funds will cover essential food and non-food needs of some 132 000 people in most affected areas, corresponding to 5% of the humanitarian needs identified, complementing the ongoing nutrition-sensitive food assistance response. Life-saving nutritional support will also be provided to approximately 5 000 severely malnourished children under 5 years of age, in areas where the GAM rate exceeds 10%.

Furthermore, in light of the worsening conditions of the populations affected by the Venezuelan crisis, Slovenia has pledged to transfer to the European Commission's budget a contribution³ to reinforce the provision of immediate relief assistance to those in need.

First modification – 4 March 2019 (Venezuelan crisis)

Since 23 January 2019, the situation in Venezuela has entered into a more acute phase of the crisis, following the self-proclamation of the President of the National Assembly as Interim President and the introduction of new economic sanctions by the US. With the sharpening of the socio-economic and political crisis, the living conditions in the country have further deteriorated and the population's needs have reached critical levels as far as access to food, medicines and basic services (including water and electricity) is concerned. According to the latest figures, more than 90% of the population in Venezuela does not have sufficient income to buy food. Lack of medicines is estimated in a range of 91%-95% by the National Chamber of Pharmaceutics. According to the latest National Hospital Survey, 96% of hospitals report not being able to provide nutritional services. The fallouts of the crisis across the region have increased proportionally: 3.4 million migrants/refugees are registered in neighbouring countries (Colombia, Peru, Ecuador, Brazil and other Latin-American and Caribbean countries), as well as in the US and in Europe, according to UNHCR-IOM. The UN-led Regional Coordination Platform set up in Panama to address the displacement crisis has issued a Regional Response Plan worth USD 737 million, currently funded by 12%. The Plan projects that the number of refugees/migrants might reach 5 million people by the end of 2019. Recipient countries are overwhelmed and unable to cope with this influx. In view to scale up DG ECHO's multisectoral response to the urgent needs of the most affected populations inside Venezuela and in

³ The full implementation of this version of the HIP is conditional upon the payment of the Member State's contribution of EUR 50 000 to the EU budget as external assigned revenue.

neighbouring countries, an amount of EUR 50 million is added to this HIP from the Emergency Aid Reserve. These funds will allow stepping up EU humanitarian assistance in the sectors of health and nutrition, food assistance, water and sanitation and protection inside the country and in the region. Part of the amount will be used to reinforce ongoing actions and/or to support suitable actions identified in the framework of the second assessment round of this HIP.

1. CONTEXT

This HIP covers response to man-made disasters and to natural hazards, as well as disaster risk reduction (DRR) and resilience in Latin America and the Caribbean. Its focus is on the impact of the socio-economic crisis in Venezuela and within the region, on the persisting humanitarian consequences of internal conflict in Colombia, as well as on the needs arising from man-made disasters and natural hazards in Central America, including their regional spill-overs. This HIP furthermore allows for a possible response to new crises in the region, in countries with limited capacity to cope, and/or where national or local capacity may be overwhelmed. This could, in particular, concern Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, México, Paraguay, Peru, Venezuela, Haiti, Cuba, Dominican Republic and other Small Island Developing States of the Caribbean. In terms of DRR, the focus of this HIP is on strengthening support to regional and national strategies in Latin America and the Caribbean, including Haiti, while exploring relevant synergies with EU Civil Protection.

Venezuela

Official data on the socio-economic situation of Venezuelan households in 2018 are largely unavailable, but studies carried out by local organisations show a critical deterioration in the overall living conditions. Lack of medicines, combined with a drastic reduction in the health system's capacity, results in a growing number of people dying due to the unavailability of treatments for chronic illnesses or emergency medical care. Several large outbreaks of infectious disease have been occurring, including measles, diphtheria and malaria, as a result of discontinuation of preventive programmes, deterioration of sanitary conditions and decreased vaccination coverage. As of July 2018, a total of 2 569 cases have been confirmed since the first measles case in 2017, including 44 deaths. Infant mortality (death of children aged 0-1) rose by 30 % in 2017, maternal mortality by 65 % and cases of malaria by 76%.

Hyperinflation and severe scarcity of food and essential goods have severely compromised the lives and livelihoods of a large part of the population. According to the ENCOVI Survey 2017, over 87% of households live below the poverty threshold while 61.2% live in extreme poverty and 80% are food insecure. As of June 2018, the monthly minimum salary (about 2 USD) covered less than 2% of the food basket. In November 2017, the overall Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) rate was 16.8%, i.e. above the 15% emergency threshold. During the first semester of 2018, some States have reached GAM values around 30%. Disruption of regular school attendance has increased across all socio-economic strata, and as of July 2018, between 50% and 60% of children aged 3-17 years are out of school due to lack of food, water, clothing, transport or teachers. School dropout reaches 80% in border States. Homicide rates continue being among the highest worldwide (89 deaths per 100 000 inhabitants in 2017), and violence is increasingly hunger-related.

Despite a large return movement, Venezuela furthermore still hosts 117 000 Colombian refugees, whose conditions have become extremely precarious. According to UNHCR at least 2.5 million Venezuelans have left the country since 2014, though other sources⁴ estimate that

⁴ RET Venezuela

this figure could exceed 4 million. Between January 2014 and August 2018, more than 299 000 Venezuelans applied for asylum worldwide; over 137 220 asylum claims were filed in 2018 alone. Peru has become the first country of asylum for Venezuelans, with 126 997 applications. Additionally, over 585 996 Venezuelans benefit from alternative protection arrangements since 2014, mostly in Latin American countries. However, UNHCR estimates that at least 60% of Venezuelans remain in an irregular situation.

DG ECHO's IAF 2018 identifies high needs in Venezuela, with a strongly deteriorating trend in relation to the socio-economic crisis, whose prominence has been overshadowing the humanitarian dimension. The vulnerability of the affected population is assessed to be high.

Colombia

In the months following the historic peace deal between the Colombian Government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) of 24 November 2016, which put an end to a 50-year long internal conflict, an overall positive progress in the implementation of the agreement was observed, despite numerous challenges. However, since mid-2017, violence by other armed groups battling for territorial control, as well as by FARC dissidence, has progressively multiplied, affecting a growing number of areas across the country, particularly on the Pacific coast and in the North-Eastern regions.

Violence against civilians and related population displacement has started to grow again in significant numbers during the first half of 2018, when armed actions have increased by 47% compared to the same period in 2017. According to OCHA, mass displacement as of August 2018 (21 229 people) has increased by 113% compared to the same period in 2017, while the number of people affected by confinement or restrictions on mobility and access to basic services has risen by 667% (945 000 people as of August 2018). Limited access to education has impacted over 45 000 children in 2018 and child recruitment is rapidly growing. The number of victims of anti-personnel mines has also doubled in the first half of 2018 compared to the whole 2017. The influx of Colombian refugees to Ecuador has re-started in significant numbers, due to extreme violence in the south of Nariño and Putumayo departments, according to UNHCR. In this deteriorating context, humanitarian needs are expected to increase, with humanitarian access and respect for International Humanitarian Law becoming more challenging in some areas. In view of the expectations raised by the peace deal among local communities, the lack of response to basic needs at this critical juncture affects negatively the implementation of the agreement.

In addition to ongoing violence, Colombia is highly hazard-prone and the impact of disasters is largely borne by conflict-affected municipalities, where vulnerabilities are higher and access by local and national emergency response mechanisms is limited. This is the case of urban slums hosting large numbers of IDPs in precarious conditions and of flood-affected rural communities in the Pacific region.

Furthermore, the escalation of the socio-economic and security crisis in Venezuela has been pushing increasing numbers of people to flee to Colombia, escaping insecurity and/or looking for basic assistance. According to Colombia Migration Officials, Venezuelan migrants in Colombia have reached one million over the last 15 months, with arrivals expected to continue. Furthermore, UNHCR estimates that about 40% of Colombian refugees in Venezuela have been forced to return, facing protection threats. Due to the deteriorating situation, larger numbers of people are expected to cross the border in 2019, putting Colombia's reception capacities under severe strain. Since February 2018, the Colombian government has called repeatedly for international assistance to deal with the migration crisis, which is overwhelming the national response capacities.

DG ECHO's Integrated Analysis Framework (IAF) 2018 identifies high humanitarian needs in Colombia, with a deteriorating (or strongly deteriorating, as concerns the migration crisis) trend. The vulnerability of the population affected by the multifaceted crisis is assessed to be high,

combined with high exposure to hazards. Colombia is included in DG ECHO's Forgotten Crisis Assessment Index.

Central America

Violence exerted by organised armed groups in El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala, which form the Northern Triangle of Central America (NTCA), as well as in several states of Mexico is causing death-rates and humanitarian needs of an identical nature and on a similar scale to those registered in conflict areas around the world⁵. This includes forced displacement, confinement, restrictions of access to basic services (health, education) for entire communities, shrinking humanitarian space, and large-scale unmet protection needs. By early 2018, more than 294 000 asylum seekers and refugees from the North of Central America were registered globally, which represents an increase by 58 % compared to the previous year, and sixteen times higher than at the end of 2011. However, this figure underrepresents the reality, as the crisis has remained unacknowledged until very recently and refugee registration has been lagging behind.

Central American countries, particularly Guatemala and Honduras, have furthermore endured successive climate shocks over the last 5 years, exacerbated by El Niño. Drought and the coffee rust plague have heavily affected the most vulnerable populations. In 2016-18 the region has recorded one of the strongest droughts in its recent history, causing average crop losses exceeding 75% in Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. After years of failed food and cash crop productions, with the majority of small scale farmers having lost between 75% and 100% of their yields, and without stocks for the hunger season, the food security situation of poor households who depend on subsistence farming or casual labour is critical. In 2019, up to 1.5 million people, mainly living in the Dry Corridor in Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador and Nicaragua, are estimated to be acutely food insecure⁶. The combination of high exposure to hazards, high levels of poverty and extreme levels of violence is eroding the coping capacities of local populations and administrations, and leading to recurrent emergency situations. Climate change and rapid unplanned urbanisation further exacerbate vulnerability.

DG ECHO's 2018 IAF identifies high humanitarian needs in Central America in relation to organised violence (a forgotten crisis according to DG ECHO's Forgotten Crisis Assessment Index) and to natural events. The vulnerability of the affected population is assessed to be very high, notably in Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, as well as in Nicaragua, where the food crisis is further compounded by the effects of the on-going social crisis.

Haiti

In response to the severe deterioration of the food security situation, the EU has mobilised a significant humanitarian envelope in 2018 in the framework of its integrated humanitarian and development intervention strategy in the country. These operations will be continued, and may be adjusted in 2019 according to the evolution of the crisis, based on the emerging needs.

The crisis is categorised as forgotten according to DG ECHO's 2018 Forgotten Crisis Assessment. The country's deep structural fragility and poverty, combined with permanent exposure to natural hazards and epidemics, render Haiti's population highly vulnerable to shocks and risks. Drought-related food insecurity continues, with an estimated 1.3 million people requiring urgent food assistance⁷.

⁵ For instance, based on latest data, in 2016 El Salvador had a homicide rate of 81.2/100 000 people, compared to Yemen (36/100 000), and Iraq (18.3/100 000) in the same year. Source: UNODC.

⁶ Food Assistance Outlook Brief - Fews Net - August 2018

⁷ Source: OCHA, 8 August 2018.

Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience (DRR)

The Latin America and Caribbean region is exposed to multiple natural hazards: volcanoes, earthquakes, droughts, floods, landslides, and yearly cycles of major tropical storms and hurricanes, partly due to global warming. Approximately three-quarters of the population live in at-risk areas, and one-third live in areas highly exposed to hazards.

Recurrent natural hazards have a high human and economic cost, impacting societies that have significant inequalities⁸ and are highly urbanized (over 80% of the region's population lives in urban areas), creating specific vulnerability areas prone to major impact. Peru, Colombia and Venezuela suffered extensive flooding in 2017 and 2018. Volcanic eruptions in Guatemala and earthquake in El Salvador required humanitarian response in 2018. The Caribbean region experienced severe drought over the past four years and has been stricken in 2017 by powerful extraordinary hurricanes with unprecedented impacts. The region is also exposed to epidemics such as cholera, malaria and measles. Relatively good levels of human and economic development mask large pockets of extreme poverty leading to exclusion, vulnerability and low coping capacities. Countries at risk of socioeconomic decline present growing levels of vulnerability.

Throughout the region, there is an increasing awareness of the importance of DRR, with new policies, laws and regulations being developed in most countries. However, implementation of approved policies and laws is still lacking. National governments have increased their ability to respond to small and localised events, but quality and coverage of the emergency assistance is still far from satisfactory. Recent large events (Hurricanes Matthew, Irma and Maria, Ecuador earthquake, El Niño-related drought and flooding, Volcán de Fuego eruption), provided evidence of the difficulties authorities face to adequately prepare for and quickly respond to disasters entailing large humanitarian needs; such events demonstrated gaps in local and national risk management capacities, along with very limited ability of governments to engage in large-scale, equitable rehabilitation efforts. Also, the recurrent cumulative impact of small scale disasters in the region is considerable and hampers community resilience.

Institutions involved in DRR/disaster management have insufficient technical capacities and/or resources for risk management and to respond effectively to natural and man-made hazards and associated needs. Consequently risk management, or preparedness, is not systematically integrated within Government planning, social services, economic or societal functioning. This is even more so in Haiti (the most disaster-prone country in the region) where a Civil Protection Directorate exists to co-ordinate risk management but it remains highly dependent on external funding, and an institutional and legal framework is lacking due to the absence of a national law on Disaster Risk Management. Disaster management capacities vary across the region.

All the countries retained in this HIP rank among the most natural hazard-prone in the world.

2. HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

1) People in need of humanitarian assistance

Venezuela

Growing numbers of people are affected by the socio-economic consequences of the ongoing crisis. Malnutrition rates highlight a critical and worsening situation, aggravated by problems

⁸ World Economic Forum, Davos 2016: *"For evidence of the destructive impact that extreme inequality has on sustainable patterns of growth and social cohesion, we need look no further than Latin America and the Caribbean [...]. Latin America remains the most unequal region in the world. In 2014 the richest 10% of people in Latin America had amassed 71% of the region's wealth"*. Cf. <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/01/inequality-is-getting-worse-in-latin-america-here-s-how-to-fix-it/>

related to access to health, education, water, sanitation, and rampant insecurity. 78% of the families have been dismembered for survival reasons, and 76% of them have sold their belongings to obtain food⁹. Lack of opportunities and of coping capacities force people to move to border areas, where illicit economic activities and the possibility to cross the border are pull factors. 47% of the families declare having at least one member who migrated. The consequences of migration on family members who stay behind are often critical. Children and elderly are left unattended and in extreme need, and they are thus specifically vulnerable.

The situation is particularly critical in urban slums with a high concentration of vulnerable people without coping capacities, in remote areas without access to basic services, often inhabited by indigenous people, as well as in border regions with massive concentration of IDPs, either in transit or precariously settled, highly exposed to protection risks.

Venezuelans are furthermore exposed to a variety of natural hazards: extensive river flooding, for instance, hit border areas with Colombia in July-August 2018, causing damage and needs which required external assistance.

Colombia

Out of 49.3 million inhabitants (2017), 16.9 million live in violence-affected areas. Over 4.9 million people are currently in need of humanitarian assistance in Colombia. This figure includes 487 129 new IDPs reported by OCHA¹⁰ between 2015 and 2017, 2 million host communities, 1.7 million people affected by natural disasters and 700 000 Venezuelans with a vocation to stay. IDPs as well as vulnerable host populations are in urgent need of protection and humanitarian assistance to cope with their situation, especially in areas where the State and local institutions do not have the capacity to respond. Confined communities, in particular Afro-Colombian and indigenous populations suffering from mobility restrictions imposed by armed groups are also among the most vulnerable and under-assisted. Children and youth are specifically vulnerable and prone to forced recruitment, also linked to forced school drop-out in confinement situations. The influx of people from Venezuela adds to the already complex situation. Many of them live in precarious conditions close to the border, often in conflict-affected areas. A study carried out by IOM found that over one third of the 47 settlements of Venezuelans close to the border did not have access to proper sanitation facilities, more than 50% did not have access to medical services and 36% of children did not have access to education. Many of these people are in need of protection, either because they are returning Colombian refugees, or because they arrive into areas controlled by illegal armed groups, who are increasingly active in border areas, or because they have been victims of violence in Venezuela.

Geographical priorities might evolve with the developments related to the implementation of the peace agreement in Colombia and the evolution of the crisis in Venezuela, the current focus being on the Pacific region, the North of the country, as well as on border areas with Venezuela.

Central America

At least 487 000 people¹¹ are internally displaced (IDPs) as a consequence of organised violence in the three most violent countries in the region (Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador). According to UNHCR¹² by June 2018 the population of concern in these countries consisted of at least 294 000 refugees and asylum-seekers, with over 1 million deportees in the last 5 years and over 45 900 new applications only in the period January-June 2017. Children and women are

⁹ Source: Caritas.

¹⁰ Source: HNO 2018

https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/hno_2018_en_0.pdf

¹¹ Source: IDMC - <http://www.internal-displacement.org/database/displacement-data>

¹² Source: UNHCR - <http://reporting.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/UNHCR%20MIRPS%20Update%20-%20June%202018.pdf>

the most vulnerable groups affected by this crisis. Schools are crucial recruiting centres for armed groups, with students and teachers subject to threats and extortion, which leads to increasingly high drop-out rates and closing of school facilities. In 2017 in El Salvador, the Ministry of Education registered the presence of gang members in more than 1 400 education facilities and 1 712 cases of threats against teachers. In Honduras (Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula) in 2015/2016, an average of 1 child per household was out of school. By 2017, the average was 1.3 per household. In Nicaragua, since 19 April 2018 when violence erupted, some 323 people have been killed (23 children), hundreds have been wounded and critical protection needs are unmet¹³.

According to FEWSNET¹⁴, the number of people in IPC 3 and above in need of food assistance in Guatemala will range from 0.5 to 1 million, and in Honduras from 0.1 to 0.5 million. In El Salvador, the most vulnerable population is projected to remain in IPC 2 (no data for Nicaragua are available). Geographical priorities for Central America will include: for food insecurity, areas with populations in IPC3 and above; for situations of violence, all NTCA countries, Nicaragua and Mexico; for disaster preparedness, focus will be on regional actions combined with strategic actions at national level.

Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience (DRR)

The countries mentioned in section 1 of this HIP are all disaster-prone. Populations most affected by disasters are usually the poorest and most vulnerable, with no or very limited access to basic services such as water, sanitation and health infrastructure. The urban poor are particularly vulnerable to natural disasters. This population's vulnerability tends to increase after each event, rendering them in need of humanitarian assistance. Potential beneficiaries are vulnerable and at risk communities including marginalized ethnic groups living in rural or urban areas and institutions with responsibilities in disaster management.

In the Caribbean, Haiti remains among the top three countries most affected by extreme events in the last two decades¹⁵ and the Caribbean Disaster Management Agency (CDEMA) refers to the region as the second most hazard-prone in the world over the last decade, suffering annual losses estimated at USD 3 billion¹⁶.

2) Description of the most acute humanitarian needs

Venezuela

Nutritional monitoring needs to be addressed in parallel with health and nutritional support to the most vulnerable groups, notably pregnant women, under-five children and elderly people. Complementary multi-sectoral actions aiming to prevent a further deterioration of the living conditions of the affected populations may also be required, including access to health services, water, sanitation and hygiene to reduce the main causes of morbidity and malnutrition. Access to education and protective spaces for children is also needed.

The provision of protection, information and assistance to IDPs and refugees in third countries needs to be focused on the most vulnerable people and adapted to the specific cases identified.

¹³ Source: <https://www.elnuevodiario.com.ni/nacionales/472999-cifras-fallecidos-nicaragua-inconsistentes/>

¹⁴ Food Assistance Outlook Brief – August 2018

¹⁵ Global Climate Risk Index 2018

¹⁶ CRIS - The Caribbean Risk Information System

Colombia

Conflict victims and populations living under the threat of armed violence require protection as first priority. Other needs (shelter, WASH, education, health, food and NFIs) are the consequence of restrictions in mobility and in access to basic services and livelihoods caused by the presence of armed actors and of unexploded ordnances or mines. Recent IDPs are often traumatised, and their basic needs remain mostly unmet by local authorities in the most critical phase of the displacement. Protection in terms of psychosocial and legal support, along with assistance to cover their basic needs is the priority in this case, taking into account specific vulnerabilities linked to gender, age and diversity. Women are more exposed to sexual violence, single-headed families suffer more severely the consequences of displacement, and children and youth are prone to forced recruitment. Afro-Colombians and indigenous people are by far the main ethnic groups affected by the conflict (52% and 45% respectively live in conflict-affected areas). The needs of the most vulnerable people fleeing Venezuela include food and livelihood support, health assistance and protection. In the context of the changing internal dynamics linked to the peace agreement and with the unfolding regional effects of the crisis in Venezuela, there is an increased need for humanitarian coordination and advocacy, systematic and timely needs assessments, data collection, analysis, presentation and dissemination.

Central America

People internally displaced due to armed actors' activities and confined communities require protection as first priority, along with basic, tailored assistance (health, WASH, shelter, NFIs) to meet their immediate needs, particularly in the first phase of displacement, with specific attention to women and children who are the most exposed to threats and GBV.

Food assistance, livelihood recovery and resilience-strengthening measures are needed by vulnerable communities affected by protracted drought, where response by local governments is insufficient and there is limited external support. Nutritional surveillance and support, generation and dissemination of information and preparedness capacities of national institutions and humanitarian actors need also to be strengthened to prevent further deterioration of livelihoods and to minimise the impact of external shocks.

Access to vulnerable groups and affected areas is often limited due to pervasive violence and presence/control of gangs and non-state armed groups; protection considerations are therefore to be mainstreamed in all actions.

Disaster risk reduction, resilience and self-reliance

DG ECHO's DRR and resilience approaches focus on where they can have maximum added value and effect: preparedness for response and early action.

Support is needed for communities vulnerable to adverse events as well as for local institutions to increase their resilience and enhance their preparedness to natural and man-made hazards, and to translate national and regional strategies into actions on the ground.

In the Caribbean, including Haiti, timely response, promoting knowledge, evaluation of risk and its dissemination, reduction of risk factors, improvement of alert mechanisms as well as strengthening capacities to respond to medium-large scale disasters, and strengthening regional collaboration in case of disasters are the priorities. ECHO has identified critical gaps and opportunities to strengthen the systems in place and to deliver on the ground.

As far as urban risk is concerned, there is a need to focus on consolidating models, since vulnerabilities and fragility in urban settings are very high in terms of housing conditions and water systems. Attention must be paid to coastal areas. Vulnerable people are to be included in a more systematic way, and the private sector must be integrated. Logistics and pre-positioning of

stocks is an issue in the Caribbean, including Haiti, and will require attention, notably if a major disaster occurs.

The strong intensification of population movements in the region triggered by economic and political crises is affecting many countries whose institutions, civil society and emergency response mechanisms have been overwhelmed by a phenomenon not included in previous risk analyses. In the same way, risks linked to protection are not systematically integrated in preparedness and response mechanisms to emergencies. These gaps need to be addressed.

3. HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

1) National / local response and involvement

Venezuela

Basic food items are sold at subsidized prices through local provision and production committees (*Comités Locales de Abastecimiento y Producción - CLAP*). The distribution of subsidised food supplies, managed by the military, is often irregular. 76% of households report not receiving their CLAP boxes regularly. This situation particularly affects people living outside Caracas and vulnerable groups who do not have sufficient purchasing capacity.

Colombia

Colombia has a legal and institutional framework for assisting the victims of the conflict, currently organized under Law 1448 of 2011, known as the Victims' and Land Restitution Law. In addition to recognising the internal armed conflict with guerrilla forces, since early 2016 the Government also recognises the main PDAGs as Organized Armed Groups, to which IHL is applicable. The same Law establishes the responsibilities of the State and of local authorities in the provision of humanitarian aid to the victims of the conflict. Since 2012, the main institution in charge is the National Unit for the Assistance to Victims (UARIV), mandated to respond when municipal capacities are overwhelmed. Municipalities bear the primary responsibility to assist the victims, but generally lack capacities and a sound management of their limited resources. The amount of assistance provided by municipal and departmental authorities is unreported and represents a major information gap in Colombia. Local and national institutions frequently lack access to areas controlled by non-state armed groups, where only humanitarian organisations are able to assist the communities. According to UARIV, more than 70% of the displaced population since 1985 has never received any sort of immediate assistance at the moment of displacement. After the signature of the peace agreement, national resources have been concentrating on peace building and rural development in stabilised areas, where State access is easier. In addition, due to cuts in the State budget, public resources assigned to cater for humanitarian needs have been decreasing in areas exposed to new, acute violence, resulting in larger numbers of victims lacking public assistance.

Central America

While the need to respond to natural disasters and food insecurity is well understood by local and national authorities and there is willingness to do so, response capacities remain limited. In September 2018 the Governments of Guatemala and El Salvador announced national response programmes to the major crop losses recorded, for which emergency decrees were issued. However national response programmes have so far failed to cover targets and respect timings. Honduras has also reported major crops losses, but its national response to food insecurity remains difficult to activate.

Understanding the need to respond to the humanitarian consequences of pervasive violence and making available adequate and effective means to respond are less evident processes, even if some national authorities have lately shown signs of openness. Forced displacement and lack of protection for the victims of violence are not recognised as an issue, except in Honduras and, partially, in El Salvador. State response to humanitarian and protection needs in Nicaragua is virtually non-existent. Dire access conditions to populations in need limit in all cases the provision of assistance and of basic services, also due to recent cuts in national budgets in critical sectors such as health, education and social services. Protection mechanisms for the most vulnerable groups are insufficient and there are limited resources and capacity for implementation. Further institutional strengthening is needed.

At regional level, the Security Strategy of the Central American Integration System (SICA) is being developed and implemented, aiming at increasing security and prevention of violence.

Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience (DRR)

The situation is highly diverse depending on the country. In general there is increasing awareness of the importance of DRR in the region, with new policies, laws and regulations being developed in most countries. But significant state budget reductions since 2015 have had a great impact on the countries' ability to prioritize DRR activities, including the implementation of recently approved policies and laws. Furthermore, even in countries with well-established national structures for disaster response and preparedness, the severity of events often overwhelm the capacities and highlights gaps; in particular it shows the difficulties to provide humanitarian assistance to the most affected populations in marginalized areas, in quantity and quality, due to limited assessment capacities, logistical coverage, weakness of operational institutions and changes in leadership. In this context where inequality is one of the highest in the world, local communities in disaster prone areas are still exposed to severe impacts of natural hazards. Institutions involved in DRR have insufficient technical capacities (know-how) and/or resources, and do not receive adequate support from their governments. In Haiti the Civil Protection Directorate (DPC) has been making some progress despite its funding constraints, but DPC coordination with other Haitian institutions linked to disaster and risk management remains limited. In all countries there is an important window of opportunity to strengthen institutional and community resilience with actions implemented shortly after disaster events, so DG ECHO will carefully analyse proposals that look at improving both institutional and community resilience focusing on specific areas recently affected by an emergency, whatever the trigger, and where critical gaps have been identified.

DG ECHO has been supporting institutionalisation of laws, regulations, protocols, and mechanisms at national level with successful results, but the implementation of these new tools is still far from sufficient at local level. As DG ECHO's support cannot be widely used to give universal access to the implementation of those tools, priority will be given to actions that sustainably strengthen systems to better, the most vulnerable populations of rural, urban and suburban communities in disaster prone areas, with the involvement and ownership of the institutions mandated in DRR and the strong participation of the private sector and organized civil society groups. Priority will be given to empowering those communities with the highest risk indicators and the lowest coping capacities, which are most exposed to natural events, and to institutions with responsibilities for DRR in need of technical support. Recently affected areas and populations, as well as new areas and populations will be targeted, although in some cases consolidation of previous actions may be considered in order to facilitate handover processes.

At regional level in the Caribbean, capacities have increased and a CARICOM-endorsed CDM strategy exists and is supported by all stakeholders. There is scope for the CDEMA regional response mechanism to be further strengthened and exchanges between countries need to be continuously fostered, e.g. between Cuba, Haiti, Dominican Republic and the rest of the region, including EU Member States present in the Caribbean.

At regional level, in South America, supporting multinational bodies to exchange and disseminate national and local good practices can be envisioned; possible areas of cooperation with the EU Civil Protection Mechanism will be further explored.

In Central America, where high exposure to hazards compounded by high levels of poverty and high levels of violence lead to very high vulnerability, despite DRR systems established up to local level, response skills remain weak and need further support. A regional DRR framework has been established (CEPREDENAC and the Central American Policy for Comprehensive Disaster Risk Management - PCGIR), which however remains dependent on the willingness of member states. Presently, disasters of a regional dimension still have a national response.

Recent programmes and initiatives supported by international grants in the region have put the issue of drought risk management and drought resilience on the agenda of national institutions, municipalities and regional organizations. While national DRR systems of El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua have the basis for establishing drought Early Warning Systems, these processes need to be further institutionalised and strengthened.

2) International Humanitarian Response

In Colombia, the main planning tool is the Humanitarian Response Plan developed through the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) under the guidance of OCHA and with the contribution of the main humanitarian stakeholders in the country. The general trend is a decrease in humanitarian funding to Colombia despite persistent needs. According to the "Who's doing What Where" (4W) information system, in August 2018 the international community had contributed with USD 34 million to the humanitarian response in Colombia reaching barely 21 % of the amount required (USD 156.5 million). Main humanitarian donors are USA, Norway, Canada, Switzerland, Spain, Sweden and Germany. DG ECHO chairs and leads the Humanitarian Donors Group since 2014. As concerns Venezuelan migrants and refugees in Colombia, only 17% of the HCT plan was covered (USD 19 million provided, out of the USD 102.4 million requested).

With regards to Central America, a humanitarian response plan to the food security situation was implemented in Guatemala and Honduras in 2016 (USD 101 million requested, only 21% covered). In 2017 USAID allocated USD 6 million for food security in Guatemala. In 2018 OCHA Financial Tracking System (FTS) registers no significant funding besides the response to the Volcano emergency in Guatemala (USD 1.6 million from CERF and others) and the ongoing DG ECHO response in Central America. Efforts are made to respond to the ongoing food insecurity crisis and to better address the impacts of others situations of violence. Due to the lack of capacities and of resources, the overall response level is however insufficient compared to the needs, in a region where the severity of both crises is high. International humanitarian funding inside Venezuela is rather limited and little information is available.

Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience (DRR)

In April 2016, the World Bank, with the support of the European Commission, signed a EUR 14 million agreement to be implemented by the Multi-Donor Trust Fund (MDTF) to facilitate access to low cost catastrophe risk insurance for the governments of Central American countries and the Dominican Republic. This contribution, lately increased by EUR 13.7 million¹⁷, supports the countries to become members of the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF SPC). Other main donors in the Caribbean are DFID, Canada, AECID, USAID/OFDA, and the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB). The Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), through

¹⁷ Regional Resilience Facility Envelope B avec WB (11th EDF), component "Expanding financial protection against disasters in the Caribbean" (EUR 13.775 million)

its Basic Needs Trust Fund (BNTF) supports sustainable asset building and livelihood strategies for a 4–year term.

In South America, the level of financing for DRR by international donors has been decreasing in recent years. There are still some initiatives funded by COSUDE (Swiss cooperation), OFDA and the IADB in some countries, but most generally, donors are geared to fund reconstruction processes through loans and credits, whose acceptance by national governments depend on their previous level of indebtedness, their capacity to reimburse, and their own availability of funds for such initiatives. Non-traditional donors like China have been providing funds and goods for disaster response.

3) Constraints and DG ECHO response capacity

Due to its proximity to the field through its field offices, DG ECHO has unique knowledge of the context and privileged access and acceptance, due to longstanding presence and numerous partners in the region, resulting in high quality response capacity. In conflict areas, recognition and acceptance by all parties and access are major assets, enabling humanitarian organisations to reach beneficiaries in remote and sensitive locations, out of the range of government aid. The absorption capacity of partners, in terms of funding and operational capacity, is high, including where it has been more recently developed. Furthermore, partners usually work with local implementing partners with a solid collaboration history, further facilitating access and acceptance. Presence through DRR activities also facilitates access, contextual knowledge and work with institutions, which expedites response in new disasters.

In Colombia, constraints are related to new armed groups and FARC dissidence occupying territories, which are restricting the humanitarian space in some areas (e.g. Pacific Region, Catatumbo, Guaviare, Meta and Caquetá). Security is an issue in conflict zones, where access may be problematic, as well as along borders and in rural areas and marginal urban zones, with the potential for further deterioration. Logistical constraints and remoteness of conflict-affected areas can increase the cost of operations mainly where there is no road access, which is often the case. In Venezuela, access constraints might also hamper some interventions.

In Central America, violence and social unrest could disrupt or complicate access for humanitarian partners. Some areas remain off-limits, such as ultra-violent urban neighbourhoods, cities or provinces controlled by armed groups or *maras*. Strict security protocols are necessary for staff and visitors alike.

In the Caribbean, possible social and/or political instability could disrupt projects and result in temporary suspensions of activities. Possible tensions between Haiti and the Dominican Republic could affect the implementation capacities of partners and hamper access to the affected populations, with increased security risks.

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

Venezuela

The envisaged response will include multi-sectoral actions addressing the most pressing needs of the affected population, with focus on most vulnerable groups (under-five children, pregnant and lactating mothers, elderly, indigenous groups), and specific attention to health, WASH, education, protection and nutritional needs.

The assistance to refugees and internally displaced people will focus on the most vulnerable cases and tailored to the different needs identified, including the provision of information and legal support, emergency medical services, protection (specifically against gender violence and human trafficking), education, shelter, NFIs and food assistance.

Colombia

Focus will be on responding to urgent unmet humanitarian needs of vulnerable populations affected by armed violence, notably recently displaced people and secluded communities, focusing on areas where national authorities are unable to address the needs and where no development actions are feasible at present. Assistance and protection to Colombian refugees in neighbouring countries will also be supported. Actions will aim to reinforce resilience and local capacities to assist the victims, as well as at opening access to conflict affected areas for development actors and public institutions. DRR will be integrated when possible and pertinent. Advocacy and coordination will be pursued, to articulate efforts and raise awareness, also regarding the victims' right to Government assistance. Complementarity and articulation between partners is encouraged in order to provide integral and comprehensive responses. Coordination, information management and monitoring of the humanitarian situation will be essential in the current context (forgotten crisis with evolving and less visible humanitarian needs). Complementarity and synergies with other funding instruments will be sought, with a view to properly articulate EU efforts and mainstreaming resilience in all post-conflict programmed actions. The provision of humanitarian assistance and protection to victims of natural disasters and in response to the influx of people from Venezuela, when not covered by national or local authorities, will be considered based on assessed needs and identified gaps in national assistance. Humanitarian assistance to conflict-affected people in Colombia will be continuously reviewed in the light of developments concerning the implementation of the peace agreement and the evolution of the violence perpetrated by armed groups, and crisis modifiers will be integrated as appropriate in operational designs. Linkages between humanitarian initiatives with development and resilience programmes in conflict-torn areas will continue to be pursued.

Central America

The envisaged response will include: a) Addressing the critical needs of the most vulnerable victims of organised violence and social unrest, notably women and children, through protection and relief assistance, information gathering and humanitarian advocacy; b) food assistance and short- to medium-term livelihood recovery and protection, replicating and/or adapting past successful initiatives in reducing vulnerability to food insecurity after a shock, while helping to build resilience; c) Multi-sectoral approaches incorporating DRR will also be supported. Special attention will be given to actions with synergies with ongoing humanitarian and development initiatives for food security, nutrition and livelihoods. All actions will focus on response to most acute humanitarian needs, aiming to meet critical needs of the most vulnerable, improve information gathering and data analysis to maximize the impact of humanitarian assistance. The implementation of the EU response to the humanitarian needs generated by civil unrest in Nicaragua, started in 2018, will continue in 2019, and may be adjusted to new needs if necessary.

Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience (DRR)

DG ECHO's support envisages assisting regional and national authorities in building local preparedness and response capacities. Support is envisaged in line with regional strategies, translating them into action on the ground. Wherever possible, ECHO-supported actions will focus on gaps identified as a result of the lessons learned from recent disasters, un-addressed risk, allowing to further progress on ECHO/DEVCO joint DRR strategies in the region.

In general, DP interventions in the LAC region will be geared towards:

a) Development of competences for early action and locally owned rapid response mechanisms, integrating shock responsiveness, early recovery and protection approach.

b) Consolidation of the integration of private sector in DP mechanisms, including the creation of public – private partnerships for DP and early action.

c) Support of regional coordination in terms integration into the DP sector of post-crisis displacements (migrants/IDPs), protection, private sector, public forces, logistic responsiveness and mutual assistance, facilitation of collaboration with UCPM mechanisms.

The overall aim of DRR action in the LAC region is to create better prepared communities and local, national and regional institutions to face hazard and risks, thus reducing mortality and protecting, to the extent possible, the assets and livelihoods of the most vulnerable. "Crisis modifiers" will be considered in DP activities to allow shifting to "emergency-type" interventions if needed, when possible, and where it can be effective and bring added value.

Actions will link with EU funding when possible, as well as global initiatives such as Resilient Cities, Safe Schools when pertinent, and in general with the Sendai Framework.

Detailed guidance on sectors and geographical zones is provided in the Technical Annex.

4. NEXUS, COORDINATION AND TRANSITION

1) Other DG ECHO interventions

The 2018 HIP for Latin America and the Caribbean (initial amount EUR 20.5 million) focused on response to the violence (EUR 2.5 million) and to the food crisis (EUR 1 million) in Central America; on addressing the most urgent humanitarian needs of conflict-affected people in Colombia (EUR 5 million) and on disaster preparedness interventions in South America (EUR 4 million), Central America (EUR 3 million), Haiti (EUR 3 million) and the Caribbean (EUR 2 million), integrating specific actions to promote resilience in food security and DRR actions adapted to violent contexts. Education in emergencies was also supported. Additional amounts were released to address the humanitarian consequences of the earthquake in Mexico (EUR 0.4 million), of the food crisis in Haiti (EUR 5 million), and of the situation in Venezuela (EUR 5 million) and in Colombia (EUR 2 million). EUR 0.9 million were allocated from the Small Scale Response (SSR) instrument for the volcano eruption in Guatemala (EUR 0.3 million), for emergency health in Nicaragua (EUR 0.3 million) and for floods response in Venezuela (EUR 0.3 million). A total of EUR 363 447 was allocated for actions in the LAC region from DG ECHO contribution to the IFRC Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF).

2) Other concomitant EU interventions

EUROCLIMA+ provides an EU contribution of EUR 80 million to support environmentally sustainable and climate-resilient development in 18 Latin American countries¹⁸. It contributes to implement the legal, institutional and financial mechanisms and to strengthen national capacities to make the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to the Paris Agreement achievable. EUROCLIMA+ implements projects in sectors potentially affected by climate change or which can contribute to climate mitigation (DRRM, Forests, Biodiversity and Ecosystems, Urban Mobility, Renewable energy, Resilient food production, and Water management in urban areas).

¹⁸Argentina, Bolivia, Brasil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, México, Nicaragua, Panamá, Paraguay, Perú, Uruguay and Venezuela

Venezuela

Different EU instruments are complementing DG ECHO's actions. In Brazil and Colombia the IcSP provides support to local institutions to deal with the influx of people from Venezuela and reduce xenophobia. The PROACT initiative supports the resilience of communities in areas where ECHO partners provide relief assistance.

As of September 2018, the EU has made available a total package of EUR 35.1 million ("Venezuela Compact") to address the consequences of the Venezuela crisis, including its regional dimension.

Colombia

The EU is supporting the peace process through an EU Trust Fund endowed with EUR 96.4 million, which provides the opportunity to build on the capacities and trust created by humanitarian actors in some areas as a baseline for longer-term development initiatives. The EUTF is due to integrate actions linking humanitarian aid with rehabilitation, development aid and resilience building (humanitarian aid per se being outside its scope).

In addition to the EUTF, the EU is also contributing EUR 67 million over the period 2014-2017 to support local sustainable development (EUR 21 million in budget support) with the Ministry of Environment and regional competitiveness (EUR 30.8 million in budget support) with the Ministry of Commerce. A third programme (FORPAZ, EUR 11 million) on local governance is being implemented through delegated cooperation. This "phasing-out" allocation has just been extended with the newly adopted MIP 2018-2020, for another EUR 60 million.

Some of these initiatives have specifically addressed the nexus between humanitarian operations, peace building and development.

Central America

Several LRRD options are under discussion as concerns food insecurity and pervasive organised violence in Central America, linking with existing EU programmes in the region. Three regional EU-funded initiatives (CCRIF, EUR 14 million; PROCAGICA, EUR 15 million; PROGRESAN-SICA, EUR 5 million) provide targeted support related to natural disasters management, resilience-building and food security. In Honduras, EUROSAN has allocated EUR 100 million under the programme 2014-2020 for three interventions related to food and nutrition security. In Nicaragua the EU has allocated EUR 2.5 Million through the IcSP (Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace) to address the human rights situation, and is furthermore supporting small and medium farmers and climate change adaptation related to food security through two initiatives worth EUR 20 million each. In Guatemala, besides the already existing synergies with DEVCO's Thematic Funding lines, concrete nexus options are being explored under the MIP for food security and natural disaster response. The EU is currently providing a EUR 21.1 million contribution for poverty reduction in rural areas ("Sustainability of Smallholder Agriculture"). The support given by DG ECHO to DRR institutionalisation processes at regional and national level, and the continuous dialogue with development stakeholders and donors create conditions for DG ECHO-supported DRR initiatives to influence and be incorporated into development programmes. DRR is already integrated in the regional 2014–2020 DCI strategy, a first LRRD step in the region on DRR. Work is ongoing for the integration of drought risk reduction into food security development programmes. Humanitarian and development stakeholders are increasingly sensitised on the need to integrate the humanitarian effects of organised violence in their respective strategies; this favours the adaptation of DRR tools to address context-specific issues linked to insecurity.

Caribbean

The 11th EDF has allocated a total of EUR 61.5 million for the region in Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change, and EUR 20 million has been allocated under the ACP-EU initiative for Natural Disaster Risk Management in the Caribbean Forum (CARIFORUM) (2014-2020) to support the regional Caribbean Disaster Management strategy implemented jointly by CDEMA and Caribbean Development Bank. Strong synergies exist between ECHO DRR actions and other EU-supported actions in the Caribbean, and joint strategies have been elaborated in the aftermath of recent disasters. Under the Global Climate Change Alliance (GCCA+) flagship initiative, EUR 5 million have been mobilised for Cuba in order to support climate adaptation projects and build long-term resilience capacity. Linkages exist with ECHO-supported projects.

South America

In terms of DRR, synergies are possible in several South American countries with the actions funded through EUROCLIMA+. In Peru, the DCI is contributing to the reconstruction process after the floods caused by El Niño” in 2017. Most of the projects, supported by DG DEVCO's Civil Society Organisations budget line (CSO) for a total of EUR 4 million, take over processes launched in the framework of DG ECHO-funded interventions during the humanitarian response to the floods.

3) Other donors availability

In the Caribbean, ECHO is in regular contact with other donors to create opportunities for LRRD. DFID and Canada contribute to the Caribbean Disaster Risk Reduction Fund managed by the Caribbean Development Bank. Canada is also funding a CAD 3 million project on safe hospitals. The World Bank has currently a USD 5 million project to strengthen weather and climate information and decision-support systems (HydroMet) 2015-2020. Three appeals were launched after the Hurricanes of 2017 and these were covered at 17% at regional level, 25% in Cuba, and 67% in Dominica.

In Colombia, there are three additional Trust Funds (UN, WB and IADB) to support the implementation of the peace agreement, on top of the EUTF for Colombia.

4) Exit scenarios

In the Caribbean, the exit strategy will mainly consist of progressive handover and advocacy towards authorities and development programmes, based on risk analysis, on coping capacities and on the existence of DRR actions funded by Governments, development actors/EU. This process coincides with the implementation of the Comprehensive Disaster Management Strategic Framework in the Caribbean and the Sendai Action framework, allowing aligning these efforts to regional and global priorities.

In South America, DG ECHO Disaster Preparedness programming has already phased out from Argentina, Brazil and Chile, and a progressive phase out from specific topics is being planned for all countries. Vulnerability to disasters together with existing gaps in Disaster Risk Management capacities makes it advisable to continue the process and consolidate the work done, specifically in Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, and Venezuela, focusing particularly on implementation of mechanisms and tools to enhance preparedness and resilience at local and community level, with the participation of local civil society organizations, with focus on areas recently affected by disasters and on most vulnerable populations. At institutional level, a Civil Protection approach to state response should be promoted, including through an increased technical support provided by the EUCPM, since most countries lack specific institutions prepared to respond with sufficient resources. The strategy and vision for the next

years is to uphold the interrelations between DP/DRR, emergency and resilience actions with participation from communities, local and national governments, incorporating institutionalization actions for civil society organizations, while including the private sector and the military personnel.

In Central America, a first step in the direction of an exit strategy from the DRR multi-hazard and regional approach is under implementation, namely through support to the institutionalisation of the DRR tools developed and to the harmonisation of the Sendai Framework (implemented in the regional legislation or in National Plans or Policies in Honduras, Nicaragua and Guatemala). This process should be completed by the incorporation of a protection approach and the adaptation of tools and methodologies to address context-specific issues linked to insecurity. Regarding other priorities, an exit strategy will be elaborated with the consolidation of successful models of locally owned rapid response mechanisms that integrate shock responsiveness and the protection approach along with formalised mechanisms of private sector participation in DP and agreements to collaborate with UCPM in logistic management and post-crisis situations. LRRD options are under discussion with the EU Delegations on food security in Guatemala and on pervasive violence in El Salvador and Nicaragua. The fragility of the region and the multiple crises unfolding at the moment, nevertheless, call for a continued presence and action by humanitarian actors in the foreseeable future.

The prevailing situation in Colombia and Venezuela does not warrant envisaging an exit strategy at this stage, considering the critical deterioration being observed, with a negative outlook in the medium term.