

## **HUMANITARIAN IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (HIP) SOUTH, EAST, SOUTH-EAST ASIA AND THE PACIFIC**

**The activities proposed hereafter are still subject to the adoption of the financing decision ECHO/WWD/BUD/2019/01000**

AMOUNT: EUR 40 000 000

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's<sup>1</sup> 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**

This HIP covers the response to man-made and natural disasters, as well as Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and resilience activities in South, East, South-East Asia and the Pacific<sup>2</sup>. This is a densely populated region, with over 2 billion people, prone to a variety of natural disasters, with rapid urbanisation rates and theatre of several conflicts and political volatility. Demographic pressure, poor urban planning, settlements in high-risk areas and reduced livelihood options lead to high vulnerability to more frequent, intense and unpredictable disasters. Due to rapid and unplanned urbanisation, urban communities are increasingly at risk.

In terms of humanitarian response, this HIP focuses on the Rohingya crisis (Myanmar and Bangladesh), as well as on the conflict in Mindanao (Philippines), with the potential to also respond to new disasters, including in other countries of the region. In these countries, particular attention will be given to Education in Emergency actions. With regard to Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and resilience, the focus will be on Bangladesh, Philippines, Nepal and regional or multi-country initiatives in South-East Asia. DRR and preparedness will also be systematically mainstreamed into humanitarian assistance, as appropriate in each situation.

### **Bangladesh**

With a population of 166 million, Bangladesh ranks 139 out of 188 in the 2016 UNDP Human Development Index and scores 6.0 in INFORM: 7.5/10 for hazards and exposure and 5.4/10 for vulnerability, with more than 80 per cent of the population potentially exposed to natural disasters. While DRR is increasingly becoming a priority at national level, efforts towards its effective mainstreaming at all levels and by all stakeholders, as well as incorporating proven effective solutions in a more systematic manner remain critical to prevent and reduce the impact of recurrent shocks.

---

<sup>1</sup> Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO)

<sup>2</sup> A total of 35 countries: South Asia (India, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Maldives, 6 countries), East and South-East Asia (10 Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations - ASEAN - plus Timor Leste, China, Mongolia and DPRK, 14 countries), Pacific region (15 countries, not counting EU Member States overseas territories).

In August 2017, following a brutal crack-down by the Myanmar military against the Rohingya population in Rakhine State, more than 700 000<sup>3</sup> Rohingya fled to Bangladesh seeking safety; many of them deeply traumatised by the atrocities they had undergone and witnessed. Cox's Bazaar, a district with some of the lowest economic and social indicators in Bangladesh and host to previous waves of Rohingya refugees, is now hosting about 900 000<sup>4</sup> refugees, with 1.3 million people (both refugee and host community) in need of humanitarian assistance.<sup>5</sup>

At the height of the refugee influx, spontaneous and makeshift settlements sprung up overnight across Cox's Bazaar, with the 'Mega-Camp' in Kutupalong hosting the largest caseload of over 600 000 Rohingya refugees. The camps and settlements were not only built in highly hazard prone (floods, landslides, cyclones) locations, but also refugees are exposed to a multitude of vulnerabilities due to risks of communicable diseases and outbreaks from congested living conditions, poor sanitation, fragile shelters and lack of key basic services.

The absence of a recognised legal status compounds to the vulnerability of refugees. Unable to access livelihood opportunities, civil documentation and justice, refugees are increasingly exposed to exploitation, detention and abuse.

The delivery of a robust humanitarian assistance is challenged by an unclear coordination and humanitarian leadership structure as well as by the constrained policy environment in Bangladesh such as: delays in visa issuance, lengthy processes and denials of Foreign Donation forms for project activities, i.e. FD6 and FD7, lengthy and unclear aid clearance/delivery processes and refusal by Bangladesh for longer term response plans to address the likely-protracted nature of the crisis.

The last twelve months also witnessed a number of agreements being concluded, such as the bilateral agreement between Bangladesh and Myanmar reached on the repatriation of Rohingya refugees; the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between UNHCR and Bangladesh establishing the framework of cooperation on the safe, voluntary, and dignified returns of refugees in line with international standard and the MoU between UNDP<sup>6</sup>, UNHCR<sup>7</sup> and Myanmar, establishing a framework for cooperation at creating conducive conditions for the voluntary, safe, dignified and sustainable repatriation of refugees from Bangladesh including in helping to create improved and resilient livelihoods for all communities living in Rakhine State. However, the current impasse and lack of political progress to resolve the crisis in Myanmar denotes the prospect of a safe and voluntary return in the near future highly unlikely. As such, it requires longer term planning and programmes to address the protracted refugee displacement in Bangladesh, ensuring host communities being an integral part of any longer term strategies.

## **Myanmar**

The population in Myanmar is estimated at circa 51.5 million, of which approximately 40% are ethnic minorities. The country ranks 145 out of 188 in the 2016 UNDP Human Development Index and 22 out of 178 countries in 2018 OECD list of fragile states. Myanmar is one of the most hazard prone countries in the world, ranking 12 out of 191 countries in the 2018 INFORM and first in South East Asian region. Vulnerabilities to

---

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.unhcr.org/rohingya-emergency.html>

<sup>4</sup> Inter Sector Coordination Group (ISCG), Situation Report Data Summary, Rohingya Refugee Crisis, 16 August 2018

<sup>5</sup> Joint Humanitarian Response Plan for Rohingya Humanitarian Crisis, March – December 2018

<sup>6</sup> United Nations Development Programme

<sup>7</sup> The United Nations High Commission for Refugees/ UN Refugee Agency

earthquakes, cyclones, floods, and landslides, coupled with generally low national capacities, exacerbate risks, especially for conflict-affected IDPs living in already precarious conditions.

Despite the continuation of the peace process, on-going conflicts *in Kachin and Shan States* have intensified and continue to produce multiple population displacements, amidst severe violations of international humanitarian law (IHL) including killing and maiming, forced recruitment, and rape. Between April and June 2018, over 7 000 people were displaced due to renewed escalation of fighting between the Myanmar Military (*Tatmadaw*) and ethnic armed groups, also due to fighting between different ethnic armed groups. As of 30 June, there are approximately 105 800 civilians in more than 170 IDP camps across Kachin and northern Shan States.

Despite the Government's moves towards developing a national "camp closure" strategy, the continued use of mines, appropriation and confiscation of land by military and ethnic armed groups in areas of origin mean that realistically, the situation of current IDPs will continue to be one of protracted displacement.

*In Rakhine State*, the situation for Rohingya has significantly deteriorated over the last year. For the estimated 200 000 - 240 000 Rohingya remaining in northern Rakhine State following the mass exodus in August 2017, the conditions remain extremely precarious with continued restrictions on movement combined with severe access constraints to basic services, widespread food insecurity and limited livelihood opportunities. In *Central Rakhine*, approximately 128 000 Rohingya still languish in squalid camps since the eruption of inter-communal violence in 2012 and a further 200 000 live confined in villages in surrounding areas. They all are subjected to restrictions on movements and livelihood opportunities, extortion and coercion to take the National Verification Card (NVC) as well as barriers to access basic services. The Government's ongoing "camp closure" exercise has only served to further entrench segregation and is not in line with international standards.

## **Philippines**

The population of the Philippines amounts to about 100 million people, with an annual population growth rate of 1.72% and more than a quarter of the population living below the poverty threshold. The country ranks 116 out 188 nations in the Human Development Index (HDI) and the 2018 Index for Risk Management (INFORM), placing the Philippines in a 'High' of 'hazard and exposure'.

The Philippines is prone to significant humanitarian crises prompted both by natural disasters and political instability, particularly in Mindanao. Mindanao has been enduring long-standing internal conflicts between the government armed forces and different non-state armed groups including Muslim separatists, political opponents (to the government), and private militias, criminal and several radical offshoots with increasing influence by the so-called Islamic State. Various clan feuds in different regions further aggravate the situation for the civilian population. It is also the least developed and the poorest part of the Philippines, with the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) being home to 53.7% living below the poverty threshold, stemming from decades of neglect of the region by the central Government.

In the first half of 2018 alone, armed confrontations have provoked the displacement of 101 554<sup>8</sup> people. Since the beginning of July 2018, the ongoing military operations by the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) against the Bangsamoro Independence Freedom Fighters (BIFF) and ISIS-Turaifie Group in Maguindanao region in Mindanao, have led to further

---

<sup>8</sup> Source: UNHCR, Mindanao Displacement Dashboard – June 2018 Issue Nr 49

new displacements (more than 50 000 people). The humanitarian needs are mainly caused by conflict-related displacement and lack of services, and destroyed or looted assets in areas of return.

An estimated 90% of the IDPs opt to stay with relatives or friends, rather than being settled in shelters and camps. The host communities are frequently poor and vulnerable themselves, and exposed to potential humanitarian shocks too. Even when returns take place, such as the Marawi IDPs, these are not well managed by authorities. Returnees do not receive adequate and sufficient services and restoring their normal lives is difficult if not impossible, thus exacerbating their vulnerabilities to future shocks.

### **Disaster Risk Reduction**

Asia-Pacific features among the most disaster affected regions in the world, in terms of recurrence and severity of disasters, often having transboundary impacts. It is also among those most at risk, given the social and economic dimensions of vulnerabilities, the hazard profiles as well as environmental and climate change considerations. According to the recent study of Overseas Development Institute (ODI), just under half of all global disasters occurred in the Asia-Pacific region between 2000 and 2017 and the region is home to more than half of global disaster mortality<sup>9</sup>. Tropical cyclones and floods are the most frequent disasters, though earthquakes, droughts, cold waves, volcanic eruptions and epidemics are also frequent occurrences. For example, only in July 2018 the Philippines have been hit by three successive cyclones (*Henry, Inday and Josie*), with more than 2 million people affected. Vulnerability profiles are evolving, with increased urban migration and erosion of traditional coping mechanisms, including increased risks of pandemics.

## **2. HUMANITARIAN NEEDS**

### **1) People in need of humanitarian assistance:**

#### **Bangladesh**

The 2018 Joint Response Plan for the Rohingya refugee crisis identified a total of 1.3 million people in need in the Cox' Bazar district of Bangladesh, including both refugees and host communities. The recent family counting exercise conducted by the UNHCR and the Government reports a total refugee population of 891 233 people, of which 55% are children, 52% are women and 31% of the families report at least one protection vulnerability<sup>10</sup>.

Concomitantly, the influx of Rohingya refugees into Cox's Bazaar has put significant pressure on scarce resources available to host communities, thus giving rise to social tensions between the two communities. Humanitarian operations need to be scaled up across all sectors, including food and nutrition, health care, WASH, protection and education, ensuring response strategies for both refugee and host populations and taking into account the principles of "do no harm" and social cohesion.

#### **Myanmar**

The 2018 Myanmar Humanitarian Response Plan targeted 832 000 people in need of humanitarian assistances (666 000 in Rakhine, 127 000 in Kachin and 39 000 in Northern Shan). Pregnant and lactating women (PLWs) children under five, youth, the elderly and

---

<sup>9</sup> Accelerating Sendai Framework implementation in Asia – Disaster risk reduction in contexts of violence, conflict and fragility; ODI report: July 2019.

<sup>10</sup> Joint Humanitarian Response Plan for Rohingya Humanitarian Crisis, March – December 2018 & Inter Sector Coordination Group (ISCG), Situation Report Data Summary, Rohingya Refugee Crisis, 16 August 2018

disabled are especially vulnerable in Rakhine, Kachin and Northern Shan states due to prevailing conflict, presence of landmines, widespread violence, Gender-Based Violence (GBV), forced conscription and significant barriers to accessing basic services in these areas.

## **Philippines**

According to OCHA, more than 555 000 people (displaced, returnees and host) are in need of humanitarian assistance.<sup>11</sup>

This includes, an estimated total number of 135 050 people in displacement in Mindanao (101 554 people are displaced since June 2018 and 87 205 since Marawi conflict); a total of 298 645 returnees in Marawi and 121 545 vulnerable host people. An additional 1 224<sup>12</sup> people are displaced from Zamboanga and remain uncertain about their future relocation prospects; furthermore 2 000 of the indigenous peoples (*Lumad*) in the north-eastern Mindanao recently fled their villages and are likewise in need of humanitarian assistance. They constitute one of the most disadvantaged and abused groups in the country.

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

### **Bangladesh**

The precarious living conditions of the Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazaar, that range from challenging living conditions (not limited to congested camps and settlements, hazard prone topography and location of the camps and settlements), protection issues linked to the absence of a protective legal status (sexual and gender based violence, trafficking, exploitation) combined with a constrictive policy environment, require a multi-sectoral humanitarian response founded on a comprehensive protection risk analysis. The most acute needs include food security and nutrition, health, WASH, education, protection, shelter and settlements. To ensure assistance is provided to the most vulnerable including host communities, in an equitable and integrated manner, a quality scale up of the humanitarian response is needed together with an effective humanitarian coordination system. Advocacy for durable solutions in respect of international humanitarian law remains key.

In addition, given Bangladesh's propensity to natural disasters and the high vulnerability of many communities, continued support to urban earthquake preparedness, integration of contingencies and preparedness arrangements into locally-owned basic service delivery and social protection, as well as setting up rapid response capacity for timely response to floods and other natural hazards is paramount.

### **Myanmar**

*Kachin and Shan States:* The most urgent humanitarian needs are protection, food security, (particularly in contested areas) education (including cash for education and mine-risk education), shelter and non-food items, health, psychosocial support, WASH, GBV prevention and response, camp management and coordination. Clashes that trigger sporadic displacements are expected to continue throughout the course of 2019, thus continued investment in locally implemented emergency response mechanisms is essential.

---

<sup>11</sup>Source: Displacement Dashboard, June 2018 and OCHA Humanitarian Bulletin <http://www.protectionclusterphilippines.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/June-2018-Displacement-Dashboard.pdf>

<sup>12</sup>[https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/OCHAPhilippines\\_Humanitarian\\_Bulletin\\_No8\\_September\\_2018\\_FINAL\\_0.pdf](https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/OCHAPhilippines_Humanitarian_Bulletin_No8_September_2018_FINAL_0.pdf)

*Rakhine:* The most acute humanitarian needs are; protection, including child protection, food security and livelihoods, nutrition, GBV prevention and response, health, emergency shelter/WASH in camps, and camp management and coordination.

Given the vulnerability to natural disasters combined with three main conflicts simultaneously ongoing across the country, Myanmar is categorised under the global list of fragile states<sup>13</sup>, thus continued engagement in disaster risk management remains key. Possibilities to consolidate and expand urban earthquake preparedness and bolstering DRR in conflict areas need to be further explored.

### **Philippines**

With regards to Mindanao, the most acute humanitarian needs as per the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT), continue to encompass food security, protection, early recovery, WASH, health, and education. The aid is recommended to include both IDPs and host communities. Low scale conflict across Mindanao is expected to continue in the course of 2019, leading to recurrent forced displacements. Thus, intervention strategies should be tailored to anticipate, prepare and respond to such displacement.

## **3. HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE**

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

#### **Bangladesh**

The Government of Bangladesh has engaged in the refugee response through multiple Ministries and entities. The Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, represented by the Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner (RRRC) at the local level, is charged with operational coordination of the response, through the deployment of Camp in Charge officials (CiCs) in the sites. A strengthened collaboration between the humanitarian response and the Governmental structures (RRRC, the District Commission, *upazilas*, military and line ministries) has been witnessed in the past months, with a more evident assertion of State's authority in the camp governance and the deployment of longer term camp officials across all camps. The increased involvement has allowed improved dialogue and space for interventions. However, the bureaucratic impediments in processing the necessary permissions for international and national organisations still pose a challenge to the timely and effective delivery of the assistance. The unified Government of Bangladesh and UNHCR database for the verification and documentation of refugees is underway, representing a milestone in the provision of protection and assistance for the refugees.

The government has demonstrated the effectiveness of its disaster preparedness measures, in particular in rural areas, and it provides assistance to those affected by natural disasters. However, needs usually largely exceed the assistance offered and exclusion errors occur. For earthquake preparedness, clear gaps remain, in particular concerning urban settings. Local NGOs have proven their capacity in DP/DRR and response to the most common disasters (floods and cyclones) but more knowledge is required for earthquake preparedness and response. Of utmost concern is the absence of an evacuation plan for the hundreds of thousands of refugees that have entered the country last year and the ability of the coordination architecture to respond to massive disasters.

---

<sup>13</sup> Accelerating Sendai Framework implementation in Asia – Disaster risk reduction in contexts of violence, conflict and fragility

## **Myanmar**

The government's capacity and willingness to respond to humanitarian crises (man-made and natural disasters) is not sufficient to meet the prevailing needs. In May 2018, the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement initiated a process to develop a national-level strategy for the closure of all confinement camps across the country. However, to date, the manner in which camps in central Rakhine have been "closed" does not meet international standards. In addition, despite Government claims that significant progress has been made on meeting many of the recommendations outlined in the Annan Commission Report, fundamental issues such as citizenship and freedom of movement have yet to be addressed.

The Ministry of Border Affairs is de facto in charge of regulating assistance in border areas, and access to contested areas remains severely restricted, increasingly even for national NGOs. Complex and slow administrative procedures for obtaining travel authorisations (TAs) pose additional challenges for humanitarian agencies.

Despite this, there are some national laws and strategies that provide a good basis for programming that encompass both humanitarian and development objectives. For example, the 2014 National social protection strategic plan establishes strong linkages between inclusive social protection programmes and DRR. The plan recognises and promotes the use of a disaster and weather index insurance and contains references to the provision of cash for disaster affected communities. The National Education Strategic Plan (NESP) 2016-2021 sets out sector-wide education reforms aimed at improving equitable access to quality education for all children and the need to support education opportunities that respect the ethnic diversity of the country. While the EU has provided substantial direct-budget support for the education sector and will shortly be allocating additional funds for the support of indigenous education networks, significant gaps remain with regards to ensuring non-discriminatory participation in education particularly for children in IDP camps in Kachin and northern Shan as well as Rohingya children in Rakhine.

## **Philippines**

It is evident that the Government of the Philippines displays little commitment to provision of humanitarian services in Mindanao and basic services are not in place or dysfunctional. In Marawi, the central government is taking charge and local government in Mindanao has a lesser role in what would be their normal humanitarian assistance and services. Disempowering the local authorities is having a further negative impact on quality of services, as decisions taken by central authorities do not necessarily reflect the needs of the people, which are better understood by the local administration.

## **2) International Humanitarian Response**

### **Bangladesh**

The Rohingya Humanitarian Crisis, Joint Response Plan (JRP) from March to December 2018, appealed for a total USD 950.8 million. As of end of August 2018, the JRP remains critically underfunded, with only 34% of the total appeal secured. An estimated USD 40 million has also been recorded outside of the appeal.<sup>14</sup> The mid-term review of the JRP to be finalised in September 2018, is expected to provide evidence-based priority needs to facilitate funding being channelled to address the most urgent and critical gaps.

---

<sup>14</sup> Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG), Rohingya Humanitarian Crisis, Joint Response Plan funding update as of 2018.07.29

The humanitarian coordination mechanism works through the Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG) at the Cox's Bazaar level and overseen by the Strategic Executive Group (SEG) at Dhaka level. However, coherent and comprehensive approach, analysis of existing critical gaps, contingency planning and information management still need to be reinforced.

Along with EU development funds, Canada, US, Sweden, DFID, Turkey, Qatar and Australia have shown support to the Rohingya response in camps and host communities. In June 2018, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank also announced significant grants in support to the needs of Rohingya refugees in health, education, water and sanitation, disaster risk management, and social protection.

On earthquake preparedness, JICA, USAID, World Bank and DFID are engaged in specific sectors such as infrastructure and capacity building of government services to respond to emergency and healthcare. There is less international response to regular recurrent natural disasters, such as floods, cyclones and landslides.

### **Myanmar**

The 2018 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) identifies funding requirements totalling USD 183.4 million for 832,000 individuals. The plan is so far (July 30) 45.5% funded with USD 83.4 million received. The EU, the Governments of the United States of America, Japan, and Australia were recorded as major contributors to HRP 2018. Humanitarian donors not only provide financial aid but also play an important role in advocating for humanitarian access and respect of human rights.

The Myanmar Humanitarian Fund launched a Call for Proposals in July 2018 with a total of USD 7 million available for Rakhine (USD 2.75 million) and Kachin and Shan States (USD 4.25 million).

Following a recommendation from the Rakhine Advisory Commission's final report, the Humanitarian Country Team has endorsed a Camp Improvement Plan for central Rakhine. The plan appeals for just over USD 9 million to provide emergency repairs in order to provide minimum dignified living conditions.

### **Philippines**

In July 2017, the HCT called for resource mobilisation for the humanitarian response to the needs of 199 000 people in Mindanao. The sought amount was €57 million for the operations until the end of 2018. In March 2018, only 29% (€15 million) was successfully raised, with €4.2 million being provided by OCHA through the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF). Other contributing donors include United States, Australia, Japan and the EU. The clusters that were active in provision of humanitarian assistance include food security and agriculture, health, protection (including gender-based violence), WASH, education, early recovery, nutrition, and camp management and camp coordination (CCCM).

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

### **Bangladesh**

Access remains critical due to the lengthy bureaucratic process for obtaining approvals to operate. This has an impact on the quality and the timely assistance to reach those most in need. While systems are in place for regulating the registration and the approval of operations implemented by the partners, this needs to be addressed at policy level.



Humanitarian activities in Cox's Bazar are limited to life-saving activities and short term solutions, due to a constrictive policy environment. More sustainable and cost-efficient provision of quality assistance remains a challenge.

With the massive influx of refugees in August 2017, a number of agencies have set up operations and resources in the area of Cox's Bazar. However, the continuous turnover of personnel and short-stay staff and positions remain an issue.

### **Myanmar**

Myanmar is categorised as one of the top 10 countries facing severe access constraints<sup>15</sup>. As of July, access tracking indicates that in central Rakhine 94% of national staff Travel Authorisations (TAs) were approved and 91% for International staff. However, for northern Rakhine, only 29% of national staff had restricted access to field sites and very limited access was given to international staff. In Kachin and northern Shan, 73% of TA applications were approved but with restrictions (i.e. for urban areas only, not to surrounding areas where most IDPs are located). No access has been granted to the UN and the majority of INGO international staff to contested areas since June 2016. The deteriorating humanitarian access and space has been exacerbated by increased fighting, both between the Myanmar Army and Ethnic Armed Groups as well as between different ethnic armed groups which spiked in April-June 2018. These access constraints have a significant impact on the protection and well-being of vulnerable communities affected by conflict. Civil-military coordination remains weak and coordination with the private sector needs to be significantly strengthened.

Despite this, absorption capacity is good and a number of experienced international partners work closely with local agencies and national NGOs to reach communities affected by conflict and displacement.

### **Philippines**

The Office of the President of the Republic of the Philippines has displayed his open opposition of engaging in and cooperating with international humanitarian and developmental actors. This limits the partners and DG ECHO to effectively engage in delivering humanitarian aid in the country.

In Mindanao the access is challenging due to insecurity and armed conflict. In the first half of 2018, 53 fighting related incidents were reported. The martial law that is in place in Mindanao is a further factor hampering humanitarian access and delivery of humanitarian goods. The situation is particularly challenging around Marawi, and around Lanao Lake, as well as in locations where the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) and break-away groups remain active, e.g. in central Mindanao and in part of Maguindanao. The islands of Basilan, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi remain inaccessible due to recent attacks carried out by Abu Sayyaf. There is a high risk of kidnapping, with foreign humanitarian workers being particularly targeted.

Interior villages are challenging to reach due to difficult terrain and poor road network, and becoming totally cut-off at times of big natural disasters, as in the case of Typhoon Tembin in December 2017.

UN agencies, INGOs, ICRC and national Red Cross societies are present in above-mentioned areas and have adequate experience and capacity to deal with the described challenges. However, organisations are struggling to meet the largely unmet humanitarian needs with declining financial resources.

---

<sup>15</sup> [https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/humanitarian\\_access\\_overview\\_march\\_2018\\_acaps.pdf](https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/humanitarian_access_overview_march_2018_acaps.pdf)

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

##### **Bangladesh**

In seeking the most effective planning of resources, priority will be given to quality life-saving assistance to the Rohingya refugees and most vulnerable host communities. Sectors of intervention include:

*Protection* - protection programming and evidence-based advocacy remain key in responding to the growing protection threats of refugees.

*Health* - quality provision of integrated health care in underserved and most affected areas.

*Nutrition* - support to multi-sectoral strategies geared at addressing the immediate and underlying drivers of undernutrition.

*WASH* - support to initiatives aimed at providing essential WASH services and promoting hygiene conditions to the underserved populations to reach basic minimum standards.

*Shelter* - support to basic solutions promoting resilience and safety from local hazards/risks and implementing people protection-centred approaches.

*Food security* – diversified modalities of assistance, including cash, to tackle degrading negative coping mechanisms.

*Education in emergencies* - non-formal learning opportunities and soft-skills activities for out-of-school refugee children.

*Coordination* – support to the coordination of humanitarian action, including improved data collection, information management and analysis, monitoring and evaluation.

*Integrated approaches* within and between organisations that seek a robust and efficient referral system and maximise coverage are encouraged. Advocacy remains paramount to ensure adherence to humanitarian principles, safeguard of humanitarian space, harmonised service provision and promotion of durable solutions. Humanitarian assistance to Rohingya refugees and host communities needs to encourage increased access to self-reliance activities, for which the government's assent is necessary.

##### **Myanmar**

DG ECHO strategy aims to address acute humanitarian needs and improve the resilience of conflict affected people. The protection of civilians remains a top priority given the deteriorating security and access constraints across Rakhine, Kachin and northern Shan. Protection will be at the core of the entire operational response, with specific emphasis on: dignified solutions to displacement, respect for IHL, and stronger emphasis on prevention and response to GBV (in alignment with the EU's leadership of the Call to Action on Protection from Gender Based Violence in Emergencies)<sup>16</sup>. Appropriate contingency planning, emergency response mechanisms and continued analysis of vulnerabilities and risks to strengthen capacity for shock-responsive programming, underpin DG ECHO's resilience strategy.

---

<sup>16</sup> <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Call-to-Action-Roadmap.pdf>

*In Northern Rakhine*, DG ECHO will continue to prioritise protection (including child protection), food, nutrition, health, and psychosocial support. Leveraging nexus opportunities through EU funding instruments and those of other development donors to better ascertain and meet needs on the ground is encouraged as are actions with a strong cross-border focus.

*In Central Rakhine*, DG ECHO will support dignified solutions to displacement through targeted support for emergency shelter and WASH repairs, food security, NFIs for populations in camps while continuing to advocate for durable solutions in line with international standards. Protection, health, GBV prevention and response will also be key priority areas.

*In Kachin and Northern Shan States*: protection, food security (particularly in areas outside government control), shelter and non-food items, health, prevention and response to GBV, respect for IHL, WASH and education including mine risk education and cash for education will be priorities. Expanding the ERM to northern Shan to ensure greater strategic coverage and coordination with the durable peace program will be fundamental to building the resilience of communities affected by multiple displacements.

*In South Eastern border areas* mine-risk education and continued monitoring of the situation in case of potential returns from Thailand will be supported.

*In all geographical areas*, cash-based assistance will be privileged whenever appropriate, relevant and safe. All interventions should be risk-informed and conflict sensitive, with clear access strategies outlined according to the different contexts.

Opportunities for *advocacy* will be sought, ranging from respect of IHL to humanitarian access, freedom of movements for all affected communities and the promotion of dignified, safe and voluntary returns of the refugees, in close cooperation with partners both in Bangladesh and Myanmar.

## **Philippines**

The humanitarian assistance in Mindanao aims to reach the most vulnerable conflict-affected populations and those who are socially and culturally discriminated and/or receive little or no assistance. Examples of these groups include: the poorest IDPs who have been left displaced for long time (such as the Zamboanga IDPs who are now 5 years displaced) and the Marawi IDPs who will remain without durable solution in the next few years but also cyclical IDPs (Maguindanao and North Cotobato); the indigenous peoples in the mountains of Surigao Del Sur, Agusan Del Sur and Bukidnon.

Children, victims or vulnerable to GBV, child and child soldiers, indigenous peoples and vulnerable communities regardless of their ethnicity, religion, political affiliations are expected to be targeted, given their vulnerabilities.

Sectors and interventions are as follow:

*Protection* - ensuring open and equal access in terms of delivery and resources to humanitarian and basic services.

*Food security* - improvements in food security through humanitarian food assistance and replacement or strengthening of lost and damaged livelihoods.

*Nutrition* – integration of nutrition improvement in Food, WASH, and Health interventions to prevent further deterioration of undernutrition.

*WASH* - better access to sources of potable water, sanitation and proper hygiene practices.

*Health* - primary health to IDPs and host communities alike.

Use of cash and vouchers as a modality of aid is encouraged as long as justified by its anticipated effectiveness and efficiency.

A possible crisis modifier is likely in the current situation in Mindanao wherein several conflicts occurred in various municipalities in the recent months. Should there be new displacement in project locations due to this dynamic security situation, modifying response to allow life-saving relief assistance may be agreed upon between partners and DG ECHO.

### **Disaster Risk Reduction**

DG ECHO strategy contributes to the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 and defines 7 global targets and 4 priority areas as well as the priorities set up by the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) work programmes 2016-2020. While building on lessons learned from over 20 years of DRR programming (DIPECHO), DG ECHO will look at further shifting towards an integrated DRR approach, through preparedness for response and early action. The core focus of actions would aim to encompass i) integration of contingencies and preparedness arrangements into locally owned service provisions and social protection to be risk-informed and shock-responsive ii) forecast-based early actions iii) urban preparedness with emphasis on mega cities and iv) national and local capacities for early response mechanism.

An overview of priorities is listed below (for detailed guidance see the Technical Annex attached to this HIP):

*Bangladesh:* Explore opportunities to integrate contingencies and preparedness arrangement into locally owned basic service delivery and social protection for refugees and local communities in Cox's Bazar via strengthening and consolidation of the urban DRR earthquake preparedness and setting up rapid response capacity for the provision of timely and effective response to floods.

*Myanmar:* Consolidation and expansion of urban DRR earthquake preparedness initiative; strengthen institutional capacities to respond to disasters using cash emergency preparedness transfers and explore ways to establish shock responsive safety net programmes.

*Philippines:* Consolidate and disseminate urban poor resilience building model especially to Mindanao, Moving Urban Poor Community toward Resilience and integrate with long-term development; tap and strengthen existing government social safety net platforms for shock responsive early action.

*Nepal:* Focus on strengthening urban municipality DRR capacity, especially in preparedness of fire, flood and earthquake hazards; improve response preparedness of local and federal government, notably the disaster management information systems and needs assessment capacity.

*Regional South-East Asia:* building on past investment, improve understanding of risk-informed and shock responsive social protection can contribute to an integrated vulnerability reduction, disaster response and recovery/resilience building; demonstration of potential for forecast based early action mechanisms to be adopted at scale in disaster risk management (risk financing and delivery mechanisms); reinforce attention to the growing importance of disaster preparedness in urban settings.

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

##### **1) Other DG ECHO interventions**

###### **Bangladesh**

Within the framework of the 2018 Humanitarian Implementation Plan for Bangladesh, DG ECHO allocated a total of EUR 36 million in humanitarian assistance (EUR 29 million) and DRR (EUR 7 million). Interventions under the HIP 2019, will build on the actions undertaken in 2018, mitigating gaps and responding to evolving needs.

###### **Myanmar**

DG ECHO's 2018 budget is EUR 11 million (EUR 9 million humanitarian aid budget and EUR 2 million disaster risk reduction budget through 2018 HIP).

###### **Philippines**

In 2018, the initial allocation of EUR 1 million for Urban DRR, was complemented by i) DREF replenishment of EUR 150 000 for the Habagat Floods, and EUR 2 million from the Operational Reserve for conflict affected populations in Mindanao.

##### **2) Other concomitant EU interventions**

###### **Bangladesh**

The EU Multi-Annual Indicative Programme (MIP) of EUR 655 million for the period 2014 - 2020 prioritises 1) Strengthening Democratic Government and human rights; 2) Food security and nutrition; and 3) Education and skills development.

Specifically for the Rohingya crisis DEVCO has allocated EUR 18 million in 2017-2018 in Cox's Bazar.

###### **Myanmar**

The European Commission has an indicative allocation for EUR 688 million under the Multi-Annual Indicative Program 2014-2020 targets four focal sectors: 1) Rural Development, Agriculture and Food and Nutrition Security; 2) Education 3) Governance, Rule of Law, State Capacity Building and 4) Peacebuilding.

Specifically for the Rohingya crisis DEVCO has allocated EUR 17.3 million in 2017-2018 in the Rakhine State.

###### **Philippines**

The EU Multiannual Indicative Programme (MIP) for 2014-2020 for the Philippines (EUR 325 million) focuses on two priority sectors: Inclusive growth through access to sustainable energy and job creation; and strengthening of rule of law.

Mindanao benefits for a total of around EUR 55 million through the Mindanao Peace and Development Programme (MINPAD). MINPAD Phase 1 is EU's response to align its development cooperation strategy in Mindanao to the Philippine government's Strategic Framework for Mindanao Peace and Development and therefore aims to contribute to a peaceful, cohesive, secure and inclusive development in Mindanao.

### **3) Other donors availability**

#### **Bangladesh**

Main donors for the Rohingya crisis in Bangladesh include USA, DFID, Japan, Canada, Australia, Sweden and Denmark.

The World Bank Group announced recently up to USD 480 million in grant-based support to Bangladesh for health, education, sanitation, disaster preparedness, and other services for the refugees until they can return home safely, voluntarily, and with dignity. This financing will also help build the country's capacity to deal with the crisis. The Asian Development Bank has also claimed future funding for the emergency amounting to at least USD 100 million.

#### **Myanmar**

The Humanitarian Assistance and Resilience Programme (HARP) is a UK Government Department for International Development (DFID) initiative designed to respond to humanitarian needs within Myanmar and on the border with Thailand. It provides flexible, multi-year funding for protracted conflict-related crisis and natural disasters. In 2018, a funding envelope of GBP 1 million (approx. EUR 1.1 million) has been allocated for an initial three months response through Civil Society Organizations to respond to recent displacements in Kachin.

Other key donors include USAID, Australia, Canada, and Japan. A number of multi-donor trust funds have also been established in Myanmar. The Livelihoods and Food Security Trust Fund (LIFT) is intended to improve the lives and prospects of poor rural communities. To date, donors have committed more than USD 400 million to LIFT. The Three Millennium Development Goal (3 MDG) fund aims at improving Maternal, New-born and Child Health (MNCH), reducing the burden of communicable diseases (HIV/TB/Malaria) in areas of highest need and strengthening health systems in Myanmar. The Joint Peace Fund (JPF) aims to support Myanmar on the path to sustainable peace. The Multi Donor Education Fund (MDEF) supports the Myanmar Quality Basic Education Program. According to the Mohinga Aid Information Management System (AIMS), a total of USD 86.74 million was committed in 2018<sup>17</sup>.

#### **Philippines**

Other contributors to the Mindanao Peace and Development Programme include World Bank (EUR 122 million) and GIZ (EUR 4 million).

### **4) Exit scenarios.**

#### **Bangladesh**

In the absence of tangible prospects for durable solutions for Rohingya refugees within Bangladesh and concrete plans and policies for a safe and voluntary return, an exit strategy from the refugee crisis cannot be envisaged in the short-term and will depend on the political developments of the context. The international community needs to scale-up funding to both Bangladesh and Myanmar proportionate to needs on both sides of the border in order to support a coherent strategy that recognises both the reality of a protracted crisis in Bangladesh and the need to keep advocating (and preparing conditions for) safe, voluntary and dignified returns to Myanmar.

---

<sup>17</sup> <https://mohinga.info/en/dashboard/location/?start=Jan+2018&end=Dec+2018>

## **Myanmar**

The challenges in Rakhine are deep rooted. A combination of historical, ethnic, and religious tensions, mistrust, extreme poverty and under-development underpin the current context. It is clear that sustained confidence-building measures are required on the part of the humanitarian, development communities and the Government of Myanmar to ensure that camp closures occur in a voluntary, dignified and sustainable manner, in line with international standards and that development efforts focus on a whole of Rakhine approach.

In Kachin and northern Shan States, seven ethnic armed groups have yet to sign the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement. As long as peace is not restored, the situation will continue generating acute humanitarian needs. DG ECHO and DEVCO have important ongoing nexus programming that is tailored to meet both urgent unmet needs and greater engagement of communities in the peace discussions, with a strong focus on gender participation. If any exit-scenarios are to be envisaged in Myanmar, they will depend greatly on the Government's own willingness and capacity to respond to these challenges as well as the international community's ability to implement a principled humanitarian and development engagement strategy.

## **Philippines**

One of the recent milestones in the Mindanao conflict crisis is the legislation of the Bangsamoro Organic Law (BBL), which is a major component of the 2014 comprehensive peace agreement between the Philippine Government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). However, recognising that there are still several other non-state armed groups that continue fighting, there may be challenges to the expected outcomes of the BBL. Given uncertainties, and lack of commitment from the Government of the Philippines to provide a meaningful humanitarian aid to the people in Mindanao, DG ECHO is likely to continue its operations until further developments in the given context. Continuation of provision of humanitarian assistance should not prevent partners in engaging in DRR and NEXUS strategies as described under Section 2.