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COVER NOTE

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PART 1/2

COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT

General Guidelines for Operational Priorities on Humanitarian Aid in 2015

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INTRODUCTION

The Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO) of the European Commission manages humanitarian aid to the victims of conflicts or disasters, both natural and man-made, in non-EU countries. The mandate of ECHO in this area is to save and preserve life, to reduce or prevent suffering and to safeguard the integrity and dignity of people affected by humanitarian crises by providing relief and protection. ECHO also helps to facilitate coordination on humanitarian assistance with, and among, EU Member States humanitarian departments and agencies. The overall priority is to ensure that the aid is managed in the most effective and efficient way possible so that the help Europe delivers to people in need has the maximum effect, whilst respecting the principles of international law and the principles of impartiality, neutrality, humanity, non-discrimination and independence.

ECHO is also responsible for the management of the civil protection instrument which covers interventions in Member States, as well as in non-EU countries. The two instruments, humanitarian aid and civil protection, are linked and under the responsibility of the same Commissioner.

The present document is drawn up under Article 16(1) of Council Regulation No 1257/96 [1] and therefore covers the humanitarian aid operations for the year ahead. It does not cover Commission activities in the field of civil protection, which are described in the annual work programme for civil protection actions in line with the new civil protection legislation, which was adopted on 17 December 2013. Equally, for the EU Aid Volunteers (EUAV) Initiative the activities for 2015 will be detailed in a specific EUAV work programme as laid down in article 21(3) of Regulation 375/2014 and will cover in particular certification of organisations, capacity building as well as the first stage of training and deployment of volunteers.

The operational priorities and funding allocation for 2015 have been based on the "Integrated Analysis Framework" (IAF), a tool for humanitarian need and situation assessment developed by ECHO. Throughout 2014, the relevant Commission services have been working in wide partnership on developing the Index for Risk Management – InfoRM which presents the first global, objective and transparent tool for understanding the risk of humanitarian crises and disasters. As of 2015 – 2016 the InfoRM index will be incorporated in the IAF for use by relevant Commission services for their overall global needs and risks analyses.

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[1] Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/96 of 20 June 1996 concerning humanitarian aid

1. OUTLOOK FOR 2015

Global trends are unambiguous: humanitarian challenges grow and become more complex. Humanitarian catastrophes become more devastating than ever, due to increasing global vulnerabilities. Endemic internal conflicts are on the increase, many of which are ideologically highly charged, involving elements of conventional war and terrorism.

At the end of 2013, 51 million people were displaced – more than ever before[2]! For example, the estimated number of Syrian refugees in neighbouring countries and the larger region reached 3 million. Almost half of all Syrians have now been forced to flee their areas of origin, with one in every eight persons fleeing across the borders and a further 6.5 million persons displaced within the country.[3] Currently, about 102 million people are estimated to be in need of humanitarian assistance, compared to 81 million in December 2013[4]. In mid-2014, the world had to deal with four L3 (level 3) disasters, the highest UN categorisation of crises: South Sudan, Central African Republic, Syria and Iraq. The Ebola epidemic in West African countries has reached unprecedented levels with far-reaching implications on the humanitarian, development, economic and security fronts. The conflict in the eastern region of Ukraine has taken a dramatic toll on civilians.

In this context, the access of humanitarians to victims and the protection of the most vulnerable are increasingly challenged due to spreading non-compliance of international humanitarian law and non-respect of the humanitarian principles. A combination of aggressive sovereignty by some states and asymmetric warfare involving non-state actors dramatically increases the rate of civilian victims and puts the security of humanitarian personnel at stake. The World Humanitarian Day in August 2014 was dedicated to all those humanitarian workers who have become targets: in 2013, 155 aid workers were killed, 171 seriously wounded and 134 kidnapped. The majority of victims are national staff, and three quarters of the incidents took place in just five countries (Afghanistan, Syria, South Sudan, Pakistan and Sudan).

The number of people affected by climate change and the damages inflicted by extreme weather remains immense, especially in disaster hot spots exposed to repeated climatic shocks and where human settlements are fragile. The IPCC concluded in its fifth assessment report[5] that "impacts from recent extreme climatic events, such as heat waves, droughts, floods, and wildfires, show significant vulnerability and exposure of many human systems to climate variability". While Asia is particularly concerned (between 2008 and 2013, 80.9 percent of displacements due to disasters took place in Asia[6]), in Europe alone, disasters cause EUR 15 billion in damages each year on average over past 10 years[7]. Indirect costs of disruptions to the economy are however much higher and constitute a real threat to the stability and growth. In 2014, in the West Balkan more than 60 people died in the worst floods in the region in more than a century. More than 31 000 people were evacuated from the affected areas and over 30 000 households were left without electricity.

The global needs triggered by the plethora of crises are difficult to quantify. In August 2014, the UN's inter-agency strategic response plans are amounting to USD 17.3 billion to help

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[2]   UNHCR, Annual Report 2013, June 2014
[3]   UNCHR, September 2014
[4]   OCHA, Global Humanitarian Overview, August 2014
[5]   IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change), Climate Change 2014: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability, March 2014
[6]   NRC, IDMC: Global Estimates 2014 – People displaced by disasters
[7]   European Environmental Agency, 2011

76 million people (and this will increase further until the end of the year). This compares to USD 12.9 billion at the end of 2013 and USD 11.3 billion in 2010.[8] However, these numbers are only a fraction of the total costs of disasters. The World Bank estimates that the global cost of extreme weather events and slow on-set disasters is over USD 100 billion per year. From 1980 to 2012, disaster-related losses amounted to incredible USD 3 800 billion.[9]

While needs are exploding, funding is not. Given the budgetary constraints, overall EU funding will remain stable (in real terms) over the coming years. In budgetary terms, it will be important that payment appropriations are matching commitment appropriations, reflecting the exceptional nature of humanitarian assistance (due to the emergency character of projects, payment appropriations need to be available immediately after contracts are signed, the life-cycle of projects being generally short).

The inability to increase funding means that Commission services will need to be even more effective and accountable. One step will be a thorough assessment of needs in the different crises. The consolidated and improved network of ECHO field offices will play an important role in this regard. Also, the newly developed InfoRM index for risk management will help to understand and measure the risk and underlying drivers of humanitarian crises. Another step will be increase burden-sharing with other donors and partners.

Also, ECHO intends to continue addressing weaknesses and gaps in the international response system. This was already at the forefront in 2013/14 when the Commission chaired the OCHA donors' support group. In the same vein, strengthening of the overall international humanitarian system through gradual improvements of the transformative agenda will need to continue. Advocacy in favour of principled humanitarian aid and respect for the International Humanitarian Law (IHL) continues to remain core preoccupations. The Commission, through ECHO, will be actively involved in the preparations of the World Humanitarian Summit which will take place in Istanbul in May 2016, bringing on board all stakeholders in order to find new ways to tackle humanitarian needs in our fast-changing world.

While an effective response will always be crucial, there has to be more focus on prevention and preparedness. Each EUR 1 invested in resilience saves EUR 4-7 in response. ECHO will further promote the resilience of populations to better withstand the effects of shocks and stress. National and regional resilience strategies in the Sahel and the Horn of Africa (AGIR and SHARE) will be complemented by strategic assessments to determine and implement resilience objectives in countries such as Nepal, Bangladesh, Haiti, Yemen, Mali and Central African Republic (CAR), with Commission services, EU Member States and others joining forces. Other donors (USAID, World Bank, Japan) are following and integrate resilience as key elements in their programmes.

The EU has developed a new comprehensive approach to conflict and crisis[10], which seeks to systematically bring together all relevant domains of EU external action, including development, diplomacy, security, justice and migration, at headquarters and on the ground. Humanitarian aid, however, is only to be provided in accordance with humanitarian principles (such as "independence" and "neutrality") and IHL, solely on the basis of needs of affected populations.

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[8]   OCHA, Global Humanitarian Overview, August 2014
[9]   World Bank, Building Resilience, November 2013
[10]   Joint Communication of the Commission and the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to the European parliament and the Council - The EU's comprehensive approach to external conflict and crises (JOIN(2013) 30 final of 11.12.2013)

EU Humanitarian Aid will continue to focus on supporting those in most needs following sudden onset, protracted and forgotten crises. Based on the results of its integrated (humanitarian and food) needs assessment, ECHO plans the main humanitarian interventions for 2015 in Africa (mainly in South Sudan, Sudan, Central African Republic, Chad, Mali, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Sahel Region, the Horn of Africa and the three West African countries mostly affected by the Ebola epidemic), and, equally, in the Middle East. The protracted conflict in Syria which has caused a humanitarian crisis of an unprecedented scale and has extended to Iraq is likely to continue to generate massive needs. The humanitarian response to this complex crisis of a regional dimension will therefore continue to put a heavy strain on aid budgets.

Overall, while the scale of the needs worldwide is such that no single donor can address them all, ECHO intends to continue having a global reach supporting relief and resilience work, covering major and forgotten humanitarian crises.

2. GENERAL CONTEXT

The unprecedented level of crises and humanitarian disasters experienced in 2014 is not likely to go down in the next years. Against this background, it is ever more relevant to increase humanitarian aid effectiveness by underpinning actions on the ground and funding decisions with evidence and to ensure coherence and complementarity of the different tools. For 2015, ECHO will focus particularly on systemic issues related to resilience and disaster risk management as well as enhanced aid effectiveness, acting in the context of the policy framework set out in the EU Consensus on Humanitarian Aid, the EU strategy for supporting Disaster Risk Reduction in developing countries[11] and the EU approach to resilience: learning from food security crises[12].

The relevance and importance of both subjects is increasingly growing as, on the one hand, one of the action points of the Resilience Communication is to systematically include resilience as an element in ECHO's Humanitarian Implementation Plans and, on the other, increasing humanitarian needs will not be matched by a corresponding budget increase, so that the funds available must be spent in an ever-increasingly effective manner. ECHO will therefore pay all due attention to those aspects as and when implementing the humanitarian budget entrusted to it by the relevant financing decisions adopted by the Commission.

2.1. Resilience and Disaster Risk Reduction

Resilience: In 2015, ECHO will integrate resilience as a driver for quality and aid effectiveness of its humanitarian response also considered in relation to development assistance. To that effect, ECHO will introduce a Resilience Marker for humanitarian aid operations in order to foster and track assistance that is adequately contributing to building resilience of the most vulnerable.

Closer co-operation within Commission services and with the EEAS will be pursued. Resilience will be systematically included as an element in the Humanitarian Implementation Plans (HIP). Better coordination between development and humanitarian objectives and interventions will be pursued, based on a common analysis of risks and vulnerabilities. The resilience approach must bring sustainable benefits to the most vulnerable populations and households, taking into account the diversity of needs of women, children, men and the elderly, who may suffer from multiple factors of vulnerability, including those coming from the climate change. In line with its experience and added value, ECHO will in particular contribute to action at community level.

The EU approach to resilience acknowledges national governments' responsibility to build resilience. Building resilience is a long-term process that needs to be context-appropriate and embedded in national policies and planning for development. In order to contribute effectively to this agenda, the Commission services will engage in a more structured way with governments at local and regional level as well as central level. A central objective of resilience is to address underlying causes of people's vulnerability. This requires that multi-faceted actions be supported by humanitarian and development assistance partners over the short, medium and long term.

In this context, and building on the successful first Resilience Forum in 2014, the relevant Commission services will increasingly be involved in joint planning processes with Member

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[11]   COM(2009) 84 final of 23.2.2009.
[12]   COM(2012) 586 final of 3.10.2012.

States and other actors that have the potential to play a key role in supporting the resilience agenda. The Intra-ACP (Africa, Caribbean and Pacific) resilience building programmes as well as the AGIR initiative in the Sahel and the SHARE initiative in the Horn of Africa provide a framework for co-ordination. Elsewhere, ECHO will continue to develop strategic and operational partnerships, at all levels, to optimise different expertise and added value behind resilience objectives.

In 2015, ECHO will further intensify its work on dealing with the issue of **development and protracted displacement** (refugees, internally displaced people and returnees). The objective is to explore possibilities for early engagement of development actors in displacement crises with the aim to either prevent protracted displacement, or, to find durable solutions in existing protracted situations.

Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) - including the DIPECHO programme - remains a crucial component of the Commission's resilience and Disaster Risk Management approach and should complement it. DIPECHO interventions will be used as a strategic tool to develop resilience approaches within our humanitarian action and to build national and local capacities for resilience. To optimise efficiency, projects will be designed to influence changed practice or replication at a greater scale. They equally remain one of the most effective tools of local capacity building which is becoming increasingly important at times of growing needs and limited budgets. An optimised approach will be reflected particularly in regional HIPs and operational guidelines.

The EU will also continue to promote resilience and disaster risk management in international fora and in the development of Sustainable Development Goals. Building on the EU position on the post 2015 Hyogo framework for action (Commission Communication adopted in April 2014, Council Conclusions adopted in June 2014) the Commission will continue to work with EU Member States and other stakeholders in order to play an active and constructive role in the negotiations to help shape an ambitious **revision to the UN Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015,** to be endorsed at the 3rd world conference for disaster risk reduction in Sendai (Japan).

Increasing vulnerability and exposure of people and assets, frequency and severity of hazards, combined with the increased complexity of managing emergencies and risks, are pressing for **more innovative ways**. ECHO will continue to play its part in having the EU targeting science and technology and making use of research and innovation for its humanitarian policy, and in particular its disaster risk management. Innovation is part of the above mentioned post-2015 UN framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and will be one of four pillars of the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016.

2.2. Improving aid effectiveness

ECHO is committed to improve the overall effectiveness of humanitarian aid through the following actions, which are structured in three levels:

(i) actions aimed at improving the effectiveness of humanitarian aid at EU level

The implementation of the **European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid** will remain high on the agenda, as discussions will start with Member States in respect of the outcome of the independent evaluation on the Consensus evaluation carried out in 2013-2014. To this end, the discussions will focus on the best way forward for the EU to implement the commitments enshrined in the Consensus in order to have a genuine impact on the ground.

Evaluation is a key tool for improving effectiveness and efficiency of EU initiatives. ECHO's evaluation programme (2014 – 2018) contains 30 evaluations and provides full evaluation coverage of the ECHO's activities (humanitarian aid and civil protection) over the programme period. Examples of recent ECHO evaluations, available on the webpage: the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid; EU Aid Volunteers pilot actions; Enhanced Response Capacity funding; Disaster Risk Reduction in the Horn of Africa, Central Asia and South Caucasus.

(ii) actions aimed at improving the effectiveness of humanitarian aid at the international level

ECHO will continue to support the consolidation of the UN-led efforts to strengthen the multilateral humanitarian architecture through the Inter-Agency Standing Committee ('IASC) and the **Transformative Agenda'** (ITA). The ITA normative framework for improved collective action in humanitarian emergencies is increasingly applied in various humanitarian crises and emergencies. ITA's main focus will now be on the effective delivery to affected populations, especially in the most difficult contexts (access problems, logistic constraints, etc.). As a main donor, the Commission, through ECHO, will continue to engage closely with the IASC Emergency Director Group, other main humanitarian donors and individual partners on the ITA implementation, in particular in L3 crises such as CAR, South Sudan, Syria and Iraq. It will continue providing support to the work on coordinated needs assessments, the strengthening of humanitarian leadership and teams, effective humanitarian coordination and roll out of the humanitarian project cycle.

ECHO and other interested Commission services will actively engage in the preparation of the **World Humanitarian Summit (WHS)** in Istanbul in May 2016, which will set the agenda for a more effective and efficient global humanitarian action in a fast-changing world. ECHO will contribute to preparing the Commission's position on the four WHS themes, namely (i) humanitarian effectiveness, (ii) reducing vulnerability and managing risk, (iii) transformation through innovation and (iv) serving the needs of people in conflict. It is already known that the Commission will co-chair the Regional Steering Committee for the European Consultation that will take place in Budapest in February 2015 and will closely follow the discussions at other regional as well as thematic and global consultations.

Partnership will also be a core theme of the Summit. Non-DAC donors play an increasingly important role in providing humanitarian assistance regionally and internationally through growing financial allocations and expanding activities. Given the changing humanitarian landscape, ECHO will strive to contribute towards a more inclusive international humanitarian system by consolidating its cooperation with a number of non-DAC donors outside the EU, in particular with Arab donors and ASEAN.

(iii) actions aimed at improving thematic and cross-cutting quality and guidance

In 2015, ECHO will maintain its increased focus on aid effectiveness, results-orientation and impact. The aim is to ensure that the needs of the most vulnerable crisis-affected populations are addressed efficiently and effectively, particularly in times of stagnating budgets.

The targeted dissemination and further development of **existing guidance on thematic and cross-cutting issues** such as food and nutrition, WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene), Health, and Disaster Risk Reduction will contribute to this end, aiming to achieve best value for money. Given the relevance of shelter end settlements both as a growing humanitarian sector and in relation to protracted situations of displacement, this area will receive particular attention in 2015. Systematic monitoring of operational guidance implementation via feedback loops, using key results indicators and specific markers will be ensured. The anchorage of operational guidance development in operational experience and best practice will continue to be primordial.

Following the adoption of the Staff Working Document on "Gender in Humanitarian Aid: Different Needs, Adapted Assistance" (SWD (2013)290), which outlines the Commission

services' approach to gender and gender-based violence in humanitarian aid, ECHO will pursue its efforts to strengthen gender- and age-sensitive programming. To that effect, ECHO introduced a **Gender-Age Marker for humanitarian aid operations** in January 2014 in order to foster and track assistance that is adequately adapted to gender and age needs. In 2015, gender guidance and the gender marker will continue to be disseminated among staff and partners, through appropriate capacity building measures. The use of the marker will allow ECHO to monitor its own performance by tracking gender and age sensitive actions and financial allocations.

The fight against Sexual and Gender Based Violence, and the lack of protection of vulnerable populations in general will remain a topic of great concern for ECHO in 2015 and awareness rising on this critical issue will continue, including through providing funds for specific actions.

An important element of improving aid effectiveness is ensuring that assistance reaches the most vulnerable population groups. Therefore, ECHO will continue to support **education in emergencies** for children affected by conflict, in particular through the EU Children of Peace Initiative, which was launched after awarding the 2012 Nobel Peace Prize to the EU. Children are particularly vulnerable to conflict. Education in emergencies is crucial for the protection and development of conflict-affected children. It gives children a sense of normality and a safe space, helps them recover from crises and encourages them to contribute to peace. The Commission is grateful for the contribution from the Governments of Luxemburg and Austria to the EU Children of Peace initiative.

The Commission has been at the forefront in pioneering the move from in-kind food aid to **food assistance** as a holistic response to victims of a humanitarian crisis, involving the direct provision of food, but equally a wider range of tools, of which cash-based assistance is a major part. The use of cash and vouchers has increased (with its share of the EU's food assistance budget for 2013 standing at 34%, up from 2% in 2007). In many crises a transfer of resources may allow people to meet their basic needs in a more dignified, efficient and effective way than providing in kind commodities or services. In 2015, the EU/Commission will chair the Food Assistance Convention (FAC), which will provide an essential platform to discuss innovative approaches in the area of food assistance.

3. OPERATIONAL PRIORITIES

3.1 Priorities reflected in the indicative budget allocation

3.1.1 General principles

In line with the Treaty, the Humanitarian Aid Regulation and the Consensus, and acting on the basis of the relevant financing decision (Commission Implementing Decision financing humanitarian aid operational priorities from the general budget of the European Union, also known as 'Worldwide Decision' by reason of its geographic scope) to be adopted by the Commission, ECHO is committed to providing relief and protection to populations affected by natural or man-made disasters solely on the basis of need.

Following the completion of the second annual **Integrated Analysis Framework (IAF)** exercise, ECHO has identified proposed allocations per individual country and region on the basis of which rests the funding allocation to be reflected in the Worldwide Decision for the following year (WWD); the same analytical preparatory work serves also as the foundation for the Humanitarian Implementation Plans (HIPs) prepared by ECHO. In 2014 a total of 51

IAF country analyses were conducted by ECHO field experts in coordination with the respective operational units. This analysis provides a first-hand account of crisis areas and gives an insight into the nature and the severity of needs[13].

ECHO also carries out, on an annual basis, at central level a global evaluation, which has two dimensions: (i) the **Global Vulnerability and Crisis Assessment**, which categorises 140 developing countries on the basis of the existence of a recent crisis (man-made or natural disaster) and the degree of vulnerability of the country's population; (ii) and the **Forgotten Crisis Assessment**, which identifies crises that have been overlooked or neglected by the international humanitarian community and/or the global media and which need special attention. As mentioned above for the 2016 allocation the InfoRM index[14] will replace GVCA for overall global needs and risks analyses. InfoRM will also be used by the relevant Commission services as a wider support tool across the disaster management field for disaster risk reduction and resilience, emergency response actions, civil protection activities and potentially for other areas such as development and climate adaptation.

This comprehensive annual process results in provisional allocations for each country/region, which are further examined in the light of other factors, one of the most relevant being the amount allocated for humanitarian assistance in the EU budget for the following year (and how much of that amount is kept in the operational reserve to provide response to crises during the year). Other key elements that intervene in the fine-tuning phase of the allocation process are the access to beneficiaries and the security aspects, the operational capacities of partners on the ground, which include the capacity to efficiently absorb funds already allocated to the country, and the presence of the other donors that may lead to changes in the priorities (in terms of geographical coverage, sectors, etc.) not to duplicate efforts and to ensure the best coverage of the needs. As a final step, a comparative analysis of proposed budget allocations is carried out in order to ensure consistency and balance of allocations across countries and regions, taking due account of any relevant operational priorities.

Funding in the field of humanitarian aid involves constant re-appraisal of humanitarian crises as they evolve. If the need for humanitarian assistance diminishes, often due to the start of rehabilitation and development activities, humanitarian work is wound down. ECHO puts a high priority on linking humanitarian aid and development activities. The exit strategy for all areas of humanitarian intervention is reviewed twice a year, first, when funds are initially allocated, then, during a mid-term review. The latter, which takes place in July, is an opportunity to review priorities for remaining funds for the rest of the year in accordance with evolving needs.

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[13]   The IAF model includes in-depth analysis of the context and the development of the crisis situation as well as the verification of certain Global Vulnerability and Crisis Assessment (GVCA) and Forgotten Crisis Assessment (FCA) indicators by Commission field experts and geographical desks. The IAF template covers a country/context analysis (national level and sub-national level), needs assessment, response analysis (presence of donors, LRRD, coordination and implementation capacity), specific food and nutrition analysis and a forgotten crisis recommendation where appropriate.

[14]   http://inform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/

3.1.2 Global Vulnerability and Crisis Assessment (GVCA)

The Global Vulnerability and Crisis Assessment[15] categorises 140 developing countries on the basis of:

- the existence of a recent crisis (caused by conflict, natural disaster, or presence of a large number of refugees or internally displaced persons (IDPs), and
- the degree of vulnerability of the country's population.

The combination of **crisis and vulnerability indices allows the identification of the high priority areas.**

Using the GVCA methodology, in 2014[16], ECHO identified **33 countries** or territories currently suffering from a natural disaster and/or a violent conflict and/or that are experiencing a large number of uprooted people – reflected by a crisis index of 3. Of the 33 countries identified, **14 have emerged as "highly vulnerable"**, i.e. vulnerability indicator of 3. They are: **Central African Republic, South Sudan, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia, Chad, Sudan, Mali, Nigeria, Afghanistan, Uganda, Kenya, Myanmar/Burma, Pakistan and Yemen.**

Further, the remaining 19 countries where the GVCA Crisis Index is also 3**,** but the vulnerability indicator is less than 3 are: Colombia, Iraq, Syrian Arab Republic, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Palestine, Philippines, Jordan, Solomon Islands, Libya, Lebanon, Ukraine, Algeria, Egypt, Thailand, Mexico, Serbia, Russian Federation and Chile.

Countries that are identified as "highly vulnerable" (GVCA Vulnerability Index 3), but with a GVCA Crisis Index less than 3 are: Burundi, Liberia, Mauritania, Haiti, Ethiopia, Cote d'Ivoire, Rep. of Congo, Burkina Faso, Niger, Zimbabwe, Djibouti, Guinea Bissau, Gambia, Comoros, Eritrea and Sierra Leone.

The final GVCA index rank and a visual representation of the GVCA results are to be found in Annexes to this document.

3.1.3 Forgotten Crisis Assessment (FCA)

The FCA attempts to identify crises characterised by very low media coverage, a lack of donor interest (as measured through aid per capita) and a weak political commitment to solve the crisis, resulting in an insufficient presence of humanitarian actors.

The FCA 2014-2015 exercise identified the existence of 10 forgotten crisis situations[17] among which 8 were already identified as forgotten in 2013-14:

1. Algeria - Sahrawi Refugee Crisis
2. Bangladesh – Rohingya refugee crisis and Chittagong Hill Tracts
3. Cameroon
4. Chad
5. India - conflicts in Jammu and Kashmir, central India (Naxalite Insurgency) and in the North East of India

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[15] The GVCA Ranking and data (final indices and sub-indicators), including an interactive map and all GVCA releases since June 2012 can be accessed at: http://echo-global-vulnerability-and-crisis.jrc.ec.europa.eu/
[16] GVCA September 2014 update
[17] The FCA index since 2012 can be accessed on: http://echo-global-vulnerability-and-crisis.jrc.ec.europa.eu/?system=FCA

6. Myanmar/Burma - Kachin conflict and Rakhine crisis
7. Pakistan
8. Sudan
9. Yemen
10. Colombia crisis - population affected by the internal armed conflict in Colombia and Colombian refugees in Ecuador and Venezuela

The newly identified forgotten crises are: Colombian refugees in Ecuador and Venezuela and refugee crises in the east of Cameroun and in Sudan. Besides Sudan, the Colombian refugees in Ecuador and Venezuela and refugee crisis in the east of Cameroun have been identified as forgotten for the first time since ECHO developed the FCA tool in 2004.

Some of the forgotten crises are becoming **chronic** having been identified as forgotten for years now. For example, Sahrawi refugees in Algeria (since 2004), Colombia (since 2007), Yemen and Myanmar/Burma (since 2009), India and Bangladesh (since 2010) have all appeared on this list.

For 2015, 16.7% of the planned geographical humanitarian aid budget allocation is earmarked for these forgotten crises[18].

3.1.4. Other considerations

ECHO aims to ensure availability of funding for as many crisis situations as possible and that there is a swift, efficient, comprehensive response. Whilst funding allocations are based on needs assessment and co-ordination with other donors, certain factors that are outside our control may reduce the volume of aid that can effectively be delivered to the beneficiaries. Two factors, in particular, should be mentioned. These are the extent to which implementing organisations are present and have the capacity to handle needs in a given crisis zone ("absorption capacity"), and the linked problem of access restrictions caused either by insecurity or administrative impediments.

ECHO also aims to ensure that proper needs assessment and monitoring take place and only accepts "remote management" in limited circumstances, where justified by humanitarian imperatives. In these cases, partners are obliged nonetheless to take advantage of any available local capacity to assess and monitor as reliably and comprehensively as possible.

Restrictions faced by partners are most prevalent in areas of conflict, a marked absence in the rule of law or due to political and administrative impediments (e.g. Syria, Somalia or Sudan). They can also be affected by political resistance from governments.

3.1.5. Operational objectives and budget planning

The general EU budget earmarked on the budget lines for humanitarian aid/food assistance and disaster preparedness (DIPECHO) is EUR 909 million. This amount is to be used to finance humanitarian aid operations aiming essentially to:

(a) provide humanitarian and food assistance, relief and protection to vulnerable people affected by man-made crises, possibly aggravated by natural disasters, including new crises and existing crises where the scale and complexity of the humanitarian crisis is such that it seems likely to continue ("complex emergencies");

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[18]   NB: the overall amount allocated to these countries/region is higher; the reason is that part of these allocations cover crises – within those countries/regions – which are not "forgotten" (e.g. Sudan/South Sudan, Pakistan)

(b) provide humanitarian and food assistance, relief and protection to vulnerable people affected by natural disasters that have entailed major loss of life, physical and psychological or social suffering or material damage ("natural disasters");

(c) support strategies and complement existing strategies that enable local communities and institutions to better prepare for, mitigate and respond adequately to natural disasters by enhancing their capacities to cope and respond, thereby increasing resilience and reducing vulnerability in the South Asia, Pacific, the Caribbean and South America ("DIPECHO").

The graph below shows the percentage of the planned budget for each region and the related supporting instrument. This amount does not take into account the funds received – as assigned revenues – from other donors, notably the EU Member States.[19]

As in previous years, **sub-Saharan Africa** will be the region in which the bulk of the budget is to be planned (50%) given the consequences of natural disasters and recurrent complex emergencies in the region.
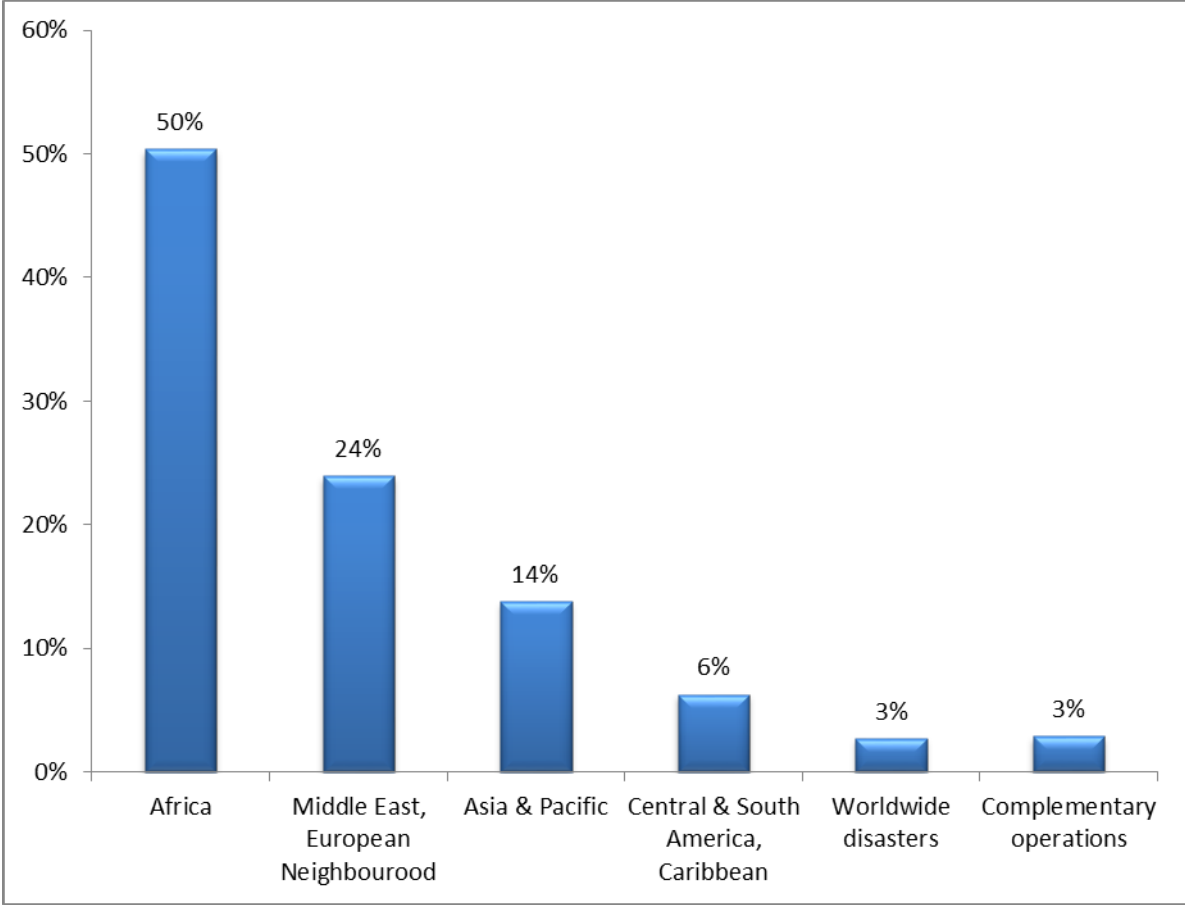
Figure 1 — Budget planned in 2015 by region

(1) Complementary operations include the technical assistance, the enhanced response capacity, the EU Children of peace, NOHA and communication projects

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[19] For 2015, an additional amount of EUR 4 million, received by the Commission as external assigned revenue through a tripartite agreement with the Government of Ivory Coast and the French Agency for Development (AFD), is expected to be used for interventions in Ivory Coast. This amount will be reflected in the 2015 Worldwide Decision, but not included in this document. Other external assigned revenues, from EU Member States, are being discussed.

The chart below shows the response planned for complex emergencies and natural disasters based on budget per region.
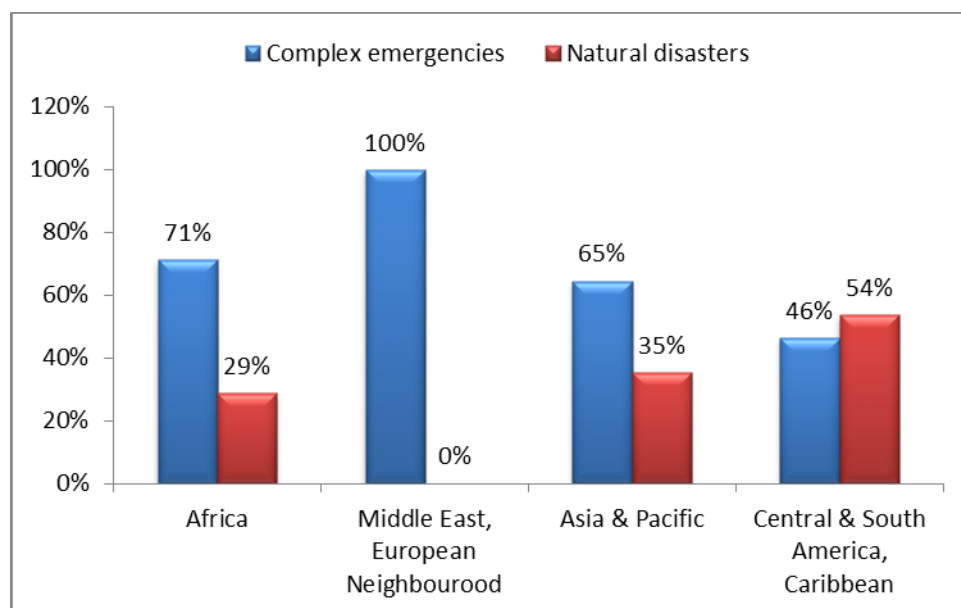
Figure 2 — Budget planning: response to complex emergencies and natural disasters

3.1.6. Regional approach in the Worldwide Decision (WWD) and Humanitarian Implementation Plans (HIPs)

As of 2015, ECHO is broadening its regional approach and moving towards regional responses within certain HIPs published in the context of the Worldwide Decision to cover i) the countries of the region concerned where funding are envisaged at the outset ii) the countries of that region for which ECHO would have identified vulnerabilities but for which no budgetary pre-allocation is foreseen iii) the countries of that region where DIPECHO actions are envisaged. This approach presents the substantial advantage of lending added speed and flexibility to EU humanitarian assistance, as well as simplification/streamlining among HIPs.

Details on how ECHO will support humanitarian and food assistance to vulnerable people affected by man-made crisis and/or natural disasters, as well as on DIPECHO can be found in sections 3.2 to 3.6 and in Annex II.

3.2 Africa

3.2.1 Sudan, South Sudan

Since 15 December 2013, the violent political conflict in South Sudan with its dramatic humanitarian consequences has overshadowed a number of outstanding issues between Sudan and South Sudan, including the border demarcation, the status of the disputed area of Abyei and the implementation of the 2012 cooperation agreement. Relations between the two countries have at least not deteriorated in 2014, despite cross-accusations of supporting proxy rebel groups in both countries. Progress on outstanding issues is stalled due to the domestic crises the two countries face. The precarious economic situation of both countries remained a major concern in 2014, and it is likely to be so as well throughout 2015 and beyond.

Insecurity and multiple conflicts prevail in both countries. The overall humanitarian situation has drastically worsened in both countries. In South Sudan the political crisis which turned violent on 15 December 2013 has led to a major humanitarian crisis (a level-3 emergency in 2014 - the highest level of a humanitarian crisis) on top of an already difficult humanitarian situation, with an estimated 7.3 million people at risk, including 3.9 million people facing alarming levels of food insecurity in August 2014 (IPC phases 3 and 4). In Sudan, 6.9 million people are estimated to be in need of humanitarian assistance, with major protection concerns being conflict-related violence in Darfur, South Kordofan and Blue Nile and a significant wave of new South Sudanese refugees. Humanitarian operations in both countries face several challenges due to access limitations, insecurity, logistical and administrative impediments and poor local capacity. Advocacy for opening up humanitarian space and for respect of humanitarian principles will therefore continue to play a key role.

In 2015, funding for South Sudan will focus on four main axes: support for the scaling-up of humanitarian assistance where the greatest needs are identified, including through adequate food aid and emergency health and nutrition response, emergency WASH to reduce deaths, logistic support; advocate for a better protection of civilians inside and outside UNMISS Protection of Civilians areas; continued humanitarian assistance to address the basic needs of refugees; and support to communities exposed to high risks of morbidity and mortality, including severe food insecurity, high malnutrition rates and outbreaks of epidemics as a result of shocks linked to flooding and seasonal hunger during the lean season. Effective coordination will also be supported.

In Sudan, which has been identified as a forgotten crisis, ECHO will focus - if access allows - on emergency response and preparedness for displaced people, refugees, returnees, host communities and nomads, in the sectors of food assistance and livelihoods, nutrition, health, water, sanitation and hygiene, shelter and non-food items and protection. It will also encompass coordination - including support to security programmes - and logistic support. Efforts to reduce acute malnutrition through a multi-sectorial approach will be supported. In settings where the emergency is less acute, the identification of transition strategies is to be pursued. An overall focus on protection will remain particularly pertinent for all types of displaced populations (IDPs, returnees and refugees) across the country, despite implementation challenges due to overall access constraints and lack of actors. Protection mainstreaming will increasingly be promoted. Improved targeting and diversifying aid modalities to build resilience of vulnerable communities to future shocks will be of paramount importance.

3.2.2 Central Africa

Central African Republic (CAR)

The humanitarian crisis in the Central African Republic escalated dramatically at the end of 2013, extending to the whole territory and pushing thousands to flee. In 2014, as a result, the entire population of 4.6 million people is considered affected by the crisis; of them 2.5 million are extremely vulnerable and in need of life-saving assistance. The conflict has generated half a million IDPs in Bangui and in the province, with numerous communities living in enclaves deprived of their rights and subsistence means. Since December 2013 more than 176 000 people, including the majority of the Muslim population, have sought refuge across borders into neighbouring states, mainly in Cameroun and Chad. The escalation of the crisis in December 2013 triggered a Level 3 emergency declaration by the UN –the highest level of a humanitarian crisis.

Despite the national and international efforts to pacify the country and (re)build state institutions, including the mobilisation of international forces (African Union, France and the EU through EUFOR-CAR) ahead of the deployment of UN peace-keeping mission (MINUSCA), the transition process remains challenging and insecurity is still widespread throughout the country. Humanitarian organisations therefore face exceptional difficulties to reach affected communities in order to provide much needed relief and protection.

In 2014 the Commission has committed to a strong LRRD process linking humanitarian aid to long term development assistance, through the creation of the first EU Trust Fund for CAR. Within this context, ECHO will focus humanitarian aid to CAR in 2015 on protection, emergency food assistance and short–term livelihood support, emergency health and nutrition interventions, WASH, shelter and non-food items distribution, logistics and humanitarian coordination, with a view to provide an integrated support to meet the basic needs of the affected populations. Humanitarian assistance will simultaneously aim at restoring resilience of populations and maintaining advocacy efforts to ensure that the international response is adequately funded and that the political process is properly supported.

Chad

In 2014, Chad was at the junction of four major crises - Central African Republic, Sudan, Nigeria and Libya -, which have intensified its exposure to population movements. The CAR crisis alone triggered some 120 000 new refugees and returnees in the first half of 2014. Regional dynamics, including growing violence in Nigeria, are expected to further affect Chad and give rise to new humanitarian needs. The Sahel belt of Chad remains highly food insecure due to harsh environmental conditions and eroded livelihoods exacerbated by endemic poverty and chronic underdevelopment. Food insecurity is projected to continue in 2015. The nutritional situation remains of great concern, with prevalence rates above emergency thresholds in 5 regions of the Sahel, and an increasing number of under-5 children estimated in need of SAM treatment. Chad is furthermore exposed to natural disasters and epidemics, with cholera being a persistent and growing threat due to population movements, and with the new threat represented by the Ebola outbreak in the region. The combination of high vulnerability with low response capacities and limited donor engagement qualifies this situation as a forgotten crisis.

Against this background, humanitarian action in 2015 will focus on the following axes:

− provide essential life-saving services support for vulnerable refugees, returnees and host populations, encouraging self-sufficiency as much as possible;

− achieving a sustainable reduction of malnutrition-related mortality among children under five and their mothers using the strategic approach developed for the Sahel, in a strong LRRD framework, while helping populations to recover from the effects of past food crises and cope with new external shocks through emergency operations and resilience building measures;

− support preparedness and response measures to new sudden or slow-onset emergencies, namely natural disasters/epidemics.

As a whole, 1.6 million people affected by different crises across the country are projected to receive multi-sectorial assistance in 2015. ECHO will adjust its interventions according to the evolving humanitarian situation. Given the volatile operational context, advocacy and support for logistics and transport services in order to secure humanitarian access will continue, partly through ECHO Flight, along with the promotion of humanitarian coordination. Focus on LRRD and disaster and epidemics preparedness and rapid response

will be enhanced. High-level attention on the AGIR Sahel initiative, to which Chad adheres, should continue to be promoted.

Cameroon

In 2014 Cameroon had to face a major refugee crisis in the East and react to the consequences of Boko Haram's attacks in border areas of Nigeria and in the North and Extreme North of Cameroon, entailing large population movements. Throughout 2014 at least 130 000 refugees from CAR arrived in extremely vulnerable conditions in a country unprepared to face a humanitarian crisis, while the influx of refugees from Nigeria reached at least 24 000 persons in the third quarter of the year. Setting up an adequate emergency response was a difficult endeavour, due to limited donor and partners' presence.

At the same time, no significant progress was recorded in respect to lowering chronic malnutrition rates in the destitute Sahelian regions of Cameroon (North and Extreme North), where around 400 000 people are affected by food insecurity and 180 000 by malnutrition in 2014.

In response to this multifaceted and largely forgotten crisis, ECHO will focus humanitarian assistance in 2015 on the following axes:

- provision of immediate multi-sectorial assistance responding to basic needs of CAR refugees both in camps and within host communities in Eastern Cameroon;

- continued emergency nutrition assistance for around 180 000 malnourished children and their mothers in the Sahelian regions;

- close monitoring of the humanitarian situation across the country and along the North-West border in particular, with a view to respond to possible new needs generated by new refugee influxes.

3.2.3 Great Lakes Region

Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Great Lakes Refugees

The humanitarian crisis in the DRC is among the world's most complex and protracted emergencies. Congolese civilians face widespread violence (including sexual) and insecurity originating both from armed groups and Congolese armed forces, access is extremely challenging for physical and security reasons, and there is insufficient funding to cover previous and new needs in such a volatile context. While the Declaration of "end of insurgency" by the M23 armed group in November 2013 has created a window of opportunity for stabilisation in the East, many other armed groups (ranging from local defence groups to well-armed foreign groups with a political agenda) continue to operate in eastern Congo and to commit gross human rights abuses. In particular, a significant deterioration of the humanitarian situation in the Katanga province is reported. Livelihoods are jeopardised by population displacement, insecurity prevents access to land, and vulnerable populations do not have adequate access to water, sanitation and medical care.

In areas not affected by conflict, malnutrition rates are often above emergency thresholds as a result of economic difficulties and instability. The whole country is regularly subject to epidemics, due to the poor health and sanitation conditions.

In 2015, ECHO will address urgent needs arising from population displacements in conflict zones (2.6 million displaced people and 400 000 Congolese refugees as a result of the conflict) and life-threatening situations in non-conflict areas. A particular attention will be

given to the protection of civilians affected by the conflict. ECHO will support emergency preparedness to ensure swift response capacity in such a volatile context. Other regions affected by epidemics (measles, cholera, malaria and Ebola), acute malnutrition and refugees situations (Central African Republic refugees and DRC refugees in neighbouring countries) will also be assisted strictly respecting emergency thresholds and taking into account local capacities.

Activities will be closely coordinated with development cooperation instruments. Advocacy for the defence of humanitarian space and respect of humanitarian principles and IHL will be maintained, along with support for humanitarian coordination and logistics, and the provision of the ECHO Flight service for access to very remote areas.

ECHO identifies also potential for interventions in response to new or widening disasters in Equatorial Guinea, Gabon and Sao Tomé, in view of the high exposure and vulnerability in these countries.

3.2.4 Horn of Africa

The Horn of Africa has experienced in 2014 an overall deteriorating food security as well as a substantial increase of newly arrived refugees, mainly as a consequence of the on-going conflict in South Sudan. Over 8.8 million people are currently in immediate need of humanitarian assistance in the region. The refugee crisis in the region is both acute and protracted with about 1.7 million refugees, originating mainly from Somalia. In addition, about 1.5 million people are internally displaced in the region.

In 2015, ECHO will sustain its activities to avoid people sliding back into crisis, whilst continuing to address new urgent needs. The assistance will put special emphasis on life-saving activities and strengthening resilience of the most vulnerable people to drought. The use of emergency preparedness and response mechanisms to provide flexibility in the response to new emergencies will continue to further strengthen cost-efficiency. ECHO will closely follow the discussions at regional level on potential return strategies and will strongly advocate for its voluntary character. Moreover, ECHO will continue to be actively involved in the search for self-reliance solutions for protracted refugees in coordination with development partners especially when conditions for return are not present.

Somalia

Somalia still represents one of the most serious humanitarian crises in the world. Over 1 million people are expected to remain acutely food insecure until the end of the year and 2.3 million people are still at risk of sliding back into crisis in the absence of adequate assistance two years only after the declaration of famine in 2011 that led to 258 000 excess deaths in Somalia. Drought, food insecurity and conflict still have the effect of aggravating the humanitarian situation, leading, among other things, to further displacement and the exhaustion of coping mechanisms. Around 1.1 million people are internally displaced in Somalia while more than 1 million have taken refuge in the neighbouring countries. Restricted access and high insecurity are major challenges for aid agencies. ECHO will continue to focus on emergency response through life-saving activities in the South-Central regions of Somalia and in urban areas of Puntland and Somaliland. Protection and support to livelihoods as well as the mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction initiatives will be encouraged. This will contribute to strengthening the resilience of the most vulnerable communities.

Ethiopia

In the second half of 2014, over 3.5 million people are in need of immediate humanitarian assistance, including refugees and internally displaced populations. Out of these, the number 2.7 million people requiring emergency relief food assistance in 2014 is expected to rise, as the nutritional situation is currently deteriorating in many parts of the country. A significant increase of recently arrived refugees from South Sudan is reported, adding on to a large refugee population from Somalia, Eritrea, South Sudan and Sudan already in the country for many years. According to UNHCR, Ethiopia is now the largest refugee-hosting nation of the continent with over 630 000 refugees in need for assistance. Movements of internally displaced people due to floods, drought and conflict, rapid-onset natural disasters and epidemic outbreaks are also recurrent.

A rapid response capacity mechanism will continue to be reinforced in order to improve the coverage and the timeliness of support to affected populations in emergency situations. The refugee caseloads will continue to receive life-saving assistance including potential opening of new camps, relocation of refugees to other sites and assistance to host community if the situation requires. The most appropriate seems to consist in building resilience of the most vulnerable populations will be pursued, better preparing them for the next drought cycle and increasing their coping capacities. For the latter, ECHO will provide assistance through a multi-sectoral approach, with nutrition as the entry point, complemented by interventions in health, water, sanitation, hygiene, food security and disaster risk reduction. Opportunities for LRRD will continue to be looked at in close collaboration with the EU Delegation and other major donors.

Kenya

In 2014, 1.3 million people remain food insecure in Kenya. 2014 has seen depressed rains throughout the country and worrying signs of drought in parts of the country. In addition, insecurity and associated disruptions to market access and income-earning opportunities are likely to further compound the effects of the poor season in Northern Kenya.

In the arid lands, in 2015 ECHO will support emergency response, nutrition and resilience building and will encourage proper information sharing among INGOs on areas under tight security constraints. Advocacy for the creation of "safety nets" will be continued throughout the region while disaster preparedness will remain a strong component. Opportunities for LRRD will be pursued in close collaboration with the EU Delegation, especially in the sectors of nutrition and livelihood. Disaster risk reduction, health, nutrition and hygiene education will continue to be mainstreamed. ECHO will pay particular attention to the devolution process and its impact on the implementation of its activities.

In the Dadaab and Kakuma refugee camps, more than 575 000 people, mainly from Somalia and South Sudan, live in extremely precarious conditions. The influx of some 50 000 refugees from South Sudan to Kakuma Camp since December 2013 has put more pressure on the level of assistance to the refugees and the host communities. ECHO will continue in 2015 to address the most pressing needs of the refugees and the host communities, including protection while looking at durable solutions in the case of protracted refugee situations. A close attention will be given to the response to the influx of South Sudanese to Kenya and to the approach of the Kenyan Authorities on the question of Somali refugees and their possible repatriation to Somalia.

Djibouti

120 000 people are still in need of humanitarian assistance in Djibouti. In this context, ECHO is planning to continue contributing to the strengthening of the resilience of the most vulnerable through nutrition, cash and livelihood activities. In 2015, ECHO will focus its support on the situation of the Somali Refugees in the Ali Addeh and Hol Hol camps through food assistance and WASH activities.

Uganda

Besides the on-going countrywide weather and epidemiologic surveillance, ECHO will continue in 2015 supporting the assistance to refugees present in Uganda.

Eritrea

ECHO is currently not supporting any humanitarian assistance in Eritrea. Due to limited access and humanitarian space in Eritrea, providing direct humanitarian assistance remains a challenge in this country. It will continue to monitor the situation and will be prepared to fund operations if needed provided there are possibilities for independent needs assessments and monitoring of humanitarian projects.

3.2.5 Southern Africa and Indian Ocean

The Southern Africa and Indian Ocean region is extremely vulnerable to recurrent weather hazards, namely tropical cyclones, floods and droughts. ECHO will continue to monitor the humanitarian situation and intervening whenever necessary using emergency funding.

During 2015 the Commission, through ECHO, will continue to implement the 4th DIPECHO programme launched in 2014, supporting community-based approaches with aim to enhance resilience of the hazards-exposed communities. To the extent possible, the Disaster Risk Reduction / Disaster Risk Management initiatives will be implemented in close collaboration and with the involvement of governments and national counterparts, seeking durable solutions and benefits for vulnerable populations.

3.2.6 West Africa

The Sahel

The recurrent food and nutrition crises in recent years broke the resilience mechanisms to absorb shocks for the most vulnerable populations in the Sahel. The level of food insecure people and the number of malnourished children remains at a permanently high level. It is estimated that almost 20 million people will be still food insecure in the Sahel, including 6.5 million in need of emergency food assistance. With 1.5 million children at risk of Severe Acute Malnutrition, the Sahel still has the highest malnutrition caseload in the world. With no significant decrease of food prices in the markets, and without large scale safety net mechanisms in place, no relief is expected for the poorest households, which in some areas represent more than 50% of the rural population. Political instability and potentially epidemics are aggravating factors, with the Mali, Nigeria and Ebola crises disrupting both availability of staple goods and casual work opportunities throughout the region.

In 2015, ECHO will continue to focus on achieving a sustainable reduction of malnutrition-related mortality among children under five using the two pillar strategic approach developed for the Sahel in recent years. First, it will continue to support actions to prevent, mitigate and treat malnutrition for under-fives and pregnant and lactating women. Second, it will support advocacy and measures to improve the knowledge base, strengthen early

warning and promote the take up of food and nutrition security, including more support to the health sector in a permanent and sustainable way in Sahel government policy planning and the priority areas of action for development partners. Apart from direct action to help those most in need, ECHO will continue to encourage high-level attention on the urgent need to strengthen the resilience of the most vulnerable populations in the Sahel, through the AGIR Sahel initiative launched by the EU in 2012.

Interventions in the Sahel region will cover Senegal, Mauritania, Mali, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Niger and Nigeria, as well as the Sahelian belt of Chad as described above (page 17). However, there is also potential for interventions in response to new disasters in other coastal West African countries[20], particularly in view of their high exposure and vulnerability to natural disasters.

Ivory Coast

In 2015 the implementation of the innovative Partnership for the Transition LRRD initiative in Ivory Coast, which started after the post-electoral crisis in 2011, will continue to be encouraged. This programme will be partly funded by AFD (*Agence Française de Développement*)[21]. The overall objective is to ensure a proper transition from humanitarian aid to public funding of the health sector. This should allow the government and development partners to restore public services in the health sector, especially in the areas of western Ivory Coast most affected by the post-electoral violence

Mali

Increasing number of security incidents in Northern regions of Mali continue to have negative impact on deployment of government of Mali, MINUSMA and humanitarian access. With a limited presence of civil servants, government of Mali is not able to restore access to basic services in these regions. Therefore, almost two millions of people, including 150 000 refugees who cannot return to Mali, are totally depending on humanitarian assistance. At the same time, food crisis and malnutrition rates are affecting the whole country in Mali. Global Acute Malnutrition rates remained above the alert threshold of 10% with the rate for Severe Acute Malnutrition at over 2%, with a peak of 3.5% in some regions. More than 700 000 children are expected to be malnourished in 2015 of which 170000 severely malnourished.

In 2015 humanitarian assistance will continue to focus on reducing malnutrition rates and strengthening food and nutrition security and resilience. At the same time it will continue to support the provision of food assistance and basic services to the population of Northern Mali through humanitarian actors. Where and when possible, it will support the implementation of transitional activities linking relief to development actions to ensure the rebuilding of resilience of those most affected by the conflict in the northern regions of Mali. In addition ECHO plans to strengthen humanitarian access to the northern regions, notably through the development of ECHO Flight, and to address the needs of refugees in neighbouring countries.

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[20] Benin, Cape Verde, the Gambia, Ghana, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Togo

[21] The Commission received EUR 17.3 million as external assigned revenue for interventions in Ivory Coast, within a tripartite agreement with the Government of Ivory Coast and the French Agency for Development (AFD), out of which EUR 4 million are expected to be implemented in 2015. This amount is not considered in the present EU budget allocation/prioritisation exercise, but will be reflected in the 2015 Worldwide Decision.

Nigeria

While a relatively rich country, Nigeria is facing considerable humanitarian challenges. A large part of the population has no access to essential goods or services. 19 million people are affected by conflict and 6.2 million people require rapid multi-sectorial assistance in terms of food assistance, nutrition, health and protection. The country has the highest number of malnourished children in Africa - 1.7 million children suffering from acute malnutrition - mostly in the 11 most Northern states, with over 11 million being stunted across Nigeria and an estimated 756 000 children under five dying every year from malnutrition and related causes.

In addition to food insecurity and malnutrition, most recent macro indicators related to health in Nigeria are under the African average. The country is regularly hit by epidemics linked to poor coverage and lack of access to clean water and sanitation. Furthermore, populations living in the Benue and Niger River basins are regularly affected by floods.

Since mid-April 2014, the north-eastern part of Nigeria has seen a significant upsurge of violence due to Boko Haram insurgency and resulted into large displacements of population. The National Emergency Management Agency estimated that from 1.5 up to 3 million people may have been internally displaced. The civil insecurity is causing a spill-over effect to the neighbouring countries. Over 70 000 people have searched refuge in the neighbouring countries of Niger, Chad and Cameroon.

In 2015, the main focus of the humanitarian action will be on improving the management of acute malnutrition and associated diseases in order to reduce mortality for vulnerable children under five years of age. In addition, ECHO will focus on assistance and protection of victims of violence in Nigeria and neighbouring countries. Furthermore, it will finance actions related to preparedness, early warning and emergency response to prevent high mortality rate in case of sudden floods and/or epidemics.

3.3 Middle East and North Africa

3.3.1 Middle East

Palestine

Palestinian refugees and local populations within Gaza and the West Bank continue to suffer from the occupation policy. Demolitions and forced evictions, movement restrictions affecting access to land and to basic services, and violence against Palestinians continue to create humanitarian needs. The blockade of the Gaza strip imposed by the Government of Israel continues for the eighth year in a row. In addition, the Gaza Strip has suffered three wars in seven years. Periodic shocks – whether internal or external –spark off humanitarian crises, as witnessed during Israel's 'Protective Edge' operation in July and August 2014 that had a massive and unprecedented humanitarian impact. The blockade translates into a situation of continuous economic de-development with consequent increase of vulnerabilities. Unless normal movement of people and goods is allowed to resume there will be no fundamental change in the humanitarian situation in Gaza. The expansion of Israeli settlements in the West Bank, which are considered illegal under International Law, has contributed to an increase in demolitions of private Palestinian property, deterioration of access to basic services, increase in settler violence, and restrictions on movement and access, which all lead to forcible displacement.

A traditional sectorial approach of relief assistance alone is insufficient to protect communities from IHL violations. Therefore in 2015 humanitarian assistance in Palestine will focus on the humanitarian mandate through increasing emphasis on protection and emergency concerns, namely emergency preparedness and response, humanitarian advocacy and support to humanitarian coordination.

Close coordination within Commission services (in particular between ECHO and Development and cooperation - DEVCO) and with the European External Action Service (EEAS), will continue to ensure programmatic complementarity between relief and long-term operations.

Syrian Crisis

The Syrian conflict is having a devastating and lasting impact on Syria and across the region. With the conflict entering its fourth year, the needs of the affected populations, including 10.8 million people inside the country and over 3 million refugees, as well as overstretched host communities in neighbouring countries, are of an unprecedented scale. The number of conflict-related deaths has surpassed 191 000 individuals and an estimated one million have been war-wounded.

The situation in Syria is expected to deteriorate further as there are no immediate prospects for a military or political solution to the conflict, and both sides still have significant capacity to resist and inflict damage. The growing involvement of extremist and foreign non-state actors in the fighting in Syria poses a threat to stability in the region and beyond.

Access to people in need has not improved. It is now estimated that 4.7 million people reside in areas that are hard to reach, including about 241 000 people who continue to live in areas that are besieged by either government or opposition forces.

The Syria crisis morphed from a humanitarian emergency to a multidimensional acute and protracted crisis directly affecting several countries in the region - mainly Lebanon and Jordan, but also Iraq, Turkey and Egypt - whose social, economic and structural capacity to deal with the ever growing influx of refugees has been stretched to the limits. The refugee influx continues at a rate of more than 100 000 people per month. Since the beginning of the crisis, neighbouring countries have shown exemplary generosity and hospitality to hundreds of thousands of families fleeing Syria. Host community resources, services and infrastructure are overstretched and in some cases at a breaking point due to unremitting increased demand, requiring immediate and long term support. Social tensions between refugees and host communities continue to increase as a result of the competition for jobs, land, housing and water.

ECHO will continue to adapt its humanitarian intervention to the ever-changing situation in Syria and the affected neighbouring countries. ECHO will focus on the most pressing humanitarian needs (emergency health assistance, shelter (winterisation), protection, food assistance, water and sanitation as well as psychosocial support to the most affected people in Syria and neighbouring countries) but will as well advocate for a greater coordination/synergies between humanitarian and development actors and for greater cost effectiveness of our operations.

In the case of new natural disasters affecting Syria, Lebanon, Jordan or Turkey, in view of the vulnerability and exposure of these countries, a potential response may be envisaged if significant humanitarian gaps are identified.

Iraq Crisis

Iraqis suffer yet another political and security crisis with large-scale humanitarian consequences. In August, the UN declared the crisis in Iraq as a level 3 emergency in order to scale up its response according to the needs of the estimated 1.8 million persons newly displaced since the beginning of the year. Given the fluidity and escalation of the conflict it is difficult to predict the humanitarian situation in 2015. There is no clear end in the horizon for the fighting between ISIL, Armed Opposition Groups, the Iraqi and Kurdish Forces and their international allies, which increases displacement and results in lack of access to basic services for the most vulnerable populations affected by the conflict.

The international community is currently focusing the attention in scaling up its response to IDPs in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, where humanitarian actors do not face barriers to access the population in need. However, greater, sustained efforts are required to assist populations suffering the conflict on a daily basis in the central belt of Iraq. Efforts should be strengthen to negotiate access and provide direct and adapted assistance to the local civilians and the around of 500 000 persons known to be displaced in the area. Also access to and delivery of assistance to those still in areas in conflict remains a critical priority. ECHO will continue advocating for the protection and humanitarian access to all populations affected by the crisis, for building an "all of Iraq" response in accordance with humanitarian principles and international humanitarian law.

ECHO will continue to support lifesaving programmes in the food, health, shelter, core relief items and wash sectors. Transversal integration of protection and multi-sectorial, needs-based assistance will be encouraged to mitigate the consequences of this conflict and the rupture of Iraq's social fabric. Special relevance in ECHO's action in 2015 will be to identify, through timely needs assessments, critical gaps of assistance and the most cost-effective aid modalities (i.e. cash, alternative shelter options, etc.).

Iraq is not only facing the consequences of the internal conflict, but also those created by the ongoing conflict in neighbouring Syria. Today Iraq hosts 217 800 registered Syrian refugees and ECHO will continue to assist them, supporting humanitarian assistance for Syrian refugees in Iraq.

Iraq is prone to disasters such as earthquakes, floods and droughts. In the case of new natural disasters affecting Iraq, in view of the vulnerability and exposure of the country, a potential response may be envisaged if significant humanitarian gaps are identified.

Yemen

Yemen is the poorest country in the Middle East and Northern Africa region. A range of intertwined causes contribute to its extreme fragility and are at the roots of a complex and multi-faceted crisis, including poor economic performance, prolonged internal conflicts, political instability, an alarming nutritional situation and widespread food insecurity. Following the uprising in 2011, the country has embarked on a complex political transition process which is progressing, despite several delays and setbacks. Yemen has some of the worst social indicators in the world and is facing an unprecedented nutrition emergency, with one million children acutely malnourished and 2.2 million chronically malnourished. Food insecurity levels are alarming: 10.6 million people encounter difficulties in purchasing food and about half of them require regular external food assistance. The country is hosting

more than 300 000 internally displaced people (IDP) and over 240 000 refugees, mostly from the Horn of Africa. All in all, the UN estimates that approximately 58% of the Yemeni population is in need of humanitarian assistance. Yemen scores 3/3, the most severe level, according to ECHO Vulnerability and Crisis Index and remains a forgotten crisis for the fifth consecutive year. At the same time, worsening security conditions and access constraints are seriously affecting the ability of humanitarian agencies to operate in the country. ECHO will continue to focus on communities affected by acute malnutrition and related food insecurity, and to ensure humanitarian assistance to populations hit by the conflict and victims of forced displacement, including refugees and vulnerable migrants.

3.3.2 North Africa

The North Africa region is prone to disasters such as earthquakes, floods and droughts. In the case of new natural disasters affecting Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia, in view of the vulnerability and exposure of these countries, a potential response may be envisaged if significant humanitarian gaps are identified.

Sahrawi refugees

Gathered in 5 main camps spread in the desert of southwest Algeria, Sahrawi refugees are almost entirely dependent on external humanitarian assistance with little prospect for self-reliance, because income generating activities are scarce and difficult to implement in the desert, or for return, as the peace process that should put an end to this 38-year old conflict has been stalled for years. The basic needs that will continue to be addressed are the provision of dry and fresh food, water in sufficient quantity and of adequate quality, health and nutrition, shelter, basic medicines, and adequate security to humanitarian workers. In such a protracted context, the potential for LRRD is very low. ECHO will continue to encourage inter-sector coordination, optimal complementarity of donor funding, local capacity-building, and a permanent logistics and supply chain to ensure continuous delivery of aid to the most vulnerable Sahrawi refugees throughout the year.

Libya

Since Qaddafi's fall, no central government has been able to impose itself. The Libyan state is undermined by rivalry between different factions and militias, which are using their military capability to compete for political power and control of the country's strategic and economic assets. Alongside the fragile political and security situation, the humanitarian crisis is deepening. At the moment, UN and IFRC estimate that nearly 110 000 people have been displaced from their homes in the conflict areas and have dispersed in different directions, including into neighbouring Tunisia, adding to the 50 000 displaced persons as a consequence of the 2011 crisis. The intensified conflict has considerably impacted the lives of civilians, causing shortages of medical supplies, displacement, destruction of homes and infrastructure, disruption of basic services and communications and difficulties on obtaining food and fuel supplies. The fate of inhabitants, displaced and other vulnerable communities trapped in fighting areas and evacuation of these individuals to the border are of great concern. Food supplies in Tripoli, parts of Benghazi, as well as reception towns, have become problematic, not only because stocks are running low, but also as a consequence of banks being closed and cash becoming a rare commodity. Concerns about water supply and the provision of electricity remain high: the main power plant supplying the capital with electricity is in Janzour, where fighting is still ongoing, and the main water plant is not accessible as it is also located in a combat zone. The Ministry of Health has warned about a possible collapse of the health system after thousands of international health workers had

been evacuated from Libya. Humanitarian organizations are currently reinforcing their preparedness and response mechanisms in Libya and Tunisia. ECHO will continue closely monitoring the situation, and will assess the need to respond to uncovered humanitarian needs in case of a deterioration of the humanitarian situation.

Tunisia

As in 2011, it is likely that Tunisia will bear the brunt of a volatile situation in Libya. Tunisia is, along with Algeria, affected by sub-Saharan migration and instability in Libya. Regular armed clashes in Libya could trigger large population movements (from both Libyans and third country nationals) towards the only opened border in the region and a country offering some degree of stability and international assistance such as Tunisia. The evolution of the conflict in Libya is unpredictable, thus making it difficult to anticipate possible humanitarian needs in neighbouring Tunisia. However, on the basis of a contingency plan, it is important ECHO encourages coordination and preparedness efforts involving key stakeholders. Other countries in the region could be affected as well if the conflict continues in Libya: Algeria, Egypt or Morocco could equally face an increased influx of refugees, migrants seeking their way to Europe or third country nationals escaping the war.

3.4 European Neighbourhood, Asia, and the Pacific

3.4.1 European Neighbourhood, Central Asia and Caucasus

Central Asia and Caucasus

Both, Caucasus and Central Asia (CAC) are highly exposed to natural hazards, including earthquakes, landslides, floods, mudflows, droughts, avalanches and extreme temperatures. Natural hazards, combined with the high vulnerability of the population and inadequate local capacities renders disaster risk reduction an important component of ECHO's intervention in the region. In some cases ECHO remains the only donor supporting DRR activities in the region.

The 2014-2015 action plan seeks to consolidate the results achieved through DIPECHO 2012-2013 in order to reduce the vulnerability and contribute to build resilience and a culture of safety of the communities and institutions. The activities will focus on interventions in the area of DRR and on increasing the awareness, preparedness and response capacities and general resilience to natural disasters, at community, national and regional levels.

Ukraine

The conflict in Ukraine has significant humanitarian consequences. It started end of February 2014, and led to substantial displacement. The number of displaced people has been growing rapidly, both inside Ukraine but also in neighbouring countries, mainly in Russia.

Fighting in conflict areas could lead to further displacement. Due to the upcoming winter, winterized shelter and access to basic needs and services are of urgent concern for IDPs in/from Eastern Ukraine and from the Autonomous Republic of Crimea. But also people moving back to regions previously occupied by the separatists are in need of humanitarian assistance.

Finally, due to the volatile security situation access to people in need in conflict areas in Eastern Ukraine is limited or often excluded, even when ceasefire agreements are in place. Bearing in mind that basic services (water, power, energy supply etc.) to the population are interrupted in conflict areas, it is crucial to gain humanitarian access to conflict areas to provide humanitarian assistance to the population.

Given the fluidity and escalation of the conflict it is still difficult to predict the humanitarian situation in 2015.

3.4.2 South Asia and Pacific

3.4.2.1 South West Asia

Afghanistan

A conflict spanning the last 35 years has caused widespread destruction to the social and economic fabric of the country, eroding the resilience of the population and has resulted in a protracted IDP and refugee crisis which is compounded by recurrent natural disasters. The protracted and fragmented nature of the conflict, the blurring of lines between humanitarian aid and military actors, insecurity, uncertainty regarding electoral outcomes, weak and corrupt government agencies, the remoteness of vulnerable communities and poor accessibility all combine to pose significant challenges to the provision of principled humanitarian aid. In order to support humanitarian actors overcome these challenges, ECHO supports coordination, safety and security and air services as a pre-requisite for humanitarian aid delivery.

As the conflict steadily expands, the number of IDPs has increased to over 700 000 and civilian casualties are rising each year. ECHO supports life-saving multi-sector interventions to conflict-affected populations, as well as healthcare provision in areas not otherwise covered. The protracted conflict has also resulted in large populations of Afghan refugees in Iran and Pakistan. At the same time, the increasing intensity of conflict in Pakistan has resulted in Pakistani refugees entering Afghanistan. ECHO supports multi-sector assistance to these populations.

Afghanistan is also regularly affected by natural disasters, predominantly floods and drought, affecting on average over 400 000 people each year. It is important to maintain life-saving multi-sector support to these populations, while engaging in disaster preparedness.

With the international presence drawing down, new shocks are putting further pressure on the resilience of communities to cope. 2015 is likely to see a continuation of these trends, with widening conflict between a variety of actors, an increase in the number of people affected and/or displaced by the conflict, a reduction in access to life-saving services, and a reduction in resources to tackle these issues.

ECHO, notably through the ECHO office in Kabul, will continue to play a leading role within the humanitarian community. As made clear in the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid, it is important to closely link and ensure coherent humanitarian actions between the Commission and EU Member States. Close coordination with other donors to support durable solutions to this protracted crisis will also be pursued.

Pakistan

The combined effects of man-made and natural disasters in Pakistan as well as economic and political instability have led to the depletion of the resilience of millions of people over the last decade. In addition, the nexus of four consecutive years of floods since 2010 and underlying structural problems have led to millions of people being displaced and put at risk,

with a significant negative impact on livelihoods, food and nutrition security. The recovery from devastating floods in 2010, 2011 and 2012 is still on-going and was aggravated in 2013 by monsoon rains. Humanitarian assistance for flood-affected communities continues to be needed.

National rates of Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) are critical, exceeding 20% in certain districts, notably in Sindh Province. According to UNICEF estimates, Sindh province comprises about one quarter of the 3.7 million acutely malnourished children in Pakistan. These poor nutrition indicators are compounded by maternal undernutrition. The factors contributing to the current nutrition emergency in rural Sindh are complex. Nevertheless, the key underlying vulnerabilities can be attributed to limited availability of and access to food and basic services (clean water, health, sanitation, education), depletion of livelihood options and assets and indebtedness, all of which are overlaid by structural inequalities. With a rate of 72%, Sindh Province has also by far the highest food insecurity rates in the country.

Vaccine preventable illnesses continue to cause significant impact with cases of Polio and Measles still prevalent. Pakistan is one of the three countries in the world where the polio virus is endemic. Dengue and malaria peak seasonally, with areas such as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Punjab and Sindh, historically at most risk. Lack of sufficient health care services decreases the populations' ability to fight infection and low vaccine uptake limits immunity.

Since 2008, Pakistan's north-western areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) have experienced major population displacements as a result of insecurity, insurgency and military operations against armed non-state actors. The most recent wave of massive displacement took place in June 2014, following military operations against non-state armed groups in the North Waziristan Agency (NWA) of FATA. The new wave of NWA Internally Displaced People (IDPs) adds to a protracted IDP caseload of 1 million, thus bringing the total IDP figure to over 1.5 million people. Up to 95% of the IDPs seek refuge in host communities, with only 5% opting to live in camps. The protracted nature of displacement has not only put significant strain on scarce resources within the host communities but has likewise adversely impacted the resilience of displaced populations. IDPs may have different levels of access to assistance and services but the lack of stable income opportunities, combined with rising food prices and rent, has significantly increased their vulnerability.

Pakistan continues to host over 1.6 million registered and an estimated 1.2 million unregistered Afghan refugees who also continue to require international assistance and protection. Pakistan has not acceded to the 1951 Refugee Convention, and the Proof of Registration cards – the only guarantee of Afghan citizens' legal right to stay in Pakistan - will expire at the end of 2015. The precarious status of Afghan refugees is a key concern.

ECHO will continue providing humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable. Ensuring neutral, impartial and independent action, in line with humanitarian principles, continues to be an important priority. In addition, a sustained, holistic, and multi-sectoral approach to address the issue of food insecurity and undernutrition continues to be required in certain parts of the country.

3.4.2.2 South Asia

South Asia is among the most disaster-affected regions in the world in terms of scale, recurrence and severity of disasters. In 2015, apart from ECHO's continued response to natural and man-made disasters in Bangladesh, India and Nepal, a potential response may be

required to new disasters in Sri Lanka in view of the high exposure and vulnerability to disasters of the country.

Furthermore, ECHO interventions in South Asia will strengthen the resilience of the most vulnerable communities in disaster-prone areas and build the capacity of institutions involved in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), while promoting the replication of DRR models which have proved to be effective and sustainable. South Asian countries are increasingly taking concrete action to improve preparedness and reduce risks, developing legal frameworks that address DRR and setting up national DRR Platforms, in accordance with their commitments to the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) 2005-2015 and the post-Hyogo process. The Disaster Management Centre of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) was set up in Delhi in 2006, reaffirming the regional commitment to the HFA.

Bangladesh

ECHO will continue to deliver basic life-saving humanitarian aid to the unregistered Rohingya population. This encompasses the treatment of acute malnutrition and the provision of basic health and water services in and around the informal camps and includes the most vulnerable populations living in the surrounding area, to the extent that access is granted. There is a clear need to also address shelter rehabilitation and protection activities, despite important access challenges. In parallel, discussions will continue with key stakeholders to promote a durable political solution to this protracted crisis.

With Bangladesh being an EU resilience flagship country, ECHO and DEVCO are working together closely to establish a roadmap towards resilience in Bangladesh. This roadmap will reinforce the linkage between relief, rehabilitation and development in two regions (South-west water-logged areas and Chittagong Hills Tracts) and focus on food and nutrition security, using the Joint Humanitarian Development Framework. In this vein and ensuring practical linkage between humanitarian and development actions, ECHO will continue to provide food assistance and livelihood diversification support to one of the most food insecure groups in the country, i.e. the ethnic minorities living in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. The region is still hit by sporadic political violence. Continued ECHO support is also foreseen for the rehabilitation and recovery of the victims of water-logging in Khulna division.

When there are important unmet emergency needs, ECHO will also continue to support the humanitarian response to recurrent natural disasters, by providing food assistance, nutrition, health, shelter, water and sanitation and logistical support, in both urban and rural contexts. This will be particularly relevant in disasters that attract little international attention, in remote and most vulnerable locations and in case of disasters with a geographically limited impact.

India

The focus of activities will be on alleviating emergency needs arising from the protracted crises in Jammu and Kashmir, in the districts of central India affected by the Naxalite insurgency, as well as in the North-eastern states of Assam, Manipur, Tripura and Nagaland. Priority sectors will be protection, livelihood, access to health services and psychosocial support. Furthermore, humanitarian assistance to victims of natural disasters may also be provided when significant gaps in the local response are identified. Opportunities for LRRD are very limited, particularly since there is no EU-India development co-operation.

Nepal

While the resettlement programme of Bhutanese refugees to third countries proceeds satisfactorily, there are still almost 25 000 refugees living in camps in the East of Nepal. ECHO will continue to provide assistance, aiming to maintain the food consumption and nutritional status of the most vulnerable groups, and advocate for a political solution to the problem. Humanitarian assistance to victims of natural disasters may also be provided, when there are significant emergency needs that remain uncovered.

3.4.2.3 South East Asia and the Pacific

For the response to natural and man-made disasters, the 2015 focus in South East Asia will largely be on Myanmar/Burma and Thailand. However, there is also potential for interventions in response to new disasters in Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Vietnam, Philippines, Indonesia, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Mongolia, Papua New Guinea and Fiji, in view of the high exposure and vulnerability to natural disasters in these countries.

In addition, ECHO will address disaster preparedness and disaster risk reduction needs in - South-East Asia and the Pacific, thereby contributing to resilience building. Priority will be on consolidating achievements made in Vanuatu during previous DIPECHO programmes and to support regional actions with a thematic focus (e.g. urban risk reduction, international disaster risk reduction campaigns), benefitting vulnerable populations in both South-East Asia and the Pacific regions. Initiatives may also be supported aiming to enhance the capacity of regional organisations to provide practical, technical and other support to countries on how to best integrate disaster risk reduction.

Myanmar/Burma, Thailand

In 2014, in Myanmar/Burma there were positive developments towards a nationwide ceasefire with ethnic groups, paving the way for a possible return of refugees from Thailand. In Rakhine State, the 140 000 people displaced as a result of the communal violence in 2012 between Muslim (mostly Rohingya) and Buddhist Rakhine still remain in camps or with host families. The attacks on the premises of international aid agencies in Sittwe in March 2014 led to a temporary suspension of assistance, which has only slowly resumed. For the 800 000 stateless Rohingya in the northern townships, the humanitarian consequences of continued human rights violations worsened, in particular as regards access to health care. In Kachin State, the internal conflict has displaced 120 000 people. Acute needs remain unaddressed, notably for the 53 000 IDPs in areas outside government control. Restricted access to the civilian population is still a major challenge to the relief response.

In 2015, ECHO will continue to address the needs of the most vulnerable people affected by violence and conflict in a holistic manner. Focus will be on Rakhine and Kachin States. Information management and coordination may also be considered, while disaster risk reduction and gender/age issues will be mainstreamed. Support for the repatriation of refugees from camps in Thailand and resettlement of IDPs in Myanmar/Burma will be envisaged in coordination with development actors, if the situation is conducive for safe and voluntary return. In the meantime, assistance to the refugee camps in Thailand will continue, although at a reduced level as the camp population is decreasing.

3.5 Central and South America, Caribbean

3.5.1 South and Central America

Central and South America and the Caribbean (LAC) is one of the world's most disaster prone areas. It is also a region where there is a long-standing internal conflict (in Colombia,

although peace negotiations are ongoing) as well as organized criminal violence that causes forced displacement. Moreover, the LAC region continues to have the highest rates of inequality worldwide, with macro-economic indicators masking the real socio-economic situation and vulnerability of the majority of the population. Rapid urbanization is also increasing vulnerability.

South America

Based on the achievements of previous interventions, ECHO's disaster preparedness and disaster risk reduction activities in 2015 aim at further strengthening replication of the best practices developed at community level for ownership and institutionalization by the authorities. To this end, close coordination with local, national and regional disaster management institutions will be maintained. The focus will be on country-specific or regional thematic initiatives. Furthermore, targeted actions are envisaged to build the resilience of the most vulnerable to recurrent disasters, such as floods in Bolivia, coordinating closely with institutions and development actors. Given the high exposure and vulnerability to natural disasters in Bolivia, Ecuador, Paraguay and Venezuela, a response may be envisaged to respond to uncovered humanitarian needs in case of new disasters in these countries.

Colombia

Despite ongoing peace negotiations with the main guerrilla group (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia - FARC), the long-lasting armed conflict continues to cause a major, evolving, humanitarian crisis. A total of up to 5.5 million people have been displaced in the last two decades. Up to 200 000 people are forced to leave their homes per year, with many fleeing to neighbouring Ecuador and Venezuela. In this forgotten crisis, humanitarian assistance remains vital in departments most affected by the armed conflict, especially where access is limited.

In view of the significant support the Colombian government foresees to support the victims of the conflict, ECHO's emergency assistance (including also protection activities) will continue to focus on the most vulnerable affected populations who do not receive adequate assistance. Support will be provided to recently displaced populations and rural communities facing restrictions on movement and/or access to basic goods and services. Thereby, particular attention will be paid to the needs of the most vulnerable groups, i.e. female-headed households, children, the elderly, indigenous and Afro-Colombian populations. In Ecuador and Venezuela, ECHO will provide humanitarian assistance and protection to Colombians in need of international protection as well as to recognized refugees, by supporting access to Refugee Status Determination procedures as well as access to health and education services. In addition, humanitarian assistance to victims of natural disasters may be provided when important gaps in the local response are identified.

Central America

Successive shocks over the last years (including droughts, coffee rust) have seriously deteriorated the food security situation of small-scale producers and day labourers and their families, More than 1.4 million people were already moderately or severely food insecure by August 2014, with a further deterioration expected for the first quarter of 2015 due to the effects of the 2014 drought. If significant gaps in the coverage of humanitarian needs are identified, ECHO may envisage emergency humanitarian assistance and support to building the resilience of the populations most affected by the different shocks and vulnerable to external threats. Priority will be given to areas and populations representative of the combined needs (food insecurity, natural disasters). Given the high exposure and

vulnerability to natural disasters in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Mexico, ECHO will assess the need to respond to uncovered humanitarian needs in these countries in case of new disasters.

3.5.2 Caribbean

ECHO will continue support to disaster preparedness, disaster risk reduction and strengthening resilience, building on the achievements of previous interventions. Cooperation will continue with disaster management institutions at local, national and regional level to further promote institutionalization and sharing of best practices. Apart from country-specific and regional thematic initiatives, targeted support for disaster risk reduction and resilience is envisaged in Haiti. Furthermore, in the case of new disasters in Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Saint Lucia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, in view of the vulnerability and exposure of these countries, a potential response may be envisaged if significant humanitarian gaps are identified.

Haiti

Five years after the 2010 earthquake and over four years after the beginning of the cholera outbreak in Haiti, significant progress has been made to address the acute humanitarian needs of the victims. However, the 100 000 people remaining in camps in dire conditions are extremely vulnerable. 600 000 people are severely food insecure across the country. In view of the high vulnerability of the population to shocks and the prevalent extreme poverty, ECHO will put strong emphasis on resilience building, while addressing the remaining acute humanitarian needs of the most vulnerable.

In this vein, in 2015 ECHO will support efforts to find adequate and durable solutions for the remaining displaced population, to the fight against cholera through adequate health and water and sanitation services, as well as to strengthen the livelihoods of the most vulnerable and food insecure households. A protection-sensitive approach in all interventions will be essential in order to take into account the high level of vulnerability. Humanitarian assistance to victims of natural disasters may also be provided when there are significant emergency needs that remain uncovered.

In line with the EU approach to resilience, ECHO will continue to reinforce the link between relief, rehabilitation and development as well as strategic coordination among humanitarian and development actors, including donors. Therefore, humanitarian interventions integrating a resilience approach will target pockets of high vulnerability in close synergy with longer-term development programmes.

3.6 Worldwide intervention tools: Emergency Toolbox

Humanitarian aid operations to be financed by ECHO under the Emergency Toolbox aims to provide humanitarian assistance for response and disaster preparedness to populations affected by disasters where a small scale response is adequate, including through the IFRC DREF, and to populations affected by epidemic outbreaks.

3.6.1 Small Scale response to disasters

While relatively limited numbers of people may be involved, small-scale disasters still have a serious negative impact on the lives and livelihoods of those affected. They often occur in remote or isolated areas and rarely attract international attention. In addition, in the context of larger disasters, even in countries with relatively developed disaster management capacity, there are sometimes gaps in the national response, i.e. needs that are not covered

due to social inequality, physical isolation, and under-reporting of events or inadequate local capacity. The objective of the Small Scale Response tool is to provide rapid relief assistance to victims of natural or man-made disasters where a small-scale response is sufficient to cover unmet needs and enhance preparedness. Where appropriate, actions funded also aim at enhancing the most vulnerable populations' resilience and strengthening the capacity of local communities and authorities to respond to disasters.

3.6.2 Support to the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF)

Most small-scale emergencies are responded to at local or national level. Red Cross and Red Crescent national societies, supported by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent societies (IFRC), are often best placed to provide an immediate response, being rooted in the local community and mobilising community members as volunteers. ECHO will continue to support the IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) through earmarked contributions. Funding is provided for relief activities as well as preparedness for imminent disasters, in the context of small-scale emergencies for which an appeal is unlikely to be launched.

3.6.3 Epidemics

Epidemics pose great risks to the health, lives and livelihoods of vulnerable people in developing countries. Communicable diseases that have appeared or reappeared in recent years have demonstrated their epidemic potential and their capacity to significantly exceed national resources and boundaries, causing major - even regional – emergencies. This was clearly illustrated by the Ebola outbreak in West Africa in 2014, for which a quick response was provided through the Epidemics component of the Emergency Toolbox. The burden of endemic and epidemic-prone diseases tends to increase in view of more complex emergencies related to natural disasters, climate change, and conflict. Such crises result in increased vulnerability to infectious diseases alongside reduced capacity of countries to respond to public health risks, especially if existing health systems were already poorly resourced. Vaccination coverage in developing countries is generally low and, thus, the risk of transmitting infection is increased. To reduce morbidity and mortality in disease outbreaks, early and effective action is required. Preparedness and response capacity are intimately linked as an effective response is only possible with an appropriate degree of preparedness.

3.7 Complementary and thematic activities

Humanitarian aid operations to be financed by ECHO as complementary and thematic activities aim to improve the delivery of aid through complementary and thematic activities aiming at increasing effectiveness, efficiency, quality, timeliness and visibility of humanitarian actions and transport. This objective is to be met through a series of sub-objectives:

a) To strengthen the global humanitarian preparedness and response capacity of humanitarian partners by increasing the effectiveness and reinforcing the capacity of international humanitarian organisations and non-governmental organisations to assess, analyse, prepare and respond to humanitarian ("Enhanced Response Capacity").

b) To improve the conditions for delivering humanitarian aid by supporting transport services to ensure that aid is accessible to beneficiaries ("Echo Flight")

c) To increase awareness, understanding and support on the part of Union citizens for humanitarian aid issues and the role which the European Union plays in the field, by organising high impact communication actions designed to enhance awareness, knowledge, understanding and support for humanitarian issues and to highlight the partnership between ECHO and its partners in delivering relief assistance to people affected by humanitarian crises. ("Visibility, information and communication").

d) To provide high quality European education and professional qualifications on humanitarian action that impact on humanitarian aid policy and practice ("NOHA").

e) To support children affected by conflict, specifically through education in emergencies and crisis situations ("Children of Peace").

f) To increase the coherence, quality and effectiveness of humanitarian aid, by the provision of expertise to assist policy development in support to humanitarian aid actions and by reinforcing networking between humanitarian non-governmental organisations. ("Policy support").

While more information on ECHO Flight can be found in section 3.2 in relation to the countries in which this humanitarian air service is to be operated, the activities to be financed under the other sub-objectives can be more specifically set out as follows:

3.7.1 Enhanced Response Capacity (ERC)

Globally, humanitarian needs are likely to continue to outstrip available resources as a consequence of climate change, food scarcity, urbanisation and inequalities, which erode the capacity of populations to cope, generating vulnerability, fragility and violent conflicts.

While globally humanitarian needs are now better addressed through improvements in parts of the global humanitarian system[22] - such as the 'Global Clusters', through an inclusive approach that better engages the main humanitarian implementers in key sectors of humanitarian delivery - the range and capacity of effective humanitarian actors remain too limited.

The overarching aim of ECHO's Enhanced Response Capacity is help to address the growing gap between the scale of humanitarian needs and the resources available. ERC funding for 2015-16 will build upon and consolidate successful investments[23] to date. It will prioritise the promotion of innovative ways of working and of new approaches that will enable a more efficient humanitarian response to counter the evolving nature, and increased scale, of humanitarian needs.

3.7.2 Visibility, information and communication

The European Union is one of the world's leading humanitarian aid donors and plays an important role in shaping the global humanitarian landscape. Providing transparent and accountable information about the impact of EU humanitarian aid and disaster response and the underlying values to stakeholders in the wider sense is crucial to underpinning and mobilising continued support and relief assistance.

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[22] As informed by the ERC Mid-Term Review Evaluation and DG ECHO's 'Fit for Purpose' Stakeholder Consultation

[23] 2013/14 ECHO Mid-Term Evaluation of ERC Funding

The communication approach aims at enhancing awareness, understanding and support for the EU's role and actions among the EU citizens, at promoting defined priorities within the EU and globally, and at supporting advocacy. Joint communication actions with ECHO's humanitarian partners are integral to this approach. Ensuring visibility for the EU's humanitarian funding and action within the EU and around the world, including through field visibility, is indispensable to maintaining and consolidating support. Operational activities will fully integrate this imperative.

Communicating about the response to major crises remains at the core of the communication plan together with awareness-raising about humanitarian principles, protection of humanitarian space and about forgotten crises. Particular emphasis will be put on the following themes: resilience and disaster risk management, food insecurity and under-nutrition, modernisation of humanitarian aid; and to the following groups of beneficiaries: children in emergencies, women within the context of gender-based violence, specific types of refugees. Moreover, considerable communication support will be required by a number of large-scale international and European events and conferences.

The measures relate to public information and awareness actions in accordance with Article 4 (fifth indent) of the Humanitarian Aid Regulation. This is also in conformity with the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid (point 97, last indent), which envisages communication on the impact and importance of European humanitarian aid and civil protection, to the European public.

Communication actions in 2015 will also contribute, where appropriate, to the corporate communication of the Commission, and in particular to the corporate theme dealing with the EU's role in the world (currently "EU as a global player"). The European Year for Development will be a main action within this theme for 2015.

3.7.3 Training initiative NOHA

The Network on Humanitarian Action (NOHA) is the first network of 12 universities at European level that provides education (teaching and research) and training in humanitarian action. It has maintained a strong relationship with ECHO since its inception in 1993. NOHA produces 175 Masters Graduates each year and is planning to increase this number to 200 in 2015 and further expand its geographical coverage eastward.

ECHO aims to increasingly shift the focus of the network to the provision of other educational products and to a much more results-oriented approach focusing on added value for the humanitarian aid environment. In a parallel development over the last years, the EU has developed a vision of its humanitarian agenda and priorities which came into focus in the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid.

Member States and the humanitarian partners of the European Commission agreed that the promotion of training activities should be part of an overall approach to reinforce global aid. Moreover, the Action Plan of the Consensus commits the European Union to the "reinforcement of EU training provision for humanitarian professionals and other actors linked to the humanitarian response" to contribute to an "improved response to humanitarian crises" and to achieve improved accountability to aid recipients. ECHO is committed to the implementation of those principles which underpin the vision of the European Union.

The Commission's relationship with NOHA was modified to reflect this evolution of the EU humanitarian agenda. Where NOHA was once viewed a source of postgraduate students, the Network is increasingly functioning as an educational platform and to inform

the humanitarian debate and policy formulation in the European Union, in particular in the European Commission. In 2015, NOHA moves into a new phase with a stronger emphasis on its global strategy, e-learning offer and research activities.

3.7.4 The EU Children of Peace

An important element of improving aid effectiveness is ensuring that assistance reaches the most vulnerable population groups. Therefore, ECHO will continue to support education in emergencies for children affected by conflict, in particular through the EU Children of Peace Initiative, which was launched after awarding the 2012 Nobel Peace Prize to the EU. Children are particularly vulnerable to conflict. Education in emergencies is crucial for the protection and development of conflict-affected children. It gives children a sense of normality and a safe space, helps them recover from crises and encourages them to contribute to peace. The Commission is grateful for the contribution from the Governments of Luxemburg and Austria to the EU Children of Peace initiative.

3.7.5 Operational guidance ("Policy support")

The increasing scale of humanitarian needs calls for the most effective use of the limited resources available. The diversity of actors and approaches requires clear guidance regarding best approaches to meet the needs of the beneficiaries, taking into account an ever more complicated context.

The need for operational guidance and operational guidance-related products to improve coherence, quality and efficiency applies both directly to EU humanitarian funding and, more broadly, to global approaches to humanitarian funding. This is true for specific sectors (such as WASH, Health, food, nutrition, DRR, shelter and settlements), horizontal areas (such as Gender, Evidence Based Needs Assessment and other current and future priorities), as well as overall humanitarian frameworks (such as International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and civil-military coordination). The diverse and wide-ranging discussions of humanitarian challenges in the run-up to the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016 will reinforce the need for the humanitarian community to pool expertise with a sense of vision for the future.

Therefore, ECHO is proposing the financing of specific humanitarian expertise and networks to contribute to the quality and coherence of "policy" initiatives in a number of focus sectors with the overall aim to improve the effectiveness of humanitarian aid.

4. DELIVERY, COORDINATION AND CONTROL OF HUMANITARIAN AID

4.1 Ways and means of delivering aid

Experts in the field

ECHO manages the European Commission's humanitarian activities from its headquarters in Brussels via a network of more than 40 field offices all over the world. Following the post-tsunami action plan of 2005, the network has been consolidated with multi-sectoral rapid response teams, which enable field experts to be dispatched rapidly in response to new crises to carry out needs assessments and to help coordinate activities in the field. The network has been reinforced in response to the recent increase in the number of large-scale disasters. Cooperation with teams deployed via the EU Civil Protection Mechanism will be further enhanced to maximise complementarities.

Relations with partners

ECHO implements its humanitarian aid mandate by funding projects proposed by around 200 partners. They include European non-governmental organisations, United Nations Agencies, other international organisations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the International Organisation for Migration, and specialised agencies from Member States.

Having a diverse range of partners is important, as it allows comprehensive coverage of an ever-growing list of needs in different parts of the world and in increasingly complex situations. Grants and contributions are decided on the basis of the best proposals covering the needs of those most vulnerable. Partner organisations make a commitment to highlight the origin of EU aid.

ECHO is also committed to improving the overall quality and coordination of the humanitarian system response. ECHO supports capacity-building for its partners, whether international organisations or NGOs, to enable them to respond quickly and efficiently to emergencies.

4.2 Coordination and exchange of information

Various mechanisms are in place to ensure coordination and exchange of information on crisis response and humanitarian aid activities in general, including:

- Member States and the Commission meet regularly in the Council Working Group on Humanitarian Aid and Food Aid (COHAFA). Exchange of information on overall strategies and on responses to specific crisis situations features regularly in the agendas of COHAFA;

- Crisis reports are shared with Member States. They contribute to the development of shared assessment and understanding on the situation on the ground and thus contribute to the overall coordination of the EU response;

- Exchanges with partners both at headquarters and at the field take place regularly;

- EDRIS (European Disaster Response Information System) collects data on Commission and Member States' humanitarian aid activities;

- At international level, the Commission, represented by ECHO, continues to participate in well-established *fora* such as the Good Humanitarian Donorship and the ICRC Donor Support Groups. It chairs the OCHA Donor Support Group in 2014;

- Regular exchanges of views on the EU's response to crises take place in the European Parliament (in particular in the DEVE Committee);

- ECHO organises ad hoc crisis coordination meetings of the EU services (including ARGUS meetings) and participates in broader inter-service meetings aimed at exchanging information (such as e.g. Crisis Platform meetings organised by the EEAS).]

4.3 Monitoring of use of funds

Correct implementation of EU-funded operations is ensured by several layers of checks and monitoring, at internal level and by external actors.

Controls performed by the Commission

The main aspects of the control environment developed by the Commission include supervision and monitoring procedures and ex-ante/ex-post controls.

− Strict selection and quality control mechanisms for partners under the Framework Partnership Agreement that the Commission/ECHO, on behalf of the EU, signs with NGOs and international organisations[24] defining the requirements for financial credentials and expertise of partners;

− Appraisal of project proposals and on the spot project monitoring through a network of Commission field experts (technical assistants) worldwide;

− Regular field visits to projects by geographical desks, technical experts, external auditors and Commission managers;

− Obligation for partners to produce reports after the end of each operation to justify their expenses. A thorough analysis of these reports, with checks on eligible expenditure, are carried out by operational and financial desk officers at the Commission;

− Regular evaluations are undertaken, focusing on major country operations, partners and thematic issues. The results of these are posted on the Commission's website;

− EU-funded humanitarian aid activities implemented by external parties (partners and contractors) are subject to financial and systems audits;

− All Commission services have an internal audit capacity. This provides an independent and objective opinion on the quality of the internal control systems and assists the Director-General and the management in controlling risks and monitoring compliance.

The monitoring mechanisms listed above should not be seen in isolation. Each one contributes to providing reasonable assurance on the legality of transactions and their general compliance with relevant rules and obligations.

Furthermore, within the Commission, controls are carried out by the Internal Audit Service, whose mission is to give recommendations, opinions and advice with respect to internal control systems of Commission's departments and EU autonomous bodies.

Additional controls

The Commission's operations and financial management are also subject to external controls. In this respect, they are further audited by the European Court of Auditors. The European Court of Auditors audits EU finances and, increasingly, the performance of its activities. Its observations and recommendations are published in the Courts' annual and special reports, which are transmitted to the European Parliament and the Council[25].

Furthermore, specialised committees of the Budget Authority (European Parliament and Council) exercise control over financial management in European Commission services: in this context, the Budgetary Control Committee of the EP organises annual hearings with a number of Commissioners in the framework of the procedure for the discharge of Commission's annual accounts.

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[24]   Mainly IFRC, ICRC and IOM
[25]   The annual report is published on http://eca.europa.eu/portal/pls/portal

Annex I: Indicative budgetary allocations for 2015 (subject to the adoption of the Worldwide Decision)

REGIONS/COUNTRIES	23.0201 Humanitarian aid and food assistance	Countries with proposed humanitarian aid interventions at the outset	Countries without initial allocation	23.0202 Disaster Preparedness	Countries with proposed DIPECHO interventions
CENTRAL AFRICA, SUDAN & SOUTH SUDAN, GREAT LAKES	**173 020 000**				
Sudan and South Sudan	82 000 000	Sudan (25 000 000), South Sudan (57 000 000)			
Great Lakes region	47 000 000	Democratic Republic of Congo, Republic of Congo, Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania	Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Sao Tomé		
Chad, Cameroon and Central African Republic	44 020 000	Chad (26 020 000), Cameroun (4 000 000), Central African Republic (14 000 000)			
EAST, WEST AND SOUTHERN AFRICA, INDIAN OCEAN	**160 975 000**				
Horn of Africa	77 000 000	Somalia (35 000 000), Djibouti (500 000), Ethiopia (21 000 000), Kenya (15 500 000), Uganda (5 000 000)	Eritrea		
West Africa	83 975 000	Senegal, Mauritania, Mali, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Niger, Nigeria	Other coastal West Africa countries		
NORTH AFRICA, EUROPEAN NEIGHBOUROOD,	**176 550 000**				

Annex I: Indicative budgetary allocations for 2015 (subject to the adoption of the Worldwide Decision)

REGIONS/COUNTRIES	23.0201 Humanitarian aid and food assistance	Countries with proposed humanitarian aid interventions at the outset	Countries without initial allocation	23.0202 Disaster Preparedness	Countries with proposed DIPECHO interventions
CENTRAL ASIA & MIDDLE EAST					
Palestine	25 000 000	Palestine			
North Africa	10 000 000	Algeria	Libya, Morocco, Tunisia		
Ukraine	5 000 000	Ukraine			
Yemen	25 000 000	Yemen			
Syrian crisis	100 000 000	Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey,	Egypt		
Iraq crisis	11 550 000	Iraq			
SOUTH ASIA & PACIFIC	**80 500 000**			**15 296 000**	
South West Asia	52 500 000	Afghanistan / Iran (24 500 000), Pakistan (28 000 000)			
South Asia	13 000 000	India (3 000 000), Bangladesh (9 500 000), Nepal (Bhutanese refugees only) (500 000)	Nepal, Sri Lanka	12 296 000	Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka
South East Asia and the Pacific (including DIPECHO Pacific)	15 000 000	Myanmar/Burma,, Thailand	Cambodia, DPRK, Fiji, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Vietnam	3 000 000	Vanuatu
CENTRAL & SOUTH	**21 600 000**			**22 000 000**	

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Annex I: Indicative budgetary allocations for 2015 (subject to the adoption of the Worldwide Decision)

REGIONS/COUNTRIES	23.0201 Humanitarian aid and food assistance	Countries with proposed humanitarian aid interventions at the outset	Countries without initial allocation	23.0202 Disaster Preparedness	Countries with proposed DIPECHO interventions
AMERICA, CARIBBEAN					
Central America and Caribbean	11 600 000	El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Haiti	Mexico, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	9 000 000	Belize, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Suriname
South America	10 000 000	Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Venezuela, Peru	Paraguay	13 000 000	Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela
WORLDWIDE	**25 790 000**				
Emergency toolbox	9 000 000	Disaster Relief Emergency Fund – DREF (3 000 000), Epidemics (3 000 000) and Small Scale Response (3 000 000)			
ECHO Flight	6 790 000				
The EU Children of Peace	10 000 000				
COMPLEMENTARY OPERATIONS	**20 150 000**				
Enhanced Response Capacity	15 000 000				
Policy Support	2 450 000				

Annex I: Indicative budgetary allocations for 2015 (subject to the adoption of the Worldwide Decision)

REGIONS/COUNTRIES	23.0201 Humanitarian aid and food assistance	Countries with proposed humanitarian aid interventions at the outset	Countries without initial allocation	23.0202 Disaster Preparedness	Countries with proposed DIPECHO interventions
Visibility, Information and Communication	2 000 000				
NOHA	700 000				
TOTAL	658 585 000			37 296 000	
TOTAL EU Budget allocation				695 881 000	
Emergency Operational Reserve				165 861 000	
Transport and field network				48 000 000	
GRAND TOTAL EU BUDGET				909 742 000	

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Annex II: Summary of Global Vulnerability and Crisis Assessment 2013-2014

Global Vulnerability and Crisis Assessment Final Index Rank

The GVCA Final Index lists countries in ranking order. The GVCA Vulnerability Index and the GVCA Crisis Index are shown, as well as the various dimensions. Each dimension has a value that is the result of combining indicators. Note that all values are the result of ranking countries. If countries are in the top quartile (25%), they score 3; in the bottom quartile (25%), they score 1; in the middle 2 quartiles, they score 2.

ISO3	Country	GVCA Vulnerability Index (VI)	4 Vulnerability Dimensions				GVCA Crisis Index (CI)	3 Crisis Dimensions			Rank
			General situation in the country Index	Health of children under 5 Index	Uprooted people (VI)	Other Vulnerability factors Index		Natural Disasters Index	Conflict Index	Uprooted people Index (CI)	
CAF	Central African Republic	3	3	3	3	2.25	3	0	3	3	11.812
SSD	South Sudan	3	x	3	3	2.25	3	1	3	3	11.750
COD	Congo, Democratic Republic of the	3	3	3	2.5	2.25	3	0	3	3	11.688
SOM	Somalia	3	3	3	3	1.75	3	1	3	3	11.688
TCD	Chad	3	3	3	2.5	2	3	2	1	3	11.625
SDN	Sudan	3	3	3	2.5	1.5	3	1	3	3	11.500
MLI	Mali	3	3	3	2	1.75	3	1	3	2	11.438
NGA	Nigeria	3	2	3	2	2.5	3	1	3	2	11.375
AFG	Afghanistan	3	2.5	3	2	1.75	3	0	3	2	11.312
UGA	Uganda	3	3	2	1.5	2.5	3	0	3	2	11.250
KEN	Kenya	3	2	2.5	2	2.25	3	1	3	2	11.188
MMR	Myanmar, Union of	3	2	2.5	2	2	3	0	3	2	11.125
PAK	Pakistan	3	2	3	2	1.5	3	2	3	2	11.125
YEM	Yemen	3	2.5	2.5	2	1.5	3	0	3	2	11.125

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Code	Country	Score									
COL	Colombia	11.062	3	3	0	3	2.25	3	1.5	1.5	2
IRQ	Iraq	10.875	3	3	0	3	1.5	2.5	1.5	2	2
SYR	Syrian Arab Republic	10.812	3	3	0	3	1.75	3	1.5	1	2
AZE	Azerbaijan	10.750	3	0	0	3	2	2.5	1.5	1	2
GEO	Georgia	10.750	3	0	1	3	2	2.5	1.5	1	2
PSE	Palestine	10.750	3	3	0	3	1	3	2	1	2
PHL	Philippines	10.750	0	3	3	3	2	1	2.5	1.5	2
JOR	Jordan	10.625	3	0	0	3	1	3	1.5	1	2
SLB	Solomon Islands	10.625	0	0	3	3	1.5	0	2	3	2
LBY	Libya	10.562	2	3	0	3	2.25	2	1	1	2
LBN	Lebanon	10.438	3	0	0	3	1.25	3	0.5	1	2
UKR	Ukraine	10.375	2	3	0	3	2	1.5	1	1	2
DZA	Algeria	10.312	0	3	0	3	1.75	1	1.5	1	2
EGY	Egypt	10.312	0	3	0	3	1.25	1	1.5	1.5	2
THA	Thailand	10.312	0	1	3	3	2.25	1	1	1	2
MEX	Mexico	10.250	0	3	0	3	2	1	1	1	2
SRB	Serbia	10.250	3	0	0	3	1	2.5	0.5	1	2
RUS	Russian Fed.	10.125	0	3	0	3	2	0.5	1	1	1
CHL	Chile	9.875	0	0	3	3	2.5	0.5	0.5	0	1
BDI	Burundi	8.500	2	0	0	2	2	2	3	3	3
LBR	Liberia	8.500	2	0	0	2	2	2	3	3	3
MRT	Mauritania	8.375	2	0	1	2	2	2	2.5	3	3
HTI	Haiti	8.312	2	0	1	2	2.25	2	2.5	2.5	3
ETH	Ethiopia	8.250	2	0	1	2	2	1.5	2.5	3	3
CIV	Cote d Ivoire	8.188	2	0	0	2	1.75	1.5	2.5	3	3
COG	Congo, Rep. Of	8.125	2	0	0	2	2	2	2.5	2	3
GTM	Guatemala	8.062	2	0	1	2	2.25	2	2	2	2
RWA	Rwanda	8.062	2	0	0	2	2.25	1.5	2	2.5	2
SEN	Senegal	8.062	0	0	2	2	2.25	1	2	3	2
CMR	Cameroon	8.000	2	0	0	2	2	1.5	2.5	2	2

Code	Country	Score									
NAM	Namibia	7.875	0	0	2	2	2.5	1	2	2	2
HND	Honduras	7.812	2	0	1	2	2.25	1.5	1.5	2	2
LAO	Laos	7.812	0	0	2	2	2.25	0.5	2.5	2	2
KGZ	Kyrgyzstan	7.750	2	0	0	2	2	2	1.5	1.5	2
IND	India	7.625	0	2	0	2	1.5	0.5	2.5	2	2
PER	Peru	7.625	2	0	1	2	2	1.5	1.5	1.5	2
SLV	El Salvador	7.562	2	0	0	2	2.25	2	1	1	2
IRN	Iran, Islamic Republic of	7.562	2	0	0	2	1.75	2	1.5	1	2
ECU	Ecuador	7.500	2	0	0	2	2	1.5	1.5	1	2
BOL	Bolivia	7.438	0	0	2	2	2.25	0.5	1.5	1.5	2
VEN	Venezuela	7.375	2	0	0	2	2	1.5	1	1	2
BIH	Bosnia and Herzegovina	7.312	2	0	0	2	1.75	2	0.5	1	2
CHN	China (w/out HongKong)	7.250	0	0	2	2	2	0.5	1	1.5	2
TUN	Tunisia	7.125	0	2	0	2	2	0.5	1	1	1
BRA	Brazil	7.000	0	2	0	2	2	0	1	1	1
PRK	Korea Dem.People's Rep.	7.000	0	0	2	2	1	0	2	x	1
BFA	Burkina Faso	5.250	0	0	1	1	2	1	3	3	3
NER	Niger	5.188	0	0	1	1	1.75	1	3	3	3
GMB	Gambia	5.125	0	0	1	1	2	1	2.5	3	3
ZWE	Zimbabwe	5.125	0	0	1	1	2.5	1	2.5	2.5	3
MOZ	Mozambique	5.062	0	0	1	1	2.25	0.5	2.5	3	2
TZA	Tanzania	5.062	0	0	1	1	2.25	1	2	3	2
AGO	Angola	5.000	0	0	1	1	2.5	1	2.5	2	2
MDG	Madagascar	4.938	0	0	1	1	2.25	0	2.5	3	2
MWI	Malawi	4.938	0	0	1	1	2.25	0.5	2	3	2
PNG	Papua New Guinea	4.938	0	0	1	1	1.75	1	2	3	2
LSO	Lesotho	4.875	0	0	1	1	2.5	0	2.5	2.5	2
BGD	Bangladesh	4.812	0	0	1	1	1.75	1	2.5	2	2
TJK	Tajikistan	4.562	0	1	0	1	1.75	0.5	2	2	2
LKA	Sri Lanka	4.312	0	0	1	1	1.75	1	1.5	1	2

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Code	Country	Score									
PRY	Paraguay	4.188	0	0	1	1	2.25	0	1.5	1	1
ALB	Albania	3.938	0	0	1	1	1.75	0	1	1	1
JAM	Jamaica	3.938	0	0	1	1	1.75	0	1	1	1
CUB	Cuba	3.438	0	0	1	1	1.75	0	0	0	1
RUS-CHE	Russian Fed. (Chechnya)	3.000	0	1	0	1	x	0	x	x	1
DJI	Djibouti	2.375	0	0	0	0	2	2	3	2.5	3
GNB	Guinea Bissau	2.375	0	0	0	0	2.5	1.5	2.5	3	3
COM	Comoros	2.125	0	0	0	0	2.5	0	3	3	3
ERI	Eritrea	2.125	0	0	0	0	2	1	2.5	3	3
SLE	Sierra Leone	2.125	0	0	0	0	2	0.5	3	3	3
GIN	Guinea	2.062	0	0	0	0	2.25	0.5	2.5	3	2
TGO	Togo	2.062	0	0	0	0	1.75	1	3	2.5	2
BEN	Benin	2.000	0	0	0	0	2	0	3	3	2
ZMB	Zambia	2.000	0	0	0	0	2.5	1	2.5	2	2
NPL	Nepal	1.812	0	0	0	0	1.75	1	2.5	2	2
GNQ	Equatorial Guinea	1.750	0	0	0	0	2.5	0	2.5	2	2
SWZ	Swaziland	1.750	0	0	0	0	2.5	0.5	2	2	2
TLS	East Timor	1.688	0	0	0	0	1.75	0.5	2.5	2	2
GHA	Ghana	1.688	0	0	0	0	2.25	0.5	2	2	2
VNM	Vietnam	1.688	0	0	0	0	2.25	0	2.5	2	2
KHM	Cambodia	1.625	0	0	0	0	2	0	2.5	2	2
CPV	Cap Verde	1.625	0	0	0	0	2.5	0	2	2	2
STP	Sao Tome and Principe	1.625	0	0	0	0	2.5	0	2	2	2
ZAF	South Africa	1.625	0	0	0	0	2.5	1	1.5	1.5	2
BWA	Botswana	1.562	0	0	0	0	2.25	1	2	1	2
FSM	Micronesia	1.562	0	0	0	0	2.25	0	2	2	2
BTN	Bhutan	1.500	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	2	2
GUY	Guyana	1.500	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	2	2
KIR	Kiribati	1.500	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	2	2
VUT	Vanuatu	1.500	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	2	2

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Code	Country	Score									
IDN	Indonesia	1.438	0	0	0	0	1.75	0.5	2	1.5	2
BLZ	Belize	1.375	0	0	0	0	2	0.5	1.5	1.5	2
DOM	Dominican Republic	1.375	0	0	0	0	2	0.5	1.5	1.5	2
GAB	Gabon	1.375	0	0	0	0	2	0.5	1.5	1.5	2
NIC	Nicaragua	1.375	0	0	0	0	2	0	1.5	2	2
PAN	Panama	1.375	0	0	0	0	2	1	1.5	1	2
TTO	Trinidad and Tobago	1.375	0	0	0	0	2.5	0	2	1	2
ARM	Armenia	1.312	0	0	0	0	1.75	1.5	1	1	2
MYS	Malaysia	1.312	0	0	0	0	2.25	1	1	1	2
MAR	Morocco	1.312	0	0	0	0	1.75	0	1.5	2	2
BRB	Barbados	1.250	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	1	2
FJI	Fiji	1.250	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	1	2
MDA	Moldova	1.250	0	0	0	0	2	0.5	1.5	1	2
MNG	Mongolia	1.250	0	0	0	0	2	0	1.5	1.5	2
VCT	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	1.250	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	1	2
SUR	Suriname	1.250	0	0	0	0	2	0	1.5	1.5	2
CRI	Costa Rica	1.188	0	0	0	0	2.25	1	0.5	1	1
MNE	Montenegro	1.188	0	0	0	0	1.25	2	0.5	1	1
WSM	Samoa	1.188	0	0	0	0	1.75	0	2	1	1
KAZ	Kazakhstan	1.125	0	0	0	0	2	0	1.5	1	1
PLW	Palau	1.125	0	0	0	0	1.5	0	2	1	1
UZB	Uzbekistan	1.125	0	0	0	0	1.5	0.5	1.5	1	1
MDV	Maldives	1.062	0	0	0	0	1.75	0	1.5	1	1
MUS	Mauritius	1.062	0	0	0	0	2.25	0	1	1	1
LCA	Saint Lucia	1.000	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	1	1
SYC	Seychelles	1.000	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	1	1
TKM	Turkmenistan	1.000	0	0	0	0	1	0.5	1.5	1	1
URY	Uruguay	1.000	0	0	0	0	2	0.5	0.5	1	1
BLR	Belarus	0.938	0	0	0	0	1.75	0.5	0.5	1	1
OMN	Oman	0.938	0	0	0	0	1.75	0	1	1	1

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TON	Tonga	1	1	1	1.75	**0**	0	0	0	*0.938*
ARG	Argentina	1	0.5	1	1.5	**0**	0	0	0	*0.875*
DMA	Dominica	1	1	1	1.5	**0**	0	0	0	*0.875*
GRD	Grenada	1	1	1	1.5	**0**	0	0	0	*0.875*
KNA	Saint Kitts and Nevis	1	1	0	1.5	**0**	0	0	0	*0.625*
ATG	Antigua and Barbuda	1	1	0	1	**0**	0	0	0	*0.500*

Annex III: Summary of Forgotten Crisis Assessment 2014-2015

Forgotten Crisis Assessment 2014

The FCA index corresponds to the sum of the following four indicators: (1) Vulnerability Index; (2) Media coverage; (3) Public aid per capita; (4) Qualitative assessment of ECHO geographical units and experts.

ISO3	Country - Crisis name	FCA Index	Vulnerability Index	Media coverage	Public aid per capita	Qualitative assessment
DZA	**Algeria** - Sahrawi Refugee Crisis	**11**	2	3	3	3
BGD	**Bangladesh** – Rohingya refugee crisis and Chittagong Hill Tracts	**9**	2	2	2	3
CMR	**Cameroon**	**10**	2	3	2	3
TCD	**Chad**	**9**	3	2	1	3
IND	**India** - conflicts in Jammu and Kashmir, central India (Naxalite Insurgency) and in the North East of India	**9**	2	1	3	3
MMR	**Myanmar** - Kachin conflict and Rakhine crisis	**10**	3	2	2	3
PAK	**Pakistan**	**9**	3	1	2	3
SDN	**Sudan**	**9**	3	2	1	3
YEM	**Yemen**	**8**	3	1	1	3
	Colombia crisis - population affected by the internal armed conflict in Colombia and Colombian refugees in Ecuador and Venezuela - including					
COL	Colombia	**9**	2	2	2	3
ECU	Ecuador	**10**	2	3	2	3
VEN	Venezuela	**10**	2	2	3	3

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