

HUMANITARIAN IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (HIP)

EUROPEAN HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE CAPACITY

AMOUNT: EUR 56 000 000

The present Humanitarian Implementation Plan (HIP) was prepared on the basis of financing decision ECHO/WWD/BUD/2024/01000 (Worldwide Decision) and the related General Guidelines for Operational Priorities on Humanitarian Aid (Operational Priorities). The purpose of the HIP and its annexes¹ is to serve as a communication tool from DG ECHO² to its partners and assist them in the preparation of their proposals. The provisions of the Worldwide Decision and the General Conditions of the Agreement with the European Commission shall take precedence over the provisions in this document.

0. MAJOR CHANGES SINCE PREVIOUS VERSION OF THE HIP

Modification 2 – November 2024

The total amount of the HIP is reduced by EUR 4 000 000. This amount is transferred to the Emergency Tool Box HIP (ECHO/DRF/BUD/2024/91000).

Modification 1.1 – July 2024

In the first six months of 2024, the EHRC has been used to provide gap-filling support in several crises such as Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Chad, DR Congo, Haiti, Gaza, Mali, Niger, and Yemen. Since the beginning of the year, 65 EU Humanitarian Air Bridge (HAB) flights have transported about 2 240 tonnes of humanitarian supplies on behalf of 35 humanitarian partners. EU Humanitarian Aid Flights (HAF) in Burkina Faso, DR Congo, and Mali, have transported 66 tonnes of humanitarian aid material and 2391 humanitarian personnel. Stocks have been mobilised for operations in Gaza, Haiti and Chad, and epidemiological experts were deployed in relation to the situation in the Middle East.

Following the first allocation round of March 2024, EUR 13.9 million have been allocated to partners for the development of new or ongoing capacities. This modification introduces additional specifications on new capacities to be developed under the European Humanitarian Response Capacity, for which partners are invited to submit proposals.

Modification 1 – December 2023

On 11 November 2023, the Budgetary Conciliation Committee reached an agreement on the 2024 budget. The outcome provides for an increase on commitment appropriations. Out of this envelope an amount of EUR 12 million has been allocated to the European Humanitarian Response Capacity so as to maintain a similar level of response capacities to emergencies as in 2023.

¹ Technical annex and thematic policies annex

² Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO)

1. CONTEXT

Year after year, the overall capacity of humanitarian actors is being stretched by constantly evolving needs. Humanitarian actors are called to adapt to fast-changing scenarios where even the shortest delay in field response might cost lives and allow the situation to further deteriorate. Therefore, the need to reach people in crisis and deliver aid in a timely fashion whilst at the same time reducing costs has never been more pressing. While the European Commission's main priority remains to support the delivery of humanitarian aid with funding, it has adapted its modus operandi to this new reality, as an active participant in the growing number of emergency responders required to provide life-saving assistance to affected populations.

Many challenges of humanitarian action are linked to logistics and the supply chain, which is the operational backbone of any response, from sudden onset disasters to protracted crises. Transport and logistics services as well as the prepositioning of stocks are essential in enabling humanitarian access and providing safe, reliable, timely and cost-efficient humanitarian responses.

To respond to these challenges, the Commission has created the European Humanitarian Response Capacity (EHRC). The objective of the EHRC is to complement the funding provided by DG ECHO, and support humanitarian partners. It will do so by facilitating the quick delivery of humanitarian assistance, while ensuring greater effectiveness and cost efficiency in the delivery of aid.

The EHRC is a set of operational tools designed to provide rapid but temporary support to partners to fill operational gaps in the humanitarian response where the humanitarian community struggles to provide support, thus helping to cover immediate needs of the affected population.

The objectives of the EHRC are:

- To support humanitarian partners to provide effective, efficient, and timely assistance to people in need in the aftermath of a sudden onset disaster, and in situation of protracted crisis where operational gaps are identified.
- To strengthen humanitarian access with the provision of safe and reliable transport, logistics and supply chain solutions.
- To enable more rapid, targeted and direct EU interventions triggered and steered by DG ECHO to improve the humanitarian response and fill gaps.
- To show EU leadership in steering the delivery of humanitarian assistance and driving the humanitarian agenda to support the EU's overall role in the crisis.
- To be an advocacy tool useful to raise the profile of a crisis, draw attention to operational constraints faced by humanitarian actors on the ground, and articulate EU diplomatic support in humanitarian access negotiations with local and national authorities.
- To raise EU visibility and promote Team Europe Initiatives.

To achieve these objectives, the EHRC covers temporary weaknesses and gaps within the humanitarian supply chain and humanitarian expertise. The different instruments of the EHRC include the provision of common logistics services to humanitarian partners in the form of international and in-country transport operations (across various modes of transport),

warehousing capacities, prepositioning and delivery of emergency stockpiles, and other supply chain/logistical support and coordination, as well as deployment of expertise and capacities.

The EHRC can also be used to break the silos in emergency contexts. Deployments of EHRC services are coordinated with humanitarian and civil protection stakeholders and maintaining the respect for the overall coordinating role of the UN, to build upon the respective sectors' added value and to foster synergies.

2. HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

2.1. People in need of humanitarian assistance

The ultimate beneficiaries of EHRC interventions are the affected and vulnerable populations, through the direct engagement with humanitarian organisations with established presence and emergency operational capacity in third countries affected by natural disasters and/or human-induced disasters.

The EHRC directly assists humanitarian partners with ready-to-deploy capacities that enable the movement of staff, support supply chains, and make specific expertise available in the crises where the services are offered.

All the services provided as part of the EHRC will serve the needs of humanitarian partners (UN agencies, INGOs, local NGOs/CSOs, IOs, MS Specialised Agencies with humanitarian mandate, etc.) and, indirectly, thousands of people affected by natural or human-induced disasters.

2.2. Description of the most acute humanitarian needs

DG ECHO recognises the importance for first responders to have the right skills, tools, and institutional and operational capacities to implement effective and timely response. Therefore, developing and/or strengthening preparedness capacity should feature as a cross-cutting element of all preparedness interventions. All capacity strengthening efforts should be in line with national policies and promote their implementation. It is critical to involve all first responders in determining which capacities should be strengthened, not only to ensure ownership of the process, but also because these actors often have clarity on what strengthening could and should look like.

Actors across the humanitarian sector are confronted with operational complexities. Frequently partners do not have access to cost-efficient and reliable logistics services on the ground, both in sudden-onset crises and protracted emergencies. Moreover, they often compete for the same services, setting up parallel structures and operations.

Operational gaps in the provision of humanitarian aid are context-driven and require attentive analysis on a case-by-case basis.

Operational logistics gaps to be covered by the EHRC are likely to be found across most sectors including health, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), shelter and settlements, non-food items, emergency rehabilitation of basic infrastructures, disaster preparedness, support to emergency communication, etc.

The humanitarian supply chain can often be a bottleneck in an emergency, due to customs or administrative restrictions, damaged infrastructure, and disruption to the regional, local, or even global market. Joint solutions such as common services can support the humanitarian response by speeding up the response as well as ensuring and improving access. While there are already some excellent initiatives, there are still situations where such an approach provides tangible benefits. This is one of the key areas for potential systematic improvement in the humanitarian supply chain, as set out in the Humanitarian Logistics Policy. Therefore, operations, such as common services, could be organised or partly supported to quickly facilitate the initial transport needs in an emergency response or reinforce the capacity in protracted crises.

In the hours following a sudden large disaster, precise information on the needs on the ground may not be available. On the basis of lessons learnt, significant urgent gaps in the humanitarian supply chain can be anticipated with the mobilisation of pre-positioned stockpiles and expertise on a no-regret basis.

In many contexts there are significant access challenges, linked to security and logistics issues such as the poor state of infrastructure damaged or destroyed by events like flooding or other natural or human induced disasters. The security context often impacts access: humanitarian aid workers can face regular roadblocks and incidents of aggression.

Needs and operational gaps in countries where DG ECHO has ongoing operations will be monitored, as well as other areas where operations could be relevant in the future, to decide on the activation of relevant operational services for new, additional or continued EHRC support, or indeed to consider its discontinuation.

3. HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE AND COORDINATION

3.1. National / local response and involvement

National and local response are fundamental in any humanitarian response. However, local services and State capacities can occasionally be overwhelmed and unable to respond to the operational requirements of the humanitarian actors.

For air transport, only few local commercial air operators respectful of the minimum international standards of aviation are flying to the destinations relevant to humanitarian response.

Local capacities offered by the private sector for sea or road transport in countries of operation are a useful resource that humanitarian actors should use and support as much as possible, to improve their resilience to crises, develop the local economy or train local actors.

3.2. International Humanitarian Response

Several international humanitarian actors intervene in the domains covered by the EHRC, either in terms of logistics, air transportation, stockpiling, or provision of expertise and capacities.

The Global Logistics Cluster coordinates and liaises between humanitarian actors to support and inform operational decision-making processes, with the overarching aim of advancing the predictability, timeliness and efficiency of the humanitarian emergency response. In 2022, its

activation in 11 countries provided a framework for coordination of humanitarian actors, in addition to a complementary last-resort provision of logistics services.

In 2022, only four humanitarian actors provided air services to the humanitarian community worldwide³. In humanitarian contexts, where several of these organisations are operating, schedules are created to ensure that services complement each other as much as possible, considering their respective mandates. WFP/UNHAS is by far the largest provider of humanitarian air transport and has offices managing air operations globally (in around 15 countries).

Humanitarian aid organisations also work with private companies, which offer free transport solutions on certain occasions. However, this support is only provided ad hoc, and in the absence of a larger coordination framework on this matter with the private sector, emergency response strategies cannot rely on such transport options.

DG ECHO is a firm supporter of the localisation agenda regarding the preparation for disasters and creation of national stockpiles. However, when confronted with gaps during sudden emergencies or peaks in an ongoing crisis, the use of regional pre-positioning of emergency stocks is an appropriate and widely used strategy to ensure the rapid deployment of in-kind emergency items to affected areas. Such stockpiles can be used by multiple actors, national authorities, international development agencies, NGOs and International Organisations. Many of these actors use the services of WFP/UNHRD's network of hubs to preposition stocks. Different Humanitarian Procurement Centres (HPCs) provide a simplified process for supply chain and are a resource available to the different humanitarian partners.

During public health emergencies of international importance, the World Health Organization (WHO) plays a key role as UN normative and technical agency in the sector. So does the Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network (GOARN) in outbreak contexts. The GOARN is a global technical partnership, established by WHO as a key mechanism to engage the resources of agencies beyond the UN for rapid identification, confirmation and public health response to emergencies. GOARN currently comprises over 270 technical institutions and networks across the globe. The main objective of the network is to provide technical support to WHO Member States experiencing a human health emergency due to various threats including disease outbreaks, food safety, chemical toxins, zoonosis, natural and human made disasters.

International expertise surge mechanisms are important for filling capacity gaps in operations conducted by United Nations agencies and humanitarian organisations during emergencies. They rapidly mobilise specialised personnel and resources, addressing critical needs from medical expertise to logistics and technical assistance, enhancing overall response capacity. Various mechanisms currently support these efforts, including through rosters of trained experts and partnerships with specialised NGOs, or expertise available for surge support managed by some Member States Specialised Agencies, private foundations or INGOS. These collaborative networks share knowledge, best practices, and resources, seek to contribute to a more effective and timely global crisis response system and amplify the positive impact of humanitarian interventions.

³ WFP/UNHAS, MAF-PACTEC, ASF and DG ECHO (via EU Humanitarian Aid Flight)

In a spirit of complementarity, DG ECHO supports the development of response capacities both under its civil protection mandate (rescEU, European Civil Protection Pool/European Medical Corps) and through EU humanitarian aid.

3.3. Operational constraints

Several operational constraints related to the implementation of EHRC activities have been identified, notably safety and security concerns for the aviation sector.

The main technical constraints of humanitarian air transport operations are linked to the remoteness of destinations, the state of airstrips, the availability of air traffic control, meteorological conditions, security and fuel availability, as well as permissions from national aviation authorities. Operations have to be flexible to adapt to the variety of situations and emergencies that need to be addressed. Therefore, high standards need to be met in challenging aviation contexts: aircraft operators must meet aviation safety, security and quality requirements and be in line with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) regulations related to this type of air transport project.

4. ENVISAGED DG ECHO RESPONSE STRATEGY AND EXPECTED RESULTS OF HUMANITARIAN AID INTERVENTIONS

Humanitarian response relies primarily on the competency, proficiency and dedication of humanitarian organizations worldwide. DG ECHO is fully committed on continuing to support its partners to provide principled and operationally sound humanitarian assistance.

The EHRC mobilises operational tools developed by DG ECHO in case of gaps, and puts them at the disposal of humanitarian partners, EU Member States and emergency responders, enabling the EU to the extent possible to directly intervene and assist the rapid delivery of humanitarian assistance.

The EHRC interventions mentioned in this HIP add specific operational support to the DG ECHO funding portfolio. The EHRC has three main features:

- **Gap-filling:** The EHRC aims at filling clearly identified operational humanitarian gaps.
- **EU steer:** The EHRC is directly steered by the Commission.
- **Visibility of the EU:** The EHRC focuses on activities that promote EU-led humanitarian action (in partnership with EU Member States and in line with the Team Europe Initiative spirit).

The general principle of cost-effectiveness applicable to all EU funding will continue to guide the further development of the EHRC.

In addition to the workstreams mentioned below, covering identified humanitarian gaps, further services in other sectors may be added in 2024 under the European Humanitarian Response Capacity (EHRC), to bolster humanitarian assistance and support humanitarian operations.

4.1. Envisaged DG ECHO response

Under this HIP, the actions planned by DG ECHO are: a) development of gap-filling capacities, and b) deployment of capacities to fill gaps.

4.1.2 Development of gap-filling capacities available to the humanitarian community:

EHRC capacities are developed via different modalities. Some actions may be operated directly by DG ECHO through DG ECHO partners or through contracting arrangements with private service providers with the required expertise, whilst others may be indirectly managed through DG ECHO partners or collaborators. Partners are invited to contribute to the development of the EHRC capacities through the submission of project proposals, as detailed in the Technical Annex to this HIP. All capacities funded under this HIP are developed with the direct involvement of DG ECHO staff. Specific decision-making, standard operating procedures and steering arrangements will be developed for each capacity. As a rule, capacities must have a global outreach.

Pursuing the objective of reinforcing the EU capacity to respond in humanitarian settings in a Team Europe spirit, cooperation with Member States' Specialised Agencies is welcome. In doing so, the Commission will maintain an enhanced and collaborative approach, drawing on many experienced and specialised actors, each with their own initiatives and niche capabilities.

DG ECHO will continue engaging with private companies to explore partnership opportunities and potential collaboration for the provision of *pro bono* initiatives, donations schemes and other type of niche services deemed useful and needed in humanitarian contexts, in full respect of the humanitarian principles and the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid.

These capacities would include:

a. Aviation services:

EU humanitarian air transport operations aim to fill air transport gaps by providing safe and reliable access for humanitarian staff and cargo. They are implemented in countries and humanitarian contexts where there is no availability of commercial flights compliant with international standards, and they are often deployed in contexts where civil aviation structures and authorities are weak.

DG ECHO has a framework contract with a broker for the provision of transport and logistics services worldwide. This broker has the required expertise to offer emergency transport solutions in challenging contexts and meets air transport requirements as they work with companies which meet the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) rules and requirements.

In addition to the broker, DG ECHO also relies on the expertise of WFP, the only DG ECHO humanitarian partner that currently meets the necessary requirements related to emergency and humanitarian air transport operations. WFP Aviation (UNHAS) has direct access to many air operators at short notice, with bases already set up in many African countries, and a dedicated

safety and quality assurance unit, the Aviation Safety Unit (ASU) and Quality Unit (QA) dealing with all the issues related to aviation safety and quality air operations.

As part of its air transport operation, the EHRC will mainly consist of two actions: the EU Humanitarian Aid Flight and the EU Humanitarian Air Bridge. In addition, specific ad hoc humanitarian flights could be implemented should new emergency needs be identified.

Aviation services under this HIP will aim to align with DG ECHO minimum environmental requirements and recommendations for a more sustainable aviation industry reducing direct and indirect CO₂ emissions.

EU Humanitarian Aid Flight (EU HAF) provides regular passenger and cargo transportation solutions to humanitarian organisations, with a focus on regions where many EU funded projects are implemented, on deep field destinations, or on acute emergencies which require increased aerial support. EU HAF aims to provide timely, flexible, safe, and reliable humanitarian transport solutions, which are well coordinated with other humanitarian services.

The starting point for **EU HAF** operations in **2024** is to directly support humanitarian operations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Mali where the projects is currently transporting more than 550 passengers and 10 tonnes of cargo per month. Needs and gaps will be monitored and assessed on a regular basis to decide the opening or closing of HAF operations. The number of aircraft could be adapted, and other countries could be considered in case of emerging needs, following assessments of aviation specific constraints and the needs of humanitarian organisations. The flexibility offered by entrusting the EU HAF to WFP/UNHAS allows for a reduction or increase of the fleet at very short notice and gives DG ECHO access to a wide range of aircraft.

Working in partnership with WFP/UNHAS increases efficiency and effectiveness by facilitating enhanced coordination and better flexibility between WFP and DG ECHO air transport offerings. This is achieved through synergies and economy of scale by using the same structures and supply channels, in particular when it comes to air operators, booking, and fuel supply.

EU Humanitarian Air Bridge (EU HAB) operations mainly consist of international transport of cargo and passengers, on an ad hoc basis. These operations, mainly ensured through DG ECHO's framework contract, are implemented when there is a gap in commercial options due to specific circumstances.

The **EU HAB** aims at reinforcing the EU's response and enabling humanitarian access, without competing with and/or duplicating existing EU and non-EU humanitarian aid and civil protection systems of delivery.

b. Warehousing, last mile delivery transportation, including cold chain

The EHRC will seek to strengthen further capacities developed since 2022, which provide humanitarian partners with stand-by capacities to support and facilitate the immediate delivery of humanitarian assistance through provision of common transport services, warehousing, cold chain services and small-scale rehabilitations for critical infrastructures.

The development of this capacity will continue to be coordinated with the Global Logistics Cluster or other key stakeholders to foster coordination, ensure operational humanitarian gap filling and avoid duplication of efforts, in line with the Humanitarian Logistics Policy.

The warehousing, last mile delivery transportation, and cold chain services provided will seek a reduced environmental footprint in line with DG ECHO's minimum environmental requirements and recommendations.

c. Accommodation and working spaces

To facilitate the deployment of humanitarian personnel into new areas of operations, the EHRC will develop a specific capacity comprised of light and heavy base equipment. The capacity will allow humanitarian personnel to have safe, dignified, and ready-to-deploy accommodation and working space. When possible, the capacity will be complemented with connectivity solutions. The services provided will seek a reduced environmental footprint in line with DG ECHO's minimum environmental requirements and recommendations.

d. Expertise

The European Commission and the EU Member States have a wide set of available expertise, which can be vital in humanitarian response. Under the EHRC, DG ECHO will be able to mobilise several skillsets of expertise, in various sectors and in partnership with different Commission services, European Union agencies and Member States, to support humanitarian partners DG ECHO field offices, emergency responders and ultimately affected populations victims of natural or human-induced disasters.

Since 2022, the EHRC provided expertise in particular in the logistics and health sectors.

For the logistics sector, the ECHO field network includes a number of logistics experts, based in Panama, Bangkok, Nairobi, Dakar and Amman. Specific additional expertise can be deployed in case of needs, with the purpose of conducting logistics assessment and identifying potential areas of logistics development.

For the health sector, in complementarity with DG ECHO health experts, DG ECHO has developed a Service-Level Agreement (SLA) with the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) to deploy its own, as well as Member States', public health experts from the EU Health Task Force. These deployments aim to support international/national emergency preparedness and response to infectious diseases outbreaks and other public health emergencies in humanitarian contexts.

DG ECHO will also seek to strengthen existing expertise provision mechanisms. This may include support to standby partnership arrangements that facilitate the rapid deployment of experts to humanitarian partners on the ground. Such arrangements are crucial to ensure that the right expertise is available to fill human resources gaps to enhance overall effectiveness and efficiency of emergency response.

e. Water and sanitation (WASH) and health capacity

DG ECHO will also look into strengthening the provision of water and medical services in emergency response, notably in the field of water supply and sanitation (WASH) and curative health.

Water service provision (WASH) can include water supply systems (water pumping stations/boreholes, water treatment/water purification, storage, distribution), wastewater and solid waste management (including medical waste). In the field of health, this can include support to mobile treatment facilities, associated laboratory analysis and logistics (e.g. cold chain).

f. Regional emergency stockpile of relief items

To strengthen and enhance DG ECHO's and its humanitarian partners' collective capacity for an effective and efficient emergency response, DG ECHO has developed a strategy for regional Emergency Stockpiles of relief items.

These stockpiles will not replace other actors in the concerned country or region, but act as a regional and sub-regional safety net in the humanitarian supply chain. The stockpiles complement existing DG ECHO preparedness and response systems, including Disaster Preparedness and Anticipatory Actions, and can be complemented with other supplies from participating EU countries, including items mobilised on an ad hoc basis via the Union Civil Protection Mechanism.

In line with DG ECHO policies, the development of the stockpile will contribute to the localisation agenda and not replace DG ECHO's firm commitment to ensure the roll-out of cash-based response as primary modality of aid delivery.

DG ECHO will continue the establishment and fine-tuning of its stockpile of emergency relief items in several warehouses worldwide to cover the needs of disaster-affected people. Prepositioned items will primarily focus on high-rotation supplies, which will allow the system to act as a safety net for supply chains. The main sectors covered are shelter, WASH, logistics, health, and education in emergency.

In addition to prepositioning, DG ECHO and its selected humanitarian partners for the stockpiling capacity might undertake ad hoc procurement of specific relief items, to be directly deployed during a crisis. The identification of items and procurement options will be based on identified gaps and needs by DG ECHO country offices, in consultation with partners, sector specialists and cluster coordinators, taking into consideration the local market capacities and DG ECHO's policy in promoting the use of multi-purpose cash actions.

Procurement and stockpiling under the ERHC will be aligned with the minimum environmental requirements and recommendations, particularly regarding sustainable supply chains and waste management⁴.

g. Coordination of logistics/support to operationalisation of logistics coordination

DG ECHO will keep on supporting logistics coordination endeavours in emergency settings. It will seek to support the rapid delivery of coordination, including support to information management, and logistics services, with targeted interventions.

⁴ As found in the "Guidance on the operationalisation of the Minimum Environmental Requirements and Recommendations for EU-funded humanitarian aid operations": https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/humanitarian-aid/climate-change-and-environment_en

Deployment of capacities to fill gaps in specific operations/scenarios

While the development of the capacities described above will be done in partnership with selected partners (based on proposals submitted using the e-Single Form), the request for activation/deployment of any of the EHRC capacities can be made by any humanitarian partner and stakeholder, including DG ECHO Country Offices, EU Member States, and affected countries.

The decision to activate the EHRC capacities is taken by DG ECHO, following an established internal procedure, aimed at securing the full complementarity of EHRC deployments with other ECHO-funded actions, or humanitarian priorities identified by DG ECHO. The partners contributing to the development of the capacities are included in the decision-making process.

Given the nature of the capacities developed, the EHRC will target, at a global level, crisis contexts with a higher vulnerability to high-impact disease outbreaks and disasters due to extreme natural events⁵, primarily located in countries with low coping capacity to respond to emergencies⁶. It will consider emergencies both in urban and rural settings. It is planned to be used both for sudden-onset disasters and for protracted crises where a peak in the access conditions, capacity of responders or needs of the affected populations require specific support that the EHRC can fill. It is expected that in sudden-onset disasters the EHRC assistance might be activated in conjunction with the Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM). In those circumstances, DG ECHO, and in particular the Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC) will ensure the non-duplication of activities and clear lines of conduct of operations.

To assess the needs and operational gaps, DG ECHO will make full use of its field network, its experience and reliable data obtained after decades working in Disaster Preparedness and Rapid Emergency Response, acting if necessary on a ‘no regrets’ basis for the quick deployment of essential EHRC services to assist populations in need, based on past lessons. Respecting the principle of complementarity with DG ECHO funding, the EHRC will not act as a funding gap tool.

Respect for humanitarian principles will be continuously reviewed throughout the duration of the activation and will remain a pivotal element of the decision-making.

EHRC deployments will be limited in time and limited to the duration of existing and identified operational gaps.

All EHRC services are available to recognised humanitarian actors, including local actors. However, to ensure full accountability of the resources deployed, specific arrangements are required. In particular:

- For stockpiles, expertise, WASH and health capacities: These capacities will be at the disposal of DG ECHO certified partners on a no-cost basis. Expertise (including health experts from ECDC) can be put at the disposal of UN or INGO health partners with

⁵ Such as tropical cyclones, earthquakes, floods, and others.

⁶ Ability of a country to cope with disasters in terms of formal, organized activities, as well as the effort of the country’s government and existing infrastructure that contribute to the reduction of disaster risk. INFORM Risk Methodology (2022)

relevant field presence and DG ECHO offices, according to needs and opportunities, and in coordination with the established humanitarian coordination system. The Technical Annex to this HIP provides details related to the necessary contractual arrangements, reporting requirements and visibility/communication obligations.

- For aviation and common logistics services: Once activated, the information related to the availability of EHRC aviation and common logistics services will be communicated to partners. The coordination of requests will be carried out either by DG ECHO, or by selected partners according to established procedures. DG ECHO will coordinate within established fora, such as the Logistics Cluster, to ensure that services are offered in line with established procedures and process, and in full complementarity with other humanitarian service providers.
- For all services: DG ECHO or its partners will collect data on the use of EHRC services to ensure internal reporting and support evidence-based decision-making on the further development of the EHRC.

Partners benefitting from EHRC services shall acknowledge the support received by DG ECHO/the European Union through public communication channels.

In the preparatory and implementation phases of any operation, DG ECHO will seek contributions and synergies with EU Member States. Beyond the delivery of cargo, a combined ECHO and EU Member States EHRC operation can increase EU visibility. It could also, in specific contexts, contribute to raising the profile of a crisis and addressing operational constraints faced by humanitarian actors on the ground, such as limited access and logistical or administrative barriers.

4.2. Other DG ECHO interventions

The EHRC operations, when activated, will complement, and be aligned with, the funding priorities of all DG ECHO country/regional Humanitarian Implementation Plans.

The Emergency Toolbox HIP may be drawn upon for the prevention of, and response to, outbreaks of epidemics. Under the Emergency Toolbox HIP, the Small-Scale Response, Acute Large Emergency Response Tool (ALERT) and Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) instruments may also provide funding options.

As EHRC operations complement partners' other activities which are subject to DG ECHO's minimum environmental requirements, the EHRC services should also be aligned with these minimum environmental requirements and take the lead by also implementing the recommendations⁷. This concerns in particular the topics of sustainable supply chains and waste management.

⁷ As found in the "Guidance on the operationalisation of the Minimum Environmental Requirements and Recommendations for EU-funded humanitarian aid operations": https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/humanitarian-aid/climate-change-and-environment_en

EHRC services, especially related to stockpiling and common services, are in line with DG ECHO Disaster Preparedness strategy (cf. DG ECHO Disaster Preparedness Guidance Note 2021).

The EHRC is a part of, and complements, DG ECHO's support to the humanitarian sector in Strategic supply chain and logistics (SSC), which stems from the DG ECHO Humanitarian Logistics Policy. The EHRC fills gaps and aims to increase the impact and efficiency of the humanitarian response. It uses common logistics services and other strategic logistical support as a cornerstone to achieve this, promoting a joint and collaborative approach – which are core to what ECHO's support of SSC is aiming to encourage. Though the EHRC has a more direct, ECHO-driven character and steer, these EHRC activities can act as a catalyst for, and showcase what is possible in these areas. This can thus demonstrate how they can also fit within the wider, whole community driven approach needed to cause a paradigm shift towards a more strategic approach to logistics across the aid sector. Therefore, there may be a blending of funding, as the funding available under the EHRC HIP and the Strategic Supply Chain and Logistics HIP are complementary, as well as with other funding to supply chain and logistics activities that may be available.