



European  
Commission



DG ECHO Guidance Note

# Disaster Preparedness

2021

*Civil Protection and  
Humanitarian Aid*

## DG ECHO Thematic Policy Documents

- N°1:** Food Assistance: From Food Aid to Food Assistance
  - N°2:** Water, Sanitation and Hygiene: Meeting the challenge of rapidly increasing humanitarian needs in WASH
  - N°3:** Cash and Vouchers: Increasing efficiency and effectiveness across all sectors
  - N°4:** Nutrition: Addressing Undernutrition in Emergencies
  - N°5:** Disaster Preparedness Guidance Note
  - N°6:** Gender: Different Needs, Adapted Assistance
  - N°7:** Health: General Guidelines
  - N°8:** Humanitarian Protection: Improving protection outcomes to reduce risks for people in humanitarian crises
  - N°9:** Humanitarian Shelter and Settlements Guidelines
- DG ECHO Operational Guidelines: The Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in EU-funded Humanitarian Aid Operations

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# Foreword

While this Guidance Note was being drawn up in 2020, the world was suddenly confronted with an unprecedented crisis: the COVID-19 pandemic. Since the beginning of the pandemic, countries and organisations across the globe have undertaken extraordinary efforts to respond to the crisis and strengthen their preparedness to respond to possible new peaks and future emergencies.

This pandemic has helped us recognise even more that preparedness and effective response are closely intertwined. This lies at the heart of DG ECHO's humanitarian approach, in which preparedness plays a critical role. Ensuring that communities have the capacity to respond to crises, and to anticipate and address the risks ahead, whatever they may be, form an integral part of humanitarian aid. This is why DG ECHO strongly promotes preparedness and risk-based interventions throughout its humanitarian action.

As our approach has been evolving and adjusting to the new challenges and risks represented by climate change, environmental degradation and the increasing overlaps between disasters, conflict and fragile situations, this Guidance Note aims to support our staff and, more importantly, our partners in their concrete interventions on the ground. As such, we hope that it will contribute to our common final objective of helping to save lives.

This is an ambitious objective and we know that as humanitarian actors we cannot achieve it alone. We need to work in partnership with our development colleagues to capitalise on mutual strengths and ensure long-term sustainability and resilience. DG ECHO is firmly committed to this way of working and to translating it into programming and specific initiatives.

DG ECHO's work can only be implemented thanks to our humanitarian partners' commitment, dedication and tireless work. We will stand by their side and work together to put our approach into practice. We look forward to continuing our collaboration, and creating a more prepared and resilient world.

**Ms Paraskevi Michou**  
*Director General*  
*DG ECHO*



# Executive Summary

Over the past two decades, the nature of humanitarian crises has gradually become more protracted, unpredictable and complex. Crises are increasingly exacerbated by factors such as climate change, environmental degradation, rapid urbanisation and industrialisation, and by the overlaps between disasters, conflict and fragile situations. Faced with these new challenges, the humanitarian community - including DG ECHO - needs to adjust its practices and tools in order to provide a more effective early response.

As the humanitarian landscape has changed, international agreements such as the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR), the Paris Agreement for Climate Change, as well as the Grand Bargain have been adopted. They have redefined the international community's commitment towards reducing disaster risk, fighting climate change and improving the effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian action.

Concurrently, the European Commission (EC) has renewed its commitment to strengthening the resilience of partner countries and to increasing the impact of its external action through the Joint Communication on Resilience in 2017<sup>1</sup>.

As a result of these developments, and the changing humanitarian landscape, DG ECHO decided to review and renew its work on disaster preparedness and promote a risk-informed approach to humanitarian action. This Guidance Note presents DG ECHO's new approach and its practical application. It is intended to be a dynamic document, and will be continuously updated to address changes in the operational environment.

DG ECHO views preparedness as being critically important for the quality and timeliness of response operations, as well as being a way of improving anticipation, thus complementing humanitarian assistance in saving lives, reducing suffering and pre-empting or decreasing humanitarian needs. DG ECHO recognises that disaster preparedness applies to all forms of risk, ranging from natural hazards and epidemics to human-induced threats such as conflict and violence. Understanding and anticipating such risks is essential in order to define the needs that they might generate and to design and implement effective preparedness actions and response operations. All humanitarian action therefore needs to be informed by risk assessment and analysis, which should consistently complement a needs-based approach.



*Civil Protection and Red Cross volunteers trained under the Disaster Preparedness programs funded by DG ECHO perform a rescue operation, Haiti.  
© EU/ECHO/I.COELLO*

1. 2017 Joint Communication - [A Strategic Approach to Resilience in the EU's External Action](#).

In line with the above, DG ECHO promotes the **mainstreaming of a preparedness and risk-informed approach** in all its response operations. This approach helps to systematically strengthen the capacity of first responders to be prepared for further problems or aftershocks while responding to a crisis. It also helps to risk-proof response interventions by designing them in a way that reduces immediate and imminent risks. To complement its mainstreaming efforts, DG ECHO also supports **targeted preparedness actions** as a specific way of strengthening preparedness for the early response to a hazard and/or threat (e.g. establishment of early warning systems, development of contingency plans and Standard Operating Procedures, emergency prepositioning of stock, etc.).

Strengthening the capacity of local actors<sup>2</sup>, involving affected people in the design and implementation of activities, and sensitivity to gender, age and diversity, as well as conflict dynamics, are critical elements of both mainstreaming and targeted preparedness actions. Similarly, the effects of climate change and environmental degradation are increasingly integrated into all interventions in recognition of their role as risk multipliers. Protection and respect for humanitarian principles are integral to all DG ECHO funded interventions.

As illustrated by this Guidance Note, DG ECHO supports a very broad range of single sector and multi-sector interventions. Importantly, all these interventions are flexible in nature as they adjust to the context in which they are being implemented and, as such, they respond to actual needs, risks and challenges on the ground.

“ Protection and respect for humanitarian principles are integral to all DG ECHO funded interventions. ”

Humanitarian actors are DG ECHO's primary partners in the implementation of both *mainstreaming* and *targeted preparedness* actions. In recognition of the importance of the humanitarian-development-peace (HDP) nexus for achieving sustainability and promoting resilience, DG ECHO will continue to work closely with all European Union (EU) services aiming to promote complementarity and mutual reinforcement between

humanitarian and development initiatives – in particular with the Directorate General for International Partnerships (DG INTPA) and with the Directorate General for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement (DG NEAR). A nexus approach needs to be the backbone of preparedness and resilience. Concurrently, DG ECHO is increasingly engaging with a variety of actors, including other donors, climate and environmental organisations, academic, scientific and research institutes, financial institutions, private sector bodies, and civil protection mechanisms, through the European Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM).

Finally, alongside its commitment to support risk-informed humanitarian action, DG ECHO is equally committed to ensuring that its humanitarian action is evidence-based and generates learning, which then feeds into its humanitarian policy and practice, so that they remain relevant.

2. Local refers to both national and local government actors, civil society, academia, private sector and communities.

# 1. Introduction

The purpose of this Disaster Preparedness (DP) Guidance Note is to present and explain DG ECHO's disaster preparedness and risk-informed approach. It aims to help humanitarian partners, DG ECHO staff, the staff of relevant Commission services, and other stakeholders concerned with DP, to implement the approach through interventions funded by DG ECHO and other forms of collaboration with DG ECHO.

This Guidance Note replaces the 2013 DG ECHO Thematic Policy Note on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)<sup>3</sup> and sets out DG ECHO's policy and operational recommendations for the years to come. However, it is intended to be a dynamic document that will continuously be updated to reflect changes and emerging challenges in humanitarian contexts.

The Guidance Note is structured into **7 Chapters and 4 Annexes**. Following a brief introductory chapter, Chapter 2 presents the international and EU policy frameworks in which DG ECHO's preparedness work and risk informed approach are grounded.

Chapter 3 and 4 explore the different components of the DP and risk-informed approach, and introduce the two main implementation modalities – *mainstreaming* and *targeted preparedness*. Chapter 5 then introduces the nexus approach to preparedness and complementary implementation modalities.

Chapter 6 provides a broad overview of those actions that DG ECHO considers as preparedness and includes operational recommendations. It also gives a series of concrete examples of preparedness actions that can be implemented by partners.

Chapter 7 emphasises the need to gather evidence and to learn from partners' preparedness interventions and risk-informed approaches.

Finally, the Annexes 1 to 3 contain guidance on specific topics - namely, mainstreaming preparedness and risk reduction into response operations, crisis modifier and global priorities 2021-2024 for the DP Budget Line. Annex 4 contains a list of resources and tools to explore further the matters addressed in this document.



Vietnam: Schoolchildren participate in a Disaster Preparedness class organised by the NGO PLAN, funded by DG ECHO. © Cecile Pichon, June 2011, DG ECHO.

3. DG ECHO Thematic Policy Document n° 5: *Disaster Risk Reduction: Increasing resilience by reducing disaster risk in humanitarian action*.

# 2. International and EU Policy Frameworks

DG ECHO's work in disaster preparedness is firmly grounded in international and EU policy frameworks that provide orientation to DRR, humanitarian assistance, and climate change. The main frameworks of reference are presented in this section, others with relevance to specific issues will be mentioned as necessary throughout the Guidance.

## 2.1 International frameworks

### 2.1.1 Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction

The [Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030](#) (Sendai Framework) is a global non-binding agreement outlining seven targets and four priorities for action to prevent and reduce existing and new disaster risk. In keeping with DG ECHO's principles and risk-based approach to preparedness (see Chapter 5), the Sendai Framework places strong emphasis on anticipatory risk management and on a wide scope of action - including small-scale and slow-onset disasters as well as human-induced, technological, environmental and bio hazards. It also strongly embraces principles such as protecting people from the risk and impact of disasters as well as an all-of-society approach, based on non-discriminatory participation, the empowerment of local communities and increased collaboration among all relevant stakeholders, including academia, the scientific community and the private sector.

Importantly, the Framework clearly recognises the “need to further strengthen disaster preparedness for response, take action in anticipation of events, integrate disaster risk reduction in response preparedness and ensure that capacities are in place for effective response and recovery at all levels”<sup>4</sup>. As such, DG ECHO's work in preparedness is a primary contribution to the implementation of Sendai Priority 4: ‘*Enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response, and to “Build Back Better” in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction*’.

### 2.1.2 Grand Bargain - the Agenda for Humanity

The [Grand Bargain](#) is an agreement of nine commitments<sup>5</sup> between donors and humanitarian organisations, launched during the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) in 2016, aimed at improving the effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian aid.

4. Sendai Framework page 21.

5. 1. [Greater Transparency](#), 2. [More support and funding tools to local and national responders](#), 3. [Increase the use and coordination of cash-based programming](#), 4. [Reduce Duplication and Management costs with periodic functional reviews](#), 5. [Improve Joint and Impartial Needs Assessments](#), 6. [A Participation Revolution: include people receiving aid in making the decisions which affect their lives](#), 7. & 8. [Increase collaborative humanitarian multi-year planning and funding & Reduce the earmarking of donor contributions](#); 9. [Harmonize and simplify reporting requirements](#).



As a signatory of the Grand Bargain, DG ECHO contributes to the implementation of all commitments. Its disaster preparedness approach specifically aims to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the response and it is specifically relevant to Commitment N°2 (More Support and Funding Tools to Local and National Actors) as this helps to strengthen the capacity of first responders - including national and local governments, communities, Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies and civil society. Reinforcing local capacity is an explicit objective of DG ECHO, which recognises that the localisation of humanitarian action is a means for increasing sustainability and strengthening the resilience of crisis-affected people.

“ DG ECHO’s disaster preparedness activities are firmly grounded in international and EU policy frameworks that provide orientation in DRR, humanitarian assistance, and climate action. ”

### 2.1.3 Paris Agreement

The [Paris Agreement](#) establishes a long-term goal to limit global temperature rise to ‘well below 2° Celsius’ and to pursue efforts to limit the rise in temperature before the end of the century to 1.5°C. In addition to establishing a legally-binding framework to guide global efforts for this purpose, the Agreement also aims to increase the ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change and foster climate resilience. The EU is supporting partner countries to do so, recognising the critical importance of adaptation and disaster risk management in the global response to the climate crisis.

Closer to DG ECHO’s mandate, the Paris Agreement recognises the importance of averting, minimising and addressing loss and damage<sup>6</sup> associated with the adverse effects of climate change. The Agreement calls for enhanced cooperation, action and support in different areas, including those in which DG ECHO operates, such as early warning systems, and emergency preparedness.



*Thanks to improved coordination mechanisms between different levels of administration, professional rescue teams sent by the municipality also form part of the disaster management mechanism – travelling by boat to reach remote villages such as Tigdaranao. © EU/ DG ECHO/Pierre Prakash*

6. <https://unfccc.int/wim-excom>

### 2.1.4 The Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted in 2015, form a plan to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. They address global challenges, including poverty, inequality, food insecurity, climate change, environmental degradation, peace and justice. DG ECHO's actions contribute to many SDGs, in particular SDG 13 on climate change, which is directly linked to disaster preparedness and early action.

With the adoption of the European Green Deal in 2020 and its overall resilience and recovery approach, the European Commission is contributing to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

## 2.2 EU policy frameworks

### 2.2.1 Preparedness and DG ECHO's Mandate

Preparedness is embedded into DG ECHO's mandate as provided by the Council Regulation No 1257/96 of 20 June 1996. Article 1 mentions that *'aid shall also comprise operations to prepare for risks or prevent disasters or comparable exceptional circumstances'*. Furthermore, Article 2.f stipulates that operations should ensure preparedness for risks of natural disasters or comparable exceptional circumstances and use a suitable rapid early warning and intervention system. In line with these articles, support for better preparedness has been gradually mainstreamed in the majority of DG ECHO funded humanitarian aid programmes.

Preparedness and risk reduction concerns are included in all DG ECHO thematic [humanitarian aid policies](#), namely: [Cash](#); [Disability](#); [Education in Emergencies](#); [Food Assistance](#); [Gender](#); [Health](#); [Nutrition](#); [Protection](#); [Shelter and Settlements](#); and [Water, Sanitation and Hygiene](#).

**DG ECHO's mission** is to preserve lives, prevent and alleviate human suffering and safeguard the integrity and dignity of populations affected by a crisis. DG ECHO's protection mandate is also to encourage and facilitate cooperation between the 33 EU Members and participating States in the EU Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM) in order to improve the effectiveness of systems for preventing and protecting against natural, technological or human-induced disasters in Europe.

In 1996, DG ECHO created a dedicated programme and budget line to strengthen preparedness capacities in partner countries: the Disaster Preparedness ECHO Programme, DIPECHO. Initially rolled out in the Caribbean region, the programme was progressively expanded to eight regions<sup>7</sup>. DIPECHO has allowed DG ECHO to support its partners in strengthening the quality, timeliness and effectiveness of a more localised<sup>8</sup> humanitarian response, and it has shown that investing in preparedness and risk reduction is efficient and contributes to saving lives<sup>9</sup>. In addition to community-based interventions, DIPECHO has helped to design national and regional platforms for practitioners which allow them to regularly discuss best practices and lessons learnt.

Since 2015, the DIPECHO approach has focused more strictly on disaster preparedness and early action to avoid overlaps with long-term development instruments used for disaster risk reduction. The programming was streamlined

7. Caribbean, Central America, South America, South East Asia, South Asia, Central Asia and Southern Caucasus, Southern Africa including the Indian Ocean, and the Pacific. Even though never formally qualified as a DIPECHO project, a similar approach was developed in the Horn of Africa, which focused on drought from 2006 to 2012 before it was embedded in the countries' interventions and linked to the resilience agenda.

8. Reflecting the localisation agenda, "localised" here refers to the capacity of in-country actors, both at national and local level.

9. Cf. also international studies such as the [Centre for Climate Research - CICERO's](#) document [Disaster Mitigation is Cost-Effective](#).

around five priorities<sup>10</sup> and the funding allocation agreed in accordance with country or regional strategies.

DIPECHO evaluations<sup>11</sup> recommended a more focused and coherent multi-year preparedness strategy in countries where operations were taking place. Specifically, they highlighted the critical importance of: i. increasing support to strengthen the capacity of Disaster Risk Management authorities to complement the support given to communities, which was the main focus of DIPECHO interventions; ii. improving risk/vulnerability analysis as the basis for preparedness programming; and iii. strengthening collaboration with development actors. Additionally, all the evaluations highlighted the need to increase coordination with Civil Protection bodies, including the UCPM.

The 2021 renewed DG ECHO DP approach recognises and builds on the multiple strengths of the DIPECHO programme and its pioneering role in supporting disaster preparedness via a community approach, by linking community-based approaches with national and regional systems. It also provides guidance on how to implement evaluation recommendations and improve coherence and effectiveness.



*Nepal: 3 years after the earthquake, DanChurchAid conducts regular awareness sessions on Disaster Risk Reduction with local communities © European Union 2018 (photo by Pierre Prakash)*

### 2.2.2 European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid

The [European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid](#) which was adopted in 2007, is the core policy framework that guides the EU's humanitarian action, ensuring that it complies with humanitarian principles<sup>12</sup>. The Consensus clearly recognises the increasingly complex, multi-hazard/threat nature of current crises, and takes into account the multiplying effect of climate change, and the overlapping of disasters and situations of conflict and fragility. The Consensus also acknowledges that preparedness is essential to saving lives and enabling communities to increase their resilience to shocks and, therefore, capacity building in this area is viewed as an integral part of EU humanitarian action.

### 2.2.3 European Communication on Humanitarian Action

The [Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the EU's Humanitarian Action: New Challenges, Same Principles](#) (2021) places a clear emphasis on the need for preparedness and anticipatory action in responding to climate impacts and addressing environmental concerns through humanitarian aid. Preparedness is viewed as integral to humanitarian action and a key element of the broader, longer-term disaster risk reduction agenda. In this respect, the Communication highlights how the humanitarian-development-peace nexus approach as a primary vehicle by which to achieve the complementary objectives of disaster risk reduction and preparedness. The Communication also underlines how anticipatory approaches to

10. 1. Linking Relief Rehabilitation and Development (LRRD) – Disaster Preparedness as part of recovery strategies - opportunities to build back better; 2. Recurrent and predictable crises - National DP systems, contingency planning and surge models into key services - e.g. health (epidemic), food security, shock responsive safety nets; 3. Urban preparedness with an emphasis on mega cities, hence including Asia and the LAC region; 4. Ongoing crises or situations of fragility - early response mechanisms; 5. Institutional partnership with UCPM in support of CP administrative agreements.

11. 2013 Global, 2013 Central Asia, 2016 Latin America and Caribbean, and 2017 Southern Africa and Indian Ocean.

12. [The principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence.](#)

humanitarian action can help to bolster community resilience, including that of forcibly displaced people, in regions vulnerable to climate-related and other hazards.

#### 2.2.4 European Consensus on Development

The [European Consensus on Development](#) (2017) frames the action of EU institutions and Member States (MS) in their cooperation with all developing countries. Responding to the [Agenda 2030](#), the Consensus includes assistance to populations and countries affected by disasters (natural and human-induced hazards and threats) among its core objectives. The Consensus clearly mentions the key role of preparedness in reducing risk, and strengthening resilience to withstand and recover from shocks and disasters (Article 70), in accord with the Sendai Framework.

#### 2.2.5 EU Joint Communication on Resilience

The Joint Communication, [A Strategic Approach to Resilience in the EU's external action](#) (2017), strongly positions resilience as a central priority of the EU's external action, and establishes better anticipation, risk reduction and disaster preparedness as integral components of the EU's approach. The Communication explicitly states that resilience requires risk-informed programming for responses to all crises and situations of fragility. With risk reduction at their core, the EU's resilience approach and the Sendai Framework are complementary and mutually reinforcing.

#### 2.2.6 The European Green Deal

The [European Green Deal](#) (2019) aims to make Europe the first climate-neutral, climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable continent by 2050 through a series of actions and measures underpinned by the core principles of environmental sustainability, climate neutrality and climate resilience.

The vision of the European Green Deal is also expected to guide the external action of the EU, including in humanitarian aid. Mainstreaming preparedness, as well as climate and environmental concerns, in humanitarian action will increase resilience among those who receive EU Aid.

#### 2.2.7 EU Adaptation Strategy

As an essential element of the European Green Deal, the interface between climate change and DRR is also central to the [EU Adaptation Strategy](#). This strategy includes an external dimension (i.e. related to non-EU countries) for the first time, in recognition of the interconnectedness of risks as well as the EU's responsibility to help the most vulnerable, including those most affected by climate change. The new strategy also responds to the need for better preparedness and has dedicated measures on anticipatory action: climate change adaptation is about understanding, planning and acting to prevent the impacts in the first place, minimising their effects, and addressing their consequences.

# 3. Preparedness & Risk Informed Approach

This section presents **DG ECHO's Preparedness and Risk Informed Approach**. It is critical that, when working together, DG ECHO and humanitarian partners are on the same page in terms of the language they use, given that there may be differences in emphasis in the broader humanitarian sector. It is also important to keep in mind that the meaning and application of the approach, and some of its key elements, may continue to evolve.

DG ECHO recognises that the effectiveness of a response depends on investments in preparedness, as a component of risk management. It also recognises that a risk-informed approach is crucial to reduce the humanitarian needs caused by risks. To this end, it seeks to **mainstream** preparedness and a risk-informed approach in all of its response operations. And as a complementary measure, it also promotes **targeted** preparedness actions as a specific way of strengthening preparedness for response and early action.

Although preparedness and risk-proofing are intrinsic to humanitarian action, DG ECHO acknowledges that development actors play a key role in scaling up and complementing these interventions, and thus ensuring their long-term sustainability. As such, DG ECHO promotes a nexus approach with development actors as the primary implementation modality for preparedness and risk reduction and seeks concrete opportunities to promote this way of working.

While this chapter focuses on DG ECHO's mainstreaming and targeted preparedness approach, the nexus approach is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 5, together with other implementation modalities.

## 3.1 Disaster Preparedness

Preparedness allows for an early and efficient response and therefore helps to save lives, reduce suffering and prevent or decrease the extent of needs. In this way it lessens the impact of a hazard and/or threat and contributes to resilience. In particular, DG ECHO views preparedness as a way to promote **anticipatory actions, early response, and flexibility** which are critical to managing disasters (see box for definition) more efficiently and effectively, and mitigating their impact.

Disaster preparedness is *'the knowledge and capacities developed by governments, response and recovery organizations, communities and individuals to effectively*

### Disaster

DG ECHO's definition of the term *disaster* includes all events, as follows:

- Natural hazards such as earthquakes, cyclones/hurricanes, storms, tsunamis, floods and drought;
- Conflict and violence;
- Disease outbreaks and epidemics, such as Ebola or Covid-19;
- Technological and industrial hazards.

DG ECHO mainly interprets disasters as humanitarian crises, which are understood by the European Commission as events or series of events which represent a critical threat to the health, safety, security or wellbeing of a community or other large group of people. A humanitarian crisis can have natural or human-induced causes, can have a rapid or slow onset, and can be of short or protracted duration.

anticipate, respond to and recover from the impacts of likely, imminent or current disasters' (UNDRR, 2017). DG ECHO embraces this definition and understands preparedness as an important component of the larger work on Disaster Risk Management.

Although preparedness does not address the structural causal factors of disasters, it complements the longer-term risk management strands (Prevention, and Recovery) that sit within a developmental approach and are within the remit of other services of the European Commission.

As a humanitarian donor, DG ECHO views 'hazardous events' as encompassing both natural hazards and human-induced threats. It views preparedness as relevant to **all types of hazards and threats** in a given context.

“ EU Humanitarian Aid aims to support people in addressing their needs and managing the risks they face. ”

### 3.2 Risk Informed Approach

EU Humanitarian Aid aims to support people in addressing their needs and managing the risks they face. As such, a sound assessment of these needs has to be carried out, based on evidence and regular updates, and factoring in an accurate assessment of the risks people face. In line with the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit's commitment to anticipate and better manage risks and crises, **a needs-based approach must consistently integrate risk assessment and analysis**. This allows existing and potential risks to be evaluated and action taken before a crisis hits or a situation deteriorates, thus reducing suffering and humanitarian needs.

DG ECHO's risk-informed approach therefore implies that all humanitarian actions are designed based on an assessment and understanding of risks, and are implemented to respond to and possibly reduce these risks, with the final objective of mitigating their impact.

## Risk

$$\text{RISK} = \text{HAZARD AND/OR THREATS} \times \frac{\text{VULNERABILITY}}{\text{COPING CAPACITY}}$$

Risk is “the combination of the consequences of an event or hazard and the associated likelihood of its occurrence” (ISO 31010) as defined in the Commission staff working paper [Risk Assessment and Mapping Guidelines for Disaster Management](#) (2010).

- **Hazard/Threat & Exposure:** Depending on the context and the nature of the hazard, this dimension of risk may be reduced by measures including prevention or reducing the occurrence or extent of the hazard/threat and by reducing the exposure of people to the impact of the hazard/threat.
- **Vulnerability:** Reducing the vulnerability of exposed people will reduce their risk.

Vulnerability is not a fixed criterion attached to specific categories of people, and no one is born vulnerable per se. In this regard, it is particularly important to target the most vulnerable groups, based on an intersectional analysis (sensitive to gender, age, disability, ethnicity, displacement etc.).

- **Coping Capacity:** Increasing coping capacity lowers the level of risk. This covers a very broad area and requires careful analysis to target investments in capacity development. It is closely linked to the development of resilience. Experiences, knowledge and networks strengthen the ability to withstand adverse impact from external stressors. The development of many elements of capacity (such as communication and organisational capacities) helps reduce the risk from a wide range of hazards/threats.

The concept of risk involves forecasting the probability of future harm. As such, it involves the capacity for anticipation and dealing with uncertainty.

Effective risk management involves a number of strands, including:

- Prevention (Risk Reduction)
- Preparedness
- Response
- Recovery

These strands are closely connected and overlapping, as illustrated in the graph below.

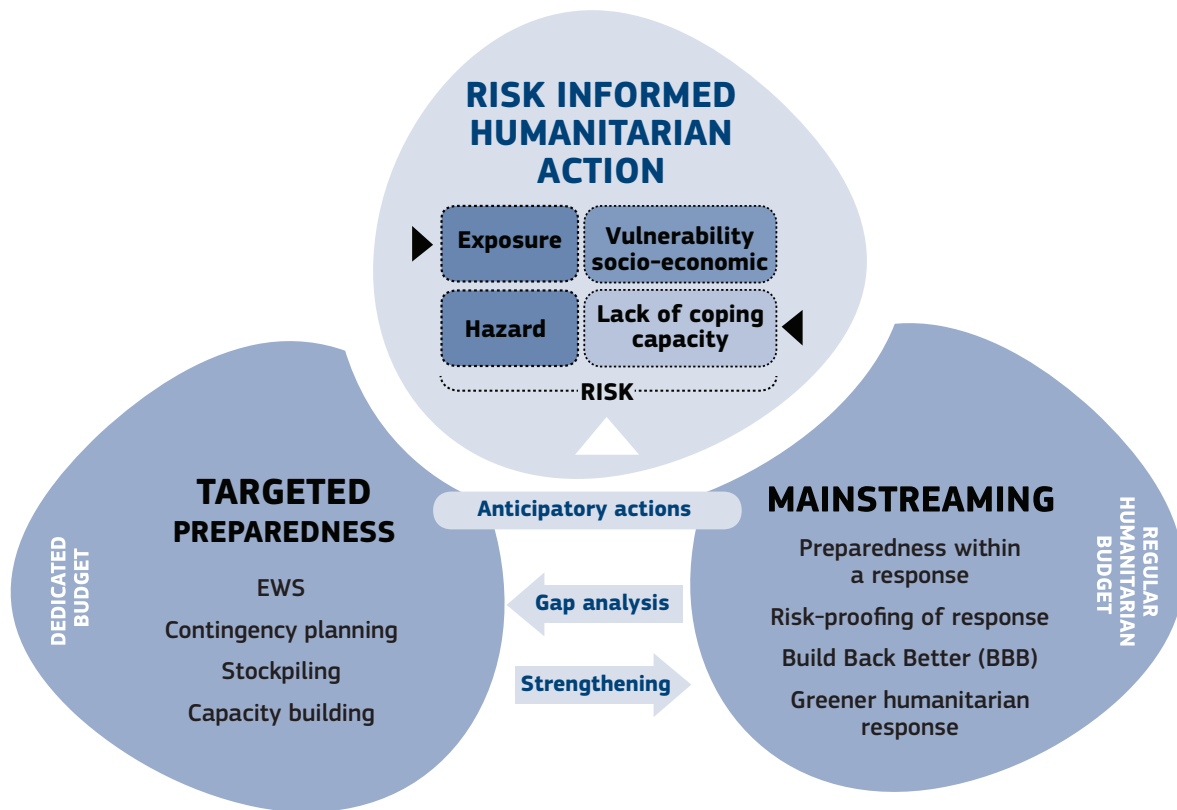


Graph 1. Risk management strands

DG ECHO's support focuses primarily on preparedness and response. Within these strands, DG ECHO applies a risk-informed approach by:

- Mainstreaming preparedness in, and risk-proofing, response operations by integrating risk reduction measures (henceforth referred to simply as 'mainstreaming');
- Targeted preparedness actions (see chapter 6 for a detailed overview of targeted preparedness actions).

Both 'mainstreaming' and 'targeted preparedness' actions are based on a comprehensive risk assessment. Similarly, risk assessment is key to the design of effective anticipatory actions, which are another important element of a risk-informed approach. The following sections focus on risk assessment, anticipatory action, mainstreaming and targeted preparedness.



Graph 2. Risk Informed Humanitarian Action

### 3.2.1 Risk Assessment

Risk assessment must be the basis for designing interventions and should be considered an integral part of all humanitarian action. Risk assessment should always be context-specific, examining each situation individually, thus avoiding generalisations or assumptions, and with a view to generating information that is precise enough to inform programming decisions. Particularly relevant for humanitarian action are the following key questions to guide the assessment:

- What are the main hazards/threats faced by people in their context, and what level of impact or consequences do these have?
- How likely is the hazard/threat to occur (i.e. probability)?
- What level of exposure do people have to these hazards/threats?
- How vulnerable are people to these risks, noting that different groups have different vulnerabilities?
- What is the coping capacity of the community?

As far as is practicable, a risk assessment should be conducted from the perspective of the affected population, thus ensuring their engagement in the analysis, decision-making and implementation of the assessment itself. It should identify risks related to specific hazards and threats and each component should be disaggregated to a detailed level. It should reveal the specific dynamics of the situation and help identify ways that interventions can reduce the associated risks. **Risk assessment and risk analysis should be a continuous process, rather than taking place only at fixed points within the programme cycle.**

Data for risk assessments can come from commercial and open-source satellite images and maps<sup>13</sup>, project reports from national and international

13. Low Resolution free imagery: <https://www.sentinel-hub.com/> (ESA Sentinel 2/3 imagery and NASA Landsat 8); Medium Resolution commercial imagery: Planet Labs; High Resolution commercial imagery: DigitalGlobe; Historical data available at: Google Earth Pro, Yandex, Bing.



environmental agencies, local knowledge, environmental assessments, national/international environmental databases, wildlife and fisheries management plans, development plans, and land tenure records<sup>14</sup>, climate trends, projections and adaptation options<sup>15</sup>.

Considering the unfolding climate and environmental crisis, analysis of current and future risks stemming from both climate change and environmental degradation should be included in all risk assessments to identify interlinkages and priorities for action in specific contexts. Although their causes can be different, the result of environmental degradation (i.e. environmental hazards) can be the same as that of climate-related hazards, and they can be made more severe by climate change. For example, climate change can increase the risk of landslides through increased heavy rain over time. Deforestation, particularly on hillsides, can also increase the risk of landslides by destabilising the soil. Furthermore, climate change impacts and environmental degradation can also exacerbate existing tensions, increasing risk of conflict and can therefore be seen as “threat multipliers”<sup>16</sup>. As such, risks should not only be assessed individually but their interacting nature should also be considered, to identify so-called ‘compounding’ risks, for example that of climate and environment crises interacting with conflict risk, and compounding vulnerabilities.

Multi-risk analyses can make use of different context-specific environmental data sources, e.g. climate data, the location of protected areas, vegetation/land cover, measurements of pollution (including information on areas where there are hazardous and toxic materials), topographical and hydrological data, biodiversity levels, the availability of natural resources, and natural hazard data<sup>17</sup>.

Finally, it should still be a priority to ensure the meaningful participation and involvement of meteorological agencies (governmental and non-governmental), climate organisations and research institutes, civil society (including affected communities), grassroots associations, academia, voluntary work organizations, and affected populations, including the most vulnerable, marginalized and exposed groups, in designing and carrying out an effective and comprehensive risk assessment. This, in turn, increases the ownership of preparedness measures and mechanisms implemented to counter the risks that have been jointly identified.

“ Considering the unfolding climate and environmental crisis, analysis of current and future risks stemming from both climate change and environmental degradation should be included in all risk assessments to identify interlinkages and priorities for action in specific contexts. ”



*This is a drill in which recently trained brigades perform rescue operations saving people from collapsed buildings during a fire in Nicaragua's capital Managua.*  
© 2013 – © Spanish Red Cross

14. <https://ehaconnect.org/preparedness/environmental-situation-analysis/how-to-guide/>

15. [World Bank Climate Change Knowledge Portal](https://www.worldbank.org/knowledge/portal/).

16. EU, 2008. Paper from the High Representative and the European Commission to the European Council: Climate Change and International Security. S113/08, 14 March 2008.

17. <https://ehaconnect.org/preparedness/environmental-situation-analysis/how-to-guide/>

## Floods risk assessment and anticipatory actions

Ahead of flooding peaks, it is possible to quickly disburse unconditional multi-purpose cash grants and distribute non-food items to transport goods and purify water. The potential at risk population and high-risk areas of action should be pre-selected on the basis of a risk and vulnerability assessment ahead of the disaster. Targeting should be adjusted once the hazard impact area can be forecast more concretely. For reference see examples in Bangladesh (July 2020) by the [World Food Programme](#) (WFP) and the [Bangladesh Red Crescent Society](#).

Note: This action was supported through DG ECHO's funding via IFRC's [Disaster Relief Emergency Fund](#) (DREF).

### 3.2.2 Anticipatory or Early Action<sup>18</sup>

**Anticipatory or Early Actions** (AA and EA) are taken when a disaster is imminent (or, in the case of a slow-onset disaster, when it is about to reach a peak). Therefore, they are carried out before a crisis occurs, or before a significant development within a crisis. Early actions are implemented according to a pre-determined protocol, which describes the activities to be undertaken and pre-agreed triggers established on the basis of historical and current forecast analysis. Ahead of a crisis, forecasts are combined with risk, vulnerability and exposure indicators to develop an intervention map, and dedicated funds are defined to be quickly released when pre-agreed thresholds are reached. Anticipatory action thus reduces the vulnerability of affected communities and strengthens their capacity to manage an emergency and to safeguard their assets. As such, anticipatory action is integral to risk management as it helps pre-define needs and respond to them more effectively, and thus reduce the impact of a hazard or threat on lives and livelihoods. In so doing, it complements preparedness as part of an effective response and, as such, it is also part

of preparedness. Anticipatory action is further discussed in section 6.2.

**Early Response** (ER) refers to actions that are undertaken right after a disaster occurs. Anticipatory (or early) action is different from 'early response' insofar as the former begins before the hazard and/or threat strikes whereas the latter begins after it has struck. "In contrast to anticipatory action, early response is based on an evidenced hazard/threat and observable rather than forecasted needs and does not require pre-agreed implementation plans"<sup>19</sup>.

### 3.2.3 Mainstreaming Preparedness and Risk Proofing Response Interventions

In line with a risk-informed approach, DG ECHO aims to **risk proof** its humanitarian response interventions by mainstreaming preparedness and integrating risk reduction measures. The objective is to make humanitarian assistance more effective, while increasing the coping capacities and resilience of communities at risk, and ultimately reducing the need for external assistance. Except in duly justified cases, preparedness actions should therefore be systematically mainstreamed into humanitarian operations to strengthen the capacity to respond to a crisis within a crisis (e.g. sudden floods during a conflict) or any recrudescence or aftershock.

To make humanitarian action more effective, response interventions should be designed to reduce immediate and imminent risks, and not add new risks (the 'do no harm' principle). By **risk-proofing** humanitarian interventions, they are protected against imminent hazards and threats<sup>20</sup>. Risk-proofing considerations should be specifically interpreted according to the local context, the nature of the hazardous/threatening event and tailored to the best suited humanitarian

18. For DG ECHO anticipatory actions and early actions are the same concept. In this guidance, they will be used interchangeably, so in the paragraph 6.2 on anticipatory actions we refer also to early actions.

19. [https://cerfun.org/sites/default/files/resources/CERF\\_and\\_Anticipatory\\_Action.pdf](https://cerfun.org/sites/default/files/resources/CERF_and_Anticipatory_Action.pdf)

20. For example: ensuring water points are located above high water levels in flood-prone areas so they are not damaged by floods or incorporating adequate fire-protection in shelter.



*Women experts reaching remote communities in Nicaragua. ©EU 2013- Photo credits: EC/DG ECHO/Silvio Balladares*

action. Risk reduction measures, however, remain relevant to every sector of humanitarian assistance. Before and during their implementation, it is important to consider the linkages between sectors. Further guidance on preparedness and risk proofing of response operations can be found in the humanitarian policies of DG ECHO, mentioned in section 2.2, as well as in Annex 1.

In addition to specific guidance on how to integrate preparedness and risk reduction into humanitarian assistance, DG ECHO has developed two tools, the [Resilience Marker](#) (RM), and the Crisis Modifier (CM) (see Annex 2), to ensure that programming is risk-informed and that there is a greater degree of financial flexibility in humanitarian action in order to respond to crises within crises.

The **Resilience Marker** is included in the DG ECHO electronic Single Form (eSF) and allows partners to verify whether their programming is effectively based on a systematic analysis of risks, and how the action addresses these risks and avoids creating new risks from the design stage. The **Crisis Modifier** promotes systematic consideration of preparedness through the integration of a flexible, early action component to address, in a timely manner, immediate and life-saving needs resulting from a rapid-onset crisis or a deteriorated situation<sup>21</sup> within a DG ECHO-funded action.

The priorities and funding for humanitarian response operations are included in the regional and/or country [Humanitarian Implementation Plans](#) (HIPs), regularly published by DG ECHO.

21. For example, although a drought is a slow onset crisis, it could trigger acute malnutrition rapidly.

## Emergency Toolbox

The Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC)'s instruments include the [Emergency Toolbox](#), which is a fund that specifically provides humanitarian assistance to respond to fast-onset crises that could not be foreseen in DG ECHO's humanitarian implementation plans. *Three of the four tools within the Toolbox can be used for disaster preparedness as well as response:*

- The Small-scale Tool is used to assist a limited number of people (< 100,000) affected by a natural hazard or human-induced disaster. This includes the deployment of preparedness activities. All DG ECHO partners can access these tools by submitting a proposal through the DG ECHO electronic Single Form.
- The Epidemics Tool is used to prevent and respond to epidemic outbreaks, and is available to all DG ECHO partners through the DG ECHO electronic Single Form.
- The IFRC's [Disaster Relief Emergency Fund](#) (DREF) and Forecast-based Action by DREF provide National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies with funds for early action or for response.

### 3.2.4 Targeted Preparedness Actions

Targeted preparedness refers to actions taken in advance of a hazardous and/or threatening event and aimed at improving the effectiveness of the response to it. This can involve, for example, the development of early warning systems, reinforcing the link between early warning and early action, the development of contingency plans, anticipatory actions, the emergency repositioning of stock, and overall capacity building for early action/early response, etc.

The Disaster Preparedness Budget Line is DG ECHO's dedicated source of funding<sup>22</sup> for targeted preparedness actions at regional and country levels. It allows support for preparedness to be extended beyond DG ECHO's regular humanitarian funding modalities.

As of 2021, the DP Budget Line is structured around a set of global priorities, for a period of five years, in order to maximise the strategic use of this funding, and bring more focus and coherence to DG ECHO's support to disaster preparedness across regions. Regional and country actions will have to mirror one or more of these priorities, while ensuring that they are tailored to the specific needs of local contexts (country and/or regional level). The 2021-2024 priorities are detailed in Annex 3, which will be

regularly updated as the priorities evolve.

The DP Budget Line replaces the previously available DG ECHO Preparedness Programme (DIPECHO). The DP Budget Line is allocated under the [Humanitarian Implementation Plans](#) (HIPs), complementing the budget dedicated to humanitarian response operations. Funding for humanitarian response and for preparedness is managed under the same framework to provide a more coherent and cohesive approach, and to further mainstream preparedness into humanitarian assistance.

22. EUR 75 million in 2021.

# 4. Key Elements of the DG ECHO Preparedness and Risk-Informed Approach

## Humanitarian principles

The [humanitarian principles](#) of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence, enshrined in the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid, guide DG ECHO's disaster preparedness activities, which are an integral part of humanitarian action. The humanitarian projects that DG ECHO funds aim to preserve life, and prevent and alleviate suffering. They also have to adhere to the *do no harm* principle to avoid exposing people to additional risks.

## Multi-hazard and multi-threat

Crises are becoming more complex, with natural hazards increasingly overlapping with human-induced ones, or with unprecedented biological hazard situations like the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. Consequently, preparedness applies to any type of crisis and covers all types of risks, from natural and biological hazards, to human-induced threats, such as technological hazards (e.g. industrial), conflict and violence.

## People centred

For DG ECHO, humanitarian action starts with affected people and communities. Interventions aim to meet, or contribute to meeting, the basic needs of affected populations, addressing needs in a demand-driven way. DG ECHO acknowledges that effective humanitarian action requires the participation of, and accountability towards, affected people. DG ECHO also recognises that, in addition to needs and vulnerabilities, affected people - including first responders - have the capacity to manage the risks they face.

Humanitarian projects must be people-centred, prioritising their impact on people's lives and livelihoods. By promoting this approach, DG ECHO contributes to strengthening people's resilience and ensures that preparedness and response measures address the needs of all, without barriers, so that no one is left behind.

In pursuing its people-centred approach, DG ECHO will take note of the provisions in the Grand Bargain and good practice as elaborated in the [Core Humanitarian Standard](#).

*With funding from DG ECHO, PAH is implementing and coordinating water and sanitation related projects, as well as improving preparedness in emergency prone areas of South Sudan. ©Tomasz Woźny / PAH*





*In Vanuatu, Disaster Preparedness measures in such small and isolated communities take time and effort but the appreciation expressed by the communities for such assistance is heartfelt.*  
© EU 2012 - Story and photo credits: EC/DG ECHO/Mathias Eick

### **Gender, age and diversity sensitivity**

Integrating gender and age enhances the quality of humanitarian programming, in line with the EU's humanitarian mandate. Aid that is not gender- and age-sensitive is less effective. It risks not reaching the most vulnerable people or failing to respond adequately to their specific needs. Furthermore, a comprehensive understanding of vulnerabilities must take an intersectional approach, considering multiple aspects of diversity, which can intersect with gender to produce multiple discrimination and exacerbate vulnerability<sup>23</sup>. These aspects influence the impact that crises have on people, as they affect both vulnerabilities and capacities, and hence their exposure to risk. This means that risk assessment, and the associated preparedness and response measures, must fully factor in the particular characteristics of different groups (age, gender, ability, ethnicity, social status, etc.) and their circumstances (rural, urban, displaced, wealth and income).

### **Conflict sensitivity**

DG ECHO recognises that violence and conflict are either a key driver or a risk multiplier in many crises. Hence, all interventions should adopt a conflict sensitive approach. Conflict sensitivity is defined as the ability of an organization to understand the context in which it is operating, and the interaction between the intervention and the context, and thus avoid negative impacts and maximise positive impacts<sup>24</sup>.

### **The centrality of protection**

All humanitarian actors need to take protection into account in their programming

<sup>23</sup> DG ECHO Thematic Policy N° 6, *Gender: Different Needs, Adapted Assistance*.

<sup>24</sup> Adapted from International Alert et al., 2004. [Conflict-sensitive approaches to development, humanitarian assistance and peacebuilding: a resource Pack](#). London: International Alert

- in line with the Inter-agency Standing Committee (IASC) Principals' statement on the [Centrality of Protection](#) which emphasises the importance of protection and contributing to collective protection outcomes in all aspects of humanitarian action. Protection should be central to humanitarian preparedness efforts, and should be taken into account throughout the duration of the humanitarian response and beyond.

### Strengthening local capacity

Anticipatory action and enhanced predictability of response can only be achieved if local<sup>25</sup> preparedness and response capacities are in place as per the Grand Bargain commitments. Therefore, preparedness actions must strengthen first responders' capacity to act as locally and as early as possible.

While recognising the importance of capacity strengthening within communities, and of maintaining a strong focus on it, DG ECHO appreciates that it needs to be well anchored, and should complement the capacity of state disaster management systems at the national and local levels as much as possible. A *system wide approach* is encouraged to ensure linkages and simultaneous capacity-building at community and governmental level, whenever possible, whilst respecting the *do no harm* principle, and other humanitarian principles.

*“ Protection should be central to humanitarian preparedness efforts, and should be taken into account throughout the duration of the humanitarian response and beyond. ”*

### Context specificity

Local context is crucial in shaping risks, vulnerabilities, capacities and the needs of populations and countries affected, or with a potential to be affected, by a crisis. Preparedness interventions should therefore always respond, and be adapted, to the context, including in the choice of target beneficiaries and partners.

### Climate change and environmental degradation

Climate change and environmental degradation are risk multipliers<sup>26</sup>. Climate change is increasing the frequency and severity of both sudden-onset and slow-onset climate-related hazards<sup>27</sup>. This, in turn, is increasing humanitarian needs and posing greater challenges to humanitarian action (e.g. scale or geographical distribution). It is increasingly clear that environmental degradation can also trigger significant and protracted humanitarian crises, e.g. by exposing human food systems to increased risk of failure through droughts or by increasing the risk of the re/emergence of zoonotic diseases and increasing human exposure to diseases. In addition, climate change is an accelerating factor in environmental degradation, including land degradation and biodiversity loss. The impact of climate change and environmental degradation can also exacerbate existing tensions, increasing the risk of conflict. As current and future climate change and environmental degradation may increase the risks faced by people in affected areas, and may jeopardise the effectiveness of interventions themselves, these phenomena should be accounted for in humanitarian action. See section 6.11.1 on climate and environmental resilience interventions.

25. Local refers to both national and local government actors, civil society, academia, private sector and communities. It also includes international partners working in country in support of preparedness and response systems.

26. EU, 2008. Paper from the High Representative and the European Commission to the European Council: Climate Change and international security, S113/08, 14 March 2008.

27. IPCC, 2013: Climate Change 2013: The Physical Science Basis. Contribution of Working Group I to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. [Stocker, T.F., D. Qin, G.-K. Plattner, M. Tignor, S.K. Allen, J. Boschung, A. Nauels, Y. Xia, V. Bex and P.M. Midgley (eds.)]. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, United Kingdom and New York, NY, USA, 1535 pp.

# 5. Complementary implementing modalities

The implementation and effectiveness of disaster preparedness interventions relies on cooperation with key actors, notably development and peace actors. In this light, when mainstreaming and in targeted preparedness actions, DG ECHO will work in a nexus approach with development and peace actors, and will establish and/or strengthen partnerships with key stakeholders and with the UCPM. This chapter provides an overview of the implementing modalities that complement mainstreaming and targeted preparedness.

## 5.1 Humanitarian Development Peace (HDP) Nexus

The recurrent, protracted and complex nature of many crises re-enforces the importance of designing interventions that address development and peacebuilding challenges as well as humanitarian needs. This can be done through the Humanitarian Development Peace (HDP) nexus approach, which is based on the shared vision and collective effort of the EU, its Member States, and its partners, and stems from the 2017 [Council Conclusions](#): *“the Council stresses the importance of investing in prevention and addressing the underlying root causes of vulnerability, fragility and conflict while simultaneously meeting humanitarian needs and strengthening resilience, thus reducing risks”*. Within this, resilience is a central objective of EU development and humanitarian assistance.

DG ECHO fully adheres to the nexus approach and the idea of engaging with development and peace actors in preparedness activities, and throughout humanitarian operations, in order to increase their sustainability and promote resilience.

### Nexus in practice: an example from Chad

Close coordination between development and humanitarian interventions in Chad has been underway for several years. For example, DG ECHO and DG INTPA are working together to deliver nutritional services to children and to establish a unified social register for ambitious social safety nets that strengthen food security.

DG ECHO’s preparedness actions, be they mainstreamed or targeted, need to be undertaken in a way that complements and/or reinforces ongoing or future, relevant development initiatives. DG ECHO funded preparedness actions should therefore, whenever possible, include an exit strategy that addresses the issues of scaling up and integrating elements into longer-term risk reduction and development interventions. This entails the establishment of a close relationship, and the sustained exchange of information and coordination between DG ECHO and the European Commission development services (DG INTPA and DG NEAR) at both HQ and field levels, as well as between partners. Partners with experience and expertise across the humanitarian and development spectrum, including in conflict zones, are particularly well placed to support the design and implementation of mutually-reinforcing humanitarian-development interventions, and bringing together funding from humanitarian and development donors.



A joint crisis context analysis is an essential step of a nexus approach, allowing risks and vulnerabilities to be identified, and humanitarian and development actors to define entry points/areas for collaboration, complementary action and mutually-reinforcing initiatives. Joint post-crisis needs assessments can also help to facilitate dialogue and promote the systematic integration of preparedness, risk and vulnerability concerns into both humanitarian and development interventions.

The targets set out by the EU Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) 2021-2027 for climate, migration and human development show that climate change resilience among the most vulnerable populations is a priority for the Commission. As such, the Instrument provides a framework for DG ECHO and the development services of the Commission (namely DG INTPA and DG NEAR) to work in a complementary manner in the areas of disaster preparedness and risk reduction.

In line with this approach, DG ECHO will:

- Encourage and support dialogue, information exchange and coordination between humanitarian, development and peace actors at headquarters and country levels;
- Support the development and use of a common analysis framework covering context, needs and risk analysis and, where possible, support joint assessments and joint planning, in a manner compatible with humanitarian principles;
- Support a multi-year NDICI planning and programming cycle to counter the multi-year funding gaps that have been faced in the past;
- Support the development of key complementary preparedness interventions that underpin this approach, notably early warning and early action measures;
- Promote further complementary action in Disaster Risk Finance (DRF)<sup>28</sup>, ensuring that it meets the needs of affected communities and engagement of civil society organisations (CSO)<sup>29</sup>. Particularly, DG ECHO will explore and support collaboration to leverage the financing of social protection mechanisms, where they exist (see also section 6.5 on Shock Responsive Social Protection) and Forecast-based Financing (see also section 6.1 on Early Warning Systems and 6.2 on Anticipatory Action as examples of collaboration areas). DG ECHO is also currently assessing its organisational readiness regarding risk-transfer instruments, such as financial insurance/micro-insurance, to create and finance insurance schemes to complement development-funded insurance solutions, as an additional mechanism for mitigating the impact of shocks at household level;



*As part of a disaster preparedness project that aims to increase the resilience of Mongolian herders, the EU's partner, People in Need (PIN), created an SMS service that provides the herders with weather forecasts and data on pasture degradation. This allows them to take precautionary measures and manage their herds more effectively when there is a harsh winter (known as 'dzud').*  
© 2018 European Union / Pierre Prakash

28. Disaster Risk Finance (DRF) includes "financial protection strategies that increase the ability of national and local governments, homeowners, businesses, agricultural producers, and low income populations to respond more quickly and resiliently to disasters" (after [World Bank](#)). It helps minimise the cost and optimise the timing of meeting post-disaster funding needs without compromising development goals, fiscal stability, or wellbeing. DRF promotes comprehensive financial protection strategies and market-based disaster risk financing and insurance solutions (such as sovereign catastrophe risk transfer solutions for governments or domestic catastrophe risk insurance for public and private assets) to ensure that governments, homeowners, small and medium-sized enterprises, agricultural producers, and people in the most vulnerable situations (especially youth and women) can meet post-disaster funding needs as they arrive.

29. For more on DRF tools and the engagement of civil society organisations: [Ensuring impact: the role of civil society organisations in strengthening World Bank disaster risk financing](#) (UK Aid, Mercy Corps, Oxfam - 2019).

- Encourage initiatives to leverage funding across the humanitarian, development and peace boundaries to invest in national capacities and systems to enhance first responders' ability to operate across the nexus divides, while building self-reliance and reducing their dependence on external intervention.

Embedding DG ECHO-funded humanitarian projects in a nexus approach ensures that the hand-over to our development partners is more fluid. This can only benefit the sustainability of these projects and help to guarantee that exit strategies are successful.

## 5.2 Partnerships

In addition to strong partnerships with humanitarian actors, DG ECHO seeks to develop synergies and complementarity through new partnerships, fostering a coordinated approach where needed, while allowing space for creative and critical dialogue in relation to policy development and implementation. DG ECHO brings the following assets to this process:

- Its convening power as one of the world's largest humanitarian donors;
- Its role as a reference donor and advocate;
- Its support for learning and the development of policy and good practice.

DG ECHO will engage with a broad spectrum of key actors and stakeholders<sup>30</sup>, such as:

- Other donors, both those that are like-minded and those with different perspectives;
- Non humanitarian multi-lateral organisations, including the relevant UN agencies and the World Bank;
- Climate and environmental experts/organisations;
- Organisations working with indigenous people;
- Academic, scientific, research and policy development institutes;
- Private sector bodies, particularly those involved in risk management;
- Security and military actors, in line with international humanitarian civil military coordination guidelines and recommended practices<sup>31</sup>.

*“ DG ECHO will increase exchanges with operational and research partners, to ensure that its policy continues to evolve. ”*

DG ECHO recognises that there is potential value in cooperation between the scientific and academic community and the humanitarian sector in all phases of humanitarian aid, from disaster preparedness to needs assessment and early recovery. This type of partnership can be particularly relevant in improving understanding of current and emerging risks, for example those related to climate change, as well as in the enhancement of technical innovation for both preparedness and response activities.

DG ECHO will increase exchanges with operational and research partners, to ensure that its policy continues to evolve.

DG ECHO will also increase the timeframe of some of the existing partnerships through the establishment of Programmatic Partnerships<sup>32</sup>, which address the

30. Development actors within the European Commission (i.e. DG INTPA, NEAR and the EEAS) are not listed here as they are considered included already as partners in the Nexus approach.

31. [www.unocha.org/fr/themes/humanitarian-civil-military-coordination](http://www.unocha.org/fr/themes/humanitarian-civil-military-coordination)

32. Programmatic partnerships have been piloted with NGO partners since 2019. As of 2021, they will also be piloted with UN Agencies, IFRC and ICRC.



Grand Bargain commitments to increase predictability and the provision of multi-year funding. Programmatic partnerships are a specific operational modality: for NGO partners under the DG ECHO Humanitarian Certification; for UN agencies under the Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement - FAFA; for the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) under their respective Framework Partnership Agreement<sup>33</sup>.

Furthermore, coordination with security and military actors will take place in accordance with humanitarian principles. Coordination of this kind can be particularly useful in humanitarian emergency and disaster situations which require capabilities that are only available from the military community, and that civilian bodies can request as a last resort. In this regard, DG ECHO will continue to promote and support effective Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination (CMCoord) at the global level (with the UN and other donors) and within the EU.

New types of partnerships can also be explored under the funding available for targeted preparedness, particularly with emerging innovative actors in the humanitarian domain such as the Start Network. Another avenue for new partnerships and exchanging knowledge between risk management actors is the [Union Civil Protection Knowledge Network](#).

Finally, Team Europe Initiatives have shown promise in tackling many COVID-19 pandemic response challenges. Enhanced coordination with Member States on prevention and preparedness globally or in specific contexts is also seen as an opportunity for more efficient preparedness and response.

*15 kilometers further down the river Shokhdara the village of Kulev, did not benefit from projects covered under the EU disaster preparedness programme (DIPECHO). Here the impact of natural disasters hitting an unprepared village is clearly visible.*  
© EC/DG ECHO/J. George

33. As of 2020, the Humanitarian Certification substitute the Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA).

### 5.3 Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM)

DG ECHO's mandate is also to encourage and facilitate cooperation between EU Member States and the six participating States (currently: Iceland, Norway, Serbia, North Macedonia, Montenegro, and Turkey) in the [Union Civil Protection Mechanism](#) (UCPM) in order to improve the effectiveness of systems for preventing and protecting against natural, technological or human-induced disasters in Europe.

The UCPM comprises civil protection actors at national and local level of EU Member States and participating countries outside the EU.

The UCPM is active in disaster preparedness (e.g. development of early warning systems, emergency planning, risk awareness, institutional and professional capacity building) and can, thus, share expertise and collaborate with humanitarian actors. For example, given the aim of the [Union Civil Protection Knowledge Network](#), to improve linkages between humanitarian and civil protection actors, DG ECHO can disseminate lessons learnt and good practices to all Member States through the UCPM Lessons Learnt Programme and its other activities.

The UCPM also includes a tool that is of particular relevance to risk reduction and preparedness: prevention and preparedness missions<sup>34</sup> (also called advisory missions). These advisory missions can be of particular benefit to improve preparedness strategies as well as to promote a 'build back better' approach. They can provide tailored expertise and recommendations on preparedness at the request of a national government or the United Nations and/or its Agencies.

Additional support, in particular to respond to identified gaps in the areas of transport and logistics, is made available via the Union Civil Protection Mechanism and DG ECHO's 24/7 [Emergency Response Coordination Centre](#) (ERCC).



*Members of the local civil protection committee benefited from disaster preparedness activities to help them prepare and respond to future natural events in South America.  
© EU 2010 - EC/DG ECHO  
Alvaro de Vicente*

logistics, is made available via the Union Civil Protection Mechanism and DG ECHO's 24/7 [Emergency Response Coordination Centre](#) (ERCC).

34. The term *prevention* is used as it is part of the official name of the advisory missions as stipulated in the Civil Protection legislation.

# 6. Preparedness Actions

DG ECHO considers preparedness actions to be activities that are carried out within the context of risk management, and that aim to build the capacities needed to efficiently respond to all types of emergencies and achieve the transition from emergency response to sustainable recovery.

This chapter outlines a broad range of interventions that DG ECHO considers to be preparedness actions. This is not an exhaustive list and the interventions themselves are indicative, as they should always be contextualised to address actual needs, risks and challenges. A brief description is provided for each action, as the scope of this Guidance Note does not allow for a more in-depth description. To this end, a list of resources and tools is available in Annex 4.

## 6.1 Early Warning System (EWS)

An Early Warning System (EWS) consists of an integrated system of hazard/threat monitoring, forecasting and prediction, risk assessment, communication and preparedness activities that enables individuals, communities, governments, businesses and others to take timely action to reduce disaster risks in advance of hazardous events<sup>35</sup>.

Key components of an EWS are: i. Risk knowledge (i.e. risk assessment and analysis); ii. Monitoring of hazards/threats and impact forecasting; iii. Dissemination and communication of warnings; iv. Preparedness for response at all levels (national and community); v. Agreed triggers for action as per an agreed plan. Each of the above-mentioned components is needed at all times as complementary parts of the whole system. EWSs can be single or multi-hazard/multi-threat, ranging from natural hazards to violence, epidemiological, nutritional and food security surveillance. More specific information on EWSs for violence, epidemics, nutrition and food security is available in section 6.11.4 and the relevant sector-based sections in Annex 1.

EWSs are a key element of preparedness. They can greatly enhance a response by enabling actions that help mitigate the impact of a hazard/threat, thus protecting life, livelihoods, safety, dignity, and potentially reducing humanitarian needs. The right composition, understanding and dissemination of warning information and the capacity to act upon such warnings are critical aspects of an EWS. For this reason, it is essential to establish *end-to-end* and *people-centred* EWS, as this helps ensure that the linkage between producers and users of the warnings is strengthened, and that the social and psychological aspects of early warning and subsequent actions are taken into account. Strengthening EWSs at community level remains a critical component of people-centred preparedness related to any hazard or threat, as long as the EWS is

*“ The right composition, understanding and dissemination of warning information and the capacity to act upon such warnings are critical aspects of an EWS. ”*

35. [UNDRR terminology 2017](#).

community owned and driven. For example, [community-based surveillance](#) (CBS), which involves the systematic detection and reporting of events of public health significance within a community, by community members, plays an important role in raising the alarm about disease outbreaks. An optimal EWS is one that integrates and capitalises on the strengths of EWSs at both the community and national levels, while avoiding mixed signals and competition between them. To this end, it is essential to anchor a community EWS in the national system; the local government and the community need to work together, exchanging information and making the most of the complementary aspects of the two systems. Furthermore, it is essential to advocate and establish partnerships with actors who assist national governments in developing and/or strengthening national EWSs in order to support them in establishing people-centred EWSs that are tailored and closely linked to at-risk communities.

## 6.2 Anticipatory Action

Anticipatory action (see section 3.2.2 for definition) is a key component of DG ECHO's approach to preparedness. Preparing anticipatory actions requires some essential steps, such as: a comprehensive analysis of risks and forecasts, the establishment and/or strengthening of EWSs, the design of pre-agreed Early Action Protocols defining triggers for actions and responsibilities, and the arrangement of flexible funds ready to be disbursed ahead of the crisis. When

successfully implemented, anticipatory action complements a needs-based approach with a risk-based one, establishing a platform for humanitarian interventions and protecting development gains.

“ Broad partnership is at the core of anticipatory action. ”

Broad partnership is at the core of anticipatory action. This helps minimise duplication of actions among different stakeholders and defines their added value. Predictable funding

is also a key element of anticipatory action. For example, pooled funds such as Country-Based Pooled Funds (CBPF - UN OCHA) or global pooled anticipation and response funds with soft allocation methodology<sup>36</sup> (Forecast-based Action by the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund – DREF<sup>37</sup>, Start Fund<sup>38</sup>) can play an important role in providing predictable financing. Furthermore, anticipatory action also allows a potentially broader range of interventions that are not strictly humanitarian and, therefore, can represent an opportunity to attract funding from, and engage with, development actors.

For the effective implementation of anticipatory actions, accountability and capacity need to be fostered at the local level, for instance, through the decentralisation of funds, and strengthening capacity to monitor and interpret EWS.

Finally, it must be highlighted that anticipation is not a panacea. Whilst evidence is increasingly showing that this can be an effective approach to sudden- and slow-onset disasters, with accurate forecasts, more evidence is needed to demonstrate that the approach adds value in other contexts. Along with building an evidence base, it is also important to continuously monitor the effectiveness of anticipatory action in order to inform future action.

36. Soft allocation methodology: guidelines or criteria exist but decisions are made on a case-by-case basis rather than using automated triggers ([Risk-informed approaches to humanitarian funding - Using risk finance tools to strengthen resilience](#), ODI 2020).

37. More information [here](#).

38. More information [here](#).

The following are examples of anticipatory action:

- The CARE-led consortium [Supporting Flood Forecast-based Action and Learning in Bangladesh](#) (SUFAL) aims to strengthen impact-based forecasting and early warning to trigger early actions and funding before floods take place. Anticipatory actions have included food and non-food relief, stockpiling medicines, providing cash transfers and scaling up social protection mechanisms.
- The Mongolian Red Cross Society, with the support of the British Red Cross, distributed cash grants and animal care kits to herder households in the areas most at risk from the severe weather of dzud<sup>39</sup> (December 2017 - January 2018).
- Before a cyclone strikes, anticipatory actions include rapidly evacuating people whose lives and livelihoods are at stake. It is also possible to reinforce housing or other infrastructure to either allow vulnerable people to stay at home (if safe enough), or to help them return more quickly. This helps to limit the amount of displacement that is caused by extreme weather events, which are becoming more frequent due to climate change. In Bangladesh, the government-led Cyclone Preparedness Programme is collaborating with the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society to save people at risk during events like Cyclone Amphan (May 2020).
- Before the eruption of a volcano, health and livelihoods protection kits can be distributed, and multi-purpose cash transfers can be put in place. The Ecuador Red Cross implemented anticipatory actions of this kind in September 2020 after predicting a high probability of ash fall in 6 provinces.



*In Bangladesh, disaster preparedness, disaster risk reduction and resilience have been priority areas of EU-funded interventions. Communities have been trained to prepare for potential hazards.*  
© European Union 2017/  
Mallika Panorat

### 6.3 Logistics<sup>40</sup>

Logistics is crucial for all humanitarian action and addressing logistics capacity is one of the main elements of preparedness. Strengthening logistics preparedness can significantly improve first responders' capacity at national and local level, ultimately reducing the need for international mobilisation and generating a positive return on investment. Additionally, achieving better logistics capacity and efficiency through preparedness can contribute to the localisation agenda<sup>41</sup> by upskilling local partners, suppliers, and local authorities, and sourcing products locally. It may also bring secondary benefits, such as a reducing the environmental footprint of humanitarian operations.

All logistics capacity-development actions should be based on a strategic assessment of risk and of existing logistics capacities and challenges at country/regional level, from government to populations at risk. For example, it is key to understand the supply chains and logistics that underpin local market performance or the infrastructure related challenges (such as quality of the road network, airports/ports, electricity and telecommunications capacity) that could hamper operations.

39. Mongolian term for a unique climatic phenomenon where severe drought is followed by an extreme winter.

40. DG ECHO is currently exploring the possibility of developing a logistics policy.

41. This responds to the Grand Bargain commitment on localisation.



Mapping risks in remote Bull Sirpi. © EU 2013- Photo credits: EC/DG ECHO/Silvio Balladares

A key consideration to improve efficiency in logistics is that of stockpiles of relief goods, ideally prepositioned and available in sufficient quantity so that time and expenses are minimised in responding to an emergency. Additionally, impact and efficiency may be improved through, for example, joint ventures in procurement, transport, storage and delivery of goods, including the provision of common services (for instance, by standardising them or by signing standard pre-agreements with potential service providers), and/or the pooling of assets. Where contexts allow, cash transfers should be used as an effective modality for the delivery of assistance and to help reduce logistics challenges for humanitarian actors (for more on cash transfer and preparedness, please refer to section 6.6).

Greater efficiency in logistics can also contribute to *reducing the environmental impact of humanitarian operations*<sup>42</sup> through measures that optimise the supply chain for better and smarter, more efficient aid delivery - including greater disaster preparedness, pre-positioning of stock, pooling of resources, and localisation. The cascading environmental benefits of “greened logistics” may include a reduction of carbon emissions, reduced waste, opportunities to promote recycling and improvements to the quality and standard of items provided to the affected population such as biodegradable or more durable items

## 6.4 Strengthening Capacity

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

42. For more information on logistics and environmental impact: Groupe URD (INSPIRE consortium). [Environmental Footprint of Humanitarian Assistance - Scoping Review](#) (2020). Additionally, how to reduce the environmental impacts of humanitarian aid more comprehensively is covered in a separate upcoming Guidance Note.



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.

National and local authorities and disaster management services are the main duty-bearers in response operations. As they are not eligible for direct funding by DG ECHO, they should be key targets for the DP capacity-strengthening actions of DG ECHO humanitarian partners.

Local civil society has an important role to play in the implementation of DP interventions and should systematically be involved in their design and implementation. Moreover, DP actions should not only provide sound capacity strengthening opportunities, but also support local civil society actors to take a greater lead. Building equal partnerships within the local system is important to understand the local culture, context, language and needs. Through the [Survivor and Community-Led Responses](#) (SCLR) approach, for example, survivors and local communities are able to point out issues that are key in identifying core vulnerabilities or that can often be under-recorded when designing preparedness actions. This, in turn, serves to strengthen preparedness and resilience. Similarly, Red Cross & Red Crescent National Societies are relevant DP stakeholders and the capacity building efforts of DG ECHO's partners should seek to strengthen their capacities. Capacity-strengthening of the local population through community-based disaster preparedness programmes should also remain a key focus of DG ECHO partners, leveraging on existing knowledge. For example, the IFRC has developed specific tools to strengthen the capacity of National Societies, such as the [Preparedness for Effective Response](#) (PER) approach. The end goal of the PER is to strengthen local preparedness capacities to ensure timely and effective humanitarian assistance.

Since knowledge is empowerment, when it comes to preparing for hazards and threats, capacity strengthening in preparedness can also include, in addition to training programmes and drill exercises, advocacy and awareness raising activities at national and local level to encourage a culture of safety. For more on this, see section 6.10.

## 6.5 Shock Responsive Social Protection (SRSP)

Social protection (SP) is defined as a broad range of public and sometimes private instruments to tackle the challenges of poverty, vulnerability and social exclusion (European Commission 2015)<sup>43</sup>. Improving social protection systems in terms of their coverage of the population, their adequacy and the range of needs they support is valuable in itself, as it reduces vulnerability, minimising the impact of shocks. By being shock responsive, social protection systems can reduce immediate needs when a crisis occurs. Therefore, social protection can play an important role in the context of growing hazards/threats, shocks and stresses and a primary role in complementing humanitarian efforts and meeting the needs of most vulnerable households and individuals, such as persons with disabilities, indigenous people, single households, children, youth, and the elderly, as well as displaced people,

43. Supporting Social Protection Systems. Tools and Methods Series, Concept Paper No. 4, European Commission (2015) in EU SPaN guidance (2019) - <https://europa.eu/capacity4dev/sp-nexus/wiki/guidance-package-span-resources>

## What does Shock Responsive Social Protection (SRSP) require?

1. A **system** (to embed Disaster Risk Management/a Contingency Plan in the system mandate, strategies and activities). A pre-requisite for further integrating shock responsive programming under preparedness interventions is the solidity of the systems or ongoing investments in strengthening system capacity and coverage. The more developed (“mature”) the system is, the better it is for humanitarian action to support it.
2. **Designing Scalability** (Where - geographic coverage? When - triggers? Who? Which households - targeting? How much? How often? For how long?).
3. Established and effective **EWS with dedicated and understood triggering mechanisms** for releasing additional funds, supply and resource.
4. **Contingency plan** with “buy in” from all actors expected to be involved in the response.
5. **Institutional arrangements** including effective coordination mechanisms (especially linking disaster risk information systems to Social Protection and Health information systems).
6. **Financing** to be readily available and accessible when needed.

including refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs). This can be achieved in many different ways before, during and after any given shock – and in the long term in anticipation of future events.

Investment in establishing social protection systems does not fall within DG ECHO’s responsibility in contexts with rather strong national SP systems (mostly in Medium-Income Countries and High-Income Countries). In crisis-prone settings with nascent national SP systems (such as in most Low-Income Countries), however, system strengthening is recommended in line with EU nexus commitments and as laid out in the 2019 OECD Triple Nexus Recommendation<sup>44</sup>. This may be achieved through advocacy/dialogue with development actors, based on evidence developed in humanitarian settings. DG ECHO can play a key role in contributing to laying the foundations of robust SP schemes by linking key humanitarian interventions across all key sectors (such as direct cash assistance, health/nutrition care, protection or education) to national system building efforts aimed at providing free of charge, quality, inclusive and shock-sensitive services and assistance.

In crisis-prone countries with operational SP systems, DG ECHO can play a critical role in including an anticipatory dimension to the systems. This could entail setting up a pre-agreed standard operating procedure, tied to pre-defined funding sources and triggered when a specific forecast threshold is reached before a potential hazard/threat event materializes.

## 6.6 Cash Preparedness

The use of cash transfers for humanitarian response is a policy priority for DG ECHO. Cash transfers offer beneficiaries dignity, choice and flexibility. Given its multi-purpose nature, cash is also central to a people-centred approach.

Investments in cash preparedness can drive increased efficiency and effectiveness of cash transfers by ensuring that analysis, agreements and elements of programme design are in place prior to a shock. Cash preparedness should encompass both of the following elements:

1. Organisational preparedness: ensuring that organisations have the systems, procedures and human capacities to rapidly deliver quality cash assistance at scale;
2. Programmatic preparedness: conducting vulnerability, feasibility and risk assessments;

44. OECD, [DAC Recommendation on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus](#): OECD/LEGAL/5019: adopted by the DAC on 22 February 2019. The aim of Nexus being: reducing people’s needs, risks, and vulnerabilities supporting prevention efforts and shifting from humanitarian assistance to ending need. A common set of 11 principles was adopted.

mapping and monitoring market functionality; defining pre-agreements with financial service providers and setting up cash information management systems. Anticipatory cash transfers need to be embedded in a pre-agreed standard operating procedure, tied to pre-defined funding sources, and triggered when a specific forecast threshold is reached. Timely, effective and scalable use of cash as part of anticipatory action is dependent on the cash preparedness activities outlined above.

Cash preparedness should also involve mapping the elements of existing social protection programmes that can be utilised and/or linked with humanitarian cash assistance. The analysis of these programmes should assess their readiness to respond to shocks through cash assistance and identify points for convergence. Cash preparedness can contribute to SRSP by improving the comprehensiveness, coverage and adequacy of existing cash-based social safety nets. Areas of potential linkages as part of cash preparedness include: identifying opportunities for using common or interoperable registries of vulnerable households, pre-agreements on beneficiary selection criteria and required documentation (particularly for households not currently enrolled in safety nets); and building the interoperability of systems to facilitate rapid payments, whilst ensuring data protection requirements.

DG ECHO expects partners to actively coordinate on cash preparedness and contingency planning, under the leadership of the Cash Working Group and in coordination with key social protection actors. This should include joint feasibility and risk assessments. Unfortunately, strategic coordination of cash transfers is currently still ad-hoc as it does not fit into the humanitarian architecture. Predictable, accountable coordination of humanitarian cash remains a key challenge<sup>45</sup>. In line with DG ECHO's global disaster preparedness priorities (for the 2021-2024 priorities refer to Annex 3), the specific opportunities (e.g. market functionality, availability of digital transfer mechanisms) and challenges (e.g. targeting, stakeholder coordination) of cash preparedness in urban contexts should be considered.



*A resident of La Esperanza (Nicaragua) shows a map drawn by the community to define the areas most at risk, the safest spots and the threats to the village. © EU 2013 – EC/DG ECHO/Silvio Balladares*

## 6.7 Institutional, Policy and Legislative Frameworks

National and local institutional, policy and legislative frameworks specific to preparedness and response are critical to ensuring that effective and timely response operations can take place. Institutional and legal barriers may hamper response capacity and it is important to identify these and the relevant mitigating measures that address related issues.

For instance, all the institutions involved in preparedness and response should have clear institutional mandates (i.e. roles and responsibilities), legal power of action and adequate resources (funding and skills) to fulfil these mandates. Similarly, coordination mechanisms and other inter-institutional arrangements should be well defined to facilitate collaboration and information flow, and avoid gaps in the response.

45. See in particular: the [World Bank Strategic Note](#) prepared in 2016 for the Principals of the IASC; and ODI 2020 [Grand Bargain annual independent report](#).

The availability of domestic financial provisions through, for example, the establishment of Contingency or Emergency Funds (national/local or community level) for first level response interventions, is also a critical requirement to support the response to crises. Limited resources are frequently a constraint. Comprehensive disaster risk financing measures therefore need to be developed including alternative and forward-looking solutions, and access to non-domestic financing mechanisms.

*“Policies and laws are what concretely define and support institutional and financial arrangements, allowing them to become operational.”*

Policies and laws define and support institutional and financial arrangements, allowing them to become operational. Appropriate policies and legislation, which respect humanitarian principles and promote all-of-society inclusion and participation, should be established to facilitate effective response.

Reviewing and strengthening relevant domestic institutional arrangements, laws and policies is a critical element of overall good governance for preparedness and response, integrating them or at least ensuring consistency and complementarity with similar national and local frameworks for disaster risk management.

DG ECHO partners can support national and local authorities in improving these institutional, legislative and policy frameworks that are specific to preparedness and response where appropriate, relevant and necessary, in collaboration with development actors working on specific institutional, legislative and policy measures for DRR.

## 6.8 Information Management, Data and Technology

Information plays a key role in shaping preparedness and response operations. To this end, risk assessment (section 3.2.1) is an essential tool for providing information about the risks to which a population and/or a geographical area are exposed. Vulnerability assessments complement them in estimating the vulnerabilities and capacities of the at-risk communities. The technology available for information management is evolving very rapidly and offers a wide range of tools with increasing power to assist in preparing for and responding to disasters.

Disaster loss databases, for instance, which compile historical disaster data, can help to understand risk based on trends and patterns on the impact of disasters, and evidence of existing hazards, vulnerabilities and exposure. All data should be disaggregated by age, gender and other context-specific vulnerability criteria (e.g. disability, or ethnicity). Consequently, hazard maps need to be layered and triangulated with exposure, vulnerability and capacity data in order to prepare for and potentially anticipate disasters and threats. This can be achieved using mapping and analytics platforms that provide location intelligence, such as [GISs](#) (geographic information systems).

Given climate-related drivers, it is essential to take into account all available scientific information. For example, through collaboration with national hydro-meteorological services, information can be gathered on national or local climate trends and national/regional climate projections, and this can be used to guide anticipatory preparedness and climate-smart planning. Tools such as [Copernicus](#), the European Union's Earth observation programme, can support preparedness and response by providing open and free-of-charge data that helps to identify risks and prevent damage and loss of life. Copernicus' satellite Earth and in-situ (non-space) observations can also be used to calibrate and confirm risk models for insurance systems.



*Drones are used in the Sofala province to map the extent of the damage after cyclone Idai, in Mozambique. © European Union 2019/Christian Jepsen*

A regular challenge is the disconnect between data availability and analysis, decision-making and anticipation or response. Thus, in order for humanitarian stakeholders or national/local authorities to be ready to effectively deploy data tools before a crisis, the focus must be placed also on *data preparedness*. In other words, it is important to ensure that the evidence needed to inform a response will be available quickly enough. Readiness of data means, for example, improving the coordination of data collection among local organisations for key datasets, such as historical impact data for early warning systems. At-risk communities must be involved throughout data collection and analysis, both as a source of information, and also to ensure that first responders have the information that they need to act effectively.

Before a crisis hits, it is also essential to have an adequate decision support system in place to make scientifically verified decisions and to enhance the ability of local authorities or humanitarian actors to effectively anticipate and respond to disasters.

During an emergency, using an emergency management information system (e.g. web-based tools and social media monitoring) helps to provide frontline responders with detailed, real-time information that allows informed decisions to be made. Moreover, the use of new technology, such as drones, is increasingly being explored to provide accurate and updated 3D risk-mapping information in pre-crisis contexts in order to inform preparedness activities, and in post-crisis contexts to obtain rapid information to support response activities (for example, to obtain rapid assessments/hazard monitoring and mapping). Along with the physical deployment of drones, an operating system capable of processing large amounts of data in real time and providing objective information needs to be in place to adequately inform this delicate decision-making process.

Finally, humanitarian actors must ensure that the highest standards are respected in the protection of beneficiaries'

## Using drones to prepare for disasters in Madagascar and Mozambique

WFP has strengthened the capacity of the National Institute for Disaster Management (INGC) in the use of unmanned aircraft systems (UASs). It has provided drones, as well as equipment and licenses for data processing, and the necessary training to collect, process and analyse data. Support was also provided to develop standard operating procedures for the use of drones for disaster preparedness (risk mapping) and emergency response (rapid assessments/hazard monitoring and mapping). The INGC has set up a drone unit within its operating office, which was fully operational during the response to cyclones Idai and Kenneth in March 2019, and supported humanitarian operations on the ground.

For more info:

<https://ec.europa.eu/echo/field-blogs/photos/using-drones-prepare-disasters-madagascar-and-mozambique>

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=-KW1TvJLzM&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-KW1TvJLzM&feature=youtu.be)

personal data<sup>46</sup>. Some sets of data, such as displacement data, can be sensitive, especially in contexts affected by conflict. In keeping with the principle of ‘do no harm’, personal and non-personal data must be handled in a way that avoids misuse and any associated risks. Furthermore, humanitarian actors should ensure that Data Protection Impact Assessments are systematically run when the processing of personal data is likely to involve specific risks in relation to the rights and freedoms of data subjects.

## Preparedness of the International Humanitarian System

DG ECHO supports the [Emergency Response Preparedness](#) (ERP) approach of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC). This approach is designed so that the humanitarian community can proactively prepare for crises that require a coordinated international response. The aim is to increase the speed and volume of life-saving assistance delivered in the first four to six weeks of an emergency. The ERP approach provides tools for UN Country Teams and/or Humanitarian Country Teams to:

- Understand risks and establish a system to monitor them.
- Establish a minimum level of preparedness; and
- Take additional action, including developing contingency plans, to ensure readiness to respond to identified risks.

## 6.9 Contingency Planning

National, local and community contingency planning can contribute to the effective and efficient management of response operations. A well-developed contingency plan helps ensure that all relevant decisions and provisions related to required resources (human, technical, financial, and material), roles and responsibilities, coordination mechanisms, information/communication management and logistics in all relevant sectors are taken in advance, agreed and well understood by all relevant actors. The process of developing the plan can be in itself beneficial as it facilitates the identification of capacity gaps (human and financial resources, technical skills, supplies, etc.) that need to be filled and supports dialogue and collaboration among all actors involved. In the interest of ownership and accountability, contingency planning - whether at national, local or community level - must be an inclusive and participatory process that engages all first responders.

A contingency plan can address single or multiple hazards and threats. Preferably, the plan should be multi-risk or at least consider compounding risks and the interaction between risks in order to foresee the action that might be necessary to respond comprehensively to them. In this respect, a contingency plan should account for existing risks, as well as how these might change in the future, thus taking into consideration factors such as climate

change or environmental degradation. The plan should also integrate and/or link to Early Action protocols - if these exist - or foresee the inclusion of opportunities for anticipatory action or forecast-based financing.

Contingency planning can be broken down into five essential steps: prepare, analyse, develop, implement and review<sup>47</sup>. All the preparedness interventions described in this chapter contributed to one or more of these steps, with a critical link to EWS and triggers to activate the plan. It is important to highlight, however, that the existence of a contingency plan is not, in itself, a guarantee of effective and coordinated response, unless the plan is actively and effectively communicated and applied. A way to ensure this is to undertake dissemination, regular updating and simulation exercises, which should be seen as integral to the development of the plan itself.

Finally, the preparedness and response capacity of humanitarian partners is a critical element in supporting communities and governments in strengthening their own capacity.

46. For further guidance: ICRC - [Handbook on Data Protection in humanitarian action](#).

47. IFRC - [Contingency Planning](#).

## 6.10 Advocacy and Awareness

Advocacy and awareness, including risk communication, play an important role in strengthening preparedness by increasing knowledge and promoting a culture of safety among local and national institutions, communities, civil society organisations (CSOs) – including faith-based organisations, private sector organisations, academia, the scientific community and all other relevant stakeholders. As such, they complement activities aimed at strengthening capacity in preparedness (section 6.4). As awareness of the importance of preparedness measures increases, they are more likely to be included in broader national and local risk management policies and strategies.

Advocacy to promote positive change, and to influence the agendas and behaviour of national or local governments, organisations, or individuals must be systematically carried out. This can be pursued, for example, by demonstrating the benefits of preparedness and thus promoting the improvement of dedicated legal and institutional mechanisms or the scaling up of pilot interventions.

Advocacy and awareness-raising activities should have a clear objective and should be designed specifically for their intended audience. They can aim to leverage the potential of specific groups, such as the media or youth, to promote change. Advocacy and awareness-raising are closely intertwined and can use a variety of means, such as documents and petitions to promote accountability mechanisms, or the media (TV, radio, newspapers, social media), or demonstrations, public events, presentations in meetings and workshops, or lobbying decision-makers like politicians, government officials and other key actors. In order for advocacy and awareness-raising activities to be successful, they need to use a variety of means at different levels. They should equally be used as a way to increase knowledge about issues/rights and as a way to empower people and communities to act and express their concerns through activities such as community-led awareness campaigns (e.g. theatre, community radio, participatory videos) or the development of awareness materials (e.g. leaflets, posters, billboards, brochures, radio spots).



Children playing ISDR Disaster Risk sensitization game, a game that teaches children what are the risks faced by their community and how to best deal with them. Santa Elena province. Ecuador. © EU 2010 - EC/DG ECHO Ivette Velasco

## 6.11 Preparedness - Specific Considerations

### 6.11.1 Climate and environmental resilience interventions

#### Climate resilient preparedness and response

As elaborated in the sections on Risk Assessment (3.2.1) and Climate Change and Environmental Degradation (Chapter 4), climate change is already increasing the frequency and severity of sudden-onset hazards (e.g. floods, hurricanes/cyclones/typhoons, forest fires, heatwaves, etc.) and slow-onset hazards (e.g. droughts, sea



*In the Philippines, cyclones and typhoons are so frequent that structural damage like this needs to be repaired before the next typhoon hits. © EC/DG ECHO/ Bernard Jaspers Fajjer*

level rise, coastal erosion, salinification of groundwater, etc.)<sup>48</sup>. It is also threatening people's ability to maintain weather-dependent livelihoods (e.g. farming, herding or fishing). This could jeopardise the effectiveness of interventions themselves. As such, and in line with the risk-proofing approach discussed in Chapter 3, the climate resilience of preparedness and response interventions should be ensured from the outset.

Disaster preparedness that takes into account current and future climate-related risks would mean, for example:

- Based on climate risk analysis/forecast, identifying preparedness needs, and updating plans and actions accordingly. For instance, supporting epidemic outbreak preparedness (e.g. dengue, malaria, cholera, Covid-19, etc.) from epidemiological surveillance to vector control;
- Integrating climate risk/impact projections into EWS, triggers and standard protocols;
- Identifying/constructing/improving community shelters to withstand climate shocks (particularly more frequent floods/cyclones);
- Improving evacuation routes and practices (e.g. cyclone evacuation simulations);
- Updating vulnerability and capacity assessments to include climate risk/impact projections;
- Engaging in awareness-raising and Early Warning Early Action (EWEA) in relation to heatwaves (e.g. mobile cooling centres, retrofitting buildings with features to reduce heat impact, and nature-based solutions);
- Promoting, improving and increasing capacity in rainwater harvesting (drought specific measure);
- Based on climate and environmental risk analysis, and in cooperation with local and national governments, reviewing sections of contingency plans/guidelines specifically dealing with camp management, to ensure that camps are either planned in safe locations or existing ones are relocated;
- Providing seeds that are resistant to current and future climate shocks and ensuring that agricultural and livelihoods interventions are adapted to current and future climatic conditions (sudden- and slow-onset climate change).

### **Environmental sustainability and environmental resilience<sup>49</sup>**

Environmental degradation erodes the ability of ecosystems, such as forest or coastal ecosystems, to reduce the risk of disasters like floods or landslides. It also makes it more difficult for people to recover from the impacts of disasters, particularly those who directly rely on the natural environment for their livelihoods. More than 75% of global land cover is already considered substantially degraded, undermining the well-being of 3.2 billion people; at this rate, 95% of the Earth's land could become degraded by 2050<sup>50</sup>.

When humanitarian interventions are planned without considering their impact on, or

48. IPCC, 2013: Climate Change 2013: The Physical Science Basis. Contribution of Working Group I to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. [Stocker, T.F., D. Qin, G.-K. Plattner, M. Tignor, S.K. Allen, J. Boschung, A. Nauels, Y. Xia, V. Bex and P.M. Midgley (eds.)]. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, United Kingdom and New York, NY, USA, 1535 pp.

49. This section outlines how to promote environmental sustainability and environmental resilience in preparedness interventions and how to leverage preparedness actions to build environmental resilience of communities. An upcoming separate guidance will be dedicated to how to reduce environmental impacts of humanitarian aid more comprehensively.

50. IPBES, 2019. IPBES Global Assessment on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services.



interaction with, the surrounding environment, this can lead to unintended environmental degradation, e.g. around refugee settlements, increasing risks for communities, and undermining their health and well-being. Better planning of interventions can reduce both their local and the more global environmental impacts. Addressing environmental concerns as part of preparedness planning lays the foundation for their integration into humanitarian action<sup>51</sup>. As such, contingency/response plans can be used to improve the way that environmental concerns are integrated into operations, and thereby reduce their environmental footprint by ensuring, for example, that:

- Shelter construction materials, including debris, are reused or recycled;
- Clean/renewable energy and energy efficient solutions are provided;
- Waste is managed responsibly to avoid the dumping of hazardous materials in environmentally sensitive areas or habitats during the response phase;
- Clearing of stagnant/polluted water and waste from canals is included in preparedness plans as an activity to be regularly carried out prior to rainy season, particularly in urban areas.

Other examples of environmental concerns that can be addressed through preparedness actions are:

- Including ecosystems in environmental emergency preparedness programmes;
- Awareness-raising and capacity-building for communities on sound environmental management (e.g. proper waste management, preventing conflict over natural resources such as water, preventing deforestation through the provision of clean energy so that there is no need to cut wood in the surrounding environment);
- Conducting rapid environmental assessments, sourcing sustainable materials for recovery, and waste management.

Investing in preparedness and in anticipatory/early actions can, in itself, be a climate and environment-friendly measure. For instance, preparedness measures can reduce the need for the transportation of goods, can support less polluting transport modalities, or can diminish the quantity of relief items that are needed (through pre-positioning or localisation), thus also reducing the quantity of waste that needs to be managed.

Other examples include:

- With the objective of reducing emissions and pollution due to transport: i. Positioning and/or pre-positioning of stocks/supplies in areas which are the most relevant to reach most at-risk areas (based on risk analysis)<sup>52</sup>; ii. Pre-identifying & pre-contracting of local vendors, who comply with environmental and social criteria; ii. Resource pooling;
- Preparedness for shock-responsive/mobile cash transfer systems to serve forecast-based anticipatory actions aimed at limiting response needs and the provision of relief items.

Another way to contribute to environmental resilience is through investing in nature-based solutions<sup>53</sup> and the restoration of degraded ecosystems as part of preparedness

*“ Environmental degradation erodes the ability of ecosystems, such as forest or coastal ecosystems, to reduce the risk of disasters like floods or landslides. ”*

51. More information: <https://ehaconnect.org/preparedness/>

52. Positioning/pre-positioning of stocks/supplies does not necessarily imply that purchase of stocks/supplies should be funded by the DP Budget Line. Should DP Budget Line funded projects comprise prepositioning and or procurement of equipment/supplies, it is suggested that this amount does not exceed 5% of the total project budget.

53. Nature-based Solutions are “Actions to protect, manage and restore natural or modified ecosystems, which address societal challenges, effectively and adaptively, providing human well-being and biodiversity benefits” - IUCN resolution ([WCC-2016-Res-069-EN](#)).

## Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR): making the difference in a refugee settlement in Uganda

In the refugee settlement, the majority of the households relied on firewood for cooking and heating, putting a huge strain on the firewood resources. This led to rampant deforestation and land degradation, and an increased tension between the local community and the refugees.

FMNR brought an easy, low-cost approach which farmers use to protect and manage the growth of trees and shrubs that regenerate naturally in their fields, woodlands and ranges. World Vision trained farmers and refugees to conduct forest management practices such as pruning, thinning and coppice reduction. Indigenous grass and tree species were regenerated and refugees learned to collect firewood without damaging the tree as a whole.

The multiple benefits of the FMNR approach mentioned by local farmers include increased supply of wood for energy, slowing down of water runoff, increased supply of fodder for livestock feed, restored soil fertility, increased supply of food for human consumption, stabilized microclimate and restored biodiversity.

and early recovery, with particular attention to displaced and at-risk populations dependent on natural resources for their livelihoods. For example, investing in natural, native land practices to restore the land and increase agricultural output, or investing in natural regeneration and reforestation to increase tree cover, improve soil quality and combat soil erosion might not only reduce risks directly but may also be a source of sustainable livelihoods, thereby increasing the resilience of vulnerable populations. If the restoration of ecosystem function is built into livelihoods activities, this can also help to create resilient value chains and stronger business continuity.

One method that has proven successful and cost-effective is the Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR) implemented by World Vision<sup>54</sup>, which is a community-led approach to restoring degraded landscapes and ecosystems through the systematic regrowth and management of existing trees and shrubs from tree stumps, sprouting root systems or wild seeds. It has had a tremendous impact on increasing food security, crop yields and decreasing dependency on food assistance. It is simple, low-cost and evidence-based, and can be rapidly and cost-efficiently applied across large areas of degraded forest, crop and pasturelands. Significant opportunities exist to scale-up climate and environmental resilience interventions, including nature-based solutions, via short-term safety net interventions for social protection and consumption support, including cash

transfers, e.g. through the ‘cash for work’ model.

These interventions straddle humanitarian aid and development cooperation as they are by nature a more long-term undertaking. As such, they require cooperation between humanitarian and development actors and are therefore optimal as a way for implementing the nexus approach. ***This is not only about funding but also about adapting ways of working in order to actually operationalise the humanitarian-development-peace (HDP) nexus.*** The HDP nexus approach can also facilitate a better exchange between humanitarian and development aid and help to mitigate potential environmental impacts and concerns more effectively (i.e. the use and dissemination of environmentally-friendlier low-fuel stoves).

Projects can also start as a humanitarian intervention (e.g. as part of livelihoods or cash assistance) and then be taken over by development funding.

### 6.11.2 Preparedness for Protection

Protection is central to humanitarian preparedness efforts as part of immediate and life-saving targeted activities. Its principles<sup>55</sup> should be mainstreamed throughout humanitarian response and beyond<sup>56</sup>.

54. [www.wvi.org/development/publication/farmer-managed-natural-regeneration](http://www.wvi.org/development/publication/farmer-managed-natural-regeneration)

55. For more on protection principles: the [Sphere Handbook](#).

56. <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/protection-priority-global-protection-cluster/documents/iasc-policy-protection-humanitarian-action>

### Protection Mainstreaming:

Mainstreaming protection principles across all preparedness actions remains critical to anticipate, mitigate and respond to identified protection risks, and promote the safety and dignity of girls, boys and women and men of all ages. DG ECHO ensures that protection mainstreaming, which is the process of incorporating protection principles and promoting meaningful access, safety and dignity in humanitarian aid, is integrated in all funded actions. Protection mainstreaming is “an imperative for all humanitarian actors engaged in humanitarian response” (IASC Policy on Protection in Humanitarian Action, 2016)<sup>57</sup>. Protection is mainstreamed by incorporating protection principles such as meaningful access, participation and empowerment, accountability, and the prioritization of do no harm to promote safety and dignity in humanitarian aid. The meaningful mainstreaming of protection in preparedness is grounded in: a system-wide approach to all-risk assessment and analysis (for more details, please refer to section 3.2.1), which provides better understanding of the specific vulnerabilities and capacities of different affected groups in relation to specific hazards/threats; the effective and timely identification of tailored early actions to respond more effectively to specific protection risks; and the promotion of a protection-sensitive, and gender- and age-appropriate, and disability-inclusive approach.



*Simulating a full scale natural disaster in the mountains of Kyrgyzstan. Meanwhile, first aid teams are dispatched to different locations across the hamlet, where serious injuries have been reported. © EU/DG ECHO/ Pierre Prakash*

### Protection Targeted Actions:

Ensuring the protection of populations is a core objective of humanitarian action. In humanitarian crises<sup>58</sup>, people need material assistance, such as food, water, shelter and medical assistance. But they also need physical safety, psychological wellbeing and dignity as preconditions to being able to gain access and enjoy this material assistance.

The definition of protection, resulting from a series of International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)-convened seminars (1996-99), and formally endorsed by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), states that protection encompasses “all activities aimed at ensuring full respect for the rights of the individual in accordance with the letter and spirit of the relevant bodies of law (i.e. human rights law, international humanitarian law and refugee law)”.

DG ECHO’s humanitarian mandate calls for a definition of protection that seeks to address fundamental protection needs, rather than the broad spectrum of political, economic and social rights, without denying that these are all of the utmost importance.

Hence, the principal objective for DG ECHO in humanitarian protection is “to prevent, reduce/mitigate and respond to the risks and consequences of violence,

57. For further guidance, please refer to: Protection Mainstreaming Toolkit, GPC, 2017 - [www.globalprotectioncluster.org/\\_assets/files/aors/protection\\_mainstreaming/gpc-pm\\_toolkit-2017.en.pdf](http://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/_assets/files/aors/protection_mainstreaming/gpc-pm_toolkit-2017.en.pdf); Links to guidance on mainstreaming of specific aspects of child protection; GBV; Age, Gender and Diversity; and Disability Inclusion can be found through [www.globalprotectioncluster.org](http://www.globalprotectioncluster.org) - Finally useful guidance is available in the video [www.globalprotectioncluster.org/en/areas-of-responsibility/protection-mainstreaming.html](http://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/en/areas-of-responsibility/protection-mainstreaming.html)

58. By humanitarian crises, the European Commission understands events or series of events which represent a critical threat to the health, safety, security or wellbeing of a community or other large group of people. A humanitarian crisis can have natural or human-induced causes, can have a rapid or slow onset, and can be of short or protracted duration.

*coercion, deliberate deprivation and abuse for persons, groups and communities in the context of humanitarian crises*<sup>59</sup>. It supports protection measures for affected people, in line with a comprehensive risk-informed approach, adhering to humanitarian principles and within the framework of International Law, and in particular International Human Rights Law (IHRL), International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and Refugee Law.

Protection is viewed as a single sector, encompassing all aspects of protection, including e.g. child protection, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (GBV), Housing, Land and Property (HLP) and mine action. A comprehensive analysis is needed in order to determine the most appropriate response “package” in a given context.

As some individuals or groups have pre-existing vulnerabilities that are exacerbated in disaster or other crisis situations, potentially leaving them at greater risk of violence, exploitation, abuse, trafficking and exclusion, preparedness involves strengthening the capacity of all first responders to incorporate protection risks into their actions. For instance, in relation to both internal and cross-border displacement, preparedness efforts should aim to help institutions, communities and systems anticipate relevant measures to minimize subsequent risks. In particular, the disruption of family and community life caused by a disaster often exacerbates risks, creates distress and threatens their psychosocial wellbeing.

### 6.11.3 Preparedness in urban settings

Accelerated urbanisation is taking place in different parts of the world and, already in 2020, more than half of the world’s population lives in urban areas. Certain characteristics of cities may make them more vulnerable to the impact of hazards and/or threats than other human settlements. The risks faced by urban populations are exacerbated by high population density, poor/exposed or non-existent urban infrastructure, informal settlement patterns, limited access to land and lack of security of tenure. Social structures that exist in rural areas (which increase community resilience) may be disrupted in urban contexts. Furthermore, displaced people who are dispersed in urban areas can become invisible to humanitarian organisations, who may focus on camp contexts.

“ Accelerated urbanisation is taking place in different parts of the world and, already in 2020, more than half of the world’s population lives in urban areas. ”

Preparedness in urban settings must take into account all of these factors, as well as the specific urban context and the potential hazards. For instance, floods in urban contexts are different from those in rural areas because they are generally linked to surface runoff (due to impermeable surfaces, blocked drainage systems due to garbage, etc.) and because flash floods, drainage system overflows, etc. are much more difficult to predict than riverine flooding, providing little if any lead time for early action.

However, although possible actions may be similar to those taken in rural areas (such as cash transfer, sandbagging, protecting important documents, evacuations etc.), in urban contexts these should also include specific actions, such as removing refuse from drainage systems to minimise flooding in anticipation of extreme rainfall.

As it is the standard for all preparedness actions, those for urban areas should also be based on a sound assessment of risk, including assessing the potential hazards/threats and exposure in a particular context, analysing the vulnerability of

59. DG ECHO Thematic Policy Document N° 8, *Improving protection outcomes to reduce risks for people in humanitarian crises*.

particular urban population groups and the local capacity to respond. Strengthening preparedness and emergency response capacities should ensure that these respond to the specific challenges of urban contexts.

Finally, preparedness efforts aimed at tackling urban risks also need to take governance issues into account. Lack of coordination among governmental agencies and sectoral silos needs to be taken into consideration as this can limit the ability of local governments to actively pursue preparedness.

#### 6.11.4 Preparedness for conflict and violent situations

Preparedness and risk-informed humanitarian action concerns all relevant hazards and threats, including those related to conflict. Conflict sensitivity should therefore be an integral element in all these interventions. Factors to consider in situations of conflict may include the intensity of the conflict, the existing or possible displacement of the population, community self-protection strategies, access to local resources, humanitarian space and access, the presence of combatants, neutrality and the quality of governance. Both existing and potential future risks, including those related to factors such as climate change, environmental degradation, natural resources and governance, need to be analysed.

In some conflict situations, preparedness for and reduction of risks associated with natural hazards may be an acceptable entry point, especially where the parties to the conflict have a negative perception of humanitarian organisations. Indeed, natural hazards and conflict are often strongly interlinked. Conflict and violence can increase the risks associated with natural hazards, while natural hazards (such as drought) may exacerbate or generate conflict. Reducing or preparing for risks and needs related to natural hazards may be perceived as 'neutral' and non-threatening politically.

In addition to preparedness *in* conflict and fragile settings, there is a clear need for preparedness *for* conflict and other situations of violence. Another potential entry point for humanitarian operations in fragile and conflict situations is the anticipation and mitigation of forecasted outbreaks of violence or the deterioration of ongoing conflicts (i.e. forced displacement due to a conflict). Preparing for the impacts and suffering caused by conflict situations brings unique challenges, such as the difficulty of predicting violent conflict or its recrudescence, and remaining neutral.

The implementation of anticipatory action in conflict settings is also currently being explored. Until now, early actions have been used, for example, to contain disease outbreaks after the rainy season in situations of conflict. Funds have been mobilised to support activities like cholera vaccination and risk awareness campaigns amongst high-risk populations thanks to data that has forecasted that there is a risk of the disease spreading.

The European External Action Service (EEAS) and European Commission services have established the [EU Conflict Early Warning System](#) (EWS) as part of their broader activities in the field of security policy. Although the goal of this tool is not to predict the exact trigger for the eruption of violence, it helps to identify certain structural factors and indicators that frequently correlate with conflict risk that the EWS can help to mitigate.

### Preparedness in conflict - Myanmar

The Myanmar Consortium for Community Resilience, led by Plan International, addresses gaps to strengthen systems for improved resilience and preparedness in disaster-prone conflict-affected areas. The aim of the consortium is, inter alia, to strengthen systems and capacities for risk-informed preparedness of institutions, communities, local government, and civil society actors in conflict-affected disaster-prone areas. This is achieved through activities such as the capacity building of community volunteers, Civil Society Organisations and pre-care service providers for improved preparedness and emergency health response or the revision and strengthening of multi-hazard management plans, infection prevention and control guidelines for urban hospitals.

For more info: [www.plan-international.org](http://www.plan-international.org)



*Preparing for disasters so they can save their communities ©2007 - Photo credit: AAA/Florian Kopp*

DG ECHO continues to support preparedness in fragile, violent and conflict-affected situations through increased foresight, but requires that humanitarian interventions in these situations are designed and implemented by agencies who have the necessary technical skills and have knowledge of socio-economic dimensions, conflict dynamics and the local environment. In contexts where it is not feasible or acceptable to work with the national system, it is possible to support a local system, for example a consortium of NGOs, or local co-ordination mechanisms who have a continuing presence in the location and are able to address preparedness capacity gaps. DG ECHO prefers to support networks and NGOs that are already in place, or that are able to have a continuous presence as this helps to produce consistent preparedness benefits, even after the project funding period, and avoids recurrent preparedness expenditure.

#### 6.11.5 Preparedness for Drought

Evidence suggests that climate change and environmental degradation will increase the frequency and intensity of droughts. As slow-onset crises, they bring significant challenges for a humanitarian response, but they also increase the opportunity for preparedness and early action to avoid a catastrophic outcome<sup>60</sup>. Drought is a seasonal hazard that brings risks at regular, predictable times of the year. Therefore, relatively high-confidence long-term early warning is possible thanks to climate forecasts. However, what remains challenging is predicting the exact peak of a drought and ensuring that assistance is timely

and appropriate as it slowly and gradually causes destruction.

A good surveillance system can be put in place or strengthened to mitigate drought risk and improve preparedness. To prepare effectively for drought risk, a reliable early warning system is needed, along with risk assessments and the engagement of communities. Indeed, this is essential to facilitate timely access to weather forecast information, and to have a strong community risk management strategy in place in order to protect pastoralist livelihoods, among others.

Preparedness interventions can include the distribution of drought-resistant seeds or anticipatory actions such as setting up small-scale irrigation systems to reduce crop losses and protect food security in the short term. Moreover, improved access to cash can help farming households cope with droughts. This was evident in 2019 when poor and vulnerable households in drought-prone provinces in southern Vietnam were involved in designing assistance by DG ECHO's partners. Though the drought was not as severe as had been forecasted, those most at risk of entering debt cycles to purchase agricultural inputs and food received a multi-purpose cash grant. Coupled with timely alerts to inform planting decisions (whether to plant short/long duration or drought tolerant rice varieties) and other enhanced agricultural techniques, this contributed to building their capacity to cope with future shocks more effectively.

Given that drought can increase water scarcity, humanitarian actors can also invest in making WASH systems more risk-proof. This endeavour should always be based on an assessment of local hazards and the vulnerabilities of WASH services, which takes

60. <https://unfccc.int/news/state-of-the-climate-in-2018-shows-accelerating-climate-change-impacts>

into consideration the situation (nature and frequency of risks), the impact of previous events, and environmental and demographic pressure.

### 6.1.1.6 Preparedness for Displacement

Displacement and mobility are an increasingly important humanitarian and development challenge, both in situations of conflict and fragility and in relation to climate change and environmental degradation. Regardless of the cause of displacement, displaced people are subject to greater risk and vulnerability. DG ECHO partners should systematically adopt a **displacement lens** in their humanitarian action, in order to integrate displacement more effectively into risk management, including preparedness. Preparedness for displacement can help strengthen the capacity of national and local actors to effectively manage displacement situations, by assisting and protecting those who are displaced, and by linking to interventions supporting national and local actors in their efforts to find durable solutions to end displacement. Preparedness can also involve anticipatory action whereby people who are at risk of being displaced are moved out of harm before the event takes place and are provided with assistance to cover their basic needs.

With regard to preparing for displacement, an important issue is the availability, quality and understanding of displacement data, which are often fragmented and sensitive, particularly when related to a conflict. Similarly, the capacity to understand, model and project the risk of displacement, particularly at smaller geographical scales, and with a larger set of hazards and threats, is still limited, and needs to be strengthened. Additionally, defining who the people at risk are during the pre-displacement phase, and what their needs would be if affected remains crucial to any successful solution, even if it is only a short-term solution.

Analysing the exposure and capacity of at-risk communities<sup>61</sup> and understanding the risk and needs of displacement are crucial to prepare comprehensive emergency plans and integrate the displacement dimension into Early Warning Systems and Early Action (EWEA) in order to make them more effective. Vulnerability and capacity assessments of disaster-prone communities can support EWSs by analysing their human mobility and displacement dimensions. Emergency plans need to be comprehensive, possibly including mid- to long-term measures such as recovery and livelihoods by linking with development actors, and addressing challenges such as those related to access issues so that the adopted responses are effectively relevant (IFRC - [The Cost of Doing Nothing](#) - 2019).

Critical to preparedness is that local systems are in place ahead of a crisis to reduce harm by prompting effective anticipation and response and to increase resilience in a timely manner.

An indicative list of actions to strengthen preparedness for displacement are as follows:

- Ensure that policy and legislative frameworks for preparedness integrate displacement concerns;

### Pre-Planning Evacuation

Mobility and pre-emptive displacement are coping mechanisms that help people respond to the impact of disasters. Preparing for displacement entails a community-based approach that considers existing coping mechanisms and strategies. Evacuations are an efficient way to prevent mortality and injury due to disasters, but may expose people to other risks linked to displacement. The choice of evacuation centres is important if we want to prevent recurrent displacement and avoid tensions with the host communities.

61. Existing tools are for instance the IFRC's Enhanced Vulnerability and Capacity Assessments (EVCA).

- Support the collection, analysis and use of displacement data to strengthen risk assessments and preparedness/emergency measures;
- Ensure that people at risk of displacement, and those previously displaced by disasters, participate in drawing up preparedness, contingency and disaster response plans: adopt a people-centred approach that considers the demographic, gender, cultural and livelihoods characteristics of the target audience;
- Develop and implement contingency plans, evacuation mechanisms, and forecast-based financing;
- Strengthen EWSs by including impact projections of the vulnerabilities and potential displacement of disaster-prone populations;
- Advocate for and support the inclusion of displacement data/considerations in national plans and strategies and develop Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) triggered by regional EWSs;
- Disseminate information to preserve family safety and unity, to prevent civil documentation loss, and to provide information about safe displacement routes, analysed in terms of risks. The communication should be culturally appropriate, child-friendly and accessible also to children, women and men with disabilities;
- Scale-up early action measures to anticipate and reduce displacement risks more effectively ahead of time. Targeted anticipatory actions could be implemented through measures such as planned evacuations, prepositioning of food, water and shelter to attend to basic needs or cash transfers so that people can move out of harm;
- Strengthen national and local capacity to protect displaced people in the context of disasters and conflict, especially in fragile contexts (see section on Preparedness for Protection).

Long-term measures, such as climate and disaster risk reduction, sustainable management of ecosystems, peace and reconciliation processes, and overall vulnerability reduction of at-risk populations nevertheless remain necessary to address issues of displacement in a sustainable manner. Humanitarian action should therefore prioritise linkages with development and peace actions and promote close coordination between the different national and international stakeholders. Furthermore, engaging with affected communities is essential for sustainability. For example, a livelihoods resilience approach could be an opportunity to advance durable solutions, by strengthening income generation and reinforcing social cohesion, particularly in situations of prolonged displacement.



## 7. Evidence and Learning

DG ECHO is committed to ensuring that all humanitarian action it supports, including preparedness, is based on the best available sources of evidence.

It is important to gather evidence on the results of preparedness interventions on the ground and of the application of a risk informed approach to humanitarian action. Such evidence helps to feed into the policy discourse, to inform the practice by highlighting what makes for successful operations and to substantiate the importance of preparedness and integrating risk analysis into humanitarian work. The development of a solid evidence base allows for credible advocacy with other donors, governments and all relevant stakeholders. It can also support EU humanitarian aid visibility, as the DG ECHO [Compendium of Experiences](#) on disaster preparedness actions testifies.

Evidence from the field will help DG ECHO identify strengths and weaknesses of its own approach and adjust it to make it more effective and relevant to the realities on the ground. The collection of experience and results of field operations is also key to learning, identifying and sharing best practices and to scaling up across interventions.

Humanitarian partners have a key role to play in producing such evidence, in learning and in supporting the policy and practice around preparedness and risk informed approach. DG ECHO recognises that evidence-based learning has a crucial role to play in the development of preparedness and effective response. Such learning requires a structured approach and resources. DG ECHO commits itself to supporting this learning process.

DG ECHO is also setting up an internal mechanism to ensure more consistently the collection and analysis of evidence and lessons learnt from the implementation of ECHO funded DP mainstreamed and targeted projects. In this attempt, the 2021 revised [Resilience Marker](#) provides opportunities for better monitoring and report on how projects include a preparedness dimension and how the variety of risks inherent to humanitarian crises are taken into account in project design and implementation. New Disaster Preparedness and Early Action indicators will equally facilitate monitoring and reporting on a mainstreamed preparedness approach.



*The owner of a rice mill in Nepal's Kathmandu Valley, Indra Bahadur Katwal is now part of the Disaster management Plan of his municipality: he has committed to stock extra rice in his mill, ensuring access to food in case of natural disasters. © European Union 2018/Pierre Prakash*

# Annex 1. Mainstreaming Preparedness and Risk Proofing Humanitarian Response

This Annex provides more detailed information regarding mainstreaming preparedness into response and risk-proofing response operations for DG ECHO's main sectors of intervention - namely, Education, Food Security, Health, Nutrition, Protection, Water, Hygiene and Sanitation (WASH) and Shelter and Settlements.

## EDUCATION<sup>62</sup>

The overall aim of EU humanitarian assistance in Education in Emergencies is to restore and maintain access to safe and quality education during humanitarian crises, and to support out-of-school children to quickly enter or return to quality learning opportunities. Its role is to minimise the impacts of crisis on the right to education and children's learning. Activities focus on those levels of education that are already covered by State commitments to free and compulsory basic education - usually primary, lower and upper secondary levels of education.

Disaster preparedness is essential to minimise education service disruption and enhance children's safe access to schools and, in line with the Comprehensive School Safety Framework<sup>63</sup>, reduce the risks of all hazards and threats to the education sector. The core of these efforts is to recognise children's rights to education continuity, participation and protection.

Additionally, education offers opportunities to communicate on DP, and motivate and engage with communities, by providing life-saving and life-sustaining information and skills, including schools in existing early warning systems, building school-centred early warning systems and contingency planning, and developing capacities and training.

DP in education can be framed through three pillars<sup>64</sup>: 1) Safe School Environment; 2) School Safety and Disaster Management; 3) DRR in Teaching and Learning. Together these pillars help to ensure schools are physically safe for students and personnel, plans are established for education continuity in the face of disaster, and the safety and resilience of communities is enhanced.

62. Please refer to the 2018 Commission Communication on Education in Emergencies and Protracted Crises and 2019 DG ECHO Staff Working Document on Education in Emergencies in EU-funded Humanitarian Aid Operations: [https://ec.europa.eu/echo/what/humanitarian-aid/education-emergencies\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/echo/what/humanitarian-aid/education-emergencies_en)

63. <https://qadrrres.net/resources/policy-enabling-environment>

64. See also Annex I: Disaster Risk Reduction to DG ECHO Staff Working Document on Education in Emergencies: [https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/news/eie\\_in\\_humanitarian\\_assistance.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/news/eie_in_humanitarian_assistance.pdf)

Education activities on disaster preparedness can include:

- Bringing together community members, children, caregivers, teachers and other education personnel and engaging with them to identify threats and crises, together with ways to prepare and reduce risks;
- Planning for disasters, including through the development of Safety Management Plans, Emergency Response Plans, School DP/DRR Plans, etc.;
- Training teachers and administration in DP;
- Lifesaving and life skills education with child-friendly and age/gender-appropriate materials and messaging, and curriculum enhancement with child-centred, project-based learning on DP/DRR;
- Relying on children and schools as agents of change to increase community resilience;
- Pre-positioning critical materials and supplies for disaster-prone areas;
- Learning Space Improvement (structural as well as materials and supplies) and adhering to resilient school construction standards;
- Incorporating hazard-resilient features into school building and rehabilitation;
- Small-scale/school level (structural and non-structural) mitigation and preparedness measures;
- Creation and management of knowledge/experience-sharing platform for school safety programming;
- Inclusion of schools/school directors as contact points in Early Warning Systems, in order for the school to be evacuated in time, and for the children to spread the alert in communities (combined with the pre-positioning of learning/teaching materials);
- DP advocacy and policy work, particularly with the Ministry of Education and other authorities – including embedding preparedness and response in national policies and sector plans, through the strengthening of decentralisation linkages and administration capacities.



*The EU funded Disaster preparedness programme in Haiti seeks to strengthen local capacities to face natural hazards. ©2012, EC/DG ECHO/M. Bernardez*

## FOOD SECURITY

The scope of work covered by the EU's humanitarian food assistance instruments is defined as saving lives, in the first place through delivering assistance to meet basic humanitarian food and nutrition needs<sup>65</sup>. However, it also aims to fulfil supportive functions, specifically contributing to reducing risk and vulnerability, and improving the appropriateness and effectiveness of humanitarian food assistance through capacity-building and advocacy. EU humanitarian food assistance seeks to avoid undermining community resilience and coping capacity. It includes emergency food security (including nutrition) and short-term livelihoods support (using cash transfers whenever possible,

65. Please refer to the EU [Humanitarian Food Assistance Communication](#) 2010 and [Staff Working Document](#).

in-kind distributions or vouchers), food security and nutrition information and analysis, advocacy and awareness-raising.

There is a direct correlation between disaster risk and food insecurity. Food-insecure people are the least able to cope with disasters. Disasters affect livelihoods, particularly those of the poorest and most vulnerable people, and they increase use of negative coping mechanisms to cover food needs. Besides, the recurrence of disasters often depletes livelihoods. Exposure to high levels of disaster risk, and lack of capacity to manage these risks, means that poor households are trapped in a cycle of food insecurity and poverty that quickly deteriorates into a food crisis and acute undernutrition when a disaster occurs.

“ *There is a direct correlation between disaster risk and food insecurity.* ”

Food assistance interventions can contribute to the protection of livelihood assets both during and ahead of crises (particularly human and social capital). Besides, they contribute to creating/advocating for a conducive environment for disaster preparedness in terms of structures and processes: for example, through the provision of technical support to quality food security information systems, the establishment

of food security surveillance mechanisms or the strengthening of national and local Early Warning Systems using food and economic indicators. Global systems also exist, such as the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC)<sup>66</sup> with the main goal of providing decision-makers with a rigorous, evidence- and consensus-based analysis of food insecurity and acute malnutrition situations, to inform emergency responses as well as medium- and long-term policy and programming.

The [Humanitarian Food Assistance Communication](#) (2010) states that the European Commission, other than responding to emergency situations and food crises, can trigger a humanitarian food assistance response for anticipated crises on the basis of firm forecasts. The development of such models remains highly relevant in the current context with more frequent disasters. Anticipatory responses should always be accompanied by a multi-risk analysis, defined triggers, and agreed Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for early/anticipatory action.

DG ECHO requires all humanitarian action to be risk-informed, meaning that analysis and design should be based on a sound assessment of risk and the intervention should seek to reduce immediate and future risks. DP should be mainstreamed in all humanitarian food assistance actions. This involves:

- Incorporating a sound multi-risk analysis in all food and livelihoods assessments in order to adequately inform the design and implementation of food assistance responses. For example, carefully choosing the distribution site in order not to expose food assistance beneficiaries to conflict or other hazards;
- Directly reducing immediate risks to people, and especially the most vulnerable. For example, by enabling access to basic food and protection of livelihoods/assets or enhancing livelihoods to strengthen people’s capacities to meet their food needs (e.g. building shelters for animals in flood-prone areas or providing seeds for off-seasonal agriculture). Where possible, food assistance and livelihoods responses should also consider medium- and longer-term risks;

66. The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) is a multi-partner initiative (governments, UN Agencies, NGOs, civil society and other relevant actors) to provide data and analysis determining the severity and magnitude of acute and chronic food insecurity, and acute malnutrition situations in a country, according to internationally-recognised scientific standards. For more information: [www.ipcinfo.org](http://www.ipcinfo.org)

- The “risk-proofing” of interventions to protect them against future hazards. For example, by ensuring that emergency food storage facilities are designed to withstand hazards such as wind, floods, earthquakes, or prepositioning food ahead of the rainy season to ensure that affected populations have access to it.

## Desert Locusts’ invasion in the Horn of Africa

In 2020, the Horn of Africa was affected by the biggest desert locust invasion in more than 25 years. The desert locust is considered the most destructive migratory pest in the world and this upsurge was threatening livelihoods and food security particularly of the most vulnerable households who are dependent on their agricultural or pastoral activities for survival, adding to existing high levels of acute food insecurity, with 13 million already in IPC 3 in the areas where the desert locusts were present at the beginning of 2020 (source IPC) and the risk of it spreading to other vulnerable areas and countries (altogether 7 countries were facing a possible negative impact on their food security and livelihoods: Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Uganda, South Sudan, and Sudan).

In February 2020, FAO launched an appeal to respond to the desert locust upsurge, which included surveillance and control actions, livelihoods protection and coordination actions. The timing for activities aimed at controlling the upsurge was key to mitigating the effects on livelihoods. DG ECHO mobilised funding (in February and in May 2020) to contribute to surveillance and control operations in the invaded areas, and to limit the movements of the desert locust swarms.

The surveillance and control activities were linked; the surveillance aimed to detect the groups of desert locusts in a timely fashion and to alert the control

centre to react and send teams to kill them through spraying. On average the response time between the surveillance and the control was 1 or 2 days, as capacities were reinforced through donor funding. DG ECHO’s contribution included the funding of equipment and the training of teams to do surveillance and control activities, and also the funding of bio pesticides, vehicles and the use of helicopters. This allowed a scale-up of the control operations and avoided the invasion of more crop and pasture areas. It was found that approximately 25% of farmers had damages due to the desert locusts.

The action contributed significantly to the reduction of further invasions in South Sudan, Uganda and Sudan. In addition, it helped to mitigate the risk of spreading towards West Africa. According to FAO, 515 billion desert locusts were killed by August 2020 in the region, and by November 2020, the livelihoods of 12 million people were saved from invasion, which protected their food security. A massive humanitarian crisis was averted by timely desert locust control. In addition, 1.7 million metric tons of crops were saved. Most importantly, these operations helped to avoid substantial negative impact on pastures and crops, which mitigated the effects on food insecurity, reducing significantly the number of people directly impacted. The number of people who suffered livelihood losses and increased food insecurity due to the desert locusts was smaller than anticipated.

## HEALTH<sup>67</sup>

Mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction (DRR) is applied in many health actions where early warning and response to outbreaks is a key component or the main objective. The 2014–2016 external evaluation of the humanitarian health intervention reported that nearly three quarters (72%) of DG ECHO funding was provided to projects that incorporated preparedness and response activities related to epidemics.

DRR activities, particularly epidemic monitoring and preparedness, were identified as an essential part of humanitarian responses in the health

67. Additional information on DP/DRR can be found in the following DG ECHO reference documents: [Health General Guidelines \(2014\)](#) and [DG ECHO Health Technical Guidelines](#). For further information on DP and DRR in the health sector: [International Health Regulations \(2005\)](#) - World Health Organisation (WHO).



*In Nepal, earthquake preparedness saved lives – and limbs. © European Union/DG ECHO/Pierre Prakash*

assessment of risk and the intervention should seek to reduce immediate and future risks” (DG ECHO 2014, p.16).

This approach was also reflected in the findings from DG ECHO staff and the evaluation partner survey. It was found that the large majority (86%) of 103 respondents integrated risk reduction activities into the design and implementation of their health actions and 13% of sample projects were specifically aimed at improving the response preparedness of health systems and/or populations.

Activities included:

- Reinforcing national disease surveillance mechanisms and building surveillance capacity;
- Training staff on emergency health situations and how to monitor and report a crisis;
- Strengthening the capacity of Health Ministries, local authorities and institutions to respond to epidemic outbreaks efficiently and effectively;
- Creating and testing Rapid Response Team capacity to respond to future disease outbreaks; and
- As is protocol for some partner organisations - including DRR, local capacity building and sustainability components within programmes wherever possible.

Recent examples of risk reduction and preparedness activities included within health interventions are:

- Yemen: healthcare/nutrition projects and epidemics managed in conflict-affected areas;
- Guinea: design of the country preparedness plan for the community level;
- Increased preparedness content in the West Africa regional programme;
- Latin America and Caribbean: strengthening surveillance of yellow fever and other zoonotic infections by supporting laboratory capacities, and training health workers to diagnose and manage diseases;
- Specific activities related to the ‘Safe Hospital’ concept (e.g. Nepal).

sector. In line with this expectation, DRR activities were usually considered in the design and implementation of actions by partners, with some projects specifically funded by DG ECHO to improve response preparedness.

The 2014 DG ECHO Consolidated Health General Guidelines include preparedness as an important dimension in every aspect of the health sector. They state that: “DRR, disaster preparedness and resilience are relevant in every aspect of a health sector humanitarian response. DG ECHO requires that all humanitarian action it supports be based on a sound

## NUTRITION<sup>68</sup>

The scope of work considered under the Nutrition sector includes the treatment and prevention of undernutrition (including through the use of cash), nutritional rehabilitation, and surveillance and surveys. Tackling high-risk, moderate and severe acute malnutrition and preventing excess mortality and morbidity from malnutrition is a priority for DG ECHO. This primarily involves direct nutrition interventions to identify and diagnose undernutrition and address the symptoms through appropriate treatment. The following six activities are the main ways to integrate preparedness, and risk-proof nutrition projects:

- Highlight to partners (in the context of strategic dialogues) the need to include risk monitoring and preparedness activities in nutrition response operations and, on the basis of the risk monitoring, ensure that they are ready to respond quickly to changing situations;
- Assess the level of understanding of undernutrition determinants, of undernutrition prevalence/admissions monitoring, of good stock management, etc. among partners and project implementation staff (in the context of field missions);
- Provide training and capacity building for national, regional, and local healthcare staff to make sure qualified human resources are readily available when needed;
- Promote and support the prepositioning of nutrition commodities in areas where mobility restrictions can be expected and/or when peaks of undernutrition are foreseen (e.g. the Covid-19 epidemic or the rainy season in South Sudan) while ensuring that RUTF is available, accessible and affordable, and supply chains are sustainable;
- Support the integration of a Community Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM)<sup>69</sup> surge approach to ensure that health systems maintain their quality of service through peaks of undernutrition;
- Promote an integrated approach to nutrition and complementary and coordinated nutrition-sensitive interventions in health, WASH and food security as well as education and social protection to contribute to the mitigation of malnutrition risks.

The following are examples of DRR and DP mainstreaming in nutrition operations:

- Support the nutrition cluster/coordination systems and promote partners' active participation in the cluster/systems;
- Support partners in purchasing buffer stocks of therapeutic food to be better prepared in case the supply chain is disrupted or there is a sudden increase in the caseload of malnourished children;
- Preposition a buffer stock of commodities at the national level (through UNICEF) to manage potential increases and shocks, and at the field level if transportation issues are foreseen;
- Promote the surge approach and the establishment/strengthening of

*“ The main response is through direct Nutrition interventions to identify and diagnose undernutrition and address the symptoms through appropriate treatment. ”*

68. DG ECHO Thematic Policy Document n° 4 - Nutrition: Addressing Undernutrition in Emergencies.

69. The CMAM approach is based on the observation that in contexts where there is a high level of seasonal variation, capacities are overwhelmed and external support is needed during peaks of malnutrition. Better planning and organisation within the health system helps to prevent disruption to services. Consequently, external partners (i.e., INGOs) are only called upon to provide support as a last resort. This approach also has the potential to feed into Early Warning Systems, by quantifying the proportion of facilities struggling to meet needs. Pilot programmes are currently being implemented to extend this approach to health emergencies.

risk monitoring systems to anticipate and reduce the impact of peaks of undernutrition, including in Niger, Ethiopia, DRC, South Sudan and Sudan, through the Pilot Programmatic Partnership with CONCERN;

- Develop/strengthen drought surveillance systems and nutrition surveillance bulletins to ensure that all relevant stakeholders are informed about how the nutrition situation is evolving in the country.

## PROTECTION<sup>70</sup>

Ensuring the protection of populations is a core objective of humanitarian action. When needs arise as a consequence of violence, deliberate deprivation and restrictions of access, the European Commission aims to ensure that the projects it funds look beyond mere material needs to the broader issues of personal safety and dignity.

Hence, for DG ECHO, the aim of humanitarian protection is to prevent, reduce/mitigate and respond to the risks and consequences of violence, coercion, deliberate deprivation and abuse for persons, groups and communities in the context of humanitarian crises, in compliance with the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence and within the framework of international law and in particular international human rights law (IHRL), International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and Refugee Law.

When disasters strike, or violence and conflicts erupt, people are often subject to threats to their lives, safety and dignity, as well as to discrimination, loss of access to basic services and new protection concerns.

Preparedness is one of the key aspects that is often missing in standard protection programming, which is typically more reactive than proactive. The meaningful integration of disaster preparedness in protection targeted actions ensures at the same time an improved understanding of the vulnerabilities and capacities of different affected groups, the effective and timely identification and tailored early actions to better respond to specific protection threats, the reinforcement of social cohesion and social care services before, during and in the aftermath of a disaster, and the promotion of a protection-sensitive, and gender- and age-sensitive approach.

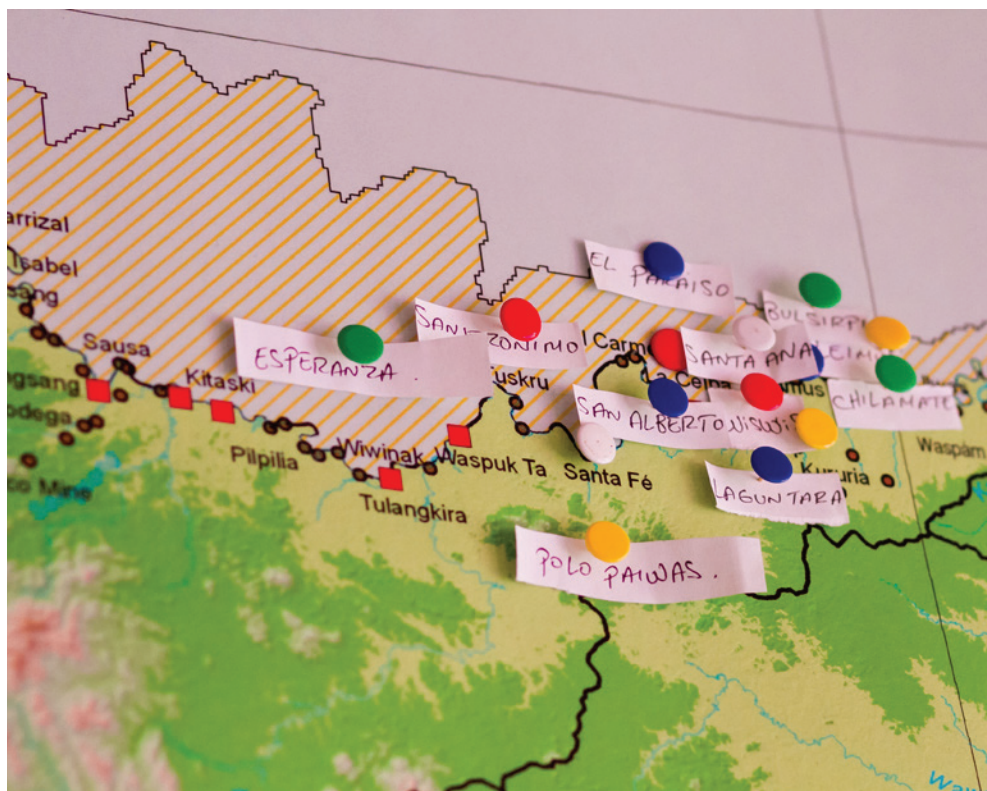
The extent to which preparedness considerations need to be addressed in protection interventions will be influenced by the type of hazards and threats faced by individuals, households and communities, their level of vulnerability to these hazards and threats, as well as the existing capacities of individuals, communities, authorities and other relevant actors. An all-risk approach to programming, based on continuous and comprehensive risk analysis, helps to identify and integrate preparedness considerations into protection interventions.

While it is recognised that basic preparedness should be context specific, a key preparedness activity for the protection sector is to work with communities to build their capacity for self-protection. Among other activities, this involves:

- Identifying and strengthening existing basic self-protection mechanisms that most communities, families, and individuals will have;
- Enhancing horizontally and vertically the shock-responsiveness and

70. DG ECHO Thematic Policy Document n° 8 - *Improving protection outcomes to reduce risks for people in humanitarian crises.*





*Communities in the remote areas around the border between Nicaragua and Honduras where DG ECHO's partner, Oxfam, is present.*  
© EU 2013 - EC/DG ECHO/Silvio Balladares

inclusiveness of social care systems and services, and their ability to rapidly scale-up and adapt in the event of a disaster;

- Ensuring that detention facilities and sites (whether for migrants, asylum seekers or the general population) are well equipped, appropriately staffed and able to cope with disasters, both natural and human-induced;
- Developing scenario plans that anticipate the impacts of a wide variety of protection-related factors, and their implications for response and recovery efforts;
- Pre-positioning items that enable an effective protection response (and advocating in favour of such actions within coordination mechanisms) - i.e. post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) kits or clinical management of rape (CMR) kits;
- Developing internal response capacities prior to the emergency phase, including the training of non-protection staff in basic information provision, identification and referral to maximise the potential of service delivery;
- Reinforcing regular disaster preparedness exercises (including evacuation drills, training and the establishment of support systems), with a view to continuously assessing the relevance of risk analysis, the inclusive participation of all vulnerable individuals and groups, and adapting the protocols if necessary;
- Integrating basic messages to preserve family safety and unity, to prevent civil documentation loss, and to inform on safe displacement routes, analysed according to risk, in awareness campaigns and information dissemination activities that are communicated in a manner that is culturally appropriate, child-friendly and accessible to all;
- Monitoring displacement risks and protection concerns, and ensuring that early warnings identify these and meaningfully integrate them.



*Preparedness programmes in La Esperanza (Nicaragua) aim to help the inhabitants react effectively when there are heavy rains and tropical storms, and to take the necessary measures to minimise the risk of damage.*  
© 2013 EC/DG ECHO/  
Silvio Balladares

## WATER, HYGIENE, AND SANITATION (WASH)<sup>71</sup>

Risk-informed WASH programming is paramount, meaning that, where feasible and relevant, DRR measures are integrated into every stage of the response cycle of emergency WASH operations. Investment in making WASH systems more disaster-proof should always be based on an assessment of local hazards and the vulnerabilities of WASH services, considering: the situation (nature and frequency of risks); the impact of previous events; environmental & demographic pressure and DRR and climate change adaptation strategies and capacities.

The WASH response should explore how to build back infrastructure to make it more disaster-proof. The sector can also be

accompanied by emergency preparedness activities. DRR considerations should always be integrated into the exit strategy of WASH programming, ensuring greater resilience of services. As an example, watershed management may have to be integrated into WASH programming.

DG ECHO requires all humanitarian WASH actions to be based on a sound assessment of risk and the intervention should seek to reduce immediate and future risks. This can involve:

- Directly reducing risk to people. This would include immediate risks, such as sickness and death from WASH related diseases such as cholera and/or acute water shocks and stress. Longer-term risks should also be considered, such as the impact on aquifer depletion or poor design of drainage or waste management systems;
- The *risk-proofing* of interventions to protect them against future hazards, by, for example, ensuring that WASH infrastructures are designed to withstand hazards such as landslides, floods or earthquakes.

Mitigation measures to provide structural protection to water supply and sanitation facilities are a critical element of disaster preparedness. Mitigation measures can be at household level (i.e. raising or strengthening of latrine pits subject to flooding) or at the community level (i.e. location of system intakes at sites less prone to landslides, or improved design and siting of water storage tanks).

DG ECHO recognises that good professional practice in WASH will incorporate many, if not most aspects of DRR. Accordingly, DG ECHO will require that humanitarian interventions in WASH are designed and implemented by agencies possessing the requisite technical competence in the specific areas of WASH covered.

The need to consider integrated water management is essential in areas prone to water insecurity or disasters, or that are environmentally fragile. In a watershed, water extraction/pumping measures taken upstream may result in negative impacts downstream (e.g. diverting water from small rivers to increase irrigation).

71. DG ECHO Thematic Policy Document n° 2: *Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Meeting the challenge of rapidly increasing humanitarian needs in WASH*, §4.3, pp 18-20.

The following are examples of preparedness mainstreaming in the WASH sector:

- Support to the Western & Central Africa UNICEF Cholera Platform 2012-2019 (4 funding allocations), as part of a strategic WASH contribution to cholera preparedness, anticipating WASH needs and requirements and reducing cholera outbreak risks;
- Support to Action Contre la Faim (ACF) Uganda for integrated water management in Karamoja 2011-2013 (2 funding allocations). Droughts are the second most frequent type of disaster in Africa, but the type with the greatest impact in terms of the number of people affected. With DG ECHO's support, a pilot project between ACF and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in Uganda built resilience against drought through improved water resource management;
- India - Rapid humanitarian assistance to vulnerable and excluded communities impacted by COVID-19 and flooding in Assam by Oxfam Novib. The action incorporated risk reduction features in the rehabilitation of water points to make them more resilient and safe from future disasters;
- In the Dominican Republic, in the context of a WASH response following Hurricane Sandy, the Emergency Plan of the national WASH service provider (INAPA) was revised and updated in order for them to maintain their capacity to deliver water in emergency situations according to different scenarios. In parallel, on the main water network, some distribution points were installed/adapted to fill the tanker trucks, in order to do water trucking in emergencies while rehabilitating destroyed sections of pipes, which is a recurrent problem after strong hurricane impacts.

## SHELTER AND SETTLEMENTS<sup>72</sup>

It is essential to adopt a risk-informed approach to Shelter and Settlements (S&S) programming whether before, during or after a crisis. Understanding the exposure to different hazards and the specific vulnerabilities and capacities of the population is vital, as is due consideration to the range of measures and safety standards that serve to mitigate and prevent risks. Measures should be taken to protect settlements, shelters and their occupants from natural hazards as well as from human-induced threats. Examples of measures include:

- **Non-structural measures** (e.g. checking that S&S is adequately addressed in the contingency plans; settlement planning; pre-positioning of S&S relief items, reviewing or updating building practices and training builders to use safe techniques and materials etc.);
- **Structural measures** (e.g. retrofitting of existing buildings; land-raising/elevation of buildings or homesteads in flood plains; strengthening roofs and shelters using hurricane straps in storm-prone areas, slope stabilisation in landslide-prone mountainous communities, etc.);

In some cases, it may be suitable to adopt a **participatory approach to safe shelter awareness**, which aims to raise awareness of everyday vulnerabilities and risks related to the built environment and to foster locally appropriate safe S&S practices.

DG ECHO requires all humanitarian S&S actions to be based on a sound assessment of

72. DG ECHO Thematic Policy Document n° 9: [Humanitarian Shelter and Settlements Guidelines](#).

risk and they should seek to reduce immediate and future risks. This can involve:

- **Directly reducing risks to people.** This includes immediate risks, such as fire, sickness and death from exposure in cold climates, and measures to prevent gender-based violence in camps (e.g. through improved external walling, internal partitions, and providing lockable doors for improved shelter safety and privacy, especially in collective shelters, the location of latrines in safe/lighted areas, sufficient lighting and security in the area). It also includes shelter and settlement non-structural vulnerability assessments, reviewing infrastructure - such as pathways - to allow safe access to other basic services, HLP issues, and considering the S&S needs of host communities;
- **The “risk-proofing” of interventions** to protect them against future hazards, such as ensuring that shelters, following a structural assessment, are designed to withstand, as far as is possible, hazards such as wind, rain/floods, and earthquakes.



*This woman lives in a slum area in El Salvador where a disaster preparedness DG ECHO project (DIPECHO) is trying to improve the way these vulnerable communities can react in the face of a disaster. ©2009 Oxfam/Tineke D'haese*

DG ECHO recognises that good professional practice in S&S incorporates many, if not most aspects of DRR. Accordingly, DG ECHO requires that humanitarian interventions in S&S are designed and implemented by agencies who have the requisite technical competence in the specific areas of shelter covered.

In cases of major displacement and camp settlements, risk-informed camp planning and management is of utmost importance and is critical to reducing risk to the displaced population. Site selection and site planning determine the risks that the population will face for the following years.

Therefore, during a settlement planning activity, increased technical support is necessary for site selection, planning and development, including the appropriate distance between shelters for fire safety and drainage systems for sanitation purposes.

Where large population displacements are expected, sites and technical solutions for shelter should be anticipated as far as possible. Additionally, as it is normally observed that shelter provision during the immediate response stage tends to be temporary or transitional, this stage presents an opportunity for capacity building, awareness raising and risk reduction for safer shelter construction in the longer term.

An analysis of the impact of disasters on S&S facilitates an early recovery and informs a ‘Build Back Better’ approach. Furthermore, risk reduction measures should be promoted whenever possible as they result in cost-effectiveness.

This should be implemented within a framework of local risk assessment (i.e. mapping the areas at risk and unsafe houses), improvement of local building practices and skills, improved and more resilient building materials and techniques, greater accessibility

and contingency planning (i.e. stockpiling materials) for subsequent disaster events.

Below are some examples of mainstreaming in the S&S sector:

- Ecuador: strengthening of institutional and community capacities at the national and local levels, to reduce vulnerability to seismic events in Ecuador (Inspection and Rapid Evaluation of Structures Post-Seismic Event)<sup>73</sup>.
- Philippines: the Move Up Project, which includes the design and employment of Alternative Temporary Shelters (ATS), developed a menu of different models/designs, from which communities and local governments can select the most appropriate for their context. These are locally-designed and use locally-available materials (DG ECHO - [DP Compendium of Experiences](#), page 21).
- Dominican Republic: providing temporary shelter to hurricane and flood victims is a challenge for the Civil Protection and local authorities. In the context of these recurrent emergencies, a concept for mobile and modular shelter has been developed. It is easy to implement and can meet different emergency response requirements. Habitat for Humanity - <http://dipecholac.net/docs/files/860-habitat-shelter-capitalization-20140930-eng.pdf>
- Caribbean: after the impact of Hurricane Irma and Maria in 2017, in the context of support to 7 Caribbean countries, the response systematically integrated a Participatory Approach for Safe Shelter Awareness training (PASSA) and training on how to build safe roofs for all the families involved in IFRC operations. A similar approach was adopted during the response after the impact of Hurricane Maria in Dominica.

73. Document can be downloaded at [www.preventionweb.net/files/52771\\_guiainpeccinpostevento.pdf](http://www.preventionweb.net/files/52771_guiainpeccinpostevento.pdf). Note that this guide was used by the Government (and UCPM), following the 2016 EQ to identify the level of damages of individual houses, allowing for a classification and broad rebuilding policy/program.

# Annex 2.

## Crisis Modifier Note

### The use of Crisis Modifiers

#### Fostering Flexible, Early and Anticipatory Action in Humanitarian Assistance

DG ECHO views flexible, early and anticipatory humanitarian action as a critical element of managing crises more efficiently and effectively. Complementing response operations, *Crisis Modifiers* (CMs) allow DG ECHO partners to integrate flexibility and preparedness into actions. This note aims to clarify terminology related to, and provide overall guidance on, the use of CMs, in order to help DG ECHO and its partners with the programming of their interventions.

#### 1. Concept, element and use

The concept of CM was developed in the early 2000s in the framework of the USAID resilience strategy to protect development gains from recurrent, predictable shocks through a “timely response to crises by partners who are already operational on the ground and running development projects”<sup>74</sup>. The CM aims at enhancing the flexibility and responsiveness of both humanitarian action and longer-term resilience programming. However, its objectives are context-specific. In a resilience framework, the CM is used to protect development gains when the beneficiaries of the development programme are affected by a shock, for example through the protection of productive livelihood assets. In humanitarian contexts, the CM is solely used to provide essential life-saving assistance to those who are most vulnerable and affected by a crisis within a crisis.

The purpose of the CM, within DG ECHO-funded action, is to promote the systematic consideration and integration of **flexible, early and anticipatory action in order to address, in a timely manner, immediate and life-saving needs resulting from a rapid-onset crisis and/or a deterioration**<sup>75</sup> (*a crisis within a crisis*) and when no other response mechanisms are yet in place.

With reference to the DG ECHO Single Form (e-Single Form), the term CM refers to a **specific result (sector and sub-sector)** – please see section 2 below for more details – to enhance the responsiveness and flexibility of partners implementing humanitarian operations.

74. Other examples, in Eastern and Southern Africa, of using a CM within resilience programmes are:

- The EU-funded RESET II in Ethiopia, which developed a Crisis Modifier Mechanisms with a separate emergency fund to be released to implementing partners based on localised risk profiling and contingency plans.
- The III Pillar of the EU-DFID-UNDP funded ZRBF (Zimbabwe Resilience Building Fund) developed a risk financing mechanism to release funds to implementing partners and activate early response to upcoming crises and provide a *resilience cushion*, and, if required, a humanitarian response.
- The DFID funded resilience building BRACED programme introduced a CM in Sahel to enable early response to new humanitarian needs to protect programme’s investments and development gains.

75. For example, although a drought is a slow onset crisis, it could trigger acute malnutrition rapidly. For more information, please refer to FAQ n.6.

The comparative advantage of the CM is in increasing the rapidity of intervention, shortening the overall time gap before other response mechanisms are activated (e.g. DG ECHO's Emergency/Rapid Response Mechanism, [Emergency Toolbox](#), *top-ups* or other donor support). Specifically, the CM offers the possibility for partners to flexibly mobilize resources from their on-going actions, to swiftly respond to new emerging shocks occurring in the area where their operations are taking place, or in other areas where they have the capacity to quickly surge. Particularly in conflict areas, a partner that is already active in the area can increase the level of acceptance of interventions by the local communities and possibly by armed groups.

The CM is used as follows:

- i) To respond quickly to the most acute needs and potentially shorten the time gap whilst exploring potential additional resources (ALERT or top-ups).
- ii) To allow for a very localised response to needs which may have remained fully unattended by a partner present in the area with an ongoing DG ECHO action<sup>76</sup>.
- iii) To activate early and/or anticipatory response(s) to the likely immediate consequences of natural hazards or other threats on the basis of a scientific or risk-based analysis (risk-informed and anticipatory approach).

**Risk-informed approach:** The CM can be used to strengthen early response and anticipatory capacity within an intervention; it can finance activities that aim at reducing the possible impact of future crises on the most vulnerable people in the area targeted by the action itself. The probability of such crises must be determined on the basis of a comprehensive risk analysis and/or scientific forecast, as in the case of weather-related hazards or anticipatory actions. In doing so, the CM exemplifies the application of a *risk-informed approach* that is based on a multi-risk analysis forecasting the impact of a shock, including likely, expected needs and estimating the potentially affected population. The consideration of pre-existing vulnerabilities remains crucial to identify those who are most vulnerable.

**Target population and area(s):** the target population/area(s) are generally those indicated in the action, whether this is a response or targeted preparedness action. However, for response operations, it is possible to use a CM for other population groups/geographical areas, provided that the partner has the capacity to scale up and respond. In the case of targeted preparedness actions<sup>77</sup>, the CM should be used to respond to a sudden crisis if related to the focus/target population and area of the action, and if the partner has the capacity to do so. Exceptionally, a CM can be used



*Local brigades who have received capacity building assistance as part of a disaster preparedness project implemented by DG ECHO's partner ACSUR-Las Segovias perform a rescue operation during a drill in Managua. © 2013 EC/DG ECHO/I.Coello*

76. Provided that other DG ECHO funding mechanisms, such as the [Emergency Toolbox](#), are not activated by the Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC).

77. Targeted disaster preparedness actions indicate those projects whose interventions (i.e. every output) are fully focused on DP and do not have any response components.



*These camps in Bangladesh are prone to seasonal flooding, landslides and cyclones. The EU and its partners have established early warning systems, helped to reinforce houses to resist storms, and have taught disaster preparedness in local schools. ©2019 European Union/Peter Biro*

in a targeted preparedness action to address a shock unrelated to the action if this is hampering its implementation.

**Triggers:** CM activation should be dependent on clearly identified, defined and agreed triggers and thresholds, particularly when designed and used in targeted DP actions and/or as anticipatory and early response tools. Triggers and thresholds should be based on a comprehensive analysis of risks to which the population/area of the action is exposed, and of the capacities already in place to respond to these risks. The triggers and thresholds should be discussed and embedded in the design of the action. Triggers should also be clearly linked to existing early warning systems and/or contingency plans (national government and/or UN-led), whenever possible.

**Timeframe and Budget:** the CM should respond to more pressing and urgent life-saving needs (not necessarily respond to all needs) and it is typically designed for a limited period of time (average duration observed is generally 1-4 weeks). As for the budget, it should be proportional to the overall total budget of the action (an average observed amount is 10%). It should be based on the type of envisaged interventions and an indicative number of beneficiaries (if possible). The partner will determine whether such a budget can be provided at the proposal stage and, if not, should indicate “0”, and should provide an indicative budget if/when activating the CM.

## 2. How to include a CM in a DG ECHO funded action and activate it

The inclusion of a CM is not mandatory but recommended to all partners, unless mechanisms such as E/RRM are in place. Should a partner decide to include a CM in an action, a dedicated result must be present in the Logical Framework of the action (preferably the last result) and it is recommended that the Single Form (eSF) includes the following:

- Definition of the CM result. Note that there is no standard phrasing for the CM result and partners can propose their formulation (see example in the box below);
- A thorough risk analysis in the appropriate eSF section (chapter 4).



- Details on the proposed CM result, including:
  - > Sector: the CM must be recorded under the “Disaster Risk Reduction/Disaster Preparedness” sector and the “Contingency planning and preparedness for response” sub-sector, independently of whether it is a multi-sector or single sector approach<sup>78</sup>.
  - > Options for activation (for example, displacement due to conflict, epidemics, natural hazards etc.), triggers and thresholds of the CM.
  - > Target population and geographic area(s) where the partner intends to use the CM.
  - > The range (numerical) of persons targeted and type of assistance should be provided. With regard to the type of assistance, partners can use the section “Comments on Transfer Modalities of the Result”<sup>79</sup> to justify the choice of the modality with regards to preparedness measures.
  - > A short description of preparedness measures already in place (for example linkages with national early warning systems, triggers for engagement/disengagement, prepositioning of stocks and equipment, internal SOPs, surge staff, coordination with non-DG ECHO/EU funded assistance).
  - > Key results indicators (KRIs) - these should be context specific. However, it is important to include an indicator measuring the time lapse between the trigger and the activation of the crisis modifier – for example: number of days between the crisis and such a response (suggestion to generally quantify as 24/48/72 hours between the crisis and the response).
  - > The partner should indicate in the Single Form the potential use of the budget attached to the CM in case not used. If partially used, the partner should just inform DG ECHO of the reallocation of the remaining funds to another result when reporting. If no activation is foreseen close to the end, an amendment can be triggered to cancel the CM result.

**DG ECHO’s approval for CM use:** as the CM is a separate result and budget of the action, it is *already approved* in the same way as any other component of the action. This helps to keep the activation process simple and rapid. However, DG ECHO expects to be informed in a timely manner about the need to use the CM, providing essential information on the crisis, such as triggers, thresholds and specific planned support, if multi-sector. An e-mail to the DG ECHO Technical Assistant (TA) in the country suffices, unless otherwise specified.

### Examples of a CM result formulation

- CARE (MOZAMBIQUE): Enhanced capacity to respond to rapid onset emergency through access to a crisis modifier.
- BRITISH RED CROSS (KENYA): KRCS responds to sudden onset emergencies or triggers of slow-onset emergencies, effectively and within 48 hours.
- ACF (SOMALIA): Vulnerability of the targeted communities to external shocks is reduced through agile life-saving interventions answering to immediate needs brought by rapid onset disasters; and efficient patient management and/or public health preparedness and response to current and future disease outbreaks including COVID-19 outbreak.
- WELTHUNGERHILFE (DRC): Emergency assistance for targeted households in case of renewed displacement due to violence.
- IMC (YEMEN): Contribute to the national emergency preparedness and response efforts to mitigate and manage the impact of identified and potential crises, including COVID-19.
- SAVE THE CHILDREN (YEMEN): Emergency Preparedness for rapid onset disasters and spikes in the conflict.

78. The reason is that the CM is one of the preparedness funding instruments available to partners within the range of preparedness investments envisaged by DG ECHO.

79. In this regard, partners are reminded to fill in the Transfer Modality Tab (TMT), also for the CM Result.

*Simulating a full scale natural disaster in the mountains of Kyrgyzstan. Near the sports ground, the school gymnasium has been transformed into an evacuation centre, where the volunteers prepare and distribute food to the villagers who have been flocking here after registering. © EU/DG ECHO/Pierre Prakash*



### 3. Frequently asked questions (FAQs)

1. If no activation happens, can the partner re-direct funds from the CM result to other results?
2. If no activation happens, how does the partner report against the indicators?
3. In the case of a crisis requiring the use of the CM, is the partner still accountable for achieving the other results in full? Or can the partner claim that due to the occurrence of a crisis within a crisis, other results' targets had to be reduced?
4. In the case of a crisis requiring the use of the CM, are partners contractually accountable / obliged to respond?
5. Is the CM to be used for rapid-onset or slow-onset crises?
6. Is the CM to be used for crises caused by natural hazards or also for human-induced and other types of crisis?
7. How should partners design triggers for the activation of a CM?
8. What are the typical activities of a CM response?
9. Is the CM always used to provide initial lifesaving assistance in the aftermath of a crisis?
10. Is the assistance provided through the CM unconditional?
11. Why do we need a *separate* result? Would DG ECHO contractual flexibility not be sufficient? What is the difference between the CM and the E/RRMs (Emergency/Rapid Response Mechanism)?

**1. If no activation happens, can the partner re-direct funds from the CM result to other results?**

Yes, the partner should state in the eSF that unused funds will be allocated to scale up another result(s). Effective internal monitoring by the partner is paramount to track unused funds early enough before the project ends, so that sufficient time is allocated to use them in a relevant way. The indicators of other results may need to be amended<sup>80</sup>. Communication in writing with the relevant DG ECHO Country Office (CO) and Desk Officer (DO) should be attached at Final Report (FR) stage.

**2. If no activation happens, how does the partner report against the indicators?**

The partner explains in the Final Report that there was no crisis and no need to use the CM (partially or fully), thus indicators were not relevant anymore.

**3. In the case of a crisis requiring the use of the CM, is the partner still accountable for achieving the other results in full? Or can the partner claim that due to the occurrence of a crisis within a crisis, other results' targets had to be reduced?**

A crisis-within-a-crisis and the need to use a CM is not *per-se* a reason/justification for implementing the action that was originally planned differently or for reducing the targets of the other results. The CM is itself part of the originally agreed work-plan and its activation should not impact the remaining planned activities. However, should the needs created by a crisis-within-a-crisis overwhelm the response capacity of the CM and require additional resources within the action, a Modification Request (MR) may be necessary to re-programme project activities. In that case, targets of indicators of other results may be adapted accordingly. In extreme situations, if the planned action cannot be implemented, termination of the project might be considered.

**4. In the case of a crisis requiring the use of the CM, are partners contractually accountable / obliged to respond?**

The partner does not have a contractual obligation. However, if a CM result has been included in Section 4 of the eSF (risk analysis, scenarios, rule of engagement), the partner is expected to activate the CM. If the CM is not activated, the partner should provide a justification.

**5. Is the CM to be used for rapid-onset or slow-onset crises?**

The specificity of the CM is its rapidity. Its added value is thus evident in the event of rapid-onset shocks, of small magnitude, but high impact. For slow-onset events, other financial instruments are more appropriate as the impact on beneficiaries unfolds over a longer timeframe. However, in specific circumstances, the activation of a CM may be justified for slow-onset crises in order to design an anticipatory or early action.

<sup>80</sup> This does not apply in every case as, according to DG ECHO's rules, when an indicator or number of beneficiaries only exceeds the original target by a reasonable amount, there is no need for an amendment. See DG ECHO FPA partner website: [www.dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu/iofpa/changes/amendments-by-mutual-consent](http://www.dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu/iofpa/changes/amendments-by-mutual-consent)

## 6. Is the CM to be used for crises caused by natural hazards or also for human-induced and other types of crisis?

The CM can be used to address all types of risks to which DG ECHO responds, as long as mechanisms in place demonstrate it is effective to initiate rapid responses to sudden crises (see examples below).

### In Eastern Africa, a CM was used in the event of small-scale displacements due to conflict

In March 2018, in connection with a project implemented by the British Red Cross, the Kenya Red Cross Society implemented a cash transfer programme for drought affected pastoralists in Kenya's northern districts during which it activated a CM. Through the CM, they were able to respond within 24 hours to the displacement of 10,000 Ethiopian asylum seekers who crossed the border with Kenya. The Kenya Red Cross Society assisted the asylum seekers first with NFIs from its pre-positioned stocks, after which a 2-week food ration was distributed to provide for immediate food needs, thus filling the gap before the WFP took over food assistance.

### In southern Africa, CMs were activated for the initial response to floods and cyclones

Weeks before the start of the cyclone season, partners implemented disaster preparedness activities to reinforce local and district committees' preparedness plans, such as prepositioning items at national and community level. Days and hours before the cyclones hit the coast, based on meteorological information, CM activation was used to mobilise large emergency stocks to be moved closer to the area of forecasted impact, along with the activation of civil protection committees and the dissemination of warning messages and for active evacuation activities.

After the cyclones hit, the CMs were used for the initial response: rescue services, first aid, the distribution of non-food items and the setting up camps and evacuation sites. This assistance bridged with the DG ECHO [ALERT](#)/Small scale funds that were subsequently received by partners who provided assessments and deployed operational personnel.

*Madagascar (tropical cyclones Enawo and Belna in 2017 and 2020) and Mozambique (Dineo/IDAI/Kenneth - 2018/2019).*

## 7. How should partners design triggers for the activation of a CM?

For recurring and predictable crises (e.g. cyclone and monsoon season, recurring cholera outbreaks or conflict-related displacement), partners should have the programming ability to take into account predictable events in their risk analysis and design scenarios for activation and triggers, which can be quantitative or qualitative. Triggers should be defined in collaboration with the relevant sectors/sector clusters and national authorities for the purpose of harmonisation and complementarity, whenever possible.

## 8. What are the typical activities of a CM response?

The CM should be used to save lives through actions/activities such as (non-exhaustive list):

- Emergency shelter, WASH, health and/or food or non-food items (NFIs) provided during the first phases of displacement.
- Emergency water supply provided in the first phases of an epidemic/displacement.
- Short-term unconditional and unrestricted cash transfers; this could also be considered in the form of horizontal or vertical scaling-up of an on-going humanitarian programme or national social protection mechanism.
- Short-term food distribution, before food assistance is in place.
- Protection: services such as restoring family links, assistance to unaccompanied minors and other vulnerable groups, information and referral of lifesaving services.
- Emergency health, nutrition and vaccination.
- Preventive evacuation (for example from areas at risk of floods/cyclones).

Cash can be used as a delivery modality for a CM.

## 9. Is the CM always used to provide initial lifesaving assistance in the aftermath of a crisis?

Yes. Activities related to recovery such as poverty mitigation (Cash/Food for Work - C/FfW), support to income-generating activities, rehabilitation of infrastructures (water supply schemes), provision of farm inputs/seeds, livestock restocking, etc., should be supported through other medium-/long-term response mechanisms.

## 10. Is the assistance provided through the CM unconditional?

Yes. As for any other DG ECHO intervention.

## 11. Why do we need a *separate* result? Would DG ECHO contractual flexibility not be sufficient? What is the difference between the CM and the E/RRMs (Emergency/Rapid Response Mechanism)?

Indeed, the contractual flexibility of DG ECHO would allow for such reorientation of activities and funds within an action. However, this contractual flexibility would still entail a discussion with DG ECHO and the immediate availability of additional funding that might slow down the intervention. In contrast, as it is already part of the action, the CM ensures rapidity of intervention, and it is also good practice to identify risks and potential interventions in areas where there is a very high probability that risks will materialise. Having a separate result is a good way to materialise it in line with ALERT. The CM thus forces both DG ECHO and its partners to anticipate ways to respond early from the beginning of the intervention.

## 12. What is the difference between the CM and the E/RRM (Emergency/Rapid Response Mechanism)?

Both instruments (CM & E/RRM) have the same purpose of enhancing the flexibility and rapidity of the response, but on different scales. Both, to be effective, have to be based on robust risk analysis, as comprehensive and cohesive preparedness plans as possible, early warning systems and related triggers and agreed scenarios and contingency plans.

### Definitions - INSPIRE report “Review of Emergency/Rapid Response Mechanisms (E/RRMs)”

E/RRMs are contractual arrangements that DG ECHO establishes with one or multiple partners in a given country to ensure that a network of humanitarian organizations can access sufficient personnel, and financial and material resources to respond to recurring localized, small-scale emergencies as soon as possible after they occur. These can either be conflict-related or natural disasters. The exact arrangements differ from country to country. Depending on the context, E/RRMs include funding for pre-positioning of goods and staff capacity, to facilitate coordinated needs assessments, or to make cash reserves available for a timely response. DG ECHO makes funding available before shocks occur, and partners commit to serve the needs of those affected by those shocks. E/RRMs are more than just a flexible funding instrument. They are designed to improve coordination and harmonize approaches throughout the assessment, response and monitoring phases. The DG ECHO-funded E/RRMs may be different in the way they are organised as they are linked to specific contexts and rely on different implementing modalities.

The principal difference between CM and E/RRM is that the CM is embedded as a result into a humanitarian action and is typically designed to be used either at once if the entire budget is needed or several times on a smaller scale if this is sufficient. It benefits from the fact that the partner is already working in the area, and has the capacity to scale up their activities within days. For conflict-affected areas, the previous presence of the partner can facilitate acceptance and reduce mistrust among the population in the event of a sudden crisis and response. The E/RRM, on the other hand, is a stand-alone action providing predictable resources for several, larger-scale responses, either subcontracted or directly implemented by the grant holder, in different and larger geographical areas.

The CM and the E/RRM are not mutually exclusive. They can coexist in the same country/geographical subdivision and be complementary both in terms of time-sequence and needs addressed.

# Annex 3. Targeted Preparedness Actions - Global Priorities 2021-2024

For the **2021-2024 cycle**, there are four global priorities for targeted preparedness actions funded by the DG ECHO dedicated budget - the DP Budget Line (DP BL). All priorities are inter-connected and mutually reinforcing as activities implemented under one priority will benefit the other priorities. The priorities are as follows:

1. **Risk-based and anticipatory actions;**
2. **Preparedness in conflict and fragile settings;**
3. **Climate and environmental resilience;**
4. **Urban preparedness.**

Additionally, cross-cutting issues should be integrated into the global priorities whenever relevant and feasible as follows: *Protection; Logistics; and Enhanced partnerships.*

## EXAMPLES OF ACTIONS FOR EACH PRIORITY

### Priority 1 - Risk-based and anticipatory actions

#### **Preparedness** (in no particular order)

- Conducting of risk and vulnerability assessments.
- Strengthening of data collection/monitoring capacity.
- Establishment/strengthening of Early Warning Systems (EWS) at local and national level.
- Development/update of contingency plans (on the basis of risk/vulnerability assessments).
- Development/reinforcement/update of Standard Operating Procedures (SoPs).
- Development/strengthening of institutional capacities and inclusion of preparedness/anticipatory approach in government legislative frameworks.
- Establishment of preparedness/emergency response/early action funds.
- Conducting of simulations/drills.
- Stipulation of pre-agreements with international/local providers for stocks/assets.

- Ensuring the establishment of coordinated and well-functioning networks and systems for the early identification of protection risks, trends and violations.
- Preparing and training front-line workers and first responders on the identification of vulnerable individuals in need of protection assistance as well as on the provision of quality service provision (e.g. psychological first aid, safe referrals etc.).
- Ensuring appropriate safeguarding and protective measures to mitigate the loss of civil documentation and housing, land and property documentation.
- Facilitating the replacement of lost or destroyed legal documents by establishing advance measures to reduce administrative hurdles for displaced people in accessing services.
- Strengthening systems and mechanisms to prevent and mitigate the risk of family separation, and ensure pre-emptive identification of alternative care solutions for unaccompanied, separated and orphaned children. Training communities and first responders in psychological first aid in order to get the appropriate reaction in an emergency to support people in need/affected by distress during the acute phase of the emergency.
- Setting up of School Disaster Risk Management Committees responsible for establishing strong safety and protection contingency plans as well as child-friendly warning systems on participatory risk assessments.
- Awareness campaigns (various topics – e.g. health protection, risk awareness, preparedness actions, GBV, etc.).
- Preparedness for camp management (e.g. pre-identification of sites/material needs)
- Strengthening capacities of all actors (community, humanitarian workers, government officials - including police and military) on protection.
- Building of emergency shelters and/or adjustments to different group needs.
- Fostering community structures and protection networks to cope with exposure to risks.
- Reinforcing self-protection plans at community level, including specific prevention and mitigation measures to ensure the inclusion of the most vulnerable in mechanisms and systems.
- Ensuring that culturally appropriate mental health and psychosocial services delivered by qualified staff remain available in the Disaster Preparedness framework and that clear pathways to access these services are disseminated beforehand.
- Reinforcing social workers' capacities to provide appropriate assistance to protection cases, securing data protection and confidentiality also during disasters through protocols with clear standards of care and treatment for survivors.
- Development of a local and national framework that supports tailored country Emergency Preparedness, early action and response to incorporate quality benchmarks for International Humanitarian Law, and support dissemination and roll-out.



**Preparedness for anticipation** (in no particular order)

- Development/reinforcement/update of Early Action Protocols.
- Scaling up of Early Action Protocols (through institutionalisation, for example).
- Strengthening of institutional capacity to implement forecast-based actions, including institutionalisation of protocols.
- Coordination and harmonisation with relevant stakeholders (including harmonisation of triggers and collaboration in terms of advocacy for institutionalisation of anticipatory approach).
- Simulation and testing of forecast-based actions (e.g. testing evacuation and transportation of people/livestock to shelters).
- Preparedness for cash transfers/SRSP.

**Anticipatory actions - activated on the basis of scientific forecasts after trigger is reached** (in no particular order):

- Cash distribution - possibly tied to preparatory actions (e.g. protection of assets/lives).
- Livestock vaccination campaigns.
- Livestock destocking (mostly for drought).
- Mass chlorination of water sources.
- Rehabilitation of water sources.
- Setting up of mobile cooling centres.
- Prepositioning of personal protective equipment.
- Mass evacuations, ensuring they are justified, based on law, and implemented without discrimination.
- Distribution of livestock feed, water purification tablets, hygiene kits, etc.

**Priority 2 - Preparedness in conflict and fragile settings**

The interventions below do not repeat some of those already listed under priority 1 that are applicable also in conflict areas (e.g. risk analysis).

- Undertaking a dividers and connectors analysis prior to designing interventions.
- Mapping of shock-responsive social care structures and mechanisms in conflict-affected and disaster-prone settings.
- Integration of protection indicators and housing, land, property issue considerations in contingency plans.
- Integration of displacement and protection concerns in existing conflict, violence and disaster early warning systems.
- Training of front-line workers and first responders on specific protection risks. Training of social workers to respond appropriately to gender-based violence survivors, securing data protection and confidentiality also during disasters.
- Creation of a roster of trained deployable protection professionals.
- Dissemination of information on how to access culturally-appropriate mental

health services delivered by qualified staff or how to access safe displacement routes, analysed according to risks.

- Reinforcement of community structures and protection networks. This may include the reinforcement of self-help groups, school and community activities, as well as more targeted interventions such as the development and dissemination of socially and culturally acceptable information about coping and self-help/self-protection techniques.
- Community-based risk awareness-raising with practical information on how to reduce displacement-related risks, such as the need to carry legal documents, secure productive assets left behind and bring essential medication.
- Capacity building of regional, national and local government units and protection service providers through, for example, real-life simulations in emergency preparedness and prevention skills to protect the most vulnerable populations.
- Reinforcement of advocacy capacities of regional, national and local stakeholders to address the protection needs of refugees and forcibly displaced people.
- Assessment of the consequences of protracted displacement.
- Establishment and strengthening of public and private employment partnerships to provide skills and language training to affected people, GBV survivors and victims of violence, abuse and exploitation for socio-economic reintegration and recovery.
- Reinforcing self-protection plans at community level, including specific prevention and mitigation measures to ensure the inclusion of the most vulnerable in mechanisms and systems.
- Reinforcing systems' preparedness in relation to refugee, asylum seeker, migrant and/or IDP displacement flows.
- Ensuring that culturally appropriate mental health and psychosocial services delivered by qualified staff remain available in the Disaster Preparedness framework and that clear pathways to access these services are disseminated beforehand.
- Reinforcing social workers' capacities to provide appropriate assistance to protection cases, securing data protection and confidentiality also during disasters through protocols with clear standards of care and treatment for survivors.
- Development of a local and national framework that supports tailored country Emergency Preparedness, early action and response to incorporate quality benchmarks for International Humanitarian Law, and support dissemination and roll-out.
- Understanding the level of IHL integration in the domestic normative framework as well as the level of IHL dissemination among the military, police and other security forces. Analysing how and where additional efforts can be undertaken to support relevant IHL dissemination and otherwise promote compliance with IHL.

### Priority 3: Interventions for climate and environmental resilience

#### ***Contributing to both climate and environmental resilience:***

- Preparedness for shock-responsive/mobile cash transfer systems to serve forecast-based anticipatory actions aiming at limiting response needs.

- Capacity building in the use of technology (e.g. drones<sup>81</sup> and remote sensing) to assess the effects of a disaster, including on the environment, search and rescue operations or for risk analysis (e.g. digital tools such as artificial intelligence).
- With the objective of reducing emissions and pollution due to transport: i. Positioning and/or pre-positioning of stocks/supplies in areas which are the most relevant to reach most at-risk areas (based on risk analysis)<sup>82</sup>; ii. Pre-identification & pre-contracting of local vendors who comply with environmental and social criteria; iii. Resource pooling.
- Based on climate and environmental risk analysis, and in cooperation with local and national governments, review sections of contingency plans/guidelines specifically dealing with camp management to ensure that camps are either planned in safe locations or existing ones are relocated.

#### ***Environment specific:***

- Capacity building for waste management during emergencies.
- Integration of environmental considerations into contingency/response plans at national and local level (e.g. ensuring reuse and recycling of materials for shelter construction, including debris, provision of clean/renewable energy and energy efficient solutions, sound waste management, including faecal sludge management, etc.).
- Integration of environmental considerations into camp management guidelines/plans at national and local level (e.g. type of shelter materials, to avoid use of illegally sourced local timber, use of renewable energy for electricity, provision of energy-efficient cooking solutions, promotion of tree planting activities, sound waste management, including faecal sludge management, etc.).
- Supporting awareness-raising and capacity-building for communities on sound environmental management (waste management, preventing conflict over natural resources, e.g. water, preventing deforestation, etc.).
- Supporting the inclusion in preparedness/contingency plans (national/local level) of clearing of stagnant/polluted water and of waste from canals prior to rainy season, particularly in urban areas.

#### ***Climate resilience specific:***

- Integrating climate risk/impact projections into Early Warning Systems, triggers and standard protocols.
- Based on climate risk analysis/forecast, supporting epidemic outbreak preparedness (e.g. dengue, malaria, cholera, Covid-19, etc. from epidemiological surveillance to vector control).
- Using future climate risk projections to identify preparedness needs, and updating plans accordingly.
- Identification/construction/improvement of community shelters to withstand climate shocks (particularly more frequent floods/cyclones).
- Improving evacuation routes and practices based on existing climate risk/impact

81. The use of drones helps limit the use of cars/helicopters or helps to plan a more targeted use so that it reduces emissions due to transport.

82. The positioning/pre-positioning of stocks/supplies does not necessarily imply that purchase of stocks/supplies should be funded by the DP BL. Should DP BL funded projects comprise prepositioning and or procurement of equipment/supplies, it is suggested that this amount does not exceed 5% of the total project budget.

projections (e.g. simulations for cyclone/flood evacuation, or for projected risks, such as coastal erosion or rising sea levels).

- Updating vulnerability and capacity assessments to integrate climate risk/impact projections.
- Awareness raising and EWEA for heatwaves (e.g. mobile cooling centres, retrofitting of buildings with features reducing heat impact, nature-based solutions).
- Conducting Gendered Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Analysis (GVCAs) in target communities for dissemination of tailored and appropriate early warning, application of techniques to reduce damage to homesteads and assets, and protection assistance in evacuations.
- Promotion/capacity building/improvement of rainwater harvesting (drought specific measure).

#### Priority 4 - Urban preparedness

The interventions below do not repeat those already listed under priority 1 that are applicable also in urban areas.

- Strengthening/updating of disaster risk/impact mapping (geospatial and open street mapping, crowdsourcing, etc.).
- Drafting/reinforcing/updating of Standard Operating Procedures/Early Action Protocols for potential hazards in urban settings (e.g. epidemics, earthquakes).
- Conducting Early Action Protocol simulations and drills.
- Establishing urban community centres for the delivery of adequate and accessible social services to the most vulnerable individuals and groups, promoting public awareness, and considering the stockpiling of necessary protection materials and services to assist the most affected populations.
- Establishing urban community centres for the delivery of adequate and accessible social services to the most vulnerable individuals and groups, promoting public awareness, and stockpiling of necessary protection materials and services to assist the most affected populations.
- Training of stakeholders to enhance preparedness of urban social care services with regard to specific urban risks, whether from natural hazards, or human-induced threats such as violence and high levels of criminality.
- Upgrading/strengthening infrastructures so that they can withstand specific urban risks, whether from natural hazards, or human-induced threats such as violence.
- Engaging with private sector and critical service providers before the disaster strikes.
- Designing mass evacuation plans and undertaking drills.
- Improving evacuation routes and practices.
- Ensuring that preparedness/contingency plans include activities such as the clearing of stagnant/polluted water and waste from canals prior to the rainy season.
- Advocating for the inclusion of gender, age, diversity and disability considerations in longer-term urban development and management programmes to ensure that there are no barriers increasing the vulnerability of different population groups when an emergency takes place.

# Annex 4.

## Resources and Tools

### Risk assessment

#### National level:

- [Index for Risk Management \(INFORM\)](#)
- [World Risk Index](#)
- FAO (2016) - [Resilience Index Measurement and Analysis II \(RIMA - II\)](#)
- Disaster loss databases: [DesInventar](#), [EM-DAT: The International Disaster Database](#) IOM's Needs and Population Monitoring tool.

#### Community level:

- Government of Bangladesh and UNDP (2005) - [Community Risk Assessment Tool](#)
- IFRC (2006-2008) - [Enhanced Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment](#)
- Trocaire (2020) - [Environmental Stewardship Tool](#)

### Disaster risk finance

- DG ECHO commissioned Overseas Development Institute - ODI (2019): [Risk-informed approaches to humanitarian funding: using risk finance tools to strengthen resilience](#)
- CARE (2019) - [Insuring for a changing climate](#)
- Centre for Disaster Protection (2019) - [Ensuring impact: the role of Civil Society Organisations in strengthening World Bank disaster risk financing](#)
- Start Network and Overseas Development Institute (2019) - [Analysing Gaps in the Humanitarian and Disaster Risk Financing Landscape](#)
- Start Network (2019) - [Disaster Risk Financing in Concert](#)

### Early warning systems

#### National level:

- [GDACS - Global Disaster Alert and Coordination System](#)
- [CREWS - Climate and Early Warning Systems](#)
- IFRC 2018 - [Collaborating with national climate and weather agencies: a guide to getting started](#)
- Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) - [www.ipcinfo.org](http://www.ipcinfo.org)

#### Community level:

- IFRC (2020) - [Community early warning systems: guiding principles](#)
- IFRC (2014) - [Community Early Warning Systems \(CEWS\), training toolkit](#)
- Norwegian Red Cross & IFRC - [Community Based Surveillance](#)

## Anticipatory action

- German Red Cross [Anticipation Hub](#)
- Climate Services Journal (2020) - [Fostering anticipatory humanitarian actions for heatwaves in Hanoi through forecast-based financing](#)
- WFP-ODI (2020) - [The Evidence Base on Anticipatory Action](#)
- ODI (2020) - [Integrating anticipatory action in disaster risk management](#)
- D. Maxwell and P. Hailey (2020) - [Towards Anticipatory Information Systems and Action: Notes on Early Warning and Early Action in East Africa](#)
- ODI (2020) - [Anticipatory Action for livelihood protection. A collective endeavour](#)
- RCCC (2020) - [Forecast-based Financing and Early Action for drought](#)

## Strengthening capacity

- Oxfam Novib - [Strengthening local and national capacity: How to rethink capacity and complementarity](#)
- UNDP - [Community-Based Resilience Analysis \(CoBRA\)](#)

## Logistics

- DG ECHO Logistics Policy - forthcoming
- [Logistics Cluster](#)
- Logistics cluster's [Logistics Capacity Assessment](#)

## Shock Responsive Social Protection (SRSP)

- European Commission - [Social Protection across the Humanitarian-Development Nexus. A game changer through crisis.](#)

## Cash preparedness

- DG ECHO Thematic Policy Paper (2013) - [Cash and Vouchers](#)
- CaLP (2019) - [Joint Donor Statement on Humanitarian cash transfers](#)
- CaLP - [Programme quality toolbox](#)

## Institutional policy and legislative frameworks

- IFRC (2019) - [Checklist on Law and Disaster Preparedness and Response](#)
- IFRC & UNDP (2015) - [Checklist on Law and Disaster Risk Reduction](#)

## Data and information management & technology

- Harvard Humanitarian Initiative - [Data preparedness: connecting data, decision-making and humanitarian response](#)
- ICRC (2017) - [Handbook on data protection in humanitarian action](#)
- European Commission - [New technology for drone-based emergency response missions](#)

## Contingency planning & business continuity

- IFRC [Contingency Planning Guide](#)
- IFRC [Business Continuity Help Desk](#)
- IASC (2015) - [Emergency Response Preparedness \(ERP\) Guidelines](#)

## Communication, advocacy and awareness

- IFRC & Save the Children (2018) - [Public Awareness and Public Education for Disaster Risk Reduction](#)
- IFRC (2018) - [Public Awareness and Public Education for Disaster Risk Reduction](#)
- IFRC (2018) - [A guide for the media on communicating in public health emergencies](#)
- IFRC (2012) - [Disaster risk reduction: a global advocacy guide](#)
- Care International (2015) - [Youth-led Advocacy for Disaster Risk Reduction: A Guide](#)

## Urban preparedness

- IFRC (2017) - [Building urban resilience: A guide for Red Cross and Red Crescent engagement and contribution](#)
- IFRC Climate Centre (2020) - [City Heatwave Guide for Red Cross Red Crescent Branches](#)
- ICRC (2020) - [Displaced in Cities: Experiencing and Responding to Urban Internal Displacement Outside Camps](#)
- ICRC (2015) - [Urban services during protracted armed conflict: a call for a better approach to assisting affected people](#)
- URBANET - [News and debates on municipal and local governance, sustainable urban development and decentralisation](#)
- IFRC (2017) - [Building urban resilience: A guide for Red Cross and Red Crescent engagement and contribution](#)
- UNDRR campaign - [Making Cities Resilient: My City is Getting Ready](#)
- UN Habitat - [City resilience profiling tool](#)
- ICLEI - [Local Governments for Sustainability](#)
- ICLEI ACCCRN Process (2014) - [Building urban climate change resilience: a toolkit for local governments](#)
- ISET (2021) - [A Framework for Urban Climate Resilience](#)
- ARUP - [City Resilience Index](#)
- [Disaster Resilience of Place \(DROP\) model](#)
- Plan International (2016) - [Child-Centred Urban Resilience Framework](#)

## Climate and environmental interventions

- UNEP-OCHA (2017) - [The environmental emergency guidelines](#)
- Sphere Handbook supplementary guidelines on [Reducing environmental impact in humanitarian response](#)
- WWF (2017) - [Green Recovery and Reconstruction Toolkit](#)
- EE Centre - [Environmental emergency preparedness and response trainings](#)
- IFRC (2020) - [What is climate-smart programming and how do we achieve it?](#)
- IFRC (2020) - [City Heatwave Guide](#)
- [World Bank Climate Change Knowledge Portal](#)
- ICRC (2019) - [When Rain Turns to Dust: Understanding and responding to the combined impact of armed conflicts and the climate and environment crisis on people's lives](#)

## Preparedness in conflict and violent situations

- Global Public Policy Institute - GPPI (2020) - [An Agenda for Expanding Forecast-Based Action to Situations of Conflict](#)
- [FAO resources on Anticipatory Action](#)

## Preparedness for drought

- FAO (2019) - [Proactive approaches to drought preparedness](#)
- IASC (2015) - [Emergency Response Preparedness](#)
- DG ECHO Thematic Policy Paper (2014) - [Water, Sanitation Hygiene](#)
- Start Network (2020) - [African Risk Capacity Replica](#)
- [African Risk Capacity - Risk View](#)

## Preparedness for protection

- DG ECHO Thematic Policy Paper (2016) - [Humanitarian Protection](#)
- ICRC (2020) - [Professional Standards for Protection Work](#)
- IASC (2018) - [Sphere Handbook](#)

## Preparedness for displacement

- [Platform on Disaster Displacement \(PDD\)](#)
- NRC, PDD, IOM, IDMC, UNHCR, the German Federal Foreign Office (2018) - [Words into Action: practical and important tool supporting the inclusion of human mobility challenges in DRR](#)
- Platform on Disaster Displacement (2018) - [Mapping the Baseline - To What Extent are Displacement and Other Forms of Human Mobility Integrated in National and Regional Disaster Risk Reduction Strategies.](#)
- [Global Compact on Refugees \(GCR\)](#)
- IOM - [Transhumance tracking tool](#)
- IOM (2020) - [Human Mobility in the Context of Environmental and Climate Change - Assessing current and recommended practices for analysis within DTM](#)



# Acronyms

<b>AA</b>	Anticipatory Action
<b>ALERT</b>	Acute Large Emergency Response Tool - DG ECHO
<b>CBPF</b>	Country Based Pooled Funds
<b>CBS</b>	Community Based Surveillance
<b>CM</b>	Crisis Modifier
<b>CMAM</b>	Community Management of Acute Malnutrition
<b>CP</b>	Civil Protection
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organisation
<b>DIPECHO</b>	Disaster Preparedness (Programme) - DG ECHO
<b>DG ECHO</b>	Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid & Civil Protection, European Commission
<b>DG INTPA</b>	Directorate General for International Partnerships
<b>DG NEAR</b>	Directorate General for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations, European Commission
<b>DP</b>	Disaster Preparedness
<b>DP BL</b>	Disaster Preparedness Budget Line
<b>DREF</b>	Disaster Relief Emergency Fund
<b>DRF</b>	Disaster Risk Finance
<b>DRM</b>	Disaster Risk Management
<b>DRR</b>	Disaster Risk Reduction
<b>EA</b>	Early Action
<b>EC</b>	European Commission
<b>EEAS</b>	European External Action Service
<b>eSF</b>	electronic Single Form
<b>ER</b>	Early Response
<b>ERP</b>	Emergency Response Preparedness
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>EWEA</b>	Early Warning Early Action
<b>EWS</b>	Early Warning System
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
<b>FAFA</b>	Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement
<b>GBV</b>	Gender-based Violence
<b>GIS</b>	Geographic Information System
<b>HDP</b>	Humanitarian Development Peace

<b>HIP</b>	Humanitarian Implementation Plan
<b>HLP</b>	Housing, Land and Property
<b>IASC</b>	Inter-agency Standing Committee
<b>ICRC</b>	International Committee of the Red Cross
<b>IDP</b>	Internally displaced people
<b>IFRC</b>	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
<b>IHL</b>	International Humanitarian Law
<b>IHRL</b>	International Human Rights Law
<b>INGC</b>	National Institute for Disaster Management (Mozambique)
<b>INGO</b>	International Non-governmental Organisation
<b>IPC</b>	Integrated Food Security Phase Classification
<b>MS</b>	Member States
<b>NGO</b>	Non-governmental Organisation
<b>OECD</b>	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
<b>PASSA</b>	Participatory Approach for Safe Shelter Awareness training
<b>PER</b>	Preparedness for Effective Response
<b>RM</b>	Resilience Marker
<b>SDGs</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>SFDRR</b>	Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction
<b>SOPs</b>	Standard Operating Procedures
<b>SP</b>	Social Protection
<b>S&amp;S</b>	Shelter and Settlements
<b>SRSP</b>	Shock Responsive Social Protection
<b>UCPM</b>	Union Civil Protection Mechanism
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNDRR</b>	United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund
<b>UN OCHA</b>	United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
<b>WASH</b>	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
<b>WFP</b>	World Food Programme



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