EUROPEAN
COMMISSION

Brussels, 31.8.2023
COM(2023) 500 final

REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL

Annual Report on the European Union´s humanitarian aid operations financed in 2022

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Introduction

This report presents the Union's main activities and policy outcomes in 2022 in the field of humanitarian aid, as carried out through the Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO) of the European Commission. It is prepared pursuant to Article 19 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/96 of 20 June 1996 concerning humanitarian aid, which requires the Commission to submit an annual report to the European Parliament and to the Council with a summary of the operations financed in the course of the preceding year.

The mandate of the Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO) is **to help save and preserve life, prevent and alleviate human suffering and safeguard the integrity and human dignity of populations affected by natural hazards or human-induced disasters** occurring inside or outside the EU. Under this common overarching objective, DG ECHO acts both as the EU humanitarian aid donor and emergency responder as well as a coordinator and facilitator of civil protection operations at EU level through the Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM).

The EU – through DG ECHO – provides humanitarian assistance to people in need around the globe, based on the humanitarian principles **of humanity, impartiality, independence and neutrality** – anchored in Article 214 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union ([1]) – as well as in the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid ([2]). EU humanitarian assistance is distributed without regard to any political agendas and seeks without exception to help those in the greatest need, irrespective of their nationality, religion, gender, ethnic origin or political affiliation.

The global context within which assistance is delivered

The year 2022 was largely marked by **Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine,** which caused an unprecedented humanitarian catastrophe on European soil. As a consequence, the EU organised a major humanitarian aid operation and the largest, longest and most complex civil protection response operation since the creation of the UCPM. This represented a **significant game changer** in the way humanitarian assistance and civil protection responses intertwine, thanks to the **unprecedented response from** all 27 EU Member States and four UCPM participating states ([3]) to the mechanism.

The **humanitarian situation continued to drastically deteriorate also in many other parts of the world,** due to persistent conflict and insecurity, the impact of climate change, failed governance, the persisting impact of COVID-19 and other epidemiological outbreaks, as well as the indirect impact of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, resulting in **unprecedented levels of humanitarian needs.** The latest United Nations (UN) Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Global Humanitarian Overview 2022 ([4]) estimated that 326 million people were in need of humanitarian assistance and protection at the end of 2022, an increase of 30.4% compared to 2021. The further deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Afghanistan, Ethiopia and Sudan, or

([1]) EUR-Lex - 12016ME/TXT - EN - EUR-Lex (europa.eu)

([2]) Joint Statement by the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council, the European Parliament and the European Commission (2008/C 25/01)

([3]) Iceland, North Macedonia, Norway and Türkiye

([4]) UN OCHA, Global Humanitarian Overview 2022, December Update (Snapshot as of 31 December 2022), 10 January 2023.

the large-scale disasters that occurred during the summer months, such as the devastating floods in Burkina Faso, Chad, Honduras or Pakistan, are only a few of the many visible examples of the sustained increase in humanitarian needs. The resources available to support humanitarian action did not keep up with these rapidly-expanding needs – in fact the **gap between needs and global humanitarian funding widened** further in 2022, increasing from a USD 11.3 billion difference between requirements and funds mobilised at the end of 2021, to a USD 18.3 billion gap at the end of 2022 ([5]).

Moreover, humanitarian assistance is often delivered under very difficult circumstances, characterised by **unpredictability, volatility and insecurity**. Conflict zones appear and disappear, and are in constant transformation, posing a significant security risk for DG ECHO's field network (50 offices, 160 international staff and 300 national staff) and the staff on mission, and hampering the delivery of humanitarian aid due to restricted or **denied access** to the people in need of humanitarian assistance. This also impacts the controls to be performed (i.e. field monitoring of funded actions and on-the-spot audits) as well as the assessments of humanitarian needs. The growing **violations of International Humanitarian Law** (IHL) made the delivery of humanitarian assistance even more difficult and dangerous.

Despite these **challenges**, DG ECHO **managed to reach its objectives**, in line with the priorities and key actions outlined in the Commission Communication on the EU's Humanitarian Action 'New challenges, same principles' adopted in March 2021 ([6]). The **EU remained a key global humanitarian donor**, providing humanitarian assistance in 83 countries, in a principled and needs-based manner, covering an 8.2% share of the total funding mobilised in the global humanitarian system ([7]). The EU aims to ensure that funding is available to assist as many people in need in the greatest number of countries as possible, and that a swift, efficient and comprehensive response is provided.

The final **2022 humanitarian budget** amounted to **EUR 2.6 billion**, enabling DG ECHO to intervene not only in large-scale humanitarian crises – like Ukraine, Syria, Afghanistan or Ethiopia – but also in forgotten/neglected crises, i.e. those of severe and protracted character that do not attract media attention, and where the level of international aid to affected populations is insufficient, such as in Haiti or the Rohingya crisis.

The initial 2022 humanitarian budget was set at EUR 1 794.4 million ([8]) (including a frontload from the Solidarity and Emergency Aid Reserve (SEAR) of EUR 211 million). Several budget reinforcements were received throughout the year, originating from the following sources:

- SEAR to cover several crises, including Ukraine and the worldwide deterioration of food insecurity (EUR 539 million) ([9]);
- Redeployments from Heading VI instruments to cater for the needs due to the Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and its cascading effects (EUR 134.8 million);

([5]) UN OCHA, Global Humanitarian Overview 2022 and UN OCHA, Global Humanitarian Overview 2021, December Update (Snapshot as of 31 December 2021), 17 January 2022.
([6]) COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL on the EU's humanitarian action: new challenges, same principles COM(2021) 110 final
([7]) UN Financial Tracking System, Global Funding Overview Summary 2022.
([8]) This amount does not include support expenditure (BA lines). Including such expenditure, the initial amount for the whole instrument amounted to EUR 1806.06 million in 2022.
([9]) Including EUR 39 million carried over from 2021.

- *Virement Aide Humanitaire* (VAH - Art 30(2) FR); allocated for the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) (EUR 2.3 million);
- European Development Fund (EUR 145.5 million) ([10]); Re-assigned revenue (EUR 3.8 million).

Annex I provides an overview of the budget allocated to the main crises covered by DG ECHO´s actions in 2022. The main actions in the different regions of the world can be summarised as follows:

- **West and Central Africa:** in a context of increasing needs, DG ECHO allocated over EUR 175 million of its initial budget to address food insecurity and malnutrition, ensure the delivery of basic social services (health, education, water and sanitation) and support disaster preparedness in Central Sahel, the Lake Chad Basin, North-West and South-West Cameroon, North-West Nigeria, and the Central African Republic. DG ECHO also sought to promote compliance with IHL and ensure the protection of civil populations and humanitarian aid workers. Reinforcements, especially to address food insecurity, were mobilised, resulting in a final budget for the region of over EUR 330 million.
- **East and Southern Africa:** The region was marked by conflicts and a significantly deteriorating humanitarian situation, mainly in Sudan, the DRC, the Horn of Africa (Somalia, Ethiopia, Kenya), South Sudan and Mozambique. Many areas were also affected by severe droughts or the intense cyclonic season particularly in the Southern Africa and Indian Ocean region (Madagascar/Mozambique), which resulted in a generalised food insecurity situation and in a loss of livelihood. The initial budget of EUR 294 million was increased to over EUR 540 million, which enabled DG ECHO to address these and other pressing humanitarian needs in the region.
- **North Africa, Iraq and the Arab Peninsula:** DG ECHO committed EUR 128 million to address the needs of displaced populations in North Africa and Iraq, and of those affected by conflict in Yemen, covering areas such as water, sanitation and hygiene, food and nutrition, education and health. Additional funding, mainly reinforcing the response to the conflict in Yemen, allowed to reach a final allocation of EUR 215 million for this region.
- **Middle East:** DG ECHO allocated an initial budget of EUR 197 million to deliver life-saving assistance to millions of conflict-affected people in Syria and to cover basic needs of displaced and refugee populations in Jordan and Lebanon, as well as vulnerable Lebanese, reaching a final budget of EUR 240 million at the end of 2022. In Palestine ([11]), DG ECHO continued to respond to the humanitarian needs resulting from the continued occupation and the closure imposed on the Gaza Strip. The budget for such crisis increased from EUR 25 million to EUR 26.5 million in the course of 2022.
- **Southeast Europe, Eastern Neighbourhood and Türkiye:** Humanitarian action in the region was strongly marked by Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, which started on 24 February 2022. The initial funding of EUR 27 million allocated to the Ukraine, Western Balkans and Eastern Neighbourhood region was reinforced to reach over EUR 529 million. Out of that amount, EUR 485 million contributed to reach nearly 16 of the 17.7 million Ukrainians in need of humanitarian assistance, while EUR 38

([10]) Financed from the 10th and 11th European Development Funds.

([11]) This designation shall not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the individual positions of the Member States on this issue.

million was allocated to help the Ukrainian refugees who fled to the Republic of Moldova; assistance was also provided to Moldovan host families. In Türkiye, the Commission continued to support vulnerable refugees in need of humanitarian support with funding amounting to EUR 125 million. Moreover, in October 2022 the flagship Conditional Cash Transfer for Education (CCTE) Programme was successfully handed over to DG NEAR, in line with the humanitarian-development nexus strategy.

- **Asia and the Pacific:** DG ECHO initially allocated over EUR 114 million to the region in 2022, mainly targeting the needs of populations displaced by the 2021 Taliban takeover in Afghanistan, as well as the needs of people affected by the 2021 coup d´état in Myanmar, including the Rohingyas, and the needs of the Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh. The EU and its Member States supported substantially Pakistan following the devastating floods in June 2022 as well as in the drafting of its post disaster needs assessment and recovery framework. The Commission also addressed the needs arising from the Mindanao conflict and from natural disasters in the Philippines. The final budget for this region at the end of 2022 amounted to EUR 313 million.
- **Americas and the Caribbean:** The Commission's actions focused on providing relief to people affected by the internal and regional crisis in Venezuela, the armed conflict in Colombia as well as the pervasive organised violence in Haiti, Central America and Mexico. They also responded to the humanitarian needs of displaced people throughout the continent and supported disaster preparedness. The Commission initially allocated over EUR 74 million to the region which was increased to reach EUR 155 million at the end of the year.

In general, DG ECHO does not deliver its humanitarian assistance directly but fulfils its mandate by providing funding to about 200 partners (complete list included in Annex II). In 2022, funding was distributed among DG ECHO's partners as follows: 38.6% to Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), 49.6% to UN agencies, 11.2% to international organisations and 0.6% to governmental organisations.

Delivery of adequate and effective humanitarian assistance to affected populations

In 2022 DG ECHO contributed significantly to the delivery of adequate and effective humanitarian assistance worldwide. In order to champion **multilateralism and a rules-based global order** through a more active role and a stronger voice for the EU in the world, DG ECHO actively participated in shaping humanitarian advocacy and policy at the European and global levels. Significant progress was made on the implementation of commitments taken under the **Grand Bargain** ([12]), notably on flexible funding, joint and impartial needs assessments, and simplification of reporting, with the ultimate goal of enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the humanitarian response.

DG ECHO continued to contribute to **Country-Based Pooled Funds** ([13]), to further **promote localisation** and the use of non-earmarked funding. Furthermore, DG ECHO increased its advocacy and outreach for a substantially enhanced humanitarian financing effort and a better sharing of responsibility among donors, including Member States. It further strengthened the longer-term **Programmatic Partnerships** ([14]) with selected UN and international organisations, to test more efficient and effective ways of working, while

([12]) The Grand Bargain
([13]) Afghanistan, South Sudan and Venezuela
([14]) Programmatic Partnerships

preparing for the roll out of the model in 2023. Examples of innovative Programmatic Partnerships are the one in support of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) prevention against IHL violation programme (three years, softly earmarked, EUR 10 million per year), and the one in support to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the localisation agenda (multi-country, multi-sector three-year ambitious programme, EUR 67 million per year).

The **Humanitarian Logistics Policy** ([15]) was launched in February 2022, with the primary objective of saving lives through greater efficiency, effectiveness and impact of humanitarian operations. As part of this policy, the **European Humanitarian Response Capacity** (EHRC), ([16]) which was launched in March 2022, contains operational tools designed to provide rapid but temporary support to partners to fill gaps in the humanitarian response, while ensuring greater effectiveness and cost efficiency in the delivery of aid. The instruments include the provision of **common logistics services** to humanitarian partners in the form of international and in-country transport operations (across various modes of transport, including the EU Humanitarian Air Bridge (HAB) and the Humanitarian Aid Flight), warehousing capacities, emergency stockpiles, and other logistical support and coordination, as well as medical expertise. In 2022, the Commission deployed 9 EHRC operations in Madagascar (twice), Ukraine, Moldova, Somalia, Afghanistan, Mozambique, Uganda and Burkina Faso. In addition, the Humanitarian Aid Flight operations continued in Kenya, the DRC and Mali. 60 EU HAB flights were organised, supporting 24 partners in 4 countries (Afghanistan, Somalia, Madagascar and the Republic of Moldova), transporting 842 tonnes of humanitarian material. Finally, in Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, 660 road transport operations were organised and 3 warehouses were opened, supporting 49 humanitarian partners. EUR 23.5 million were allocated in 2022 to these activities.

DG ECHO made full use of its **Emergency Toolbox,** composed of the Acute Large Emergency Response Tool (ALERT), Epidemics tool, Small-scale tool and Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF), providing first line emergency humanitarian assistance amounting to EUR 36.5 million to sudden-onset crises that could not be foreseen in its humanitarian implementation plans. Some examples of the allocation of funds are: the small-scale tool and later ALERT were used for the immediate response to the floods which affected Pakistan; for the tropical cyclones in the Philippines, Madagascar, Mozambique and Cuba, as well as for the earthquakes in Afghanistan and the Philippines; the Epidemics tool supported the response to the Ebola virus disease in Uganda and the response to cholera in Lebanon, Syria, Haiti, Nigeria and Malawi. DG ECHO replenished 67 DREF operations implemented by the IFRC in 52 countries, including in relation to the hunger crisis in Africa, and to floods and earthquakes in Southeast Asia and South America.

Furthermore, in 2022 DG ECHO continued to work **on policies and guidance that outline the Commission's position on key issues,** providing concrete recommendations to its implementing partners, to ensure quality, coherence and accountability of EU-funded humanitarian operations.

As regards **food assistance, nutrition and famine prevention**, areas in which the situation was further exacerbated by the direct effects of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine due to increased prices of food, energy and fertilizers, DG ECHO significantly increased its assistance to over one billion (i.e. over 75% more than in 2021). DG ECHO was also

([15]) DG ECHO thematic policy document: Humanitarian logistics policy
([16]) DG ECHO: European Humanitarian Response Capacity (EHRC) Factsheet

instrumental in setting up and facilitating a comprehensive Team Europe Response strategy adopted by the EU and its Member States in June 2022. Furthermore, the reporting under the Nutrition for Growth Accountability Framework ([17]) confirms that DG ECHO and the EU are on track to fulfil the 2021 Team Europe pledge of supporting nutrition objectives with a budget of at least EUR 4.2 billion until 2024.

In 2022, projects targeting **health** as primary sector were supported with almost EUR 300 million. Given the increased complexity of humanitarian crises, many with a protracted nature, the main objective of the assistance remained to ensure that basic health needs are adequately addressed through an approach that is needs-based, multi-sectoral and in line with Health in All Policies. DG ECHO has also prioritised epidemic/pandemic prevention, preparedness and response, driven by the lessons learnt from the COVID-19 pandemic, with a particular focus on equitable access to quality care and medical countermeasures in low-income countries and humanitarian settings. Besides, DG ECHO has supported cross-sectoral aspects of global health policy, to provide a holistic approach particularly in the areas of mental health and psychosocial support, sexual and reproductive health and rights, and health and displacement.

In 2022, DG ECHO continued its systematic public advocacy through public statements and interventions on **IHL** in multilateral forums. DG ECHO co-organised a high-level side event in the margins of the UN General Assembly Ministerial Week on promoting accountability for IHL violations, especially sexual and gender-based violence. IHL also featured prominently at the first European Humanitarian Forum in March 2022. DG ECHO continued to support and advocate for the protection of humanitarian and healthcare workers and the education sector from attacks and implemented actions for children associated with armed conflict. DG ECHO facilitated the coordination of relevant EU actors, notably through the Interservice Group on IHL, and supported stronger EU humanitarian diplomacy. DG ECHO also made funding available to IHL-related projects, notably supporting the programme for the Prevention of IHL violations of the ICRC through its first thematic Programmatic Partnership.

In a context of continued IHL breaches and the widespread risks and instances of violence, deprivation and abuse in today's crises, DG ECHO maintained **protection** as a priority, mainstreaming gender and age across all sectors of interventions, outlining the approach to gender and gender-based violence in humanitarian crises in the Staff Working Document '*Gender: Different Needs, Adapted Assistance'* ([18]). DG ECHO remained an active member of the Call to Action on Protection from Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies ([19]) and reported on the commitments made to the Road map 2021-2025 ([20]). Furthermore, DG ECHO increased its focus on conflict-related sexual violence in response to observations in several recent and ongoing crises. In line with the 2021 Strategy on the Rights of the Child ([21]), DG ECHO strengthened its activities for child protection, including with advocacy activities. DG ECHO also paid specific attention to addressing the needs of persons with disabilities, in line with the Guidance on the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in EU-funded Humanitarian Aid Operations and with the Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030.

DG ECHO continued to place emphasis on **education in emergencies** (EiE), maintaining its commitment to invest in education at the ambitious level of 10% of the annual initial

([17]) 2022 Global Nutrition Report - Global Nutrition Report
([18]) https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/gender_thematic_policy_document_en.pdf
([19]) https://www.calltoactiongbv.com/
([20]) https://www.calltoactiongbv.com/what-we-do
([21]) COM(2021) 142 final.

EU humanitarian aid budget. In 2022, the total investment in EiE amounted to over EUR 220 million, aiming to reach over 6 million children and young adolescents with direct or indirect education support.

As regards **humanitarian cash transfers** ([22]), DG ECHO published its policy in March 2022, disseminating it widely to increase the quality and efficiency of cash programmes. This policy marks a step-change in linking cash transfers and social protection and enables synergies with key developments in the field of digitalisation and greening of humanitarian assistance. Together with the United States (Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance and Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration), DG ECHO represented the Donor Cash Forum in the caucus on cash coordination under the Grand Bargain 2.0. The new model was endorsed by the Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC), which represented a major step in the humanitarian coordination architecture, including a strong participation from local actors.

On **climate change and environmental degradation,** DG ECHO further adapted its humanitarian response to the growing and shifting needs. Climate risks are now factored in humanitarian operations. Minimum Environmental Requirements and associated guidance were published in 2022 ([23]) to reduce the carbon footprint and the environmental damage of humanitarian assistance. Technical assistance and support were provided to partners and DG ECHO's staff, in order to integrate environmental considerations in DG ECHO's humanitarian aid operations and those of its partners. Moreover, DG ECHO further strengthened its support to disaster preparedness ([24]), which promotes multi-hazard preparedness and anticipatory action. In 2022, EUR 77 million were allocated to targeted preparedness activities (see Annex I for more details) and 32% of EU-funded humanitarian operations included elements of disaster preparedness ([25]).

DG ECHO developed a mix of communication activities that aimed at maintaining a high level of public support and political backing of EU humanitarian aid and civil protection, based on the narrative of EU solidarity. For instance, DG ECHO published a series of central and local press releases and resumed its successful series of field visits with European journalists, as well as trips for journalists accompanying Commissioner Lenarčič. DG ECHO ran several awareness-raising campaigns in 2022 such as "Climate Connect", illustrating the humanitarian impact of climate change and reaching more than 36 million youngsters in Member States.

Review of any outside assessment conducted on specific operations

Commission evaluation services are responsible for steering, coordinating, monitoring and reporting of the evaluation function. They produce timely, high-quality evaluation results to ensure evidence for informed decision-making and accountability. The evaluations can be geographic, thematic or focused on a specific partnership. Annex III provides a list of evaluations completed in 2022 and of ongoing evaluations.

([22]) DG ECHO Thematic Policy Document No 3: Cash Transfers
([23]) guidance_on_the_operationalisation_of_the_mers_for_eu-funded_humanitarian_aid_operations.pdf (europa.eu)
([24]) Implementing the approach adopted in 2021 (DG ECHO Guidance Note on Disaster Preparedness)
([25]) This figure derives from a revised methodology, which solely relies on the reporting by the EU's Humanitarian Partners and may not include preparedness mainstreaming efforts in other sectors of operations.

RELEVANT LINKS

- General information on DG ECHO:
  http://ec.europa.eu/echo/en

- Financial information on the European Commission's humanitarian aid activities in 2022:
  Financing decisions (HIPs) 2022 (europa.eu)

- Operational information from previous years:
  European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations | European Commission (europa.eu)

- 2022 Annual Activity Report, DG ECHO:
  Annual activity report 2022 - European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) (europa.eu)

- 2022 Annual Management and Performance Report:
  Annual management and performance report 2022 (europa.eu)

- DG ECHO evaluation reports:
  https://ec.europa.eu/echo/funding-evaluations/evaluations_en

- European Commission and Member States' humanitarian aid funding data:
  https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/hac/