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**Annual Report on the European Union's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection
Policies and their Implementation in 2011**

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1. POLICY

1.1. Disaster response capacity

Following the adoption of the Disaster Response Communication¹, which was welcomed by the General Affairs Council², the Commission launched work in 2011 on further developing the European disaster response capacity. The Communication also paved the way for the Commission's legislative proposal on the review of Union Civil Protection Mechanism, adopted in December 2011.

In the field of civil protection response, the overall objective is to move away from the current system relying on ad hoc offers of assistance to a pre-planned, predictable and immediate system. At present, the deployment of EU civil protection assets is based purely on voluntary and *ad hoc* offers of assistance by Member States, but in situations where every hour counts Europe needs a system that can ensure the availability of some key assets, which can be deployed instantly and which meet the agreed quality criteria. The Commission's proposal therefore provides for the development of a European Emergency Response Capacity in the form of a voluntary pool of Member States assets on standby for operations under the Mechanism. Furthermore, it is proposed that a 24/7 Emergency Response Centre (ERC) based on the current MIC will serve as a platform to provide a more effective, efficient and coherent EU response whenever and wherever a disaster strikes. For this purpose the ERC will collect real-time information on disasters, monitor hazards, lead work on preparing the contingency plans and coordinate the Union's disaster response efforts. It will have direct links with both civil protection and humanitarian aid authorities in Member States, allowing a better coordination of all in-kind assistance and humanitarian funding, and thus ensuring a fully joined-up approach to European disaster response.

1.2. Voluntary Corps (EVHAC)

Work has continued in earnest on the Voluntary Corps: 2011 was the year of DG ECHO's first 25 pilot volunteers sent to 14 countries worldwide from Haiti to Indonesia, from Mozambique to Tajikistan - and there are 60 more waiting in the wings for deployment early 2012. And it was the year of a mood-shift within the sector: the online public consultation run between February and May 2011 showed an overwhelming support for the Corps with over 80% agreeing that the Corps will make a positive contribution to the humanitarian sector.

After all, no such European-wide programme exists and humanitarian organisations report a sore lack of suitable human resources to deliver on their missions in the current period of an increasing number, intensity and protraction of crises. At the same time, the European Year of Volunteering 2011 highlighted once again that Europeans have volunteering in their DNA: an estimated 100 million Europeans do it and when asked where volunteering makes the biggest difference, 'humanitarian aid' comes first in the responses with 34%. This concept laid down in the Lisbon Treaty³ is thus a positive response to what European citizens aspire to.

¹ COM(2010) 600 final, SEC(2010) 1243 and 1242.

² 14 December 2010 Conclusions of the General Affairs Council (Council conclusions on the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council - Towards a stronger European disaster response: the role of civil protection and humanitarian assistance).

³ Article 214.5 TFEU

However, the Commission has understood the messages from its humanitarian partners. Rigorous selection and thorough preparation and training of volunteers are key to ensure professionalism of humanitarian aid. Security of the volunteers is paramount. And the Corps needs to add real value to the local capacities to have a lasting impact. In this spirit DG ECHO has set aside €1 million in 2011 for a first phase of pilot projects. Commissioner Georgieva launched them in June in Budapest conveying her conviction that the Corps will become a programme to build the next generation of leaders in the humanitarian sector. Save the Children, the French Red Cross and Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO) have been selected to run the first three 15-months projects that focus on disaster preparedness and post disaster recovery activities. For a second phase of pilot projects in 2012, DG ECHO has announced its intention to include disaster response and civil protection as eligible activities to learn what added value the Corps can have in these areas.

The work towards the key element in this process has equally started. In 2012, the Commission will propose a Regulation to be adopted by the Council and the European Parliament concerning the establishment of the Voluntary Corps with an indicative financial allocation of €210 million under the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020. The Commission has launched a thorough Impact Assessment exercise in 2011 in order to compare different options of how the Corps could look like and to be sure that the Commission chooses the most cost effective one with the highest impact.

Last but certainly not least: DG ECHO is committed to finding an attractive name for the Voluntary Corps. The exercise to coin a catchy name has started and will include in 2012 a public online forum to involve the European public

More up-to-date information can be found on http://ec.europa.eu/echo/aid/voluntarycorps_en.htm and on http://ec.europa.eu/echo/media/videos/index_en.htm?file=http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dWjCDqtaF0#evhac-budapest-062011⁴

1.3. Food assistance, nutrition and Food Aid Convention

In 2011, the further roll-out of the Humanitarian Food Assistance Policy⁵, adopted by the Commission and endorsed by Member States in Council Conclusions in 2010, continued. The main aim is to provide food assistance to the most vulnerable crisis-affected people in the most efficient and effective way. To this end, this policy promotes the best mix of assistance tools in order to deliver the most appropriate response in a given humanitarian context. For instance, in situations where safe and nutritious food is actually available but vulnerable people do not have access to it, the most efficient response is likely to include the distribution of cash or vouchers to beneficiaries. In this vein, cash-based assistance was implemented in response to e.g. the floods in Pakistan and South East Asia. At the same time, this reflects the momentum cash transfers have gained within the humanitarian community. DG ECHO was proactive throughout 2011 in promoting corresponding good practices and programming. In this respect, it supported, for instance, initiatives such as the "*Cash Learning Partnership*" (a consortium of six aid organizations) and "*Cash For Change*" (WFP initiative).

In the Sahel and Horn of Africa regions, where there are protracted food crises exacerbated by cyclical shocks, DG ECHO continued to work closely with the Directorate-General for Development and Cooperation - EuropeAid (DG DEVCO). Thereby, the methodology of the

⁴ DG ECHO's movie on the launch of the pilot projects on 17 June 2011 in Budapest

⁵ COM(2010) 126, SEC(2010) 374.

"*Joint Humanitarian Development Framework*" was used, allowing a better understanding of the immediate, underlying and basic causes of the food crises. This has paved the way for the design in 2012 of a "*joint programme*", where humanitarian and developmental actions are aligned with a common goal and where the multiple and inter-related causes of the food crises will be addressed in a consistent manner by humanitarian and/or development instruments.

The problem of **under-nutrition** attracted increasing interest in 2011. Thereby it was recognised that for sustainable solutions, the issue has to be addressed through a multi-sectoral approach (food security, water/sanitation, health ..) and from both the humanitarian and development angles.

DG ECHO continued the further development of its approach towards under-nutrition in emergencies. At the same time, it maintained close co-operation with more development-oriented Commission services and contributed for instance to the DG DEVCO-led Reference Document "*Addressing Under-nutrition in External Assistance*". DG ECHO addressed acute malnutrition through comprehensive action for instance in drought-stricken the Kenya, Somalia and Ethiopia.

In 2011, DG ECHO negotiated for the Commission, on behalf of the Union, the new Food Assistance Convention which will replace the **Food Aid Convention 1999**. The new Food Assistance Convention will facilitate the provision of effective, appropriate and adequate food assistance responses, consistent with best practices and the European Humanitarian Food Assistance Policy.

1.4. Civil protection policy

On 20 December 2011 the Commission adopted a proposal to the European Parliament and the Council on the review of Union civil protection legislation⁶. The proposal aims to reinforce the Mechanism in face of the future challenges by closer linking its different elements (prevention, preparedness and response) into a more coherent whole and by strengthening the prevention and preparedness elements, as well as disaster response. The related impact assessment assessed different options to support and complement Member States' disaster risk management actions by a coherent EU prevention policy framework. Several policy options were studied and compared using quantitative and qualitative analysis. The options included Commission guidelines on minimum national prevention standards and on national disaster risk management plans (RMPs), different levels of EU co-funding, plus the setting of a date for completion of RMPs by MS. The options and results were consulted with a wide range of stakeholders and formed the basis of the legislative proposal.

In the fields of prevention and preparedness, more emphasis was placed on preventive measures (the costs of prevention are always considerably lower than those linked to remediation) and on the development of training courses and simulation exercises. Lessons learnt meetings were organised for the numerous disasters that occurred in 2011.

1.5. Good Humanitarian Donorship

The Commission continued to play an active part in the Good Humanitarian Donorship (GHD) initiative, focusing in particular on efforts towards a common needs assessment system. The Commission liaised with the IASC⁷ Needs Assessment Task Force on behalf of

⁶ COM(2011) 934 final, adopted on 20.12.2011.

⁷ Inter-Agency Committee Task Force

the GHD. At field level, DG ECHO chaired the GHD groups in Democratic Republic of Congo and in the occupied Palestinian territory throughout the year.

Under the Swiss GHD chairmanship in 2010-11, GHD focused on issues related to the protection of civilians, the safety and security of humanitarian workers as well on quality standards in humanitarian action. In 2011, Mexico and Liechtenstein officially joined the GHD, now comprising 39 members.

1.6. Thematic policies

1.6.1. Disaster Risk Reduction

Throughout 2011, the Commission, building on its humanitarian experience, has multiplied its efforts to reduce vulnerability and increase resilience of the populations living in high-risk regions in the world. It has further integrated disaster risk reduction into its humanitarian activities, from the early phase of disaster planning to disaster response and recovery while strengthening its work in the community-based preparedness sector, advocacy, coordination, capacity-building and dissemination of good practices.

The Commission has also strengthened the coordination and improved the synergies between its Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) initiatives within and outside the EU creating, thus, the conditions for setting up a consistent, effective, and strategic DRR framework within the current EU policy.

Benefitting from the learning and experience DG ECHO has acquired with regards to DRR⁸, and given the international and EU commitments on DRR and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA), the Commission started to develop a comprehensive DRR policy which also encompasses adequate references to adaptation concepts.

This policy guidance for DRR is an important element in the development of an overall EU strategy for resilience, providing missing baseline data for existing DRR funding in humanitarian aid while establishing best practice in disaster risk reduction and positioning longstanding Commission-funded programmes, such as DIPECHO⁹, in the context of resilience-building strategies overall.

Finally, DG ECHO has also started the reinforcement of its human resource knowledge, organisational and management capacities for an improved DRR integration across its actions through the development of a training policy that will be completed in 2012.

1.6.2. Civil-military relations

The increasing intensity, frequency and complexity of natural or man-made emergencies has led to a growing number of actors in crisis response, besides traditional humanitarian and civil protection organisations. Furthermore, the adoption of "*integrated*" or "*comprehensive*" approaches, as well as "*stabilisation*" strategies to tackle conflicts have challenged existing mechanisms and experiences in civil-military coordination. Effective civil-military

⁸ Since the mid 1990s, DG ECHO has significantly contributed to international DRR efforts. Over the past 10 years, DG ECHO has invested more than €356 million in direct DRR actions (this includes both Dipecho and other disaster preparedness actions funded by DG ECHO Humanitarian Budget).

⁹ DIPECHO programmes launched by DG ECHO in 1996, focuses on preparedness and small scale mitigation and works with a philosophy based on community level and participatory approach.

coordination is thus becoming an essential element for the humanitarian community in many emergencies.

The above environment, coupled with the administrative reorganisation following the establishment of the European External Action Service (EEAS), led to a natural increase in the interaction of DG ECHO with the work of the EEAS Crisis Management structures. More leverage, regular outreach, interaction and coordination with key civilian, military and political actors allowed the Commission to preserve the vital specificities of humanitarian assistance, while at the same time contributing to mutual understanding and synergies with other actors and to the coherence of the EU external action when appropriate.

In 2011, the interaction between DG ECHO and crisis management actors brought a number of positive results:

- The planning and conduct of the military operation EUFOR Libya, the first EU CSDP (Common Security and Defence Policy) operation in support of the humanitarian community was a positive example of the cooperative model that the Commission wishes to replicate as a standard practice –namely, timely involvement of the European in the early stages of the definition of the CMC (Crisis Management Concept) and other planning documents until the activation of the CSDP operation and its deployment on the ground. The non-activation of EUFOR Libya should not be seen as a failure. The Operational Headquarters in Rome were set-up but full activation of the operation was made conditional to needs identified by humanitarian organisations on the ground, as well as to the respect of humanitarian principles and the UN Guidelines on the use of Military Assets in complex emergencies (MCDA Guidelines). Indeed, designed as a measure of last resort, neither OCHA¹⁰ nor the humanitarian organisations active in Libya did consider that the situation evolved in a way to warrant a direct military assistance for the provision of humanitarian aid. The fact that EUFOR Libya was ready to be launched at any time in strict respect and support of the humanitarian community and its principles was highly welcomed.
- The coordination arrangements between DG ECHO and the Movement and Planning Cell of the EU Military Staff to mobilise military assets in support of Community civil protection operations were once more successfully put into practice during the evacuation of thousands of third country nationals stranded at the border in Tunisia during the height of the Libyan crisis. For the first time, the Movement and Planning Cell of the EU Military Staff collocated with the ECHO's Monitoring and Information Centre (MIC). This proved to be a valuable innovation that improved coordination and efficiency.
- DG ECHO was, for the first time, associated to the planning and conduct of an EU civil-military exercise organised by the EEAS crisis management structures: CME11 (Crisis Management Exercise 2011). It contributed to mutual understanding of each other mechanisms and specificities, as well as to improving the culture of coordination during the planning phase of CSDP actions. The Commission hopes that this will be continued and reflected also in future real crisis management situations.
- DG ECHO followed closely developments of the joint Qatari/Turkish/Dominican HOPEFOR initiative to enhance the effectiveness and coordination of the use of MCDA for natural disaster response and participated in the International Conference in Doha in

¹⁰ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

November 2011 where the Qatar Government announced the establishment of a civil-military coordination Centre of Excellence based in Doha to serve the Middle East and West Asia.

Finally, the Commission continued to contribute to enhancing civil-military coordination by funding the activities of UNOCHA in the civil-military coordination field, including training events, large-scale multilateral military exercises and the dissemination of the existing UN Civil-Military Coordination Guidelines ('MCDA Guidelines' on the use of military and civil defence assets in complex emergencies and 'Oslo Guidelines' for international disaster relief).

1.6.3. International humanitarian law (IHL) and Humanitarian Space

Strengthened advocacy on IHL, humanitarian principles and humanitarian space was an important achievement in 2011. Exchanges with and outreach to key humanitarian actors, donors and key actors within the European Union have given those issues more visibility. On many occasions Commissioner Georgieva raised her concerns regarding the lack of respect for IHL and the obligations falling on warring parties involved in various armed conflicts, in particular vis-à-vis civilian populations.

DG ECHO was actively involved in the preparation of the EU pledges for the 31st International Conference of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement (28 November-1 December 2011). The main objective of the Conference was to strengthen IHL and humanitarian action by focusing on four areas: (1) Strengthening legal protection for victims of armed conflicts; (2) Strengthening Disaster Law; (3) Strengthening local humanitarian action and (4) Addressing barriers to health care. The Conference gave a mandate to ICRC¹¹ to conduct consultations on possible ways to ensure that IHL remains practical and relevant in two areas: providing legal protection to all persons deprived of their liberty in relation to armed conflict and ensuring; effectiveness of mechanisms of compliance with IHL.

DG ECHO has also contributed to the organisation of the EU Annual Forum on Human Rights, which was focused this year on "*how to boost the EU Guidelines for promoting compliance with IHL*". Participants highlighted that to enhance humanitarian access, a humanitarian diplomacy was needed. They also recognised the relevance of strengthening IHL dissemination outside the EU, in particular to armed non-State actors who have often become main actors in contemporary armed conflict situations,

Under the DG ECHO Grant Facility (2010-2011), more than 120 humanitarian workers and policy-makers have been trained in IHL. Two IHL-related projects have been launched under the new Enhanced Response Capacity funding: the first one, implemented by the Norwegian Refugee Council in consortium with the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), aims at identifying how humanitarian principles are applied in practice by NGOs, agencies and donors, with the view to strengthen their operationalisation. The second project, implemented by the Swiss Foundation for Mine Action and Geneva Call will provide training in IHL and related humanitarian norms to armed non State actors and civil society organisations in selected countries, promoting compliance with international norms and principles and hereby contributing to the protection of civilians.

In order to better steer its advocacy and its interventions in situations of restricted humanitarian access, DG ECHO has commissioned a review and evaluation of humanitarian

¹¹ International Committee of the Red Cross

access strategies in EU-funded humanitarian interventions, which will be finalised by April 2012.

A general concern for the unimpeded delivery of humanitarian aid by the European Union is arising as counterterrorism legislations are now having a significant impact on humanitarian action. These legislations include provisions that criminalize the transfer of resources to terrorist groups or individuals, irrespective of the humanitarian character of such actions or the absence of any intention to support terrorist acts. This issue has started being addressed with discussions within the EU and key partners, and importantly with the US because of the latter's far-reaching anti-terrorism legislation and its extraterritorial application.

1.6.4. Gender

Following the 2010 Issues Paper on the gender dimension of humanitarian aid and the recommendations of the 2009 Gender Review, DG ECHO developed last year a Gender Policy for Humanitarian Aid, complemented by an Action Plan, which shall be adopted in early 2012.

The principal objective of a gender approach to humanitarian aid, as defined in the above mentioned policy, is *"to ensure the quality, impact, efficacy, relevance and efficiency of humanitarian actions, by developing and implementing responses sensitive to social vulnerabilities and mindful of the different cultural backgrounds, capacities, coping mechanisms and contributions of women, girls, boys, men and other gender groups, and adapted to fulfilling their basic and specific needs"*. The policy develops a framework for action concerning gender integration, gender-focused actions and capacity building.

The Action Plan of the Gender Policy for Humanitarian Aid proposes concrete steps aimed at fully integrating a gender dimension in EU humanitarian aid and defines measurable and time-bound objectives as well as the necessary actions to reach them. Among these, is the development and adoption of a Gender Marker.

The adoption of the Equal Opportunities Action Plan, establishing recruitment targets for staff, including in management positions, was a step forward towards the promotion of gender balance in DG ECHO. The Plan also commits to improving work-life balance. Furthermore, it determines the drafting of a Code of Conduct for field staff, including specific provisions on sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA).

In 2011, Commissioner Georgieva met on numerous occasions with partners engaged in fostering gender equality, such as UN Women and the UN Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict.

For the first time, ECHO's Gender Working Group (GWG) met in its full capacity, bringing together headquarters staff and field experts to discuss gender policy development efforts, practical tools for making EU humanitarian aid more gender-sensitive and ways to better integrate sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) into programming. The two-day meeting was also an opportunity for exchanges of information and best practices with external actors, including the IASC Gender Standby Capacity (GenCap) and DG DEVCO.

Finally, DG ECHO actively participated in networking and coordination meetings of several EU gender-related inter-service working groups. DG ECHO also contributed to the negotiations of the Memorandum of Understanding between the EU and UN Women. The

Commission continued supporting capacity building projects related to gender in humanitarian settings, namely to address SGBV, and has engaged in discussions with partner organisations in view of potentially financing new capacity building initiatives.

1.7. Aid effectiveness

1.7.1. Needs assessment

Since early 2009, the issue of needs assessment has gained importance in inter-agency discussions and is now on the agenda of the main humanitarian aid donors and partners.

The IASC Needs Assessment Task Force (NATF) has approved a series of guidance documents and tools designed to support a coordinated approach to assessments in emergencies including operational guidance, humanitarian indicators, Multi-Cluster Initial and Rapid Assessment methodology and the Humanitarian Dashboard.

In 2011 DG ECHO has continued to support the rolling-out of the Needs Assessment Dashboard (including through dedicated capacity building funding), with a view to strengthen capacities and inter-agency collaboration on this issue. All donors have fully subscribed to these objectives.

Given the challenges in implementing the tools developed by NATF, donors decided to fund ACAPS (Assessment Capacity Project) aimed to support the Needs Assessment process at the field level through training, development of a roster of experts and deployment of needs assessment experts.

Donors agreed on the need to continue to support the work towards common/joint needs assessment. DG ECHO is in particular working with other donors for making sure that the NATF Work Plan is implemented under the overall lead of OCHA, and with the support provided through the ACAPS project.

1.7.2. Capacity building

Global capacity building provides for a better and broader humanitarian coverage through a more rapid and cost effective humanitarian response. It is achieved primarily through the strengthening of the global humanitarian system. This is consistent with DG ECHO's commitment in the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid, and the Good Humanitarian Donorship Principles.

For 2011 and 2012, €24 million has been allocated for global humanitarian capacity building. This funding is engaged to improve the promotion of the humanitarian principles that underpin why we provide humanitarian aid, and with a view to improving access and respect for humanitarian assistance. It also provides the practical measures to improve the global delivery in humanitarian responses. In all cases, this is done through the global humanitarian system and in particular the clusters for their respective sectors. This include e.g.:

- In Logistics, rapid global helicopter deployment through the UN World Food Programme (WFP) both to accelerate and extend the vital initial phase of humanitarian responses. This is combined with International Federation of the Red Cross/Crescent (IFRC) which led improvement of the global information management of what stocks are available to improve the speed and cost of providing aid.

- In Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), improving the capacities and articulation between non-governmental organisations and UN agencies in the Shelter Cluster in order to provide rapid response teams and to rapidly follow-through on their work to improve responses to sudden onset and large scale emergencies.
- For Shelter, the engagement of satellite mapping technology coordinated with the Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) to assist the Shelter Cluster with needs assessment in large scale emergencies.
- For Food Assistance, improving cost-effectiveness through scaling up the use of measures such as food vouchers rather than the importing of bulk food over long distances; and for Nutrition, setting improved international standards on how best to manage acute malnutrition.

2. INTERINSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS AND COOPERATION WITH OTHER DONORS AND PARTNERS

2.1. Council Working Group on Humanitarian Aid and Food Aid (COHAFA)

The work of COHAFA, successfully launched at the start of 2009, continued under the rotating Hungarian and Polish EU Presidencies in 2011. Having a dedicated forum for regular policy exchange by Member States and the Commission experts represents a qualitative jump in the evolution of a more coherent and co-ordinated EU approach to humanitarian policy and action.

Throughout the year, the working group, which brings together mostly representatives from EU capitals, met 17 times out of which twice exclusively in response to a sudden onset emergency (in Libya in March, Horn of Africa in July). There were also two informal meetings of COHAFA in Budapest and Warsaw allowing for an informal exchange of views on topics of strategic importance for the work of the working party.

In its first three years of work, COHAFA has made progress in establishing itself as the Council point of reference for questions on humanitarian aid. Input is provided on a regular basis to other geographical groups, and, via these groups, to PSC¹², COREPER¹³ and the Foreign Affairs or General Affairs Councils.

On a strategic level, COHAFA has allowed the European Union to increase the coherence of the Commission and Member States' humanitarian aid activities: there is an annual exchange on individual humanitarian aid policies and budgets (this took place in several stages at the beginning of 2011), policies produced by the Commission are often referred to or repeated by Member States, individual EU donor activities in specific crises are better coordinated and EU positions on specific issues are discussed ahead of international meetings. On a day-to-day basis, the work of the group was facilitated by the Commission's initiative to spread widely its situation reports on specific humanitarian crises and other information products like Factsheets, which have quickly become one major source of information for a wide audience of stakeholders.

¹² Political and Security Committee

¹³ Permanent Representatives Committee

Under the Belgian Presidency of the EU, COHAFa undertook to review its mandate, which was considered to provide a good basis for the future work of the group. However, in the course of this review it was also felt that COHAFa should follow new working methods aimed at improving visibility, outputs, results and impact of its work even further. This renewed working methods were endorsed in January 2011 and since then COHAFa has made efforts of better linking its work with the one of other Council bodies (geographical working parties but also the working parties on development cooperation and civil protection).

2.2. Council Working Group on Civil Protection (PROCIV)

PROCIV is the Council working group that deals with civil protection policy for the Justice and Home Affairs Council. Meetings occurred 9 times in 2011, covering the full range of civil protection policy and operational issues: response, preparedness and prevention, risk assessment, including discussions on the major disasters that occurred in 2011.

A specific focus of the working group was discussing and agreeing on 3 sets of Council conclusions that were subsequently adopted as I/A items¹⁴ by the Council. These Conclusions call on Member States and the Commission to step up existing actions and also to take new measures to strengthen disaster management in the EU.

The subjects covered during the Presidency were "*Integrated Flood Management*" (Council document number 9241/11), and "*Further Developing Risk Assessment for Disaster Management within the European Union*" (Council document number 8068/11).

During the Polish EU Presidency conclusions were adopted on: "*Integrated approach to more effective risk, emergency and crisis communication*" (Council document number 17122/11).

2.3. Cooperation with other EU institutions, donors and partners

The main activities focussed on following the day-to-day work of the main European Parliament committees of interest for the work of DG ECHO (mainly DEVE¹⁵/AFET¹⁶ and ENVI¹⁷ for civil protection matters). DG ECHO worked closely with the members of the DEVE Committee in particular to raise awareness and interest in humanitarian issues and assisted the Parliament's services in organizing several field missions. Meetings with the Chair of the DEVE Committee (Ms Eva Joly), the standing Humanitarian Rapporteur (Ms Michele Striffler) and other Members were held to discuss humanitarian policy and operational issues.

Commissioner Georgieva regularly attended EP Committees (DEVE and ENVI) to conduct the so-called "*structured dialogue*" with the European Parliament in the areas of her portfolio. These occasions were used to brief the European Parliament about current and future policy initiatives and priorities, both in the field of humanitarian aid and civil protection, as well as to inform about the Commission's response to specific crises.

Throughout the year Commissioner Georgieva visited a greater number of EU capitals to meet her counterparts in the field of humanitarian aid and civil protection. The purposes of these

¹⁴ "I" point means points for information; "A" points where the decision can be made without debate and is often on a subject outside the detailed responsibility of the particular group of ministers.

¹⁵ European Parliament Committee on Development

¹⁶ European Parliament Committee on Foreign Affairs

¹⁷ European Parliament Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

visits were the presentation of her newly created portfolio as well as an exchange of views on her policy priorities and issues of concern to Member States. Particular emphasis was put on contacts with Member States holding or about to hold the rotating Presidency in the Council.

Commissioner Georgieva did regularly attend meetings of the Council of Ministers (Foreign/Development and General Affairs Councils) for discussions within her portfolio either on specific crisis or on policy initiatives such as a stronger European disaster response or linking relief with reconstruction and development. The Commissioner did also carry out a number of field missions outside of Europe (e.g. Horn of Africa, Myanmar, South-East Asia).

Throughout the year, DG ECHO and Commissioner Georgieva maintained regular contact with relevant international organisations, in particular the UN and the Red Cross Movement, on policy development and operational issues. Regular meetings were held with key partners. Special emphasis was placed on close cooperation with the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator Valerie Amos, notably on the "*transformative agenda*" which the IASC agreed in 2011 to further strengthen the international humanitarian system in the areas of Leadership, Coordination, Accountability, Global Capacity for Preparedness as well as Advocacy and Communications.

DG ECHO took part in UN and Red Cross Movement related meetings and processes, mainly in New York, Geneva and Rome, in close liaison with the relevant EU Delegations. Through active participation in the OCHA and ICRC Donor Support Groups, and through its permanent observer status at WFP Executive Board meetings and in the UNHCR's Executive Committee, DG ECHO provided inputs to strategic decision-making and guidance at these organisations. DG ECHO continued to promote EU-coordinated positions, resolutions and statements in UN bodies reflecting Commission policy.

Throughout the year DG ECHO had contacts with non-EU donors both at operational level and in the field and at policy level at HQ. These included a strategic dialogue with the US in November and other meetings with other key and non-traditional donors.

DG ECHO contributed to an outreach forum in Budapest, co-organised by Hungary and OCHA in October for senior level officials from 18 countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

3. IMPLEMENTATION OF HUMANITARIAN AID AND CIVIL PROTECTION IN 2011

3.1. A needs-based approach

In line with the Treaty, the Humanitarian Aid Regulation and the Consensus, the Commission, through DG ECHO, is committed to delivering aid to populations affected by natural or man-made disasters solely on the basis of need. In order to establish its priorities for intervention DG ECHO follows **a three-pronged approach:**

- This first relies on the **specific country/region evaluation of needs** conducted by ECHO field experts and the respective geographical units of DG ECHO. This analysis by experts not only provides a first hand account of crisis areas, it also gives an insight into the nature and the severity of needs. DG ECHO field experts conduct such assessments for every crisis, as objectively as possible and in close cooperation with the Commission's implementing partners.

- For DG ECHO's single largest aid sector – food assistance/nutrition - a specific **food insecurity needs assessment** is carried out in the countries/regions with food assistance/nutrition interventions. The specific needs-based analysis is reinforced with reports from field mission, nutrition and food indicators, an assessment of the potential funding from other donors and the possible capacity and access limitations faced by implementing partners. The sectoral analysis is validated by and dovetailed with the global needs assessment established by DG ECHO.
- In parallel, a **global evaluation** is carried out centrally, which compares countries, in order to identify the priority areas for DG ECHO interventions. This global evaluation has two dimensions: the **global needs assessment (GNA)** which categorises 139 developing countries that have recently experienced a crisis (caused by conflict, natural disaster, or the presence of a large number of refugees or displaced people) and the extent to which their populations are vulnerable (derived from national indicators) and the **forgotten crisis assessment (FCA)**. Both the GNA and the FCA are invaluable tools in determining impartially and independently where the Commission's aid is most likely to be necessary. They also facilitate ensuring parity and consistency in the allocation of resources across continents and countries. The methodology and results for these assessments are explained in further detail in the next sections.

In the final calibration of allocations, other considerations such as access restrictions or lack of handling capacity in the field are also borne in mind. Throughout this exercise DG ECHO actively communicates and co-ordinates with other relevant actors (humanitarian aid organisations, EU Member States and other donors). DG ECHO is amongst the first among the donor community to establish and share detailed assessments and budgetary allocations for the countries/crises in which it intervenes for the year ahead. DG ECHO also seeks to engage actively in dialogue throughout the year with other donors, both at HQ and in the field, on funding intentions in different crises, not least in the context of the Good Humanitarian Donorship initiative.

Following the trend over the last three years, more than half of DG ECHO's budget is spent on countries which the Global Needs Assessment identifies as extremely vulnerable. In 2011, DG ECHO identified 22 extremely vulnerable countries or territories which received humanitarian aid and food assistance worth **65%** of the final budget dedicated to operations in countries and regions. Where allocations are made for aid in countries identified as being of medium or low priority, this may be because they experience disasters after the publication of the needs assessment.

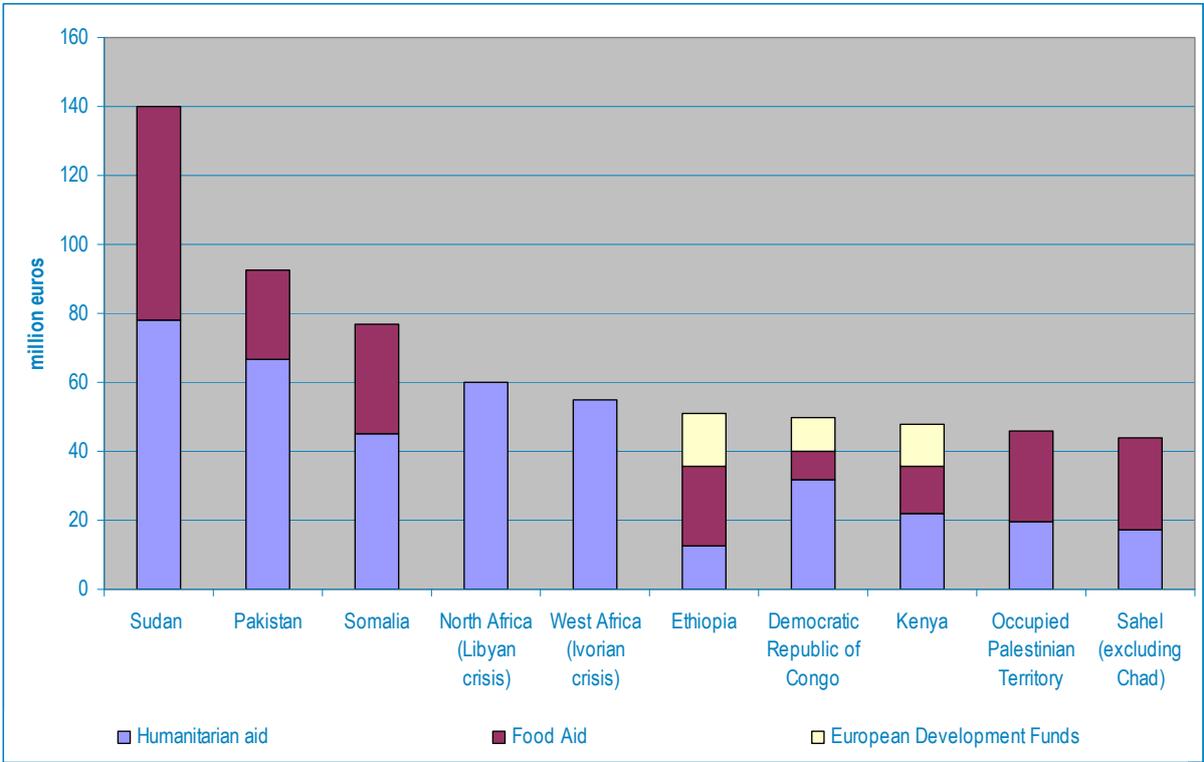
Using the FCA methodology, DG ECHO identified 10 crises in 12 countries as 'forgotten' for the purposes of allocating 2011 funding. This classification is understood to mean the regions have been exposed to protracted crisis situations, resulting from conflict; the cumulative effect of recurring natural disasters; or a combination of both. Very low media coverage, lack of donor interest and lack of political commitment to solve the crisis mean a lack of humanitarian intervention. Forgotten crises often involve minorities, or specific groups within a country which is not necessarily considered as being in crisis. This is why national indicators used to define the vulnerability index or the level of public aid may not reflect the specific situation of the cohorts that DG ECHO may pinpoint as being in need of aid.

Among the ten crises identified as priorities for 2011, nine had already been identified as forgotten in 2010:

- Rohingya refugees and the Chittagong Hill Tracts crisis in **Bangladesh**;
- Inter-ethnic conflict in **Burma (Myanmar)**;
- The related Burmese refugee situation in **Thailand**;
- Civilians affected by internal armed conflict in **Colombia**;
- The conflict in the north of **Yemen** as well as the refugees from the Horn of Africa;
- Sahrawi refugees in **Algeria**;
- Internal armed conflict in **Central African Republic**;
- Bhutanese refugees in **Nepal**;
- Civilians affected by regional conflicts in **India** (Kashmir, north-east India, Naxalite movement).
- Areas of **Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan** affected by the presence of the Lord's Resistance Army: a newly-identified regional forgotten crisis: a continued series of brutal attacks has caused massive population displacements and has thus aggravated the situation of people who were already highly vulnerable, without attracting sufficient media or donor attention – media attention has focused much more on efforts to defeat the LRA rather than on the victims of their attacks.

3.2. Top 10 humanitarian crises in terms of funding allocations

EU humanitarian funding in 2011 for the top ten recipients was €663 million, or 66% of the total operational budget resources allocated to countries and regions¹⁸.



¹⁸ Based on final amounts of Humanitarian aid, Food aid and European Development Funds

3.3. Sub-Saharan Africa

In 2011, humanitarian aid and food assistance operations were funded for a total amount of €56.5 million, or 48% of the total budget managed by DG ECHO. The main areas funded were Sudan and South Sudan, countries affected by the severe drought in the Horn of Africa, R.D. Congo, Sahel and Côte d'Ivoire which received 85% of the amount allocated to Africa.

The EU continued to fund ECHO-Flight, a service for humanitarian operators in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Republic of Congo and Kenya.

3.3.1. Sudan/South Sudan and Chad, Central Africa

Table - Breakdown of funding (commitments) for Sudan, South Sudan, Chad and Central Africa

	<i>Humanitarian Aid</i>	<i>Food Aid</i>	<i>EDF</i>	<i>Total</i>
Sudan/South Sudan	77 980 000	62 020 000		140 000 000
Chad (East & South)	22 746 437	7 053 563		29 800 000
Chad (Sahel)	5 500 000	5 700 000		11 200 000
Total Sudan, South Sudan & Chad	106 226 437	74 773 563		181 000 000
Burundi (+refugees in Tanzania)	6 250 000	3 000 000	1 000 000	10 250 000
Cameroon			900 000	900 000
Central African Republic	9 000 000			9 000 000
D.R. Congo	31 650 000	8 350 000	9 975 000	49 975 000
Echo-Flight	10 000 000			10 000 000
Total Cental Africa	56 900 000	11 350 000	11 875 000	80 125 000

Sudan and South Sudan

In 2011 DG ECHO delivered humanitarian aid to over 5 million Internally Displaced People (IDPs), refugees, returnees, host communities and nomads in Sudan and South Sudan. In Darfur serious protection and security issues remain, with over 2.5 million people still reliant on humanitarian assistance, including 1.9 million IDPs, 80,000 people recently displaced by violence, 40,000 refugees from Chad, and 500,000 residents and nomads. However, access constraints because of administrative impediments and insecurity seriously reduced the presence of humanitarian actors on the ground. The extremely difficult conditions under which partners have been working inevitably affects the quantity and quality of aid delivered. The outbreak of conflict in mid-2011 in South Kordofan and Blue Nile States has affected 500,000 people, on top of the 50,000 refugees who fled to South Sudan and the 37,000 refugees who fled to Ethiopia. With very few exceptions, the government has denied access to international organisations to assess the situation, carry out humanitarian activities and replenish diminishing stocks, despite continuous advocacy efforts. The situation is of grave concern, but the lack of first hand information makes it difficult to know the extent and severity of the situation. Disputes in the Abyei area have left 100,000 people displaced. The East continues to have some of the worst malnutrition indicators in the region, and hosts 88,000 Eritrean refugees. The humanitarian situation in South Sudan, which became an independent country during 2011, worsened with 330,000 conflict-related IDPs, inter-ethnic clashes, deteriorated food security, high malnutrition rates and epidemic outbreaks. Integrating the 357,000 people who have returned from Sudan since 30 October 2010 is

proving a massive challenge for many areas and is putting pressure on basic services which were already scarce.

Five main objectives were targeted in 2011: (1) providing life-saving services to the most vulnerable populations in Darfur, South Sudan, Eastern Sudan and the Transitional Areas; (2) supporting emergency preparedness and response (EP&R) mechanisms in areas of South Sudan and Eastern Sudan affected by conflict, flooding, disease outbreaks, high levels of malnutrition and areas of high return – this has proved to be particularly successful in South Sudan, with most partners including EP&R components in their interventions, allowing them to respond to new emergencies; (3) providing food aid to highly food-insecure populations throughout Sudan and South Sudan; (4) supporting common services such as air transport, co-ordination, logistic services and security assessments – in this way DG ECHO has helped to ensure a safer environment for the effective and principled delivery of humanitarian aid and (5) advocacy, information and communication activities to secure better access and working conditions for humanitarian agencies.

Out of the allocation to Sudan and South Sudan, general food distributions represented the largest single element both in terms of overall funding and coverage, with 3.7 million beneficiaries in Sudan and one million in South Sudan. Life-saving activities (29%) were supported in the sectors of health, water, sanitation and hygiene, shelter, non food items (NFI) and nutrition. Substantial support was given to EP&R (25%) and common services (4.5%).

Chad

In 2011 DG ECHO assisted 2.2 million people in response to four major humanitarian crises in the country: (1) refugees and IDPs from the conflict in the East and South; (2) the nutrition and food security crisis created by the drought in the Sahel belt; (3) the influx of tens of thousands of returning migrants from Libya; and (4) response to the unprecedentedly large cholera outbreak.

In the East priority continued to be the provision of life-saving services (health, nutrition, food security, water/sanitation, shelter and NFIs) to 267,000 Sudanese refugees, 131,000 IDPs, 50,000 returnees and their host communities, whilst aiming to bring these populations into self-reliance in the medium term. In the South, given the positive results of LRRD¹⁹ and the engagement of EU development funds, DG ECHO has progressively disengaged from assistance to the 64,000 Central African refugees, providing only targeted assistance to the most vulnerable in camps and to new arrivals.

In the Sahel belt nutrition, livelihood and food security support were provided to 1.6 million food-insecure people. Signs of recovery were being reported, but then in September a new food crisis broke out due to harvest failure. Without international aid the poorest households will be at risk of facing an important food deficit (hunger gap) earlier in the year. The overall economic situation in Chad has also been badly hit by the Libyan crisis: returnees coming back and putting additional pressure on vulnerable populations, loss of remittances from Chadians working in Libya, and the drying up of the supply of various products from Libya at advantageous prices. Over 85,000 Chadian returnees from Libya were supported through the provision of transport, health, food, water and protection services.

¹⁹ Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development

At national level DG ECHO continued to promote humanitarian coordination and support common transport services. Support to Emergency Preparedness and Response enabled a timely response to the meningitis, measles and cholera epidemics that hit more than 30,000 people in 2011.

Burundi and Tanzania

In 2011, DG ECHO assisted 391,000 people in Burundi and Tanzania affected by displacement and conflict. The focus in Burundi was on multi-sectoral assistance to 21,000 Congolese refugees in three camps, protection activities for a further 20,000 and finalisation of LRRD in the health and nutrition sectors. Primary and secondary healthcare was provided to 225,000 people and emergency nutrition for 25,000 children under 5. The design and implementation of an LRRD strategy in close collaboration with the EU Delegation and other development actors has enabled DG ECHO to withdraw from all sectors other than the specific support to refugees in camps and assistance for repatriation and reintegration. Refugees have been unwilling to return to Burundi, so repatriation levels have been low. The basic needs of the few who did return from Tanzania were covered in the initial period after return.

In Tanzania, food, health, water, education and protection support was given to the 37,000 Burundian refugees in Mtablia camp and the 63,000 Congolese in Nyarugusu camp. Funding was also given to maintain the logistical capacity to support the voluntary repatriation of refugees to Burundi and DRC, even though repatriation levels from the camps fell to a very low level, due to the security situation in DRC and an unwillingness to move on the part of the Burundians. In May the Tanzanian government announced its intention to close Mtabila camp by the end of 2011 and repatriate its residents to Burundi. After considerable advocacy efforts, in which DG ECHO fully participated, this deadline was postponed to the end of 2012, and the EU funded an in-depth individual interview exercise, conducted jointly by UNHCR and the Tanzanian government, to identify which of the Mtabila residents were still in need of international protection.

Central African Republic (CAR)

The overall humanitarian context of CAR remains complex, with a shifting canvas of both conflict and post-conflict situations, against a background of chronic poverty, high levels of malnutrition, structural collapse, absence of infrastructure and lack of basic services. During the year, conflict levels once again increased as a result of the faltering Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) process, the resumption of activities by certain rebel movements, cross-border insecurity with Chad and Sudan/South Sudan and LRA attacks. The North and the North-East are the areas most affected by fighting between rebel groups – the pattern is often unpredictable, with alliances and ceasefires quickly being agreed and broken – while the South-East is the area targeted by the LRA. CAR is designated by DG ECHO as a forgotten crisis and remains a highly volatile context, with significant access and security constraints.

In 2011 DG ECHO provided assistance and relief to 255,000 vulnerable people, including IDPs, refugees and local people in the most difficult regions of CAR in terms of security and access, namely the Central North, North-East and South-East of the country. Funding was used to tackle the consequences of population movements, conflicts between rebel groups and LRA attacks. The main sectors of intervention related to access to safe drinking water, sanitation facilities and hygiene related assistance, access to basic health care, protection, and

provision of seeds and tools and NFIs. DG ECHO also supported the rehabilitation of infrastructures, humanitarian coordination (via OCHA) and the humanitarian air transport service (UNHAS). In September 2011 additional funds were made available to respond to an outbreak of cholera.

Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

Despite some improvements in the humanitarian situation in parts of the East of the country (North Kivu and Province Orientale), more than one million IDPs in DRC have been newly displaced or are still unable to return home and regain self-sufficiency. In South Kivu parts of North Kivu and Haut and Bas Uélé (Orientale), security continues to be disrupted by the conflicts between numerous armed groups and with the Congolese army (FARDC), generally with the objective of gaining or maintaining control over natural resources. Violence against civilians is perpetrated with almost complete impunity, causing repeated cycles of displacement. In Haut and Bas Uélé less than 100 fighters from the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) have created such a climate of terror that 250,000 people remain displaced. The working environment in DRC is extremely difficult: logistics are a constant challenge due to the lack of basic infrastructure. Security in some of the zones where DG ECHO operates has become more and more problematic, with an increasing number of restricted areas and a substantial number of attacks on humanitarian workers.

In Equateur province there is now only a residual caseload of IDPs, with many spontaneous returns of refugees from Republic of Congo. Unless the security situation changes, this trend is likely to continue in 2012. However, infrastructure and access to basic services remain very limited in this province. In Kasai Occidental there was a big increase in arrivals of economic migrants deported from Angola: 50,000 to 80,000 people, including families, women and unaccompanied children. As well as putting the local population under pressure and affecting access to basic services such as health care, there are serious protection concerns for these people. After having monitored the situation and assisted some partners in 2011, DG ECHO will increase its assistance in 2012 to Congolese deported from Angola into Kasai Occidental. In 2011 DG ECHO launched also a substantial new nutrition response in non-conflict areas (the Kasais and Bandundu), to address severe malnutrition problems that have been identified by several surveys over the past three years. This response is complementary to actions of other humanitarian donors and of food security development programmes.

In a country at the very bottom of the Human Development Index, DG ECHO's response strategy focused on the consequences of conflict-induced displacement and on protection-related issues. 51% of the funding was allocated to the North East, North and South-Kivu and Haut and Bas-Uele. In 2011, across the country as a whole, DG ECHO assisted more than two million people. The issues arising from sexual and gender-based violence continued to be integrated into all health programmes, as well as there being some more specialised projects assisting survivors. Surveillance and response to recurrent epidemics in DRC (mainly cholera and measles) and contingency planning were also part of the 2011 programmes.

DG ECHO has strengthened the coordination of humanitarian aid by supporting the role of OCHA and the cluster system in DRC and the Good Humanitarian Donorship (GHD) group, which continues to foster active co-operation among donors. It is extremely relevant, in view of the growing number of funding instruments and programmes in place in the Eastern part of the country, including those being implemented on the initiative of the Congolese authorities.

ECHO Flight

Because of the logistical and security-related access problems in a number of countries, the Commission implements a flight service focusing on DRC and its neighbouring areas and in Kenya. ECHO Flight provides an efficient and reliable service to enable safe and accountable implementation of humanitarian projects and post-emergency development projects in remote regions, which would otherwise be inaccessible. The service is closely coordinated with other humanitarian air services and avoids duplication and competition with safe, viable commercial airlines. The drought in the Horn of Africa and the insecurity in DRC in 2011 led to partners asking for an increased level of service. Therefore, DG ECHO increased the flight frequency and the number of destinations in some regions and reorganised the routes in others. In 2011 a fourth aircraft was brought into service in order to respond to the global increase in flight hours.

A mix of fixed and flexible schedules as well as ad-hoc tasking for special operations such as the polio outbreak in Republic of Congo and cargo transport to the Haut and Bas Uélé regions of DRC is offered to partners. ECHO Flight enables humanitarian NGOs to reduce their inventory stockpiles at field locations, which often run the risk of theft by armed bandits or local militias, and increases the quality of humanitarian operations since supervisory visits can be conducted more frequently. In addition, having an airborne stand-by evacuation capacity is for many agencies an essential condition for continuing projects implementation. In 2011 ECHO Flight transported more than 18,826 passengers and 376.5 tonnes of humanitarian cargo, all from recognised international organisations implementing humanitarian and, to a smaller extent, development projects.

Republic of Congo

In the course of 2011 the situation of the 100,000 refugees that had fled over the Ubangi River from the Equateur Province, the country turned into a care and maintenance situation where people developed coping mechanisms and re-established strong links with their former home areas. Therefore, DG ECHO ended its humanitarian assistance in the first half of 2011 and focused instead on improving the basic social services in the areas of return. In parallel, DG ECHO also made an urgent response to a polio epidemic that killed more than 200 people and affected more than 500 others mainly in the Pointe Noire area. A rapid humanitarian intervention involving several actors was quickly launched in order to efficiently stop the propagation of this epidemic.

Areas affected by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) presence

LRA attacks range over an extensive part of North East DRC (Haut and Bas-Uélé), Eastern CAR and the southern part of South Sudan (Western Equatoria), and cause massive displacement levels throughout this area. In 2011, this was designated as a forgotten crisis by DG ECHO. In order to raise awareness of the crisis and to improve the coherence of the humanitarian response, a two-day Humanitarian Round Table was held in Nairobi in April 2011, bringing for the first time together fifty key humanitarian actors from these three countries and from Uganda, where the LRA originated. A series of detailed recommendations were produced and are being applied in the field. Among these, a key point is the need for a central humanitarian focal point for LRA-affected areas and the importance of more cross-border humanitarian responses to the crisis.

3.3.2. *Horn of Africa*

In 2011, a major humanitarian crisis developed in the Horn of Africa consisting of a combination of high food prices, failed rains seasons, increased population displacements mainly caused by ongoing violent conflict in Somalia, and restricted humanitarian access, leading to a rapid deterioration of the food security and nutritional status of vulnerable populations, further aggravated by underlying poverty and reduced coping capacities. In the second half of 2011, more than 13 million people were affected by the crisis. DG ECHO responded by mobilizing more than €181 million to assist the most vulnerable population groups in the region.

Table - Breakdown of funding (commitments) for the Horn of Africa

	<i>Humanitarian Aid</i>	<i>Food Aid</i>	<i>EDF</i>	<i>Total</i>
Djibouti		2 000 000	600 000	2 600 000
Ethiopia	12 360 000	23 500 000	15 000 000	50 860 000
Kenya	21 770 000	13 900 000	12 200 000	47 870 000
Somalia	45 100 000	31 900 000		77 000 000
Uganda	3 000 000			3 000 000
TOTAL	82 230 000	71 300 000	27 800 000	181 330 000

Djibouti

Food insecurity also continued to persist in all pastoral livelihood zones as well as in poor urban areas of Djibouti. In 2011 the EU funded activities to support nutrition programmes, food assistance, as well as a smaller caseload of refugees mainly from Somalia.

Ethiopia

In Ethiopia, the drought affected some 4.5 million people, mainly in need of food assistance and water. In addition, there was a rapid upsurge of Somali refugees into Dolo Ado areas of the Somali Regional State of Ethiopia, and an increase in the influx of Sudanese refugees in the western parts of Benishangul-Gumuz Regional State. Whereas the former was mainly caused by conflict, drought and famine in Somalia, the latter was due to military operations in the Blue Nile Region of the Sudan. The total number of refugees in Dolo Ado Camps reached 140,000 at the end of the year and the registered number of Sudanese refugees was over 23,000.

DG ECHO focused its operations on the support of vulnerable population groups in the sectors of health, food assistance (including food aid, nutritional support, short-term food security and livelihood support), and water/sanitation. Access as well as humanitarian space remained constrained. In Somali Regional State and Gambella, some areas were only sporadically accessible.

Eritrea

In Eritrea, by contrast, the Government continued to deny possibilities for independent humanitarian needs assessment and project implementation in accordance with relevant standards.

Kenya

Also Kenya faced a severe humanitarian crisis mainly due to the drought, with the highest malnutrition rates of the last decade recorded in some areas of the arid lands. In 2011, some 3.75 million people suffered from food insecurity. Moreover, a massive influx from Somali people fleeing conflict and famine led to a severe refugee crisis, and resulting in the camp Dadaab in North-Eastern Kenya growing into the biggest refugee camp in the world, with a population of close to 500,000 people. In addition, over 23,000 new refugees were registered in Kakuma camp, Turkana, and in Nairobi. The protection of refugees in the North-Eastern Province has become of increasing concern over the year. Also the security situation has deteriorated considerably since October 2011, leading to temporary suspensions of key humanitarian operations in around Dadaab refugee camps.

The allocation for Kenya in 2011 was used to support refugees (food, water, health and sanitation and protection) and contribute to the improvement of food and nutrition security in the arid lands. In addition, more than 200,000 children and pregnant or lactating women were provided with specialized assistance. Moreover, specific Disaster Risk Reduction programmes were implemented accompanied with advocacy efforts to encourage relevant actors to further enhance their engagement strengthening the resilience of vulnerable populations in the arid and semi-arid lands.

Somalia

This country represented the epicentre of the crisis. In mid-2011, famine was declared in six areas of the country and the number of people in urgent need of humanitarian assistance grew to four million, most of which in the southern part of the country under the control of Al Shaabab/Armed Opposition Groups. The number of people at risk of starvation rose to 750,000. Continuous conflict, mainly in the South and Central regions, and also involving military forces of neighboring countries, led to additional displacements. The number of IDPs increased to 1.46 million, the number of Somali refugees in neighbouring countries to almost one million.

Fighting for control of territory and the targeting of humanitarian assets and staff has continued to considerably restrict the implementation of humanitarian actions. In November, 16 humanitarian agencies operating in the Central-South regions were expelled by armed opposition groups. Key life saving programmes were severely affected.

DG ECHO supported a large variety of humanitarian interventions in health care, nutrition, food security, water/sanitation, with a focus on newly displaced persons and drought response initiatives. In view of the rapid deterioration of the humanitarian situation over the year, the Commission increased its initial 2011 allocation for Somalia, reaching an estimated 1.8 million people.

While sustained aid contributed to push back famine in most parts of south and central Somalia, and despite favourable short rain season at the end of 2011, millions of people remained in a severe food security and nutrition crisis.

Uganda

The country being only marginally affected by the Horn of Africa crisis, DG ECHO interventions remained mainly limited to the strengthening of the integrated management of

the acute malnutrition and to reinforce the primary health care in the Karamoja, and to the support of the IDP return process in the Acholi region. While DG ECHO's office in Uganda was closed in late 2011, the ECHO Regional Office in Nairobi will continue to monitor the situation.

Throughout the year 2011, the implementation of the 2010 DG ECHO programme on disaster risk reduction (DRR) aimed at the strengthening of the resilience of vulnerable population groups continued, and contributed to improve the capacities of targeted communities at risk to better prepare and protect themselves against natural hazards such as drought.

An evaluation conducted in 2010 and 2011 concluded that there are substantial funding and strategic gaps for paving the transition to development, and recommended a number of operational measures in this regard.

3.3.3. *West Africa*

West Africa is one of the poorest and most under-developed regions of the world. The Commission allocated €104 million²⁰ to this region. Most part of the population lives in rural areas and relies mainly on subsistence agriculture. Food production in the Sahel relies mainly on erratic rainfall and livestock is reared to harsh environmental conditions aggravated by climate changes.

Table - Breakdown of funding (commitments) for West Africa

	<i>Humanitarian Aid</i>	<i>Food Aid</i>	<i>Total</i>
Sahel	17 300 000	26 700 000	44 000 000
West Africa (Ivorian crisis)	55 000 000		55 000 000
Liberia	5 000 000		5 000 000
TOTAL	77 300 000	26 700 000	104 000 000

Sahel and coastal States

Acute malnutrition rates in the Sahel zone of West Africa (Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger) remained persistently above internationally recognized alert thresholds, with some 1.5 million children under 5 years of age suffering from malnutrition. Food and nutrition insecurity is due mainly to under-investment in agriculture and food production, high demographic growth, high illiteracy rates especially amongst females, low access to basic health care and clean water and poor governance. The region is in the front line of climate change and victim to international food price movements. The current local systems are not able to cope with the shock of a large-scale additional crisis.

Although the generally good harvest in 2010 provided more food security to many vulnerable households, in 2011 there were production losses in some areas caused by heavy flooding and crop pests. An important factor aggravating the already worse situation in 2011 has been the spill-over from the crises in Côte d'Ivoire and Libya which have led to the mass return of migrant-workers to their Sahel countries of origin, greatly reducing remittances to dependent local economies. Threats and attacks by extremist groups have continued to seriously reduce humanitarian assessments and access to those in need. Kidnappings of expatriates remained

²⁰ This amount do not include the funding to the sahelian part of Chad (see under Sudan, South Sudan and Chad)

an increasing risk. A surge in violent incidents in Nigeria attributed to Boko Haram was of additional concern.

DG ECHO action in the Sahel was focused on reducing acute malnutrition of children under-5 and pregnant and nursing women in a sustainable way, and to support for the post-crisis livelihoods recovery of the victims of last year's food crisis. Support focused on treating the most at risk children (over 200,000 severely malnourished children were treated in 2011), and on raising awareness of the multi-sector causes of acute malnutrition.

DG ECHO's strategy continued to include the objective of positioning the fight against malnutrition at the centre of government policies and development aid programming. Further progress was made in establishing a dialogue with governments and development partners on the need for long-term, sustainable policies and programmes to tackle malnutrition in a structured way and to encourage the integration of humanitarian action into the national health system. DG ECHO also continued to support the implementation of routine rapid nutrition surveys to improve access to reliable baseline information and to support the Household Economy Analysis (HEA) all over the region to constantly get accurate levels of acute malnutrition and information on poorest households.

In addition to the funds allocated to the fight against malnutrition, an emergency decision was adopted in response to the growing food crisis which is expected to cause a massive lack of food in 2012. The cause is again low food production as a result of the poor harvest following erratic rains during the 2011/2012 agricultural season and rapidly rising food prices.

Côte d'Ivoire

Côte d'Ivoire suffered major humanitarian consequences of the post-election crisis, which affected 1.5 million people in Abidjan and the Western regions and led 200,000 people to seek refuge in Liberia, Ghana and Togo.

In Côte d'Ivoire, medical assistance was provided to the war-wounded victims, with access to health facilities, food and clean water/sanitation for the displaced, shelter for those who have lost or who have had to flee their homes, protection for the most vulnerable, especially women and children victims of abuse, eventually support to the LRRD transition to longer term aid and the resumption of basic services.

While the security situation had already improved on most of the territory upon the election of President Alassane Ouattara and the creation of his government, a very high level of insecurity persisted which caused disarray in government services, hampered movements of aid workers and negatively impacted on the provision of humanitarian assistance.

Medical structures were disrupted by violence, shortage of drugs, disruptions in supply, transport and security constraints, departure of staff and were not able to cope with the number of victims. Sanitary conditions deteriorated quickly, with electricity cuts in the North, destruction in the West, water cuts and limited access to safe water. DG ECHO's partners provided emergency assistance to the displaced and victims of violence, and supported health structures, including vaccination campaigns to prevent the outbreak of contagious diseases.

The crisis also had an immediate negative impact on late harvesting and commercial food traffic, resulting in increased food prices which left hundreds of thousands in a situation of food insecurity. DG ECHO initially provided emergency food assistance to cover immediate

needs and assisted households, especially among returnees, to restore their agricultural production or other income generating activities.

Ivorian refugees in Liberia, Ghana, Togo

In Liberia, Ghana and Togo, DG ECHO supported shelter and care programmes for Ivorian refugees accommodated in campsites and host families, despite the challenge of access and insecurity. Protection issues were a concern in areas close to the border or the region of fighting.

A Tripartite Agreement was signed in August 2011 with Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire to establish the repatriation modalities for Ivorian refugees. It is foreseen that the majority of the population displaced had spontaneously returned home by the end of the year. A similar trend was seen in parts of the western region with an estimated 100,000 spontaneous returns (out of 200,000) from neighbouring countries. DG ECHO assisted the voluntary repatriation and reinstallation process with the restoration of basic services and livelihood mechanisms as well as measures to protect civilians.

Liberia

In 2011, the overall situation remained difficult in Liberia, due to a dysfunctional public sector lacking qualified human resources and with relevant services provided by international aid agencies. This situation continued to cause humanitarian needs notably in the sectors of health, nutrition, as well as in water/sanitation, where the situation remained critical in numerous rural communities as well as in urban areas, especially Monrovia, where regular cholera outbreaks occur.

In order to address this situation, DG ECHO contributed to the provision of safe water, safe human waste disposal and health education. DG ECHO also supported paediatric services in two hospitals in Monrovia, as well as the rehabilitation and operation of 53 health facilities. In the course of 2011, these latter programs were successfully handed over to development donors. The government and aid agencies also had to respond to an influx of up to 180,000 Ivorian refugees seeking asylum in the remote eastern part of Liberia. (see also Côte d'Ivoire).

3.3.4. Southern Africa

The funding for this region in 2011 was €10 million, totally dedicated to Zimbabwe.

Table - Breakdown of funding (commitments) for Southern Africa

	<i>Humanitarian Aid</i>	<i>Total</i>
Zimbabwe	10 000 000	10 000 000
TOTAL	10 000 000	10 000 000

Zimbabwe

The humanitarian situation in Zimbabwe further stabilized in 2011, enabling DG ECHO to continue its approach of gradually phasing out its assistance to the country, and to reduce its allocation. The assistance included emergency assistance for newly displaced, returnees and deportees. DG ECHO also remained one of the largest donors in the areas of health, water/sanitation in Zimbabwe, promoting an integrated public health approach aimed at tackling potential epidemics like cholera, measles or typhoid. Significant investments were

made in disease surveillance and early warning systems as well as in emergency treatment facilities to be used during outbreaks. DG ECHO has also engaged in improvement of urban water supply facilities of the areas more at risk and supported food security interventions aimed at improving diet diversity and additional sources of income for the most vulnerable segments of the population.

An evaluation of the response to the cholera epidemics in Zimbabwe was carried out in 2011. The evaluation highlighted the effectiveness of the urgency measures taken, and recommended that further efforts should be made during the transition process to consolidate the Health institutions progress achieved during the cholera crisis.

Regional action in Southern Africa - Disaster Risk Reduction

Although spared from major disasters in 2011, the Southern African region remained extremely vulnerable to natural events, in particular tropical cyclones and floods. In the first part of 2011, DG ECHO assisted in alleviating the effects of cyclone Bingiza as well as of the floods in Madagascar and Northern Namibia. Moreover, the second Disaster Preparedness (DIPECHO) Action Plan for South-East Africa and the South-West Indian Ocean, launched in 2010 was completed successfully, with actions focussing on decreasing the vulnerability of local communities and enhancing relevant capacities of local institutions (through i.e. improved early warning systems, shelter, as well as better grains and seeds' production and storage).

The evaluation on disaster preparedness and disaster risk reduction actions in Southern Africa and the Indian Ocean finalised in January 2012 concluded that DIPECHO strategies in Southern Africa addressed the needs of regions and communities particularly exposed to the selected priority hazards, and was effective in preparing communities for a local response to disasters. However, ensuring the replication of successful projects at other levels, as well as the sustainability of the efforts, would require a more strategic approach at country level, with a reinforced partnership of DRR and development actors.

3.4. Middle East and Mediterranean

3.4.1. Middle East

DG ECHO continued to be involved in preserving the dignity of its beneficiaries in the Middle East region in 2011. Apart from the Palestinian, Iraqi and Yemen crises, the Commission also closely monitored the humanitarian situation in Syria since the start of the civil unrest in March 2011. The Commission prepared a contingency planning in view of a possible intervention in Syria in case the humanitarian situation further deteriorates.

Table - Breakdown of funding (commitments) for the Middle East

	<i>Humanitarian Aid</i>	<i>Food Aid</i>	<i>Total</i>
Occupied Palestinian Territory	19 500 000	26 500 000	46 000 000
Palestinian refugees in Lebanon	4 591 103	1 200 000	5 791 103
Iraq Crisis	10 000 000		10 000 000
Yemen	25 000 000		25 000 000
TOTAL	59 091 103	27 700 000	86 791 103

Palestinian population in the occupied Palestinian territory and refugees in Lebanon

2011 was marked by significant political developments in the region and in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt). These included the start of reconciliation talks between the two main Palestinian political factions, Fatah and Hamas, in May, the Palestine application for full membership at the United Nations in September, and a subsequent campaign to join individual UN organisations (Palestine became member of UNESCO in October). Israel and Hamas agreed on a prisoner swap for the Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit, held prisoner by Hamas since June 2006, in exchange for 1,027 Palestinian prisoners. However, the stalemate in direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organisation prevented any political progress.

There have been some positive trends on the ground such as the Palestinian National Development Plan for 2011-2013 and some economic growth in Gaza, albeit starting from a very low base. However, these trends are considered unsustainable as long as the main aspects of the Israeli occupation remain in place: the blockade imposed on Gaza since 2007 placing severe restrictions on movements of people and goods on land, air and sea; restrictions on access and movements between Gaza and the West Bank, and within the West Bank to areas located behind the Barrier, the Jordan Valley, and to land in the vicinity of Israeli settlements.

Consequently, the situation of the vulnerable Palestinians has not fundamentally changed. Day-to-day life in Gaza, in Area C of the West Bank and in East Jerusalem continued to be characterised by serious protection and human rights issues, and by limited access to essential services and to livelihood opportunities. In addition to its impact on economic and social development, the situation of occupation continued to fuel violence with an increase by 30% of civilian casualties in Gaza and the West Bank compared to 2010. There was also a rise in demolitions, forced evictions, and a 40% increase in the number of settler attacks resulting in casualties, property and livelihood damage targeting in particular Bedouins and herder communities in Area C.

Commissioner Georgieva visited these communities in May 2011. She subsequently raised the issues of Bedouin communities and demolitions with Israeli Defence Minister Ehud Barak. Concern was expressed about the dependence of the populations on humanitarian assistance and the urgency of offering them more sustainable solutions.

Operations in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip were also funded, including the response to the 2011 drought that threatened the livelihoods of many of the herding communities in the West Bank. 54% of the total allocation supported directly the population of Gaza. In addition to humanitarian actions with a direct impact on people's living conditions, the Commission paid particular attention to the prevention of violations of international humanitarian law. Close and effective coordination was maintained with other donors to ensure that humanitarian assistance and other programmes complement each other, in particular Pegase²¹.

In Lebanon, 2011 was marked by political tensions around the formation of a government that translated into security incidents, notably attacks on UNIFIL (United Nations Interim Forces) and incidents along the Lebanese and Israel blue line border. Refugee camps across the country witnessed military and civil unrest, including security threats against UNWRA. Since March 2011, more than 5,000 people displaced from Syria arrived in Northern Lebanon, many of them staying with relatives. Relief efforts were coordinated by the High Relief Commission and UNHCR and largely supported by international NGOs.

²¹ EU mechanism for support to Palestinians

Living conditions for most Palestinian refugees in Lebanon remain precarious. Two thirds are living in UNRWA camps or unofficial settlements across the country and are highly dependent on external assistance for their basic services. In 2011 the EU funded humanitarian operations benefitting Palestinians in the occupied Palestinian territory and in Lebanon.

Support to Palestinian refugees in Lebanon was almost fully disbursed to UNRWA and INGOS²² for very urgent shelter rehabilitation, access to clean water/sanitation, healthcare including secondary care for the most vulnerable, psychological support and legal protection. Food assistance and shelter rental subsidies were provided specifically to the Nahr El Bard displaced population.

Iraqi crisis

Since the 2006 bombing of the Al-Askari mosque in Samarra that triggered sectarian violence to a level that forced 1.6 million persons to flee their homes, bringing the post-2003 internally displaced population to more than 2.8 million people, some partial returns took place in 2011. The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) estimates that approximately 1.3 million people remain displaced inside Iraq. In addition, many Iraqis have left the country and as of November 2011, the UNHCR was referring to more than 177, 000 registered Iraqi refugees in the region.

Meanwhile the security situation has not improved since the parliamentary election in March 2010 and insurgencies, high criminality in Baghdad, and killings in the Northern/Central governorates as well as in the so-called Disputed Areas, have remained at a level which continue to affect development efforts. US troops withdrew from the country in December 2011. It is still unclear what exact impact this move will have on the overall security situation of the country although the beginning of 2012 has witnessed an increase in sectarian violence. December 2011 was also the deadline set by the Government of Iraq for the closure of the Ashraf Camp hosting some 3,400 members of the Iranian opposition movement, the People's Mujahidin Organisation of Iran (PMOI). Given the highly political nature of the issue and taking into consideration that the core concern is more a Human Rights issue than a humanitarian issue, it is considered that there are other more suitable tools to contribute than the humanitarian budget line. It is expected that the registration of the residents and the relocation to Camp Liberty will take place early 2012.

As a consequence, inside Iraq, large pockets of vulnerable civilians in remote areas are unable to access basic services such as safe water or quality health care. The on-going sectarian violence is hindering the capacity of the local authorities to provide services. Refugees in neighbouring countries have limited access to the labour market or social services and are in need for cash to pay for rent and healthcare. The situation is particularly critical for chronic patients (diabetes, hypertension) and tertiary health care. Psychological problems are also widespread, ranging from mild depression to severe mental health issues for persons who have witnessed or have been directly affected by violent incidents. In Lebanon, protection issues are prevalent. This is due to the fact that Lebanon does not recognize Iraqis as refugees. They are not granted special status and are treated as migrants.

In response to these needs, DG ECHO provided humanitarian assistance to the vulnerable population of Iraq and to the Iraqi refugees living in neighbouring countries. DG ECHO response included a significant protection component as well as activities in the fields of

²² International non-governmental organisation

health and psychosocial support, water/sanitation and direct assistance (cash, non-food items). Most of the programmes focus on support to refugees in Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. The brutal repression of the civil unrest in Syria since March 2011 has had direct repercussions on the living conditions of the 112,000 Iraqi refugees living there, in particular on the psychological status of people who had crossed the border in search of a protective environment and found themselves trapped in a country facing increased violence, triggering painfully familiar reminiscences of the past. Inside Iraq, insecurity has limited the population's mobility and access to basic services as well as the possibility for most aid agencies to access and respond to needs. Support inside Iraq focussed mainly on water/sanitation and protection activities in the most affected areas (Disputed territories and rural Baghdad).

Yemen

Conflict in North Yemen as well as the influx of refugees from the Horn of Africa remained on the list of forgotten crises in 2011.

The political and humanitarian situation continued to seriously deteriorate during the year. Yemen faced a complex emergency with widespread conflict-driven displacements and a slow-onset crisis in food security and malnutrition. In the North, the vast majority of long-term IDPs (316,000 at the end of 2011) remained displaced due to the situation of insecurity, damaged homes, lack of livelihood opportunities and poor basic services. In the South, continuous fighting between security forces and Islamic militants resulted in the displacement of 150,000 people. There was also an increase in the influx of migrants, refugees (93,760 in 2011) and asylum seekers from the Horn of Africa, driven by conflict and famine.

Civil unrest, involving high levels of violence, severely disrupted the delivery of basic social services, exacerbating widespread and chronic vulnerabilities. Despite the signature of the Transition Agreement by President Saleh on 23 November 2011, the political and security situation remains very fragile, as some opposition groups did not sign this Agreement. The country's fragmentation also continued, governmental control being limited to a small part of the territory, and the rest being controlled by local tribes, the Al Houthis in the North and Islamist militants in the South.

Weak economic growth, a growing trade deficit and an unstable national currency exposed the population to rising global food and fuel prices. Recent nutritional surveys performed by UNICEF have shown alarming rates of malnutrition in several governorates, Global Acute Malnutrition levels of over 30% and Severe Acute Malnutrition levels of more than 10%, both being more than the threshold for emergencies as set by the World Health Organisation.

The 2011 OCHA Consolidated Appeal was increased to a total amount of \$290 million, mainly to fund operations in the food and nutrition sectors for the IDPs and refugee population.

In view of the deterioration of the humanitarian situation and the growing needs in the country, the Commission intervened to provide support to the additional number of people affected by the ongoing conflict and the food insecurity crisis. Operations managed by DG ECHO concerned provision of relief (including food distribution, fight against malnutrition, cash distribution) to IDPs, to refugees and to the population affected by the high level of malnutrition.

The EU funded the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in order to improve the needs analysis and the efficiency of the aid provided and to advocate for the mobilisation of additional funding and access to all those affected by the different conflicts. A risk management component was also supported to enhance humanitarian NGO security.

3.4.2. *Mediterranean*

DG ECHO continued to be involved in preserving the dignity of its beneficiaries in the Mediterranean region in 2011. Some of the world's longest running humanitarian crises persist in this region, including the plight of the Sahrawi refugees in Algeria, living in camps in the Sahara desert under extremely harsh conditions. DG ECHO also intervened in new crises such as the Libyan conflict. A total funding of €69 million was allocated to these crises.

Table - Breakdown of funding (commitments) for Mediterranean

	<i>Humanitarian Aid</i>	<i>Food Aid</i>	<i>Total</i>
Western Sahara	4 000 000	5 000 000	9 000 000
North Africa (Libyan crisis)	60 000 000		60 000 000
TOTAL	64 000 000	5 000 000	69 000 000

Sahrawi refugees (Algeria)

Since 1975, tens of thousands of Sahrawi refugees have been hosted by Algeria in four camps in the South-Western region of Tindouf (El Aaiun, Awerd, Smara and Dakhla). The presence of the refugees is the result of the conflict between Morocco and the Polisario Front over the former Spanish colony of Western Sahara following Spain's withdrawal in 1975.

In 1991, Morocco and the Polisario Front agreed to a United Nations Security Council conflict settlement plan, which proposed a cease-fire and set up the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) with a mandate to organise a referendum for self-determination.

The living conditions of the Sahrawi refugees, who have been living in these camps for more than 35 years, are extremely difficult. They depend completely on humanitarian aid to meet their basic needs: food, health, water/sanitation, shelter, hygiene and education. The status of Sahrawi refugees remained on the list of forgotten crises for 2011.

Humanitarian assistance to the Sahrawi refugees continued in 2011, partially through the 2010 financing decision and the 2011 allocation. Operations concerned food distribution, fresh food and tent distributions, medicine distribution as well as water supply, sanitation and hygiene item distribution.

On 22 October 2011, three European humanitarian workers were abducted in the camps by a dissident branch of AQIM (Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb) and were not yet liberated by the end of 2011. Although international humanitarian staff was evacuated just after this event for several weeks, the relief distribution was not interrupted in the camps. Following this abduction, security in the camps has been reinforced by DG ECHO and its partners. One of the potential consequences of this kidnapping is the limitation of access to the camps and the difficulty to carry out monitoring.

North Africa (Libyan crisis)

On 17 February 2011, major political protests began in Libya against the Gaddafi government. By late February, the country descended rapidly into chaos with most of the Northern Libyan cities joining in the revolt. In view of the escalating situation, the United Nations Security Council adopted two resolutions (1970 on 26 February 2011, and 1973 on 17 March 2011) imposing a sanctions regime, including an arms embargo, freezing of the assets of the leaders of the Gaddafi government, and a non-fly zone. The installation of the non-fly zone was followed by the start of air strikes, carried out by forces from a wide international coalition.

Since the very beginning of the crisis in Libya, the main objective of DG ECHO's intervention has been to assist and protect the Libyan population from the effect of the armed conflict and to provide the necessary assistance to those directly confronted by the fighting and/or living in areas under siege, as well as to protect and assist vulnerable groups such as Internally Displaced Persons (IDP), Third Country Nationals (TCN) and Libyan refugees in neighbouring countries. DG ECHO has been at the forefront of the humanitarian response to the Libyan crisis. It was the first donor on the ground both in East and West Libya, which allowed a close follow-up of the humanitarian situation and a swift response to the rapidly evolving needs.

In the first stage, right after the onset of hostilities, which caused a massive outflow of migrant workers, the priority was to provide funding to ensure that the immediate needs of those who had crossed the border were covered, people of concern were assisted, and that migrants who were stranded could be repatriated. DG ECHO deployed its humanitarian and civil protection experts to the Libyan borders (Tunisia, Egypt, Algeria, Chad) as soon as the needs arose. A total of 56,000 Third Country Nationals were repatriated with the assistance of DG ECHO humanitarian partners and EU Member States' assets coordinated by the EU Civil Protection Mechanism and co-financed by the EU budget. More than 90,000 refugees stranded at the borders received water, food, shelter and medical assistance. DG ECHO supported also the Tunisian families who despite their rather limited financial resources hosted the largest part of the Libyan refugees.

As access to larger parts of the country became possible, DG ECHO-supported aid started to address the needs also of the populations inside Libya. Since the onset of the crisis, the European Union was advocating for unimpeded access for humanitarian workers to the entire territory of the country as well as for delivery of aid in an independent and neutral way both in the East and the West of Libya, regardless of people's affiliations. Great importance was given to the protection of the civilian population and the provision of medical support to the Libyan health sector and in particular to the war-wounded. Thanks to the efforts of DG ECHO-supported partners more than 9,000 detainees were visited across Libya and more than 130,000 Internally Displaced Persons were provided with assistance, in particular some 70,000 who originate from minority groups.

As hostilities ceased and international efforts rapidly shifted towards rebuilding of the Libyan nation, DG ECHO continued addressing the remaining pockets of humanitarian need across the country. Therefore, DG ECHO priorities for the post-conflict period were defined as mine clearance to allow physical return and restart of the economic activities, and protection of those who were perceived as having been on the wrong side of the revolution in order to ensure their survival but also to possibly facilitate reconciliation. The EU funded humanitarian mine clearance activities and mine risk education. As part of protection activities psychosocial support is a crucial element aiming to help heal the scars of war. A

special focus is given to children as one of the most vulnerable groups that have suffered from the crisis. Child friendly spaces were equipped and staffed in different Libyan cities (Tripoli, Misrata, Sirte etc.) in order to provide a supportive environment and psychosocial activities for children affected by the conflict.

Although the humanitarian situation has significantly improved and the humanitarian needs are mainly covered, DG ECHO will continue in 2012 to closely monitor the situation in Libya.

3.4.3. Caucasus

Chechnya crisis

2011 saw the phasing out of ECHO's presence and funding in the framework of the Chechnya crises which triggered the displacement of thousand of civilians during the 1994-1996 and 1999-2001 armed conflicts. With the budget allocated in 2010, the last EU humanitarian intervention focused on the protection needs of the vulnerable population and its activities came to an end in September 2011. It also encompassed livelihood support and temporary shelter activities.

Despite a true and solid improvement in Chechnya, the number of security incidents continued to rise in 2011 in the neighbouring autonomous republics of Dagestan and Kabardino-Balkaria. The main challenges are the inability of protection agencies to carry out their mandates to defend civilians from human rights violations as well as the spread of violent incidents targeting law enforcement officials.

South Caucasus

The situation of Georgian IDPs from the August 2008 conflict has been stabilised. Basic needs are covered and rehabilitation projects are in place. In South Ossetia, the needs are well covered by the Russian Ministry for Civil Defence, Emergencies and Elimination of Consequences of Natural Disasters. Tensions at the administrative borderline between South Ossetia and Georgia proper have nevertheless been constant.

Implementation of the DIPECHO South Caucasus interventions, funded under a 2009 Action plan was finalised by mid-2011. This regional programme (covering Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia) contributed to the awareness raising on disaster risk reduction through the education system and ensuring preparedness at community level. All stakeholders, partners, local communities and national administrations, have requested to continue the project.

3.5. Asia and the Pacific

In 2011, humanitarian aid and food assistance operations were provided in about 20 countries in Asia and the Pacific region for a total of €238 million, representing 21% of the total budget managed by DG ECHO.

3.5.1. Central and South-West Asia

3.5.1.1. Central Asia

DG ECHO has been present in Central Asia since 1993, initially to provide assistance in the wake of the civil war in Tajikistan and later to respond to natural disasters and to support

disaster preparedness projects through DIPECHO in the five countries of Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan).

As a region, Central Asia is highly exposed to natural disasters, e.g. earthquakes, landslides, floods, mudflows, droughts, avalanches and extreme temperatures. The region is also volatile politically, as exemplified by the inter-ethnic violence that erupted in Kyrgyzstan in June 2010 in which several hundred people were killed, some 300,000 people displaced and with serious destruction of property.

In 2011, on top of monitoring very closely the situation through the Office for Central Asia in Dushanbe (Tajikistan), DG ECHO provided support through the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) managed by the IFRC to victims of the floods in Kazakhstan in April and floods in Tajikistan in June. Under the financing decision for small-scale humanitarian response to disasters, DG ECHO also contributed in support to victims of the earthquake in Kyrgyzstan in July 2011.

The 2010 DIPECHO projects were also mostly implemented throughout 2011 and came to an end only in autumn 2011.

3.5.1.2. South-West Asia

Table - Breakdown of funding (commitments) for Central and South West Asia

	<i>Humanitarian Aid</i>	<i>Food Aid</i>	<i>Total</i>
Afghanistan	28 000 000	6 500 000	34 500 000
Pakistan	66 500 000	26 000 000	92 500 000
TOTAL	94 500 000	32 500 000	127 000 000

In Afghanistan and Pakistan, the humanitarian crises are twofold: first, the 'Afghan' crisis affects not only Afghanistan but also Iran and Pakistan, where almost three million Afghan refugees are still living; second, Pakistan is affected by a twin-faceted crisis with still almost one million people displaced by the conflict and 6 million affected in 2011 by major floods in Sindh and Baluchistan.

In Afghanistan, the deterioration of security and the consequences of extensive military operations, aggravated by years of drought, increasing flooding and recurrent small-scale disasters such as earthquakes, resulted in significant levels of humanitarian needs in 2011.

In Pakistan, following the worst floods in living memory in 2010 affecting almost 20 million people, the monsoon rains created another emergency again in 2011, severely affecting Sindh, parts of Baluchistan and South Punjab. This second major natural disaster within 2 years has exacerbated the situation of many communities that were still recovering from the 2010 floods. Once again, Pakistan is confronting the humanitarian consequences of both conflicts (in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas) and natural disasters.

Afghanistan

Humanitarian needs increased in 2011. They were mainly related to the consequences of the on-going conflict. The number of war-induced IDPs increased by 45% compared to 2010. The total number of IDPs by 30 November 2011 reached around 454,000 individuals of which 185,000 were war induced cases. Afghan refugees who returned from Pakistan and Iran benefitted also from assistance. Finally, the highly food-insecure population affected by recurrent natural disasters, including 2011 year's drought in the North and North-East of the country and the 2010 severe flooding in the central highlands and East, received also support.

Considering the above needs, the focus in 2011 was on assisting IDPs and the return of refugees both providing the latter with a cash allowance and ensuring basic livelihood support. Considering access difficulties for humanitarian organisations in many parts of the country, IDP needs remained largely uncovered.

Under the 2011 Humanitarian Implementation Plan for the Afghan crisis, the EU funded i.e. registration and transportation of refugees from Pakistan and Iran to Afghanistan, support to reintegration plus aid for the most vulnerable of the remaining refugees in both countries. Protection assistance in Afghanistan was provided, notably through UNHCR and ICRC in their respective protection mandate roles. Shelter, together with water/sanitation, was another significant area of activity within Afghanistan. Given high security constraints and a difficult geographical configuration, support for security advisory services as well as for coordination of aid agencies and for a subsidised humanitarian flight service was maintained. In 2011, food assistance budget line was mobilised, mainly for cash-based projects but also for a support of the food security and agriculture cluster and the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification tool (IPC) via funding of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). Afghanistan being a natural disaster prone country, mainstreaming of Disaster Risk Reduction is essential in all funded projects.

Along with various other players, the Commission has continued to advocate the need to respect basic humanitarian principles and International Humanitarian Law, in particular for humanitarian access and protection of civilians in a country where the line between military, private and civilian intervention is blurred, putting at risk the lives of humanitarian workers, the smooth implementation of projects and the beneficiaries themselves. The overall security situation in Afghanistan remains volatile and extremely unpredictable. Abductions of humanitarian aid workers remain a threat. This seriously restricts humanitarian access. DG ECHO's 2011 portfolio of projects was selected on that basis. DG ECHO only managed projects that met conditions where partners and DG ECHO could perform implementation and monitoring of activities as well.

Pakistan

Multiple humanitarian challenges confronted Pakistan in 2011: on-going humanitarian needs from the devastating floods of 2010 and the new emergency engendered by the 2011 floods; the needs of the conflict- affected population, both those displaced, those who have returned and those remaining in their areas of origin; and the remaining 1.7 million Afghan refugees.

Without having had a chance to recover from the devastating floods of 2010 (which affected almost 20 million people, damaged or destroyed 1.7 million homes, killed 1,985 people, devastated the agricultural heartland of the country and created unprecedented damage to

public and private infrastructure), parts of Pakistan (in particular Sindh, Baluchistan and parts of South Punjab) were again affected by very serious flooding, in autumn 2011.

At the same time, displacement of conflict-affected civilians continued in 2011. The fighting between militant groups and Pakistan's security forces, which started in 2007, continues to affect Baluchistan, the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Khyber Pahtunkhwa Province (KPK). Since March 2011, major displacements have taken place in Mohmand and Kurram agencies of FATA, and further displacements in a number of other locations. It is estimated that one million people remain displaced in FATA and KPK.

Pakistan continues to host a sizeable population of Afghan refugees, despite the considerable return movement to Afghanistan over the last 10 years.

Part of the 2010 emergency interventions were still ongoing in 2011, when again it was necessary for DG ECHO to intervene with a large allocation to cover ongoing relief assistance from the 2010 floods, new needs created as a result of the 2011 floods and the needs of the conflict affected, including IDPs and people returning to their area of origin.

Humanitarian assistance to Pakistan includes (1) support for emergency food assistance, managed by several actors including INGOs regrouped in an Alliance and WFP (2) support for the ICRC's protection activities and distribution of food and other essentials NFIs mainly to IDPs and people returning; (3) support for provision of protection, shelter and NFIs by UNHCR to flood and conflict-affected IDPs and shelter by IOM; (4) provision of health care by medical INGOs; (5) support for INGO partners to provide water, sanitation and hygiene. Support for co-ordination of humanitarian assistance was channelled through UNOCHA. Disaster Risk Reduction continued to be strongly encouraged in all interventions. In addition, through the DIPECHO Action Plan for South Asia, projects were funded to help enable local communities and institutions to better prepare for and respond to natural disasters, thereby increasing resilience and reducing vulnerability.

Throughout the year, the Commission, along with various other players, continued to advocate for the respect of humanitarian principles and International Humanitarian Law, in particular for humanitarian space and access for humanitarian workers, protection of civilians, voluntary and safe return for IDPs and the right to assistance based on the needs of the most vulnerable rather than official registration status. Access to some areas was difficult and sometimes not possible for expatriates. The overall security situation in Pakistan remains very volatile and extremely unpredictable. Humanitarian aid workers face serious risks to their lives and have also paid a high price in the form of stress.

3.5.2. Central South Asia

In 2011, the EU funded humanitarian aid and food assistance in response to protracted needs and crises as well as to new emergencies in South Asia. Funding was also made available for DIPECHO actions in South Asia (including Afghanistan and Pakistan), totalling €3.8 million.

Table - Breakdown of funding (commitments) for Central South Asia

	Humanitarian Aid	Food Aid	Dipecho	Total
Bangladesh	11 000 000	10 000 000		21 000 000
India	6 400 000	200 000		6 600 000
Nepal		1 200 000		1 200 000
Sri Lanka	13 000 000			13 000 000
South Asia			12 000 000	12 000 000
Total	30 400 000	11 400 000	12 000 000	53 800 000

In Bangladesh, destitute people who, two years after cyclone Aila, were still displaced or had not been able to recover yet, were assisted. The year's monsoon season generated more than one million new victims, to whom food, water/sanitation, as well as shelter, were provided. Despite access restrictions and a difficult overall working environment, the unregistered Rohingya refugees in the South-East continued to receive assistance.

In India, actions were funded to support the victims of continued violence in Jammu and Kashmir, as well as people affected by and displaced as a consequence of the Naxalite conflict in Chhattisgarh. Emergency interventions were also funded in order to support flood-affected people, in particular marginalised groups.

In Nepal, refugees from Bhutan still living in camps continued to receive regular food rations. Emergency assistance was also provided in response to fires affecting two of the camps.

In Sri Lanka, two and a half year after the end of the civil war, IDPs and vulnerable returnees received shelter, food, physical rehabilitation and mental health support, as well as still much needed protection. Emergency aid was provided to people affected by floods in the Northern and Eastern regions.

Bangladesh

Bangladesh, the world's most densely populated country, is highly vulnerable to natural disasters, in particular floods, cyclones and earthquakes, a vulnerability exacerbated by climate change. 2011 was not an exception for Bangladeshi people who had to face the outstanding impact of a long-standing natural disaster, one new natural disaster and a protracted crisis.

Cyclone Aila hit the South-western coast of the country on 25 May 2009, affecting over 4 million people and displacing over one million. For more than two years, an estimated 230,000 people continued to be displaced from their homes by the after effects of the cyclone, being acutely affected for their daily survival. Consequently, DG ECHO managed actions to support the early recovery phase of the returnee population and continued assisting a residual caseload of 50,000 people whose conditions to recover had not yet been met.

The scale of the third spell of the 2011 monsoon has affected an estimated one million people, displaced some 200,000 in the south west region of the country and led to serious water logging with significant loss of livelihoods, and house destruction. Funds were allocated to respond to acute emergency needs of people displaced in the sectors of food assistance, water/sanitation and shelter.

The protracted crisis affecting the unregistered Rohingya refugees continued to be challenging during 2011, as a result of humanitarian access restrictions and a difficult local working environment. One of DG ECHO's partners even decided to pull out, as working conditions became untenable. The situation is directly impacting the humanitarian situation of

undocumented refugees, which has further deteriorated since then. Despite these problems, DG ECHO support to the two unofficial settlements continued in 2011, through the provision of basic humanitarian assistance (health care, therapeutic feeding, safe water and sanitary conditions, protection and security) to unregistered Rohingyas living in these camps. Recent nutritional surveys indicate that malnutrition rates in the settlements and among host communities are beyond emergency threshold. The case of the Rohingya refugees and the Chittagong Hill Tracts crisis are designated as being a forgotten crisis, according to DG ECHO's analysis.

India

The Naxalite conflict, which involves opposing Maoist fighters (Naxals) and security forces, continued affecting 7 States. Chhattisgarh, in particular its southernmost districts, is the worst affected area and the population (mainly tribal people and scheduled castes) are caught between the conflicting parties. Some areas are totally inaccessible to outsiders and in general the region is acutely lacking in basic social services, as the authorities find it practically impossible to hire doctors or teachers to work in such a risky environment. Tens of thousands people are displaced, both inside and outside the State, as a consequence of the fighting. Several independent reports point to continued serious human rights violations, including the use of child soldiers. With the EU financial support, some 95,000 people benefitted from curative and preventive basic healthcare services in Chhattisgarh, while over 13,000 IDPs received emergency assistance in the neighbouring State of Andhra Pradesh.

Continued violence in Jammu and Kashmir remained a matter of serious concern, given its ongoing serious humanitarian consequences for the civilian population. The underlying cause of the conflict remains unchanged, and there is little room for optimism. Funds made available allowed approximately 16,000 people to receive psychosocial support and protection, including children in orphanages and specialised services for people living with disabilities. These regional conflicts affecting civilians continue to be recognised as being a forgotten crisis, according to DG ECHO's analysis.

The country was also affected by serious flooding in the second half of the monsoon season, due to a combination of heavy rainfall, breaches in embankments and release of accumulated water in reservoirs. The most seriously affected States were Odisha, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh and Assam. DG ECHO supported the rehabilitation of damaged housing and drinking water systems and the recovery of livelihoods through cash transfers. This assistance, which will run into 2012, will benefit approximately to 126,000 flood-affected people, with particular attention to marginalised groups.

At the very end of the year, Cyclone Thane swept into southern India, causing extensive damage to housing, communications and electricity systems, and widespread areas of standing crops. An EU funding allowed to undertake emergency repair of housing, and to enhance access to income and food through cash transfers. The assistance benefits over 25,000 cyclone-affected people in Tamil Nadu and Puducherry.

As India increases its capacity to manage its own development, few international donors remain active. DG ECHO is the only external donor providing significant funding in the humanitarian contexts in which it intervenes.

Nepal

The peace agreement signed between the Government of Nepal and the Maoist rebel in 2006 ended the 10 years conflict which cost 13,000 lives and had two major objectives: to promulgate a new constitution and to bring the Maoist in the mainstream politics. Both remain unfinished tasks. Local governance is setting in and the security situation has improved. The monsoon season was relatively calm, claiming 77 lives which was much less than in previous years. With good monsoon rain, the summer crop production was up by 14%, resulting in fewer food insecure districts. In such a context, DG ECHO completed in 2011 its phasing out of post conflict humanitarian assistance, as remaining needs are now better addressed by development stakeholders. The Commission however remained engaged in addressing the needs of refugees from Bhutan and in Disaster Risk Reduction interventions.

At the end of 2011, there were still 55,000 Bhutanese refugees of Nepali origin, living in camps since 1992, accepted by neither Nepal nor Bhutan, and fully dependent on external aid. Bhutanese refugees in Nepal remain on the list of forgotten crises established by DG ECHO. In the absence of a political solution, the United States and other countries offered resettlement options, and since 2008 more than 58,000 refugees have been resettled. The resettlement programme brought fresh hopes for a possible solution. DG ECHO has been providing substantial contributions to the regular food aid distributions to refugees in camps by the World Food Programme. In 2011 this assistance was complemented by support from the Commission's other departments for UNHCR's camp management and basic services to the refugees. It is expected that a majority of refugees will opt for resettlement. However, around 13,000 refugees have not expressed their desire to be resettled, or cannot be resettled. UNHCR estimates that by 2015 there will be a residual caseload of 10-12,000 refugees, whom the Government of Nepal might be willing to integrate.

In response to major fires in two refugee camps in March, DG ECHO managed UNHCR project to assist the 5,300 refugees affected. In response to an earthquake that struck Eastern Nepal in September, DG ECHO intervened through the related IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund operation.

In terms of access constraints and security, although there is no major risk for humanitarian staff, some operations were delayed by blockades stemming from political instability. Access to hilly areas, most affected by landslides, is always very difficult and some villages can only be reached by helicopter.

Sri Lanka

More than two years after the end of the conflict (May 2009) the national economy has picked up and a series of elections have confirmed the firm control of the ruling party at all political representative levels. The country is presenting a picture of an Asian economic boom backed up with a strong confident public stance and ambitious planning for the future. However, this picture does not include necessarily the former war affected areas, where serious humanitarian needs still prevail.

Despite the implementation of large-scale infrastructure works such as roads, schools, electricity and telecom networks, the population returning from IDP camps to their home areas continue to face serious hardship. The large majority of the original 300.000 IDPs from

the last conflict phase have returned to their places of origin. Some 50,000 IDPs²³ are still living in camps or with host families. These people, as well as recent returnees face important needs, which DG ECHO has helped to address, making it one of the largest single donors for humanitarian aid. The objectives set by DG ECHO sought to support the return process by supplying the unmet needs of highly vulnerable returning individuals in terms of protection, humanitarian demining, shelter, food assistance, physical rehabilitation for persons with disabilities, and mental health support.

Protection concerns prevail, especially with a high proportion of returning families headed by women and the destruction of the social fabric. Gender-based violence (domestic violence, child abuse) is on the rise. These factors, combined with the sustained military presence and weak civilian structures, have created a fragile situation where the vulnerability of those already deemed most vulnerable is exacerbated further. In DG ECHO's strategy for Sri Lanka protection is a guiding operational pillar. Therefore, funding was made available to UNHCR for raising the awareness of protection needs among a number of key stakeholders in the areas of return, thus working towards improving the general protection environment. With a number of humanitarian actors still present, and development activities on the rise, coordination is key to ensure that aid is delivered effectively to those most in need. By supporting the work of OCHA, ECHO has sought to ensure that coordination arrangements remain in place as we have entered the LRRD transition phase.

In the first months of the year, intermittent rains in Northern and Eastern Sri Lanka, combined with some of the heaviest rainfall in one century resulted in significant flooding and affected close to one million people. Over 130,000 people have been displaced to makeshift camps or host families whilst access to the affected population was further complicated by rising water levels. DG ECHO responded by contributing to the recovery of the flood-affected people in the region of Batticaloa in the East of the country.

The security situation has remained stable since the end of the conflict and the main safety risk incurred by partners is the prevalence of mines and UXO in the areas of return. Access to the areas of concern for DG ECHO partners and donors has improved. There is room for further improvement in terms of coordination among the aid actors.

Regional action in South Asia (including Afghanistan and Pakistan) - DIPECHO

Given the humanitarian impact of recurrent natural disasters in the region, DG ECHO's disaster preparedness programme (DIPECHO) continued in South Asia focusing on improving the capacities of communities at risk and on institutions involved in disaster risk reduction/disaster management, with the aim to enable them to better prepare for and protect themselves against natural disasters. In 2011 the 6th DIPECHO Action Plan for South Asia, whose duration runs until the end of 2012, was launched for actions currently being implemented in Afghanistan, Bhutan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

3.5.3. South-East Asia

South East Asia figures among the most hazard prone regions in the world, in terms of scale, recurrence and severity of disasters. In 2011, many countries in the region, including the best-prepared country Japan, were affected by numerous disasters and the cost incurred in disaster damage was the highest ever recorded.

²³ UNHCR data

The total funded allocated to this region was €55.3 million.

Table - Breakdown of funding (commitments) for South East Asia

	<i>Humanitarian Aid</i>	<i>Food Aid</i>	<i>Total</i>
Myanmar (Burma) / Thailand	16 000 000	6 250 000	22 250 000
Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)		10 000 000	10 000 000
Japan	10 000 000		10 000 000
Philippines	3 000 000		3 000 000
South East Asia	10 000 000		10 000 000
Total	39 000 000	16 250 000	55 250 000

In March, a 9.0 magnitude earthquake slammed the North-East coast of Japan triggering a devastating tsunami on the Pacific coast. Thanks to the early warning system and well-prepared communities and local capacities, 90% of the habitants in the affected areas were able to evacuate in time. Nevertheless, the magnitude and severity of the disaster claimed over 20,000 deaths and contributed to significant economic losses.

Five major tropical storms struck the Philippines, resulting in widespread damage to property and many casualties. In December, several communities in Mindanao were affected by flash floods caused by tropical storm Washi. In September/October, two powerful typhoons (Nesat and Nalgae) struck, causing devastation on the island of Luzon. In June and July typhoons had already unleashed floods on Luzon Island and in the southern region of Mindanao (an area also wracked by internal conflict). Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia were also affected by unseasonably strong rains, with floods causing destruction to life and property in the second half of the year. DG ECHO had already responded to severe floods in Lao PDR earlier in 2011, via the small-scale response decision and via IFRC's DREF operation. At the end of 2011, a response to a malaria epidemic in Attapeu province was provided via the Epidemics decision. Thailand saw the worst flooding in 50 years, affecting more than 5 million people, damaging vast areas of agricultural land and industry and inundating most surrounding areas of Bangkok. Flash floods also occurred in Magway division in Burma/Myanmar.

In Indonesia, the consequences of the earthquake and ensuing tsunami that struck the remote Mentawai islands off the western coast of Sumatra in October 2010, displacing 20,000 individuals, continued to be felt in 2011.

Political change was seen in Burma/Myanmar following the national elections in November 2010. 270 political prisoners were released, media and internet censorship was eased, there was an improved dialogue between the Government and the opposition and new peace deals were struck with ethnic groups. The humanitarian situation, however, did not improve significantly in the remote border areas and renewed conflict in Kachin State in June 2011 saw the displacement of 30,000 people. Commissioner Kristalina Georgieva visited the region twice in 2011 covering Burma/Myanmar, Thailand and Indonesia, where she met the ASEAN²⁴ Secretary General to discuss closer cooperation on disaster response and preparedness. Her repeated calls for improved humanitarian access in Burma/Myanmar and the need to find durable solutions to the Burmese Refugee situation in Thailand were appreciated by all stakeholders. During 2011 DG ECHO and its partners continued to provide assistance to IDPs in Burma/Myanmar and to the most vulnerable of the muslim community (Rohingyas) in Northern Rakine State. Furthermore, recovery assistance was maintained for the victims of Cyclone GIRI which had hit the country in 2010.

²⁴ Association of Southeast Asian Nations

Burma/Myanmar

In 2011, despite political changes in the country following the elections in late 2010 and a new nominally civilian government in place, the characteristics of the protracted crisis did not change significantly. Although new cease-fire agreements were reached and peace talks started with several ethnic armed groups, fighting with the Kachin Independence Army, one of the largest armed groups in the country, resumed in June 2011.

In the northern part of Rakhine State (NRS), living conditions of the muslim population (Rohingyas) remained precarious with hardly any positive change in 2011. Segregation and discrimination did not recede with the population still deprived of citizenship. In 2011, no political solution was proposed by the government. With DG ECHO support to NRS, more than 27,500 malnourished children under 5 were treated, 142,000 people benefitted from primary health care, 120,000 people received protection assistance and 87,000 food assistance. In southern Rakhine State, following cyclone GIRI's landfall in October 2010, shelter and recovery programmes continued in 2011. 64,000 people received adapted shelter assistance and 70,000 farmer or fishermen households received livelihood support. Some of these programmes may eventually be supported by longer term funding under the Livelihood Trust Fund (LIFT) to which the Commission (DEVCO) is an important donor.

In response to the flash floods in Magway division which affected 30,000 people in 4 townships, DG ECHO responded with relief assistance targeting 18,000 people considered to be the most vulnerable.

The situation of the 500,000 internally displaced people along the eastern borders remained unchanged in 2011. Humanitarian needs of the population affected by the protracted low intensity conflict situation were addressed by DG ECHO in the health and protection sectors. 55,000 people received basic health care and 54,000 benefitted from protection activities.

In Kachin State fighting between KIA/KIO and government forces started in June and continued throughout the year. An estimated 30,000 people were displaced and most were supported by local religious groups. Only limited humanitarian access has been granted and negotiations are ongoing with the government to allow humanitarian aid to victims on both sides of the conflict. DG ECHO is ready to provide assistance, provided that acceptable access conditions and monitoring possibilities exist.

The constraints and limitations in implementing aid programmes in Burma/Myanmar did not significantly change in 2011 and partners faced lengthy procedures to obtain MoUs and visas/travel authorisations. ECHO access to beneficiaries was nevertheless usually possible (with the notable exception of Kachin non-government controlled area), allowing for monitoring and follow-up.

Commissioner Kristalina Georgieva visited Burma/Myanmar in September 2011, calling for improved humanitarian access, in particular in Kachin State, improved conditions for the muslim population in NRS, and UNHCR involvement in any future return of refugees from Thailand, which should only take place when conditions in Burma/Myanmar are right and in full respect of international humanitarian principles.

Thailand

The conflict and poor economic situation in Burma/Myanmar has resulted in a huge influx of its citizens into Thailand. An estimated 3 million people from Burma/Myanmar reside in Thailand, of whom approximately 140,000 ethnic Karen refugees are living in 9 refugee camps along the Thai-Myanmar border. The refugees are dependent on external aid for their survival. In 2011 UNHCR played an important role in coordinating the relief response to the new influx.

Since 2005, more than 77,000 refugees have been resettled from the refugee camps in Thailand to third countries. However, not all refugees are willing or eligible for resettlement, thus requiring alternative durable solutions. There is also a need to resume the screening and registration process of refugees, to determine the number of genuine refugees. However, the process was delayed due to the floods in the second half of 2011, which diverted most local capacity and resources to the emergency response.

In 2011 DG ECHO continued to encourage the gradual shift from humanitarian aid in favour of a livelihood and self-reliance approach, with other Commission funding such as the AUP (Aid to Uprooted People) budget becoming increasingly important. The EU remained an important donor, with interventions in the sectors of food aid, health care, water/sanitation, livelihoods and protection. 100,000 refugees benefitted from its assistance.

Commissioner Kristalina Georgieva visited Thailand in March and September 2011, including to Mae La camp. In her meetings with high-level Thai authorities, the Commissioner emphasised the EU's commitment to continue to work for sustainable solutions for the refugees in Thailand.

The external evaluation on the Burmese Refugee Camps finalised in 2011 concluded that the new Commission strategy had succeeded in shifting the approach of most aid stakeholders from emergency to sustainable activities. Thailand also experienced during the second half of 2011 the worst floods in 50 years. Provinces located along the Chao Phraya river and Mekong river basin, including Bangkok, were most severely affected by inundation of 1-2 meters of flood waters for months. Over 300 deaths were reported and over 2 million people were displaced. In response to the floods, the EU funded projects with IFRC and Save the Children-UK, targeting 116,000 affected people living in evacuation centres and in inundated homes. The funding was part of a humanitarian funding decision to support flood emergency response in South East Asia.

North Korea (Democratic People's Republic of Korea - DPRK)

In 2011 DPRK faced severe food shortages due to a combination of several factors, mainly harsh winter conditions, absence of international aid and poor food import capacities. As a result, food rations distributed by the centrally managed Public Distribution System to 16 million urban dwellers dramatically reduced, and malnutrition rates increased among the most vulnerable people (namely children under five years old and pregnant and lactating women). The EU mobilised funds for a one-off emergency intervention to bridge the critical food gap during the 2011 season. A food relief programme implemented by WFP and a Save the Children therapeutic feeding programme targeting the most vulnerable in the four northern and north eastern provinces was implemented. Complementary funds were allocated for non-

food items in response to the floods in the Southern areas of the country. Although the DPRK authorities have been more forthcoming in providing access to data and to affected areas, operating conditions continue to remain a challenge in this country.

Japan

Japan is one of the best-prepared countries to cope with disasters, but the magnitude and severity of the earthquake which struck on the 11th of March and the subsequent tsunami and nuclear incident at Fukushima rendered the country in need of international assistance. The North-eastern coastal city of Miyako in Iwate Prefecture and the city of Sendai in Miyagi prefecture were the closest to the earthquake's epicentre and were largely destroyed. The death and missing toll reached 28,550. About 250,000 people were evacuated to more than 2,000 evacuation centres. According to the Japanese government, 14,413 houses were totally destroyed and another 98,466 houses were damaged. Several thousand families in Miyagi, Iwate, and Fukushima prefectures were displaced by the tsunami. Commissioner Georgieva visited Japan two weeks after the disaster. On 25 March, the Commissioner met with the President of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the President of the Japanese Red Cross (JRC), to show EU solidarity with Japan through humanitarian assistance and in-kind relief items from EU Member States, coordinated by the Civil Protection mechanism. The Commissioner visited affected populations living in temporary shelters in the coastal area.

Funds were channelled through IFRC to support JRC in distributing basic household appliances to evacuees and other affected people. Out of the 70,000 household benefitting from JRC assistance, EU funds targeted 8,000 families in the most affected provinces of Iwate, Miyagi and Fukushima. The total financial contribution from the EU and its Member States reached more than €17 million. These funds provided food and shelter, health care and relief to thousands of Japanese people affected by the disaster.

The Philippines

Tropical storm Washi was the last major disaster hitting the country in 2011. On 17-18 December, 13 provinces of northern Mindanao, and particularly the cities of Cagayan de Oro and Iligan, were affected by devastating floods which claimed 1,257 lives, injured 6,000 and displaced 430,000. More than 1.14 million people were affected. The EU immediately allocated funds for primary emergency humanitarian operations (debris clean-up, rehabilitation, food assistance, NFIs, shelter support, coordination and management of evacuation centres, water/sanitation activities, psychological support and protection). The Civil Protection Mechanism was activated to co-ordinate offers of assistance from Participating States.

Indonesia

In Indonesia, the consequences of the 7.7 Richter Scale earthquake and tsunami that struck the remote Mentawai islands off the western coast of Sumatra on 25 October 2010, displacing 20,000 individuals, continued to be felt in 2011. Lack of adequate hygiene and health services contributed to the susceptibility to potential diseases, particularly in relocation areas. DG ECHO supported two actions aiming to ensure preparedness and control of epidemics. Both were financed under the worldwide intervention on epidemics.

Regional Action in South East Asia - Flood Response

Five countries in South East Asia (the Philippines, Cambodia, Vietnam, Lao PDR and Thailand) were affected by successive tropical storms (Tropical Storm Haima, Nock-ten in July, Tropical Depression Haitang in August and Typhoon Nesat and Nalgae in September) and continuous heavy rainfalls. As a result, all countries experienced cumulated flooding from July to December 2011 causing major human losses (over 1,000 deaths, over 11 million people affected, and over 250,000 displaced across the region), as well as substantial damage to infrastructure, houses, livelihood assets, agricultural land, schools and public buildings. DG ECHO experts were deployed to conduct assessment missions in all affected countries. EU mobilised humanitarian funding to support these five countries. Between one and 1.5 million of people benefitted from the humanitarian operations funded with this budget.

In the Philippines, 4.5 million people were affected and over one million people were initially displaced. Emergency needs related to health (mobile clinics and support to health structures), water/sanitation and emergency livelihood. Many affected areas were inaccessible due to damaged infrastructures. In Thailand, the 2011 floods affected 5.1 million people. Over 20,000 houses were damaged and the harvest on 1.6 million hectares was destroyed. According to the World Bank, the cost of the damage was estimated at approximately \$ 45 billion. EU allocated funds to assist some 116,000 people, including migrants, with family kits, food, water, medicine, shelter and boats for evacuations and distribution of aid. In Cambodia, 17 out of 24 provinces were affected by the floods and flash floods since mid-August. Three quarters of Cambodia's land area was submerged for months. Immediate needs were food, water, sanitation, shelter, health care, seeds and tools. Over 160,000 people were assisted with humanitarian aid. The Mekong delta in Vietnam faced the worst floods in decades. The most affected provinces were Dong Thap and An Giang in the south and assistance was provided for shelter, food aid, livelihood support, water, sanitation and hygiene kits. In Lao PDR, flooding occurred in 12 out of 16 provinces and the most affected were Vientiane, Khammouane and Bolikhamxay. A thorough assessment of the losses will be carried out early 2012 but initial relief assistance was provided end of 2011 for livelihood support, water, sanitation, NFIs, food, and disaster preparedness.

Regional action in South-East Asia - DIPECHO

Implementation of the 7th DIPECHO Action Plan for South East Asia continued in 2011 benefitting Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, the Philippines, Indonesia, Burma/Myanmar and Thailand. Regional programmes included WHO²⁵'s Safe Hospitals Campaign, IFRC's programme for strengthening the National Red Cross Societies in the region, and support to the ASEAN Secretariat through Oxfam's project of improving civil society's knowledge about disaster preparedness and disaster risk reduction.

Regional action with the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN)

The Commission is keen to engage in closer cooperation in regional disaster management with the ASEAN. The legally-binding ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) is a good example of a consensual approach among countries for reducing the impact of disasters and helping one another. Since 2010, ASEAN has started updating the ASEAN Regional Programme on Disaster Management by translating it into a Work Programme 2010–2015, in line with the ratification of the

²⁵ World Health Organisation

AADMER and the Hyogo Framework of Action. Mutual commitment to reinforce joint disaster response and risk reduction was confirmed by the EU and ASEAN in Jakarta in September 2011. DG ECHO recognised the need to support the implementation of the AADMER work programme and funding was provided to Oxfam under the 7th DIPECHO Action Plan for 2010-2011 to facilitate the regional civil society’s dialogue with ASEAN. Another example of the active partnership between the Commission and ASEAN in disaster risk reduction is the high-level response exercise held in Manado, Indonesia, in March 2011.

3.5.4. Pacific

The Commission's involvement in the funding of humanitarian assistance is regular, but less frequent than in other parts of the world. Other very active donors i.e. Australia and New Zealand have the tradition of responding swiftly to disasters occurring in the region.

Table - Breakdown of funding (commitments) for the Pacific region

	Humanitarian Aid	Food Aid	Dipecho	Total
Pacific region			2 300 000	2 300 000
TOTAL			2 300 000	2 300 000

In 2011 the Pacific region was spared from the impact of major disasters. Even the tsunami generated by the massive earthquake which occurred in March off the coast of Japan caused only limited damage to Pacific island countries when it moved from the north to the south of the Pacific Ocean.

Nevertheless, populations in the Pacific remain exposed to natural hazards of hydro-meteorological and geological origin which renders DG ECHO's support to disaster risk reduction very relevant. This support seeks to increase the resilience of local communities to natural disasters but also helps to improve the response preparedness by enhancing the capacity of key humanitarian agencies, in particular the Red Cross and UN OCHA.

Regional action in the Pacific - DIPECHO and DRR

Following a successful pilot project in 2010 the first DIPECHO Action Plan for the Pacific was launched in 2011, covering Vanuatu, Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea, i.e. those countries which combine highest risk with limited coping capacity. On a local level, implementing partners will promote community based solutions so that the various island communities can address the challenges posed by natural disasters with sustainable actions.

3.6. Latin America and Caribbean

During 2011, DG ECHO continued to support the devastating effects of the 2010 Haiti earthquake where an estimated 230,000 people were killed and over 2 million were displaced out of a total population of 9.8 million. Interventions included facilitation of safe exit of IDPs from camps through provision of housing options and revitalization of services in areas of return or resettlement while providing basic services in camps. At the end of 2011, the number of IDPs had decreased by 66% compared to July 2010, with an estimated 519,164 individuals still living in camps across the areas affected by the earthquake.

The 2011 hurricane season was active, particularly affecting Central America and the Caribbean. Tropical Depression 12-E in Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua affected approximately 2.6 million people, causing damage and losses amounting to almost

US\$1.9 billion. In terms of damage, and when compared to Hurricane Mitch in 1998, the losses caused by this Depression have been qualified as worse and more devastating. In the Caribbean, Hurricane Irene affected the Bahamas and Tropical Storm Ophelia affected Dominica with more than 1,300 people in need of emergency support.

The 2010-2011 rainy season showed well the vulnerabilities of the South American countries to natural disasters, as entire neighbourhoods in large cities such as La Paz, Caracas and Rio de Janeiro were washed away by mega landslides and flash floods. Also, in more remote areas the impact of the rainy season was felt, with the Peruvian Amazonia (Ucayali province) facing severe flooding, affecting tens of thousands of people.

DG ECHO's humanitarian assistance to victims of Colombia's prolonged internal conflict continued throughout 2011, including support to IDPs, rural populations facing restriction of movement and access to basic goods and services, as well as to Colombians in need of protection who fled to neighbouring countries, particularly Ecuador and Venezuela.

Cholera continued to affect the island of Hispaniola. In Haiti, by December 2011, a total of 515,699 cholera cases were registered nationwide while 6,749 people were reported to have died from the disease. In the Dominican Republic, there were 360 suspected deaths, out of 21,432 reported cases. Dengue outbreaks also affected Peru and Bolivia in 2011.

With a view to the recurrent nature of natural hazards and their humanitarian impact, DG ECHO's disaster preparedness programme (DIPECHO) continued in the respective regions, i.e. Central America, South America and the Caribbean.

Articulation between preparedness and response components is being strengthened through systematic mainstreaming of DRR in all response operations. Furthermore, supporting DRR actions that complement previous emergency projects went a step further in the region with the Drought Management initiative, launched by DG ECHO in 2011. This initiative is designed to look for more sustainable solutions and improve local capacities to face periods of drought in Central America's "Dry Corridor" and the Paraguayan and Bolivian Chaco, where EU has funded emergency projects in response to drought on a recurrent basis during the past years.

Table - Breakdown of funding (commitments) for Latin America

	Humanitarian Aid	Food Aid	Dipecho	Total
Central America	4 000 000			4 000 000
Central and South America		5 000 000		5 000 000
South America			12 000 000	12 000 000
Colombia	11 000 000	1 000 000		12 000 000
Peru	2 000 000			2 000 000
TOTAL	17 000 000	6 000 000	12 000 000	35 000 000

Central America (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama)

Central America is one of the most disaster-prone areas in the world, in terms of recurrence, severity and scope of disasters, and it is particularly exposed to cyclones, floods, landslides, earthquakes, drought, forest fires and volcanic eruptions, which are combined with high vulnerability rates. The recently published Global Climate Risk Index reveals that Honduras was one of the three most affected countries in the world by extreme weather events from 1990-2008, and Nicaragua is the fifth most affected in the world.

In 2011, DG ECHO actions in Central America focused on the response to the emergency needs caused in the month of October by the Tropical Depression 12-E in Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua. This event affected approximately 2.6 million people and causing damage and losses of almost \$1.9 billion. In total, 117 people died and, in terms of damage and losses this crisis has been qualified as worse than Hurricane Mitch in 1998. As a result, an Emergency Decision was adopted and a total of 100,000 people benefitted from nine EU-funded operations. This decision complemented a previous one for Guatemala, adopted at the end of 2010, in response to a series of natural disasters that occurred throughout 2010 (including Pacaya volcano eruption, Tropical Storm Agatha, and Tropical Depression 11-E). These events had substantially eroded the coping capacity of the most vulnerable populations, and led to significant harvest losses that seriously affected subsistence farmers, while opportunities to work as day labourers on bigger farms diminished due to the floods.

Using other funding instruments, the Small Scale Response and the IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF), five interventions were carried out in the region to respond to floods affecting Guatemala, Costa Rica and Nicaragua, and earthquakes in Guatemala, and to cover the humanitarian gaps in these humanitarian crises.

The security situation worsened in 2011 and the main safety risks incurred by partners are related to violent crimes. Access is sometimes compromised due to the high presence of drug-trafficking or youth groups (*maras*). The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes in its first-ever Global Study on Homicide released in October 2011, reported that the world's most dangerous countries — ranked by 2010 murder rates per 100,000 inhabitants — are Honduras (82.1); El Salvador (66); Côte d'Ivoire (56.9); Jamaica (52.1); Venezuela (49); Belize (41.7); and Guatemala (41.4). Three Central American countries are rated among the most dangerous countries in the world.

South America (except Colombia)

The rainy season between 2010 and 2011 highlighted the vulnerabilities of South American countries to natural hazards, as entire neighbourhoods from macro cities as La Paz, Caracas and Rio de Janeiro were washed away by mega landslides and flash floods. These disasters happened because of the practice of building houses on inappropriate land and without proper construction techniques and materials. In Rio de Janeiro alone, more than 800 casualties were registered in the floods/landslides of early 2011. Far from the urban settings, in areas of the Peruvian Amazonia (Ucayali province), severe flooding caused by extreme precipitation levels were the worst in 50 years and severely affected tens of thousands of people.

DG ECHO implemented seven projects to respond to the disasters caused by the rainy season 2010/11 in Peru, Venezuela, Bolivia and Brazil. In Venezuela and Brazil, small scale projects have proven to be well adapted to the South American context by filling the gap of unmet humanitarian needs, complementing the local and national response, serving as a pulling effect for other donors and setting appropriate standards of humanitarian operations which were afterwards replicated by other stakeholders. In the case of the floods in Ucayali (Peru), operations met basic needs and allowed affected indigenous people (largely unsupported by their authorities, due to a combination of lack of capacity and isolation of the affected communities) to restart subsistence agricultural production as soon as possible.

In addition, DG ECHO supported some small scale operations in response to disasters such as the cold waves in Chile and Bolivia, the effects of the ashes coming from the Puyehue volcano eruption in Patagonia, hailstorm in Paraguay and the dengue outbreak in Peru and Bolivia.

DG ECHO continued to advocate for common approaches and increased synergies among partners, trying to multiply the impact of the operations and ensure coherence in the same responses or programmes. To this effect, consortia and alliances between implementing partners have led to a lower number of grant agreements while the number of partners in the region has increased.

Efforts were made to increase integration of projects with local and national systems and strategies in order to increase the possibilities of local ownership, handing over and scaling-up of the good practices developed by ECHO partners in the region for more than 12 years. Examples include the Letter of Intent signed between DG ECHO and the Government of Chile establishing a dialogue on DRR, the support to bottom-up based regulations for DRR laws in Ecuador, Paraguay and Peru, the country-wide replication of DIPECHO experiences by the National Civil Protection in Argentina.

In the same way, DG ECHO prioritised increased coordination with other donors and international initiatives, launching a Technical Group of Humanitarian and DRR donors in Ecuador and Peru. A principal objective is that the DIPECHO consultative process should become a fully open DRR consultative process led by Disaster Risk Management (DRM) national systems and integrating other donors and stakeholders.

DG ECHO and EU Delegations are working to include DRR as one of the priorities in local thematic lines, which gives room for reinforcing LRRD and sustainability of the Commission's funded projects by supporting municipalities and local institutions. An example is the Drought Management initiative, designed to seek more sustainable solutions and improve capacities to face the droughts in the Paraguayan and Bolivian Chaco, where DG ECHO has funded emergency response projects on a recurrent basis during the last 10 years.

Articulation between response and preparedness is being strengthened through systematic mainstreaming of DRR in all response operations and supporting DRR actions at the exit of emergency projects, taking advantage of the public awareness raised by the disaster and filling the preparedness gaps identified during the response.

Colombia (including Colombians in need of international protection in Ecuador and Venezuela)

Internal armed conflict in Colombia continued in 2011 and remains on the list of forgotten crises established by DG ECHO. Despite the killing of the FARC leader in November 2011, there are no clear prospects for a negotiated solution to the armed conflict or an incipient military victory. Massive and individual displacements, confinement of civilians and weapon contamination continued to be major consequences of the conflict in Colombia in 2011. In cumulative terms (and depending on the source), between 3.7 and 5.2 million people have been displaced in Colombia. Restrictions imposed by armed groups on mobility and access to basic services continued during 2011, mostly in remote rural communities where DG ECHO and the main humanitarian organizations intend to concentrate their efforts. According to the

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), around 400,000²⁶ Colombians are refugees or live in a refugee-like situation in Ecuador, Venezuela and Panamá.

Despite the sophisticated Colombian legal protection system (including the endorsement of the victims law in June 2011) and the substantial allocations by the Colombian government to emergency aid in 2011, there is a clear added value for international, independent humanitarian aid to fill gaps, particularly in those remote rural areas, where the population often has to face restrictions of movement and lack of access to basic goods and services.

Afro-Colombian and indigenous communities have been particularly affected by the armed conflict. In the neighbouring countries, protection (notably refugee-status determination) and emergency assistance for new arrivals remain the most important humanitarian issues to address. Protection for asylum seekers and refugees in Venezuela and Ecuador are of serious concern.

Colombia is highly prone to natural disasters; in particular floods caused enormous damage in 2010 and 2011. Around 4.3 million²⁷ people were affected by the rains in 2010 and 2011; despite significant efforts made by national and local authorities to respond to the humanitarian needs created by floods and landslides, the national capacities were overwhelmed by the magnitude of the disaster.

DG ECHO supported the Colombian population affected by the conflict and the emergency provoked by the heavy rainy season in 2011. Around 200,000 people were assisted by DG ECHO in the framework of the Humanitarian Implementation Plan for Colombia 2011 (including IDPs and affected populations in Colombia by armed conflict and/or recent floods: asylum seekers and refugees in Ecuador and Venezuela).

Protection has been the main objective of DG ECHO's intervention in Colombia in the past years. DG ECHO continued to concentrate humanitarian operations in remote rural areas, where State institutions are generally not present or government assistance is not sufficient. The protection of children, women and minorities continued to be a priority. DG ECHO assistance was intended to cover those humanitarian emergency needs not – or not sufficiently – covered by the aid provided by the Colombian government, and ensure humanitarian protection as much as possible. Additionally, DG ECHO conducted a wide consultation process to define its strategy for 2012 and technical workshops were organised by DG ECHO with its partners in December 2011 in order to increase impact of operations in 2012.

Regional action in Central and South America

As far as Disaster Risk Reduction is concerned the implementation of the 7th DIPECHO Action Plan for Central America was ongoing in 2011 with 22 actions implemented. The programme addressed both the risks of large-scale disasters and the expected impact of recurrent small – and medium scale – natural events on the most vulnerable populations. Urban risks have also been addressed with more than half of the projects working on the resilient cities campaign. There has been an increase in coordination between partners which has led to more exchange of methodologies and development of common approaches when coordinating with National Systems for Disaster Risk Reduction, leading to a higher impact.

²⁶ UNHCR global appeal 2012-13.

²⁷ According to Unidad Nacional para la Gestión del Riesgo de Desastres, Presidencia de la Republica de Colombia.

The 7th DIPECHO Action Plan for South America, covering 2011 and 2012 started in April 2011. 23 projects are being implemented in nine countries until the end of 2012 (Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela, Paraguay, Chile, Argentina and Brazil) to increase the preparedness and resilience of communities and institutions to face natural disasters.

In addition to the activities funded under DIPECHO, a Drought Management Programme was launched in 2011; covering both Central and South America. The programme whose objective is to strengthen the resilience of vulnerable communities living in drought-affected areas will continue until end of 2012.

In terms of LRRD, collaboration has been developed with the EU Delegations in the framework of specific programmes. In addition, some tools developed by DIPECHO partners have now been completely absorbed and appropriated at national level e.g.: Early Warning Systems for landslides, Guidelines for training on different topics. With other donors, DG ECHO is leading the Technical Groups of Donors in Honduras and Nicaragua and this has allowed opportunities for LRRD, especially with Swiss Cooperation, USAID/OFDA²⁸ and the IADB²⁹ and World Bank. In 2012, DG ECHO will concentrate on establishing similar spaces in Guatemala and El Salvador.

3.6.1. Caribbean

Table - Breakdown of funding (commitments) for the Caribbean region

	Humanitarian Aid	Food Aid	Dipecho	EDF	Total
Haiti	25 000 000	11 000 000			36 000 000
St Lucia				1 030 000	1 030 000
Caribbean			8 000 000		8 000 000
TOTAL	25 000 000	11 000 000	8 000 000	1 030 000	45 030 000

Haiti

In 2011, the EU allocated funds to the cholera and earthquake response to provide further support to people affected by the January 2010 earthquake and the cholera epidemic that started in October 2010. Interventions included facilitation of safe exit of IDPs from camps through provision of housing options such as T-shelters, rental subsidies and house repairs in neighborhoods of origin or new locations, combined with support to basic livelihoods and rehabilitation of water, sanitation and primary health care structures. Residual support to basic services in camps was also provided with a view to handing them over to local authorities. At the end of 2011, the number of displaced had decreased by 66% compared to July 2010, with an estimated 519,164 individuals still living in camps across the areas affected by the earthquake.

Hygiene promotion, access to safe water/sanitation and support to Cholera Treatment Centers and Units (CTC and CTUs), capacity building of national health staff and strengthening of an epidemiological surveillance and alert system were the components of DG ECHO's strategy to fight cholera. By December, a total of 515,699 cholera cases were registered nationwide while 6,749 people were reported to have died from the disease. The number of new cholera cases per month declined to 300 compared to 1,100 in June 2011. At 1.3%, the cumulative case

²⁸ Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance
²⁹ Inter American Development Bank

fatality rate is at its lowest since the first outbreak and dropped from 2.4% in November 2010 but is still above the 1% internationally recommended threshold.

Complementary funds secured the implementation of an exit strategy from the 2009 DG ECHO Global Plan which was temporarily interrupted due to the earthquake. Interventions focused on the fight against malnutrition and improved access to mother and child health care services. The EU also funded partners to strengthen and capacity build human resources of the MSPP³⁰ and departmental health structures with the objective of integrating the prevention and treatment of malnutrition into health services.

Disaster Risk Reduction was also focused in order to support capacity development of communities, the DPC³¹ and the Haitian Red Cross to prepare for and respond to multi-hazard disasters with the objective of increasing the resilience of the population and the government when faced with natural hazards.

In 2011, Haiti was spared from major natural hazards. Since May, a newly elected President is in office and in October a Prime Minister was nominated. In October, the Security Council extended the mandate of MINUSTAH³² for another year with 7,340 troops and a police force of 3,240 contributing to relative security and stability in the country. Reconstruction efforts gained momentum in the second half of 2011.

Throughout 2011, DG ECHO placed particular emphasis on LRRD initiatives in the reconstruction, water/sanitation, health, food assistance and DRR sectors.

A real time evaluation of the intervention was carried out between November 2010 and April 2011. Amongst other conclusions, the evaluation recommended continuing the phasing strategy throughout 2011 and 2012, as well as reinforcing the LRRD components, as well as the DRR structures in Haiti. The objective should be to place DRR at the heart of development policies in the country.

St. Lucia

Emergency response to Hurricane Tomas in Saint Lucia was implemented. Through its partners, DG ECHO provided assistance to more than 34,000 people, covering shelter, water/sanitation and livelihood interventions.

Regional action in the Caribbean (except Haiti)

The 2011 Atlantic hurricane season was active. A total of 19 cyclone formations affected the region; six of them evolved to hurricane category. DG ECHO continually monitored the situation and provided support for the emergency response to Hurricane Irene (Bahamas) and Tropical Storm Ophelia (Dominica), which directly affected more than 1,300 people. DG ECHO contributed to IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) and, in addition, a Small Scale Disaster Response intervention was financed in Dominican Republic to benefit 500 families affected by the water level increase of Lake Enriquillo. The communities settled around the lake were at risk of food insecurity/malnutrition and by a compromised capacity to manage their livelihoods.

³⁰ Ministry of Public Health and Populations

³¹ Direction de la Protection Civile/civil protection agency of the Haitian government

³² Mission des Nations Unis pour la Stabilisation d'Haiti

Epidemics continued to affect the region in 2011. The cholera outbreak in the Dominican Republic is reported to have caused more than 360 deaths, of 21,432 cases. DG ECHO contributed to control of the disease supporting actions in communities with active transmission, which benefitted more than 200,000 people.

Following the Haiti earthquake, support to people in need of protection and hosting communities in Dominican Republic was provided by UNHCR.

Regional action in the Caribbean - DIPECHO

Disaster preparedness actions in the region continued to be funded through the DIPECHO Action Plan 2011-2012. Implementation of eleven projects started in 2011 and will continue in 2012 (three regional projects, three projects in the Dominican Republic, one in Jamaica and four in Haiti). Through this programme, the most vulnerable communities were prepared to face disasters, benefitting more than 145,000 people in the Caribbean (except Haiti where DRR action was funded through country specific allocations).

3.7. Worldwide intervention tools

In 2008, DG ECHO decided to launch pilot decisions to complement its Emergency tool box and to evaluate them after one year of implementation. Three types of pilot decisions were taken: for epidemics, small-scale disasters and a contribution to the IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF). The initial objectives were:

- Response to smaller crisis without increasing DG ECHO administrative burden
- Access to crisis in remote areas or for which it is difficult to respond within 72 hours.
- Better preparation for "*predictable*" crisis based on past experience.
- Increased DG ECHO visibility.

The 3 instruments increase the image of DG ECHO as quality donor and meet at least two of the Principles and Good Practice of Humanitarian Donorship, i.e. n°8 "*Strengthen the capacity of affected countries and local communities to prevent, prepare for, mitigate and respond to humanitarian crises*" and principle n°11 "*...necessity of dynamics and flexible response to changing needs in humanitarian crisis, strive to ensure predictability and flexibility in funding ...*".

In order to be able to intervene in new ‘small- scale’ crises, funding decisions with a worldwide scope were adopted in 2011:

Table - Breakdown of funding (commitments) for worldwide intervention tools

	<i>Humanitarian Aid</i>	<i>Total</i>
Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF)	3 000 000	3 000 000
Epidemics	6 500 000	6 500 000
TOTAL	9 500 000	9 500 000

3.7.1. The IFRC’s Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF)

Vulnerable people in third countries throughout the world are affected by disasters, such as floods, landslides, cyclones, tsunamis, drought, fires, cold waves, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, epidemics, food insecurity, population movements and civil unrest. Relief is required, as well as preparedness for imminent disasters, in the context of small-scale

emergencies for which an appeal is unlikely to be launched. Most small-scale emergencies (sometimes no more than 100,000 people are affected) are responded to at local or national level. The Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies, supported by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), are often best placed to provide an immediate response, being rooted in the local community and mobilising community members as volunteers.

DG ECHO ensured a quick reaction capacity to many small-scale disasters in 2011, by means of an earmarked contribution to IFRC's DREF and a rapid response was provided via 35 operations. Life-saving assistance and relief were brought to over 1,5 million victims of floods, cyclones/hurricanes/storms, earthquakes, epidemics, civil unrest and other small-scale disasters. Health operations included a strong preparedness component, with prompt reaction to disease outbreaks preventing a full-scale epidemic. Capacity-building of local staff and volunteers of many Red Cross/Crescent National Societies also enhanced disaster preparedness.

3.7.2. Epidemics

Epidemic outbreaks pose major risks notably to the world's poorest populations. The vaccination coverage in developing countries is generally low and the risk of transmission of infections enhanced. Poverty, lack of basic sanitation facilities, low hygienic standards and malnutrition in post-emergency or structurally weak countries increase the vulnerability to communicable diseases. A timely response to epidemic outbreaks, combined with appropriate preparedness action, can help save thousands of lives.

In 2011, EU funds allowed to reduce the impact of epidemics on vulnerable people in developing countries and to support preparedness and emergency response operations to address outbreaks of communicable diseases, especially cholera, meningitis and yellow fever, with a specific focus on Africa, assisting an estimated 3.6 million individuals.

3.7.3. Small-Scale Response Instrument

Small-scale disasters often occur in remote or isolated areas, rarely trigger a declaration of emergency and usually do not figure prominently in the news despite the serious humanitarian needs they create locally. National response to disasters in larger disasters, even in countries with relatively developed disaster management capacities, may leave gaps of uncovered needs - often related to social inequality, isolation, under-reporting of events, inadequate capacity at local level - where only a limited humanitarian intervention is needed.

In order to allow a rapid response to those disasters where the number of affected people is low, and to strengthen the capacity of affected communities to withstand future disasters, DG ECHO uses the Small Scale Response instrument. At least one of the two following criteria for intervention must be fulfilled:

- extent of damage: the number of affected people is less than 50,000;
- unmet needs (gaps left by ongoing assistance), where an intervention limited to a maximum amount of €200,000 per disaster is sufficient to cover unmet needs.

The Small Scale Response instrument was used in 2011³³ to provide assistance in cases such as: landslide-affected populations in La Paz, Bolivia; flood response and preparedness in India, Laos, Gambia, Colombia; emergency assistance to victims of Tropical Depressions in Nicaragua and Bangladesh; assistance to earthquake-affected populations in southern Kyrgyzstan and in Chile; assistance to cyclone-affected populations in Madagascar; emergency interventions and disaster management for fire affected families in camps in Nepal.

³³ On funds made available in 2010

3.8. Disaster preparedness activities, including DIPECHO

The EU's main contribution to the global disaster risk reduction effort remains the DIPECHO programme, which targets highly vulnerable communities living in seven of the most disaster-prone regions in the world. In DG ECHO terminology, this is called the '*community-based approach*'.

Since launching the DIPECHO programmes (as from 1996), the Commission has invested €264 million in the associated action plans.

Besides the DIPECHO action plans, mainstreaming activities contribute also to disaster preparedness. The effort is based on activities related to the following sectors: infrastructure support, capacity building and training, advocacy and public awareness, small-scale mitigation, mapping and data computerisation, early warning systems, education, facilitation and coordination, institutional strengthening and climate change adaptation activities.

In 2011, disaster preparedness activities managed by DG ECHO allowed about 12 million beneficiaries to be reached.

Disaster Preparedness Activities 1996-2011			
Region	Funding 1996-2010	Funding 2011	Funding 1996-2011
Southern Africa	11.735.000		11 735 000
Southern Caucasus/Eastern Europe	4.703.357		4 703 357
Central Asia	29.670.000		29 670 000
South Asia	31.753.043	12.000.000	43 753 043
South-East Asia	41.680.000		41 680 000
Central America	42.480.000		42 480 000
South America	36.227.663	12.000.000	48 227 663
Caribbean	25.178.156	8.000.000	33 178 156
Pacific	1.500.000	2.300.000	3 800 000
Other	4.245.381	183.013	4 428 394
Other - Capacity-building	200.000	117.639	317 639
Total DIPECHO programmes	229 372 600	34 600 652	263 973 252
Drought preparedness (on the HA budget)	90 000 000		90 000 000
Pilot disaster preparedness programme (Peru)	2.000.000		2 000 000
Mainstreaming activities*	pm	pm	
Total disaster preparedness activities	301 372 600	34 600 652	355 973 252

Details concerning the actions implemented in 2011 are included in Sections 3.3 to 3.7 above under the regional sections concerned.

DG ECHO's contribution to disaster preparedness goes well beyond the DIPECHO programme as many of its major humanitarian financing decisions include disaster preparedness or mitigation of disaster impacts as an objective. Even post-disaster emergency responses often have a risk reduction element.

In 2011, this was the case in the following regions/countries:

- Africa: Sudan/South Sudan, Uganda, Djibouti, Ethiopia, The Gambia and Côte d'Ivoire;
- Asia: Afghanistan, Philippines;
- Latin America: Paraguay, Bolivia and Guatemala;
- Caribbean/Pacific: Haiti, Cook islands, Micronesia and Fiji.

3.9. Transition and Resilience

There is a growing need to improve synergies between humanitarian aid and development policies. Disasters destroy gains from development cooperation while they place an increased pressure on humanitarian aid budgets. The transition from relief to development – especially in conflict affected countries and complex crises– is often neither quick nor linear. Numerous international actors in the areas of humanitarian aid, recovery, development, peace keeping etc. work side by side for several years (such as in Afghanistan or in the Democratic Republic of Congo), though they act still in isolation.

This makes proper articulation and close coordination critical, starting from the needs assessment through to actual implementation of operations, so as to ensure better consistency and to lay the foundations for a sustainable development process.

There is a compelling case for greater humanitarian-development interaction: Their common objective should be to increase the resilience of vulnerable populations in order to reduce vulnerability and to avoid that humanitarian emergencies turn into protracted crises. Adaptation to climate change and natural Disaster Risk Reduction strategies should become a joint priority objective, as well as recovery and transition between relief, rehabilitation and development.

Coordination (both at political and operational level) is an essential element to ensure a timely, efficient and effective delivery of our humanitarian and development aid and use of budgetary resources. The Commission is currently developing concrete tools and approaches ("*Joint Humanitarian and Development Framework*") aimed at ensuring proper coordination and consistency between different EU instruments and interventions in transition contexts.

While the LRRD approach has long been debated mostly from an aid architecture perspective (how to link instruments), the debate on resilience was initiated in 2011 and will be pursued to provide an opportunity to address those important challenges from the objectives to be achieved ("*building resilience*") and not from the possible means to be mobilised (humanitarian funds on the one hand, development funds on the other hand). The assumption is that starting from this common goal, Humanitarian Aid and Development Aid together will do better.

In 2011, DG ECHO has been engaged at different levels to translate this thinking into practical considerations. DG ECHO has actively participated in the drafting of the new financial instruments for development, making sure that transition/resilience issues would be taken into account and factored in the new Regulations. The draft Regulations does provide more opportunities than the current ones to tackle effectively those challenges. DG ECHO has also been actively engaged (with DEVCO and EEAS) in the development and testing of a common ECHO-DEVCO-EEAS methodology ("*Joint Humanitarian and Development Framework*") for defining strategic priorities, designing joint strategic "programmes"

addressing the basic, underlying and immediate causes leading to fragility and vulnerability of a population affected by a crisis. Several approaches developed at country levels were based on improved working relationships between ECHO DEVCO and EEAS and the development of a common approach.

Below, an example of the approach developed on transition from DG ECHO DRR action plan in Kenya to Development EU funded DRR programme:

The dialogue with the EU Delegation since 2006 has led to the elaboration and implementation of two development drought risk reduction programmes³⁴; including a call for proposal to NGOs early 2012, allowing a handover between DG ECHO and the EU Delegation on community based DRR and livelihoods assets protection activities in the country. Articulated around 3 main components, the design of these two EC development programmes has been optimal to create conditions for a positive change regarding drought management in Kenya. These components are:

- a) a support to community based activities, generating lessons learnt to feed the technical assistance;
- b) a technical assistance embedded into the national institution in charge of the management of drought and
- c) a financial support to the activities and the functioning of this national institution.

The DG ECHO funded Drought Risk Reduction action plans have performed their testing and laboratory roles and shared evidences from the DRR pilot operations supported by DG ECHO so that the Kenya Rural Development Programme (KRDP) could integrate them. For example, a stronger emphasis is now given to the setting up of DRR mechanisms at community level, correcting therefore a crucial gap in the national drought management system in place up to now.

The design of these two EC development programmes has allowed the EU Delegation to have a political dialogue with the Government of Kenya regarding drought management in the country, pushing and advocating for institutional change to increase the effectiveness of the national system: creation of a Drought Management Authority, setting up of a National Drought Contingency Fund. It has certainly contributed to the recent approval of the creation of the national Drought Management Authority.

3.10. Civil protection

Financing of civil protection activities in 2011 reached the levels as specified below:

Table - Breakdown of funding (commitments) for Civil Protection

	<i>Amount</i>
Civil Protection inside the EU	16 543 559
Civil Protection outside the EU	13 978 904
TOTAL	30 522 463

3.10.1. Prevention

The Commission developed a number of activities to fully implement the EU framework for the prevention of disasters³⁵.

³⁴ Drought Management Initiative (DMI - 2007-2011) and its following phase, the Kenya Rural Development Programme (KRDP - starting in 2012)

³⁵ See Commission Communication on a Community approach on the prevention of natural and man-made disasters (COM(2009) 82 final, 23.2.2009) and Council Conclusions of 30 November 2009 on a Community framework on disaster prevention within the EU.

Following the adoption by the Commission in December 2010 of a guidance paper on national risk assessment and mapping for disaster management, developed together with the national authorities of the Member States³⁶, the Council adopted Conclusions on further developing risk assessment for disaster management within the European Union³⁷. Member States were invited to develop national risk assessment processes, in the context of which they would make use of those guidelines. In particular, Member States are invited to provide the Commission with a description of the process, methodology, methods, and non-sensitive data used for national risk assessment. Several meetings have taken place with Member States and interested stakeholders to facilitate this process.

Before the end of 2012, the Commission, using the available national risk analysis, and taking into account the future impact of climate change and the need for climate adaptation, will prepare a cross-sectoral overview of the major natural and man-made risks faced by the EU.

The Commission is also working towards improving its knowledge base on disasters.

Actions were developed with the European Environment Agency (EEA) to encourage better information, public accessibility, and comparability of disaster data, such as information on the costs of disasters. The Agency issued in January 2011 a report assessing the occurrence and impacts of disasters in Europe for the period 1998-2009 and meetings have been organised with private and public stakeholders.

The Commission has also started collecting information in the framework of an 18-month disaster prevention good practice programme, focussing on specific disasters (earthquakes, tsunamis, floods, storms, droughts and heat waves) and horizontal measures (such as planning and infrastructure design). The programme will lead to the adoption of EU guidelines on minimum standards for disaster prevention before the end of 2012.

The results of this work will be integrated in the adaptation to the Climate Change Clearing House Mechanism that will become operational in 2012.

The Commission is also encouraging effective and greater investment in disaster prevention³⁸: a requirement to disaster (and climate) proofed infrastructure investments has been introduced in the proposals for cohesion policy 2014-2020, adopted in October 2011. Conditionality provisions on risk prevention and risk management have also been introduced to maximise the effectiveness of the interventions.

The Commission has started discussions with the insurance industry to explore ways to encourage increased use of disaster insurance policies with risk-based premiums. The Commission hosted in October 2011 a conference "*Prevention and Insurance of Natural Catastrophes*"³⁹, bringing together policy makers, regulators, consumers, experts representing re/insurance industry, re/insurance intermediaries, loss adjusters as well as academia.

³⁶ Commission Staff Working Paper — Risk Assessment and Mapping Guidelines for Disaster Management (SEC(2010) 1626, 21.12.2010).

³⁷ Council Conclusions on further developing risk assessment for disaster management within the European Union

³⁸ See, inter alia, the Council Conclusions of 8 November 2010 on Innovative Solutions for Financing Disaster Prevention.

³⁹ http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/insurance/natural-catastrophes_en.htm

The Commission is also actively ensuring linkages with the initiatives developed by the United Nations' International Strategy for Disaster Reduction Secretariat (UNISDR) implementing the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA). The Commission took part in and contributed to the third session of the global platform for disaster risk reduction and to the annual meeting of European national platforms and HFA focal points, the "*European Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction*". Synergies are ensured with the ongoing work at EU level.

In 2011 the Civil Protection Financial Instrument financed, on the basis of an annual call for proposals for prevention projects, 5 projects in the area of prevention. The projects will be implemented in 2012 and 2013 (country of coordinating beneficiary indicated):

- Urban disaster prevention (Italy);
- Assessment of Risk Evaluations (UK);
- Hazard Assessments (Spain);
- Tsunami Early Warning (Greece);
- Prevention Strategy for the Baltic Sea region (Sweden).

3.10.2. Preparedness

Preparedness activities seek to contribute to reaching a state of readiness and capability of human and material means enabling them to ensure an effective rapid response to an emergency, obtained as a result of action taken in advance⁴⁰. Early Warning Systems, modules and the Civil Protection Mechanism's training programme are essential parts of those activities. In addition, the Commission gave financial support to a number of preparedness cooperation projects.

a) Several *Early Warning Systems* were financially supported in 2011, including:

- ▶ EFAS (European Floods Alert System), which provides early warning of floods in Europe. The system is developed by the Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC).
- ▶ EFFIS (European Forest Fire Information System), covering the EU and neighbouring countries, which monitors and predicts forest fires in Europe (fire forecasts up to six days ahead). The system, which is also a JRC product, is able to assess the damage following a forest fire.
- ▶ GDACS (Global Disaster Alert and Coordination System), which provides a worldwide warning for earthquakes, tsunamis, hurricanes and volcanic eruptions. It also serves as a coordination tool during emergencies and provides an automatic analysis of an event.

b) Member States are to identify in advance *modules*⁴¹ that might be available for intervention or could be established at very short notice and dispatched, generally within 12 hours following a request for assistance. As civil protection modules should be capable of working self-sufficiently for a given period of time, general requirements for self-sufficiency and, where appropriate, specific requirements that may vary according to the type of intervention or the type of module concerned are established at EU level so that

⁴⁰ See Article 4 of the Mechanism Recast.

⁴¹ 'Module' means a self-sufficient and autonomous predefined task- and needs-driven arrangement of Member States' capabilities or a mobile operational team of the Member States representing a combination of human and material means, that can be described in terms of its capacity for intervention or by the task(s) it is able to undertake (Article 3(5) of the Mechanism Recast).

Participating States know in advance the features to be met by the modules they offer on a voluntary basis for participating in an EU civil protection assistance intervention⁴².

In 2010, those requirements were partially changed with respect to the "*Aerial forest fire fighting using airplanes*" and "*Field hospital*" modules⁴³. In addition, recent civil protection operations demonstrated the need to add and implement four new types of civil protection modules to reinforce the civil protection rapid response capability, namely the "*Ground forest fire fighting*", "*Ground forest fire fighting using vehicles*", "*Flood containment*" and "*Flood rescue using boats*" modules⁴⁴.

As of 31 December 2011, Participating States had registered in the Mechanism's Common Emergency Communication and Information System (CECIS) 136 modules, such as Water purification, Aerial forest fire fighting using airplanes or field hospitals, and 8 TAST (Technical Assistance and Support Teams).

- c) The Mechanism's *training programme* which aims at enhancing the coordination of civil protection assistance intervention by ensuring compatibility and complementarity between the intervention teams and modules, and by improving the competence of the experts to be deployed on-site as members of an EU assessment and coordination team. The programme comprises joint courses and exercises (including exercises involving modules) and an exchange system whereby individuals may be seconded to other Member States.

► *Training courses*: in 2011, 891 persons took part in the 12 types of training courses offered by selected civil protection organisations. Altogether 49 courses were organised in 2011 and offered to eligible personnel from Participating States' civil protection organisations and UN personnel. The experts participating in the training programme can become part of EU Civil Protection Teams deployed in the event of an emergency within and outside the EU (52 experts deployed in 2011).

► *Exercises*: in 2011, 9 grant agreements related to full-scale exercises were implemented and followed-up. Furthermore, 5 exercises were selected in the call for proposal for Civil Protection Full-Scale exercises launched in 2011. The exercises will focus on the following areas: a chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear (CBRN), tidal wave, marine pollution, floods and terrorist attack.

► *Exercises with modules*: in 2011, 5 contracts related to exercises for Civil Protection modules and TAST were implemented and followed up. Four table-top exercises and four field exercises took also place in 2011, with the total participation of about 500 participants.

► *Preparedness projects*: in 2011 the Civil Protection Financial Instrument financed four preparedness projects in the following areas (country of coordinating beneficiary indicated): creation of a team for evacuation of citizens (Germany), evacuation in case

⁴² Commission Decision 2004/277/EC, Euratom of 29 December 2003 as regards rules for the implementation of Council Decision 2007/779/EC, Euratom establishing a Community civil protection mechanism (OJ L 87, 25.3.2004, p. 20), as amended by Decision 2008/73/EC, Euratom of 20 December 2007 (OJ L 20, 24.1.2008, p. 23).

⁴³ Commission Decision 2010/481/EU, Euratom of 29 July 2010 amending Decision 2004/277/EC, Euratom as regards rules for the implementation of Council Decision 2007/779/EC, Euratom establishing a Community civil protection mechanism (OJ L 236, 7.9.2010, p. 5).

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

of a nuclear incident (Slovenia), cave rescuing awareness raising (Slovenia) and oil polluted shore line cleanup (Malta).

3.10.3. The civil protection response

In 2011, the Commission's Monitoring and Information Centre (MIC) was dealing with 27⁴⁵ disasters inside and outside EU. This includes an explosion and power shortage in Cyprus; earthquake, tsunami and nuclear accident in Fukushima power plant in Japan; evacuation of EU citizens and repatriation of third country nationals from Libya/Tunisia, as well as coordinating the European response to other requests for international assistance with regard to disasters worldwide. The European Civil Protection Mechanism was six times on a close monitoring phase and three times on a pre-alert phase. It was activated 4 times in order to respond to emergencies within the EU and 14 times for emergencies occurring outside EU borders.

In order to provide adequate response:

- A total of 52 experts were dispatched inside and outside the EU within the framework of 9 missions of experts mandated in an assessment and coordination team.
- 9 MIC Liaison officers were dispatched on emergencies.
- 46 transports requests were awarded.

In terms of disasters, it should be noted that 2011 was heavily plagued by floods, forest fires and civil unrest. Also noteworthy were the requests for assistance received as a result of volcano eruptions, tropical storms, earthquakes, a nuclear incident following the earthquake and tsunami in Japan. Worth to be noted that there is a new type of emergencies: space debris.

In terms of evaluation, the effectiveness of civil protection scheme has been assessed at the end of 2010. The results of the evaluation are positive on the MIC providing useful services, relevant to Participating States when civil protection assistance interventions are deployed within or outside the EU. The training courses have proved to be a valuable asset in terms of preparing national experts for civil protection assistance interventions, thus improving the overall response capability of the Mechanism. The modular approach met with great interest and success among Participating States, and should be further developed, including through specialised exercises and the development of standard operating procedures.

3.10.4. International cooperation

a) Candidate Countries & Potential Candidates

A Commission Decision approving a Memorandum of Understanding on the participation of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in the Civil Protection Financial Instrument and the Civil Protection Mechanism was adopted on 15.2.2011⁴⁶. The country will become the 32nd State to participate in the Mechanism after the internal ratification of the Memorandum of Understanding has been completed and the agreement enters into force, which is expected to take place before the end of 2012.

In December 2010, DG ECHO launched a programme for civil protection cooperation with the candidate countries and potential candidates financed through the EU Instrument for Pre-

⁴⁵ Of which 18 requests for assistance (4 within and 14 outside EU), 3 pre-alerts and 6 monitoring

⁴⁶ C(2011) 862 final

Accession Assistance (IPA). The beneficiaries are Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Kosovo⁴⁷ under UNSCR 1244/99 and Turkey. The Programme has a budget of €4 million and an implementation period of 2 years.

The overall objective of the programme is to bring the beneficiary countries closer to the EU Civil Protection Mechanism and to contribute to the development of their civil protection capacities. To this end, activities were organised in 2011 such as trainings on international disaster relief operations for up to 60 experts in the field of civil protection; one table top exercise and one regional field exercise in Slovenia with earthquake scenario where 7 intervention teams from the region and 40 observers participated; one high-level workshop on the European Civil Protection Mechanism.

b) Southern partnership

The Prevention, Preparedness and Response to Natural and Man-made Disasters Programme (PPRD South) contributes to the development in partner countries of stronger prevention, preparedness and response capacities in civil protection. It also aims to bring the Mediterranean Partner Countries progressively closer to the European Civil Protection Mechanism.

Funded by the European Union, PPRD South started in March 2009 and will run until 2012. It provides a framework for reviewing existing civil protection/disaster management capacities and legislative framework, the preparation of a regional Risk Atlas, capacity building measures, increased cooperation with the EU Civil Protection Mechanism and the organisation of technical assistance activities.

PPRD South is managed by a consortium led by the Italian Department for Civil Protection and includes the Civil Protection Authorities of France, Egypt and Algeria and the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR). The Programme's beneficiary countries are Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria, the Palestinian Authority, Tunisia, Turkey, Israel, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Montenegro. Mauritania and Libya participate as observers.

c) Other third countries

Chile - The Commission and the Chilean Government, through the Chilean National Emergency Office (ONEMI), signed on 25th November 2011 a letter of intent on cooperation in Disaster Management. Both parties recognize that prevention, mitigation and preparedness are the most effective way to respond to the increasing threat posed by disasters and agree to cooperate in a view to promote the mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation in related sectors and institutions. The parties identified a number of areas for possible cooperation, among them the exchange of best practices on disaster preparedness and mitigation with local communities in disaster prone areas, the exchange of know-how and practices in risk mapping and risk assessment, the share of information and lessons learned on emergencies.

United States - The Commission and the Department of Homeland Security, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) signed on 16 November 2011 an administrative

⁴⁷ This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

arrangement to create a framework for information sharing and knowledge exchange to foster coordination in disaster management. Their respective actions are detailed in a workplan agreed between the parties along the needs and priorities identified. The information sharing will concern risk assessment and mapping, lessons learned (and implemented) from disasters, prevention measures, scenario planning and exercising, with particular attention to mega disasters (low probability – high impact).

International organizations - In October 2004, the Commission and UNOCHA agreed on a system of close cooperation and coordination in disaster response (Joint Standard Operating Procedures for coordination in disaster response). The EU works closely with UN experts to ensure that European assistance is effectively integrated into the overall relief effort coordinated by the UN. During the response to an emergency, information is exchanged both at the headquarters level as well as in the field. As far as disaster preparedness is concerned, the Commission works very closely with UNOCHA on the development of training programmes. UN representatives are invited to the Commission's civil protection training courses and exercises and vice versa. This is important to ensure that EU and UN experts can work well together. The EU and the UN have taken part in several joint missions. Missions can take different forms, such as a joint assessment by a combined EU and UN team, or a team of EU experts integrated into a UN team.

The Joint UNEP⁴⁸/OCHA Environment Unit integrated into the Emergency Services Branch of UNOCHA, is the United Nations mechanism for mobilizing and coordinating the international response to environmental emergencies. Following the signing of an informal cooperation paper in December 2005, there have been a number of emergencies where the European Civil Protection Mechanism and the Joint UNEP/OCHA Environment Unit worked together, pooling expertise in environmental emergencies and maximizing the overall impact of the assistance provided to a disaster-stricken country. These emergencies have included an oil spill off the Lebanese coast in July 2006; the chemical spill in the Côte d'Ivoire in September 2006; and a joint environmental emergency mission in March 2010 to Ukraine to evaluate the risk of a dam break and pollution in a former mining area.

3.11. Case studies on launching assistance (humanitarian aid, disaster preparedness and civil protection)

3.11.1. Conflict in Libya - joined Humanitarian aid and Civil Protection assistance

Humanitarian assistance to besieged cities (Sirte, Bani Wallid) - All along the conflict in Libya, the cities of Sirte and Bani Wallid suffered heavy shelling. For the population of Sirte it was extremely difficult to leave the city and it had to face day by day an increasingly difficult humanitarian situation. Quite rapidly shortages of water, electricity, hygiene items and food started to be reported. Ibn Sina, the only hospital in Sirte, was quickly overwhelmed as a result of the ongoing fighting and it had to operate in extremely difficult circumstances with shortages of oxygen, drinking water, food and life saving drugs. While fighting was ongoing, DG ECHO partners (ICRC, UNICEF, ACTED, Mercy Corps, WFP) developed contingency planning and stockpiled emergency relief items (food, water, NFI) to provide emergency aid to the affected populations as soon as they became accessible. The coordination between humanitarian agencies was facilitated by DG ECHO's support to a humanitarian hub in Misrata. As Sirte fell, the priority became to ensure for those who had fled the hostilities a safe return in a town heavily contaminated with unexploded ordnances. Ever since the aggravation of the situation in Sirte, DG ECHO had been anticipating this need and had advocated for the necessity to rapidly deploy Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) teams and Mine Risk Education teams. As early

⁴⁸ United Nations Environment Programme - www.unep.org

as mid-October, DG ECHO decided to reinforce its support for humanitarian mine clearance actions. At the occasion, Commissioner Kristalina Georgieva stated that: *"One of the major threats to civilians remains the residues of war. Despite the cessation of the fighting, unexploded ammunition and mines are still claiming victims, especially children. This additional funding will assist the Libyan people to reduce the risk of fatalities and injury"*.

Repatriation of Third Country Nationals - During the conflict, Tunisia, Egypt and Niger were faced a sudden influx of Tunisian and Egyptian returnees, along with Libyan and third country nationals, who were seeking to escape violence. At least 77,000 persons crossed the border from Libya into Tunisia in a few days. The Tunisian army set up a transit camp at the Ras-Ajdir crossing point. The camp could accommodate 800 people. Basic services such as food and medical care were provided. A similar reception camp had been established at the Egyptian border but assistance was availed exclusively to Egyptian returnees. An estimated 5,000 to 7,000 Third Country Nationals (non-Egyptians and non-Libyans) were stranded at the compound of the Egypt-Libya border, requiring urgent evacuation assistance. On 28 February, IOM started the first five of ten air rotations to support the evacuation from Djerba (Tunisia) of nearly 2,000 stranded migrants. A ferry had departed with 1,500 stranded Egyptian migrants back to their country. Despite these efforts, the overcrowding at the borders was worsening by the hour. A coordination and assessment team consisting of 6 members arrived in Djerba in the evening of 3rd March 2011. A second team was deployed to Tunisia in the evening of 12/4/2011. All in all, the MIC helped in coordinating the provision of in-kind assistance provided by the participating States to the Mechanism and facilitated the evacuation of nationals and third country nationals by co-funding 30 requests for transport assistance.

3.11.2. Rapid Response to populations' movements (D.R. Congo)

DRC is one of the biggest protracted crises in the world: the country is still affected by regular and violent fighting on its Eastern part with ongoing population displacements. The challenge is to address the needs in a adequate and timely manner, in a volatile insecurity and logistically context. One of the reported success stories in eastern DRC is the Rapid Response to Movements of Population, RRMP. This inter-agency mechanism co-led by OCHA and UNICEF, includes phases of contingency preparation (including pre-positioning of aid supplies and identification of experimented operational partners), humanitarian surveillance system through alert networks, as well as dedicated and pre-financed response in water/sanitation, education and non food items. This programme was initially launched in 2004 but it has been continuously adapted. DG ECHO is one of the main donors of this initiative (€20 million since 2005). In 2011⁴⁹, the mechanism assessed the needs of more than 2.3 million persons and supported one million beneficiaries - all affected by population movements – including internally displaced persons (IDPs), returnees and host communities. Implementation is done through numerous NGOs including AVSI, Save the Children, IRC, NRC, Solidarités in three provinces (North and South Kivu and in the Orientale province). The RRMP programme has developed a multi-sector assessment (MSA) tool, which scores every crisis situation against a set of commonly agreed indicators; leading to a total vulnerability score, which when exceeded triggers an RRMP response. In 2011, 230 assessments were done and shared. MSA results are accessible online and via clusters and are often used by the wider humanitarian community to prioritise other interventions. They are often used to reinforce programming decision making by donors, ensuring that adequate targeting in the areas of highest need. This innovative model allows, in a challenging and volatile context, a better needs-focused emergency response programme and helps to improve the speed, quality and coverage of emergency response. Its limitation is that the emergency response is time-bound and that needs remaining after the RRMP response are not always easily taken over by other projects.

⁴⁹ Compilation of results from the beginning of RRMP 2011 on February 1st to the end of November 2011

3.11.3. Mogadishu's lifesaving soup kitchens

Long queues form at a wet feeding centre in Wadajir district of Mogadishu. Everyday, about five thousand people collect food here, for most, the only meal of the day. This is one of the 18 kitchens operated by a local organisation called SAACID, which means "to help" in the local Somali language. The wet feeding programme is funded by several donors, including the Humanitarian Aid department of the Commission. The Head of Somalia Office at the Commission, observes that Somalia is one of the most difficult contexts to work in for humanitarian aid workers. Militants have declared humanitarian aid workers legitimate targets, making delivery of aid extremely difficult. Inside Mogadishu, displaced people fleeing conflict and drought in the rural areas are braving the long and difficult journey only to starve in the city. The soup kitchens are the only source of food for many families. About 80,000 hot meals are served across the city everyday for six days a week. Moving supplies to the centres is filled with challenges. Numerous roadblocks manned by different militias who often impose random 'taxation' pose the biggest problem. But this lifeline has come under increasing threat. SAACID is one of the agencies ordered to stop operations in the November 2011 announcement issued by the al-Shebaab. Residents such as Habiba Mohamed Ali do not know where to turn to. Habiba has no income or other source of nutrition. Without this food centre, she fears that her family will starve and die.

3.11.4. Essential Medicines Programme in Zimbabwe⁵⁰

Harare: 20 January, 2011 - Every four months, Henry Gwiranenzira, a Pharmaceutical Technician from Saint Albert's Mission hospital, located in Mount Darwin, 200 km North East of Harare, arrives at the NatPharm Warehouse in Harare to collect much needed vital and essential medicines for the district hospital and its twelve surrounding rural primary health care facilities. This time he has come to collect the Primary Health Care Packs (PHCP), which are pre-packaged medicine kits, each containing 41 different vital medicines and supplies which are set to support 400 patients for a month. "Before we started receiving the PHCP, the situation was bad," he says. "Due to the shortage of essential supplies, patients were forced to buy their own medicines. This resulted in many of them being turned away without treatment". "People in the rural areas were the most affected during this time. Most of them did not have money as they could not afford to visit private institutions for the fulfilment of their prescriptions. This resulted in many of them dying from easily preventable illnesses". Since the introduction of the Primary Health Care Packs under the Emergency Vital Medicines Support for Zimbabwe, which receives continued support from the Commission, at least 95% of the 1,300 health facilities in Zimbabwe now have more than 80% stock of vital and essential medicines. To date, the Commission through DG ECHO has contributed towards the procurement of essential medicines, as well as providing significant technical support in the management of these medicines. The effects of the unstable political and economic situation in Zimbabwe, which escalated in 2008, resulted in a chronic shortage in the supply of drugs and medical supplies throughout the country. Health facilities such as Saint Albert's Mission hospital, which sees over 5,000 patients a year, as well as providing outreach services for the surrounding rural clinics, operated with only 27% stock levels of the required essential drugs. "The PHCP's have made a huge difference in the lives of the most vulnerable populations" says UNICEF Representative, Dr. Peter Salama. "Thanks to this commitment by the Commission, the most disadvantaged communities have equitable access to quality healthcare and treatment". As the economic situation continues to stabilize in Zimbabwe, the support to the health sector being given by the Commission is going a long way to ensure that Henry brings the necessary medical supplies for the patients at St Albert Mission Hospital and the surrounding areas.

⁵⁰ © UNICEF - Elizabeth Mupfumira

3.11.5. Small Scale Response mechanism to a mega landslide in La Paz (Bolivia) on 26 February 2011

In December 2010, the municipal authorities of La Paz (Bolivia) warned that certain neighbourhoods of the city were about to collapse due to imminent landslides. Defective housing, sewage and water networks, together with the intensity of the rains, had started to move the ground on which thousands of people were living. A state of emergency was declared and it was decided to immediately relocate at least one hundred families to a safer place in order to avoid a catastrophe. At that moment, the Municipality of La Paz did not have the means to manage the evacuation and requested help from DG ECHO's partners. OXFAM GB, in association with the Bolivian NGO FUNDEPCO, applied for the EU funds through the Small Scale Response mechanism⁵¹, and this allowed them to react quickly and start the installation of transitional housing jointly with the Municipality in order to host the potentially affected families. The small-scale project included the construction of transitional housing, sanitary modules and the sensitisation of people about the risks to which they were exposed in order to facilitate the evacuation.

On 26 February 2011, just one day after starting the installation of families in the newly created transitional campsites, a mega landslide destroyed more than 1,000 houses in the area targeted by the project and a whole part of the town disappeared. No casualties were registered because all inhabitants of the affected area had been previously evacuated. DG ECHO partners were obliged to accelerate the construction of facilities, combining efforts with the Municipality and other organisations in order to respond effectively and rapidly to cover the needs of the 5,446 people affected by the landslide. While transitional shelter was being built, hundreds of tents, which had been stocked by local institutions from previous DG ECHO interventions in Bolivia, were installed quickly and people were able to sleep under a roof immediately after the disaster happened. Moved by reports of the incident, several institutions and donors contributed with additional funding, doubling the funds initially provided by the Commission. This allowed the immediate needs of the affected people to be met. In addition, the transitional housing and sanitary modules established by OXFAM and FUNDEPCO were taken as a reference by the Municipality to scale it up. These modules are removable and reusable for future emergencies.

This experience helped DG ECHO partners to identify the gaps in terms of DRR and to define a DIPECHO project which is now being implemented in La Paz to improve the response capacities and reduce the risks of people suffering from the effects of natural hazards in the most vulnerable parts of the city. It demonstrates how well-timed anticipatory actions can help ensure that local authorities make good decisions in moments of crisis; the importance of disaster preparedness in responding more effectively; when capacity exists, response can be timely. It also shows to what extent permanent contact and exchange between DG ECHO and its implementing partners in the field can definitively help to save lives and reduce losses.

3.11.6. Disaster preparedness, a life saving investment for communities in El Salvador

Between 10 and 20 October 2011, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua were under the destructive influence of Tropical Depression 12-E (TD12E) and this led to several days of intensive rainfall, causing great damages. Precipitation registered in the region surpassed the rainfall average for this period of the year by 200% to 300% and levels registered in El Salvador were higher than historical levels registered from previous disasters such as Hurricane Mitch (1998), Tropical Storm IDA (2009) or Tropical Storm Agatha (2010). Such event had not occurred during the past forty years. In El Salvador, the damages are equivalent to \$ 840 Million, 4% of the GDP.

TD 12E also showed that disaster preparedness saves lives. Many communities reacted in a timely manner and evacuated its neighbours, thus contributing to avoid more deaths. The testimonies from residents of areas where ECHO's Disaster Preparedness projects were being implemented showed the

⁵¹ See Worldwide intervention tools under 3.7.

extent to which these programmes are having an extremely positive effect in areas affected by the Depression, helping communities get organized and making live saving decisions like evacuating residents on time. In Caserío San Antonio, Comasagua municipality, where DG ECHO implemented a disaster preparedness project in 2009, the evacuation following TD 12E was carried out successfully, and allowed to save 350 people from the floods.

A testimony from a different municipality gives another such example. "*ECHO's Disaster Preparedness project has improved the capacities of the local Civil Protection Committee and they are applying what they have learned*", said Félix Franco, local Civil Protection Committee's coordinator at Caserío Los Marroquines, Cojupeque municipality. "*When the rains started on October 11th, the Commission got together, coordinated the monitoring or risk areas and decided the evacuation of 14 families. They also coordinated with the local authorities to get supplies to the school centre that was going to host these evacuated families. So we can observe an increase in the capacities and we see how, when a concrete threat comes, they have been able to evaluate the risk and propose concrete actions*".

3.11.7. Civil protection intervention during forest fires in Greece

In August 2011, Greece was faced with more than 60 forest fires, out of which 7 major ones. As forest fires risk was also running very high in other parts of Southern Europe, it was difficult for Participating States to provide mutual assistance. As a result, Greece activated the Civil Protection Mechanism on 25 August 2011 and made an urgent request for three aerial forest fire fighting (AFFF) modules consisting of two planes each. In the meantime, the MIC also received a request for assistance from Albania, which was also facing forest fires and was equally requesting aerial fire-fighting support.

The MIC called for an urgent audio conference with all Participating States concerned. Following this, two AFFF modules were provided by Spain and France through a project financed under the preparatory action on an EU Rapid Response Capability.

Moreover, through a cascade scheme, another AFFF module was kept on standby in France for possible deployment in Italy. This allowed Italy to send two more planes to Greece, thus covering the Greek request in full. The latter two airplanes first assisted Albania in fighting forest fires on their way to Greece.

The MIC also deployed a liaison officer to Greece to ensure a smooth liaison on the ground between Greece, the assisting modules and the MIC.

3.11.8. Civil protection response to the earthquake in Japan

An earthquake of 8.8 magnitude, depth 24.4 km hit the North Eastern part of Japan on 11 March 2011. That was one of the biggest earthquakes ever recorded in history. Several aftershocks of 6 on the Richter scale occurred and a Pacific wide tsunami warning was sent out with warnings of up to 10 meter waves. Damage in Japan was extensive merely due to the tsunami than the earthquake. An explosion followed by a fire took place in the nuclear plant in Fukushima prefecture, leading to problems with the cooling system and concerns about possible radioactive leakage.

Japan activated the Civil Protection Mechanism on 11 March 2011. A MIC liaison officer was deployed to Tokyo to liaise with the EU Delegation and prepare the ground for an eventual deployment of a EUCP Team. One humanitarian expert from DG ECHO joined the UNDAC mission. The needs identified by Japan were blankets, mattresses, bottles of mineral water, poly water tanks, food and temporary toilets. Japan accepted a EUCP Team to coordinate the incoming assistance. An EU Civil Protection team of 17 people (including assessment and coordination experts) left for Japan on 18 March 2011.

On 24 March, the Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid, International Cooperation and Crisis Response, Kristalina Georgieva travelled to Japan to discuss the national relief effort with the Japanese authorities and partner organisations and to explore needs for further assistance.

A total of 400 tons of in-kind assistance has been channelled through the EU Civil Protection Mechanism with flights coordinated by the MIC. Distribution was to Fukushima, Ibaraki, Miyagi, Tochigi and Yamagata Prefectures. 11 Participating States contributed: Austria, Bulgaria, Denmark, Finland, France, Hungary, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Slovakia, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

4. AID MANAGEMENT

Humanitarian aid is often delivered in an emergency and/or situations where access to beneficiaries is difficult due to logistical or security constraints. To make sure that the best use is made of public funds under these circumstances, the Commission pursues an active relationship with its stakeholders and has put in place various monitoring and coordination mechanisms. Some of their key features are described below.

4.1. Aid delivery methods

The EU is the only humanitarian donor to have a worldwide network of field experts who play a key role in assessing humanitarian needs and monitoring EU-funded operations. The aid itself is implemented by a limited number of humanitarian organisations, which have both the financial and the operational capacity to manage emergency operations in often difficult circumstances.

4.1.1. Experts in the field

One strength and comparative advantage of DG ECHO is its worldwide network of field offices allowing an up-to-date analysis of existing and forecast needs in a given country or region, contributing to the development of intervention strategies and policy development, providing technical support to ECHO funded operations, ensuring adequate monitoring of these interventions and facilitating donor's coordination at field level.

The allocation of budget to the field offices as well as the opening of new offices in a region or inside a country depends on the assessed needs and the humanitarian situation. Accordingly, the size and type of offices and the number of experts mandated in the field varies from one location to another.

By the end of 2011, 140 international experts and 330 local staff were in place in 44 field offices located over 38 countries.

A few openings and closures of ECHO offices have taken place during 2011, mainly in North and West Africa. Following the Libya crisis, few temporary offices were opened to allow the smooth support of the ECHO operations in the area:

- *Marsa Matrouh, Egypt* – opening 09/03/2011, closure 22/05/2011
- *Zarzis, Tunisia* – opening 05/03/2011, closure 15/10/2011
- *Benghazi, Libya* – opening 18/04/2011, closure 07/11/2011
- *Tripoli, Libya* – opening 29/08/2011, tentative closure date by the end of March 2012 or mid April 2012

In January 2011 the ECHO office in Sana'a, Yemen, was officially opened and in November, the one in Kampala, Uganda, was definitely closed. In West Africa, two offices were opened in 2011:

- *Bamako, Mali* – the decision to open it was taken in July 2011 although the recruitment of staff is still ongoing
- *Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire* – The ECHO Imprest Account was authorised on 01/08/2011, the same date as started the TA's contract.

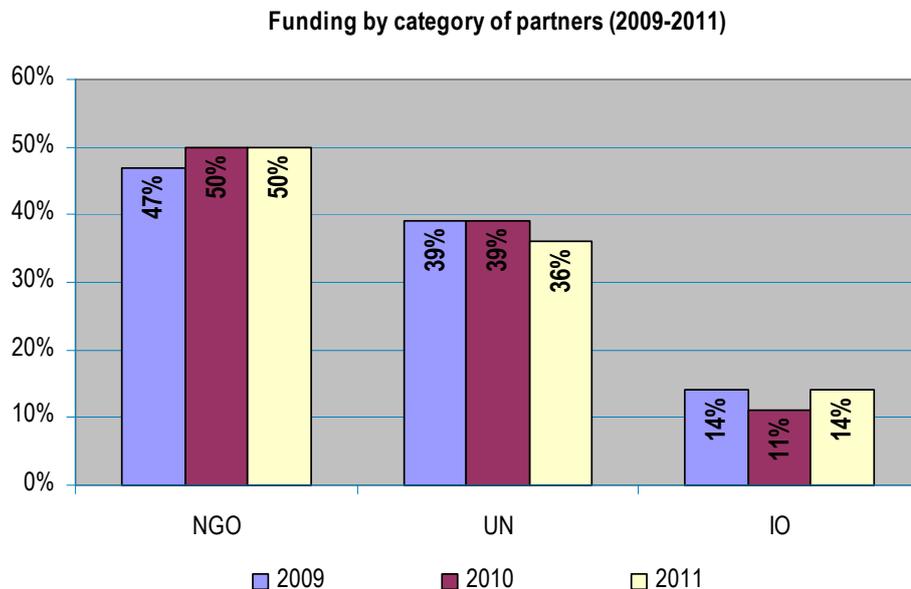
4.1.2. Relations with partners

In the field of Humanitarian aid, the Commission implements its mandate mainly by funding partners ranging from non-governmental organisations, United Nations agencies, other international organisations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent Societies, to specialised agencies of EU Member States.

The number of partners is about 200. The diversity of partners is important for the Commission since it guarantees a high level of flexibility, quality and it allows comprehensive coverage of an ever-growing list of needs in different parts of the world and in increasingly complex situations.

In 2011 the relative share of these organisations in the funding provided by DG ECHO was NGOs: 50 %, UN organisations: 36 % and international organisations: 14 %.

The graph below provides an overview of the funding by category of partners over the last three years:



Relations between DG ECHO and its implementing partners are governed by Partnership Agreements, which define the respective roles and responsibilities in humanitarian operations financed by the European Union. The Framework Partnership Agreements govern relations with both non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and international organisations (IOs). In the case of United Nations agencies, the Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement between the Commission and the UN (FAFA) governs the relations between them in the domain of humanitarian aid.

The notion of partnership is underpinned by a permanent dialogue on operational, policy and administrative issues with the various types of partners. The Partnership Agreements are revised every 4/5 years. The next revision will take place in 2013⁵².

Any humanitarian organisation which meets the eligibility criteria set out in the Regulation on Humanitarian Aid can submit an application for partnership. To be recognised as a partner by DG ECHO, the organisations have to demonstrate non profit making status, their establishment in an EU Member State, their professionalism, financial standing, respect for humanitarian principles, experience and capacity to implement humanitarian aid operations in urgent situations. In 2011, around 20 organisations submitted an application.

Further information on these Agreements is available on DG ECHO's website at http://ec.europa.eu/echo/partners/index_en.htm.

4.2. Coordination of humanitarian funds

Various mechanisms are in place to ensure the co-ordination of the humanitarian funds provided by DG ECHO with those of other humanitarian actors involved in responses:

- Coordination with Member States is ensured through consultation/meetings with their representatives in the Humanitarian Aid Committee (HAC) which gives an opinion, in conformity with the Humanitarian Aid Regulation, on all funding decisions exceeding €2 million⁵³ before being adopted by the Commission. In addition exchanges of specific crisis situations feature regularly in the agenda of COHAFA.
- other EU-services are consulted on funding decisions, prior to their approval and through various co-ordination meetings, in particular on LRRD⁵⁴ issues;
- Contacts at field and headquarters' level are held regularly with major partners, in particular United Nations organisations and other International Organisations such as the ICRC and the IFRC;
- Coordination with NGOs is ensured through a dedicated network (VOICE) and organisation of annual conference with partners
- An IT application has been developed to collect humanitarian aid contributions from EU and Member States (EDRIS, formerly called 14-points application). This database, which is accessible by anyone, gives the global EU (EU + Member States) humanitarian assistance provided by year and country. The system is linked to the Financial Tracking System (FTS) of OCHA⁵⁵.

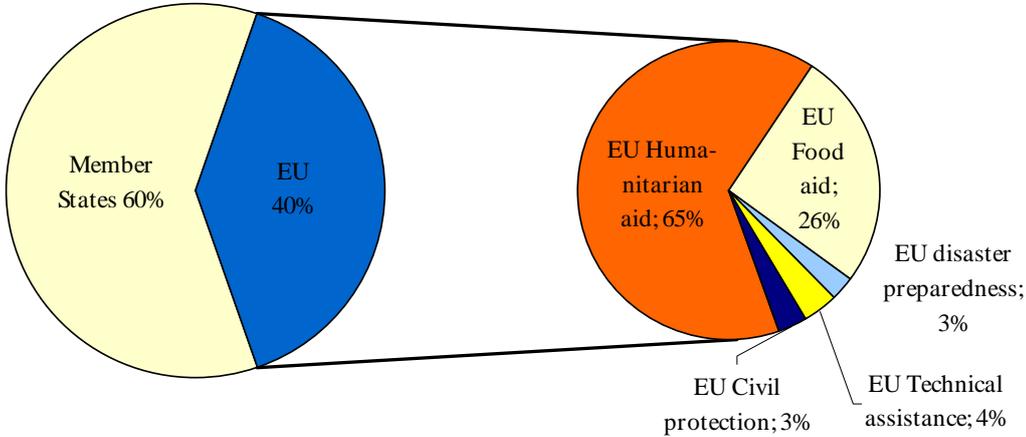
The core objective of the EDRIS application is to cover all humanitarian aid contributions, whichever government department is responsible for them. The definition of what constitutes humanitarian aid — and therefore should be reported — is a difficult question and Member States have developed their own working definitions.

⁵² With respect to UN Partners, the review will not deal with the FAFA itself – which is a Commission-wide agreement – but will address any issues arising out of other legal documents governing the working relations between those Partners and DG ECHO (such as General Conditions).

⁵³ €10 million for emergency actions

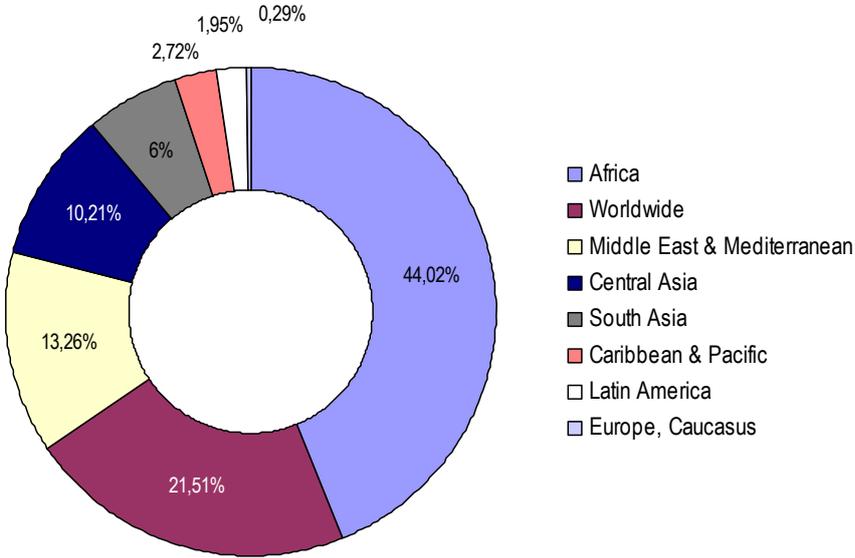
⁵⁴ Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development.

In 2011, humanitarian aid contributions totalling €2,875 million were reported in DG ECHO's EDRIS, of which 60% were from Member States and 40% from EU funds.



Looking at the geographic breakdown of the total EU + MS funding in 2011, the largest part went to African countries – 44% (compared to 37% and 47% in 2010 and 2009 respectively), 13% to Middle East, 10% to Central Asia.

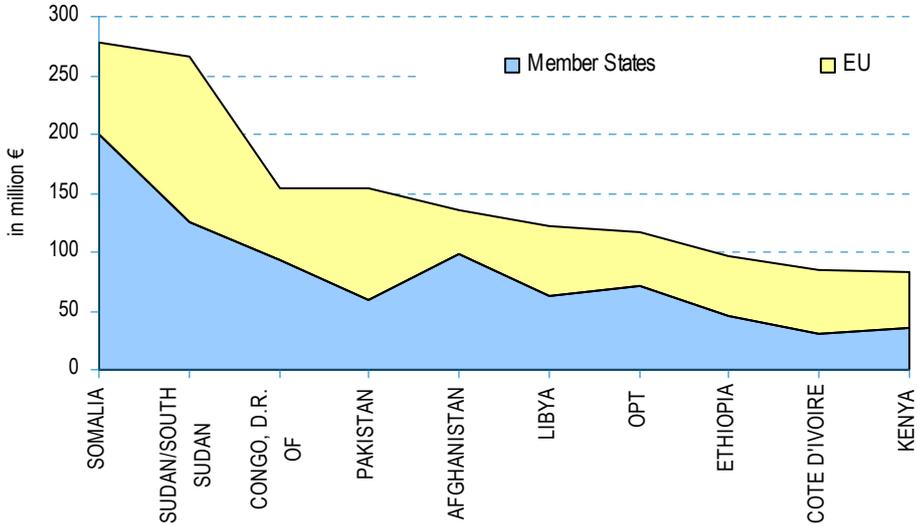
The 21% classified as "not specified" stands for contributions allocated to unspecified countries, meaning mainly to UN agencies and other humanitarian aid activities.



Geographical breakdown of MS and EU humanitarian aid contributions

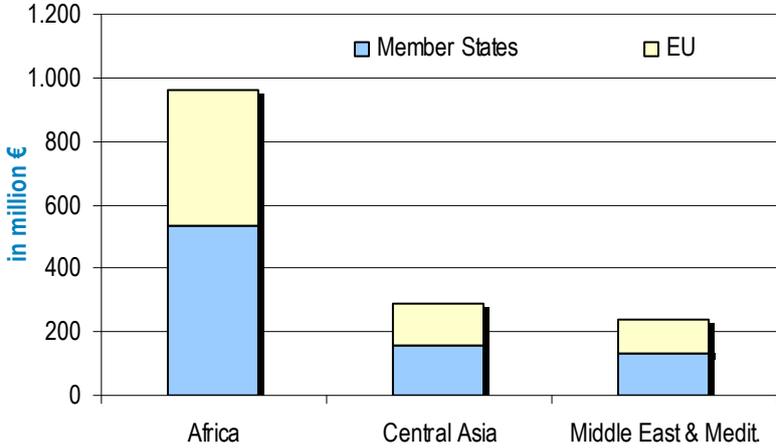
⁵⁵ United Nations Office for the coordination of Humanitarian Aid.

Overall, largely the same countries benefited from humanitarian aid funded by the Member States and from the EU⁵⁶. The severe drought that affected the Horn of Africa counted for 16% of the total aid (EU + Member States) provided during the year. Beside this, the two complex crises dating back to previous years (Sudan/South Sudan and DR Congo) accounted for 15% of the EU assistance (EU+MS).



Top10 beneficiaries

Some 33% of the top 10 funding went to African countries in 2011, the balance going to Pakistan, Afghanistan, occupied Palestinian territory and Libya.



Top 10 beneficiaries – regional breakdown of MS and EU humanitarian aid contributions

⁵⁶ To be compared with graph in section 3.2.

4.3. Evaluations

DG ECHO's mandate to evaluate is defined by the provisions included in the Financial Regulation and its Implementing Rules. It is also an obligation set in the Commission's evaluation standards. Additionally, as regards specifically humanitarian interventions, Article 18 of the Humanitarian Aid Regulation requires the Commission to "*regularly assess humanitarian aid operations financed by the Community in order to establish whether they have achieved their objectives and to produce guidelines for improving the effectiveness of subsequent operations*".

Each year, an indicative Evaluation Plan is established after a consultative process within DG ECHO. The Evaluation Plan is shared with the Humanitarian Aid Committee (HAC). This programme is flexible and can be adapted to include evaluations not foreseen initially, in response to particular events or changing circumstances. Evaluations can cover not only the assessment of individual Commission-funded operations, but also thematic issues and partnerships.

These evaluations are almost always carried out by independent consultants selected through a specific procurement procedure.

4.3.1. The 2011 work programme

The Evaluation programme for 2011 included 18 evaluations and studies, plus the possibility of carrying out a number of evaluations of certain interventions depending on the access conditions to those areas. Given the flexible nature of the planning and new priorities during the year, new evaluations were decided on the basis of the needs identified, while other were postponed or suspended. Moreover, a number of studies ongoing at the beginning of 2011 were concluded during the year.

In total, in 2011, 7 evaluations and evaluation-related studies were concluded, five of which had been launched in 2010:

- EVHAC Review 2010,
- Study on DG ECHO's 'Costs Observed for Results' Approach,
- Evaluation and Strategy Orientation of DG ECHO-Funded Health Sector Activities in Burmese Refugee Camps in Thailand (2004-2009),
- Impact Assessment for the EVHAC,
- Real-time Evaluation of Humanitarian Action Supported by DG ECHO in Haiti,
- Evaluation of DG ECHO's Action in Uganda,
- Evaluation of DG ECHO's Action in the Water/sanitation/Public Health Sector in Zimbabwe.

12 evaluations or studies were launched, but not finalised, in 2011:

- Evaluation of DG ECHO's Action in URBAN Settings,
- Evaluation of DG ECHO's Actions in the Livelihoods Sector,
- Evaluation of DG ECHO's Disaster Preparedness and Disaster Risk Reduction Actions in Southern Africa & the Indian Ocean,
- Evaluation of DG ECHO's Intervention in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and Lebanon,
- Need Analysis, Review and Design of DG ECHO's Training in Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation,

- Impact assessment for the modernisation of the EU Humanitarian Aid legislation (HAR),
- Review of Existing Practices to Ensure Participation of Disaster-Affected Communities in Humanitarian Aid Operations,
- Evaluation and Review of Humanitarian Access Strategies in DG ECHO-Funded Interventions,
- Evaluation of DG ECHO's Legal Framework for Funding Humanitarian Actions (FPA 2008),
- Evaluation of the Civil Protection Mechanism and the CP Financial Instrument 2007-2009,
- Evaluation of DG ECHO's Fleet Management,
- Evaluation of DIPECHO South America.

4.3.2. *Results of some evaluations finalised in 2011*

The evaluations and reviews concluded in 2011 confirmed that, in general terms, DG ECHO's actions in the field of Humanitarian Aid contributed to an effective implementation of the DG's objectives. Results of evaluations in countries are included in sections 3.3 to 3.7 under the countries concerned and in section 3.9.3 on civil protection.

During 2011, DG ECHO launched mechanisms for reinforcing the follow-up of the use made of conclusions and recommendations from the evaluations. The aim is to enhance the integration of evaluation lessons into the management and decision-making of Humanitarian and Civil Protection activities and, therefore, contribute to increase the effectiveness and positive impact of DG ECHO interventions.

More detail on the evaluations carried out can be found on DG ECHO's website:

http://ec.europa.eu/echo/evaluation/index_en.htm.

4.4. **Control of the use of funds**

4.4.1. *Internal control*

Correct implementation of EU-funded operations is ensured by **several layers of checks** at various stages of the project cycle for humanitarian operations. The main aspects of the control strategy developed by the Commission, the supervision and monitoring procedures and the ex-ante and ex-post controls are described below and comprise:

- **Strict selection and quality control mechanisms for partners** under the Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA) signed with NGOs and international organisations⁵⁷ that specify the financial credentials and expertise required of implementing partners, combined with both regular and ad hoc assessments of FPA partners in order to ensure that these requirements are met continuously. Financial management and control requirements for UN bodies are laid down in the EU-UN Financial Administrative Framework Agreement (FAFA).
- Strictly **needs-based** systems for **identifying the actions** to be funded. These needs assessments are carried out by the partner organisations and cross-checked/monitored by DG ECHO's technical assistants on the ground.
- **Ex-ante controls** on the selection of projects and before the signature of contracts.

⁵⁷ Mainly the IFRC, ICRC and IOM.

- Day-to-day **monitoring of progress of projects**. Each grant and contribution agreement is monitored by the desk and field expert and the outcome is recorded on a project appraisal worksheet ('fichop').
- **Project monitoring by a network of field experts** (technical assistants) worldwide. These specialists are based in the field in order to facilitate operations funded by the EU, regardless of where, and maximise their impact. They closely monitor projects and write regular reports. In order to enhance the rapid reaction capacity and monitoring of operations, the number of field experts has gradually been increased in recent years. Currently about 130 field experts are based in the various field offices.
- Regular **field visits** to projects by geographic desks, auditors and management.
- An obligation on the partners to provide **reports after the end of the operations** to substantiate their expenses.
- A thorough **analysis of these reports and checks on eligible expenditure** by both the operational and financial desk officers. Various procedures, such as check-lists and double checking, have been set up to ensure that all financial transactions are in line with the financial rules, comply with sound financial management and are recorded correctly in the accounting system. Expenditure which is not sufficiently substantiated in final reports is disallowed and deducted from the final payment.
- **Evaluations** focusing on major country operations (i.e. operations that receive funding totalling about €50 million and have not been evaluated in the last three years), partners and thematic issues. The results of these evaluations can be found on DG ECHO's website at http://ec.europa.eu/echo/policies/evaluation/introduction_en.htm (see also Section 4.3).
- EU-funded activities implemented by external partners and contractors are subject to a **financial audit**. The audit strategy is based on a twin-track approach: audits are performed both at partners' headquarters on a cyclical basis for finalised projects and in the field for ongoing projects.

In 2011, a budget of €1.8 million for contracts with external auditors was allocated to audits. In terms of work carried out, 46 audits were performed at headquarters; 44 field audits were finalised on projects under way; 9 field office audits were carried out, 2 humanitarian procurement centres were assessed and 7 audits of grant recipients of the Civil Protection mechanism took place;

Audit recommendations are a valuable channel for feedback for improvements to partners' reporting systems. Furthermore, audit findings on the eligibility of expenditures are analysed by Commission officials and appropriate follow-up action is taken, such as recovery of funds.

The working arrangements for audits performed by DG ECHO are available on the internet at http://ec.europa.eu/echo/funding/audit_en.htm to inform partners about what they can expect from audits as well as what the audit team expects from its partners.

DG ECHO also has an **Internal Audit Capability (IAC)**, which provides independent, objective assurance and consulting services designed to add value and improve the operations of the Department. The IAC helps the Director General to accomplish its objectives by

bringing a systematic, disciplined approach in order to evaluate and make recommendations for improving the effectiveness of risk management, control, and governance processes.

The above layers of control should not be seen in isolation. Each of them contributes to providing overall reasonable assurance on the legality and regularity of the transactions.

4.4.2. External control

Every year, the European Parliament and the Council give their opinion on the discharge of past budgets. To this end, the specialised committees of the budget authority exercises control over financial management in EU bodies and organises yearly hearings with the Commissioners concerned. All Commission departments are accountable to the European Parliament and the Council, among other things in annual reports giving details of their activities. Their budget management is also continuously audited by the European Court of Auditors, which reports to the budget authority.

The Commission's operations and its financial management in the field of humanitarian assistance are audited by its Internal Audit Service (IAS) and by the Court of Auditors.

The task of the Internal Audit Service is to audit the internal control systems that exist within the Commission. In 2011, the IAS conducted a performance audit on DG ECHO's operational activities. The IAS audit objective was to assess, amongst others, DG ECHO's preparedness to meet the needs of populations affected by disasters, the investment in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and disaster preparedness, the rapidity and flexibility of procedures, the quality of the aid delivered, the visibility and communication policies and the sustainability of the aid. The final report was issued on 12 December 2011, endorsing the ECHO's internal control systems as effective. The report includes a series of observations and recommendation (none of them which were critical) on how to improve the set-up of our operations. Two of the 7 recommendations issued were considered very important. Firstly, IAS recommends DG ECHO and DEVCO to prepare a common strategy on LRRD⁵⁸/transition that serves as the baseline for preparing individual country strategies. Secondly, it considers that DG ECHO should conclude its work on the development of a methodology and the appropriate tools for mainstreaming DRR into its emergency response.

The Court of Auditors audits the EU's finances. Its observations and recommendations are published in its annual report and in special reports to the European Parliament and the European Council. For the 2010 financial year and its related 2010 annual report, the Court did not find a material level of errors in DG ECHO transactions. The Court did not assessed in 2010 DG ECHO's monitoring and supervisory systems (this will be performed in 2011).

4.5. Visibility of aid and communication

The broad objective of DG ECHO's communication work is to raise awareness and understanding for its humanitarian aid and civil protection policies and activities within the European Union and beyond and to promote the role of the EU as the leading global donor in humanitarian aid as a concrete expression of its solidarity with the world's most vulnerable people.

The high profile and rapidly moving environment of humanitarian aid means that media-oriented activities are a vital part of the communication strategy. An example of this was the

⁵⁸ Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development

deployment of DG ECHO communication officers in major crisis situations such as in Libya and during the drought and food crisis in the Horn of Africa. They handled the media on the ground and were able to highlight the EU relief efforts.

Throughout the year, a variety of communication products were produced with an emphasis on web-based tools and audiovisual. The website of the Commissioner for International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response (http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/georgieva/index_en.htm) and that of DG ECHO (http://ec.europa.eu/echo/index_en.htm) were revamped by pursuing a more interactive approach. The presence in social media, in particular Facebook, was further strengthened with more than 10,000 people following ECHO and nearly 15,000 following the Commissioner. More than a dozen video documentaries and video clips on humanitarian crises and the EU response (such as in Libya, Pakistan, Horn of Africa, Chad, Sudan/South Sudan) and on specific topics (such as the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps, disaster risk reduction, World Humanitarian Day and World Food Day) were produced and disseminated.

Other communication products included press releases; (photo) stories from the field, eye-witness accounts, as well as updated leaflets and publications on humanitarian aid and civil protection.

To ensure the visibility of EU aid, DG ECHO reinforced its dialogue with partner organisations in the area of communication and continued to advise them on communication activities funded under operational financing agreements. Related expenditure under operational visibility budget lines was also monitored.

In addition, 2011 was the second year of implementation of a new approach based on less grant funding in operations and more direct communication work through a Commission Decision on the financing of public awareness, information and communication actions in the humanitarian field. The following joint communication actions were carried out in 2011:

(1) *"Professional football against hunger"* – the Commission's humanitarian aid department joined the awareness campaign which is run by the Association of European Professional Football Leagues (EPFL) and the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). The aim is to address the humanitarian issue of hunger and to raise awareness of the role of the EU and FAO in restoring the self reliance of hungry people. Actions included joint field visits with famous footballers, public events and production of media materials. The campaign was launched at the Soccerex⁵⁹ fair in the UK in March. For the Commission, it is the appeal of football and its power to sensitize public opinion and engage with massive audiences that makes *"Professional football against hunger"* so appealing. The campaign – and participating footballers like Baggio, Hristo Stoichkov and Patrick Vieira – help keeping the hunger issue high on the global agenda.

(2) Appointment of Malian-born singers Amadou & Mariam as *WFP Ambassadors Against Hunger for the European Union*. The singers have a global following and a proven history of charitable work for the fight against hunger. As Ambassadors, they raised awareness and visibility for the partnership between the World Food Programme and the Commission's Humanitarian Aid. Activities in 2011 included, among others, a media trip to Haiti with musicians, a concert in Rome (where they were joined on stage by WFP's Executive Director and Commissioner Georgieva), as well as concerts in Berlin, Malmö, Ferrara and Brussels

⁵⁹ <http://www.soccerex.com/>

and a European media tour, three video news releases and a social media campaign. On World Food Day, Amadou & Mariam released a donated song dedicated 'against hunger' called "*Labendela*", together with a documentary-style video on the issue.

(3) The Finnish Red Cross organised an awareness campaign called "*Not forgetting the silent*" by producing a 12-page illustrated supplement in Finland's largest newspaper Helsingin Sanomat highlighting their partnership with the Commission, which reached around 20 percent of the population. The campaign also included various events around the country in the framework of Europe Day, an information stand with interactive sessions at the World Village Festival in Helsinki in May and a high level humanitarian conference in Helsinki in June with Commissioner Georgieva as the keynote speaker.

(4) Social media campaign targeting young Europeans (aged from 18 to 24) designed by the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) and called "*The city that should not exist*". It consisted of several parts including a Facebook page which hosted an internet game as well as testimonies about humanitarian work in refugee camps with DRC and other humanitarian aid organisations contributing (videos, photos, testimonies etc.).

(5) Interactive multimedia exhibition "*La Scienza dell'Emergenza*" on the practical fruits of the partnership between the Commission's Humanitarian Aid and CEVSI, plus associated media events in northern Italy (Milan, Bergamo) and Ljubljana/Slovenia. The activity had started in 2010 and ran till June 2011.

Participation in public events not directly organised by DG ECHO, such as the European Development Days, provided further opportunities for communication and visibility. Especially the presence of the Commissioner attracts substantial media attention at such events.

4.6. Security and Security of Operations

2011 was a particularly demanding year for DG ECHO in terms of staff safety and security challenges. DG ECHO and its humanitarian and civil protection partners had to increasingly operate in some of most insecure and highly complex security environments in the world. While there may have been a slight down turn in overall number of recorded incidents affecting aid workers compared to previous years, the number of kidnappings continued to rise dramatically as did the number of incidents involving national aid workers. The majority of incidents continued to be concentrated in a small number of highly volatile environments such as Afghanistan, Somalia, Sudan/South Sudan, and Pakistan. An additional worrying trend was the fact that many of the tactics used against aid workers were increasingly lethal and more sophisticated.

During the reporting period, DG ECHO continued to enhance its internal security management procedures by further developing its risk management approach to security challenges. This allowed for a more rapid deployment of both humanitarian evaluation and civil protection monitoring teams at the outset of the Arab Spring and Horn of Africa crises. DG ECHO organised a number of hostile environment training courses for its humanitarian and civil protection staff tasked to undertake missions to crisis regions. ECHO's network of Regional Field Security Officers was enlarged and now has officers based in Amman, Bangkok, Bogota, Nairobi and Dakar.

In 2011, DG ECHO's efforts to improve the safety and security of its staff operating in high-risk environments was greatly facilitated by the exceptional advice and support it received from a wide-range of security correspondents such as UN Department for Safety and Security (UNDSS) and others.

DG ECHO also continued to provide partners with financial support for a wide-range of capacity building measures to enhance their security management. In particular, it supported the actions of a number of NGO security platforms in such locations as Afghanistan, Pakistan, Gaza and Yemen. By funding flight support services such as ECHO Flight⁶⁰ and UNHAS it played a crucial role in providing safer access for partners to high-risk areas which would be otherwise inaccessible due to security constraints.

During the year, DG ECHO also played an active part in the discussion on safety and security of humanitarian partners as part of the Good Humanitarian Donorship (GHD) initiative⁶¹. It continued to be closely associated with the efforts to refine the UN *Saving Lives Together* framework, designed to improve security collaboration between the UN and NGOs. It provided input for a number of policy documents and academic papers related to aid worker safety and security. The Director-General chaired the presentation of the UN's Annual Report on the Safety and Security of UN and Associated Personnel. ECHO also played an active role in facilitating the 2011 UN General Assembly's Resolution on the Safety and Security of Humanitarian Personnel and Protection of UN Personnel.

At the ECHO Annual Partners' Conference, Commissioner Georgieva highlighted the importance she attributes to improving the safety and security of partners. She reassured partners that she will continue to advocate for greater security for aid workers and ensure that ECHO continues to support related capacity building initiatives.

4.7. Training initiative — NOHA

The EU finances networks and training in the humanitarian field. One example is NOHA, the first network of universities at European level active in developing education on humanitarian action. It seeks greater professionalism among humanitarian workers by providing a solid intellectual grounding and developing sound concepts and principles that will, in turn, lead to 'good practice'. It also contributes to greater awareness of humanitarian issues among the broader public and policy-makers. It has been a model for other quality networks.

The NOHA Master's programme is an inter-university, multidisciplinary postgraduate programme launched in 1993 that provides high-quality education and professional skills for personnel working or intending to work in the area of international humanitarian assistance. NOHA takes an interdisciplinary approach, linking theory, practice, participatory learning and case-based analyses.

NOHA was developed jointly by the Commission and the universities concerned under the auspices of the Socrates/Erasmus programme. The NOHA Master's programme is the first of its kind in the world, bringing together seven universities from all over Europe. The strong commitment of the NOHA Universities is extended through a broader network of associates in each of the EU countries and at the broader level of 83 European Faculties dealing with

⁶⁰ For more information about ECHO Flight, see point 3.3.1.

⁶¹ For more information about GHD, see point 1.5.

related issues. This is the Thematic Network of Humanitarian Development Studies of which NOHA is the starting point and the core component.

The objectives pursued by this training are to:

- pool academic resources and cultural traditions in order to accommodate diverse individual, academic and employment needs in the field of humanitarian action;
- provide the academic and professional profiles and skills for personnel working in the field of international humanitarian action;
- train a team of professionals in the field of humanitarian action who are able to share their experience world-wide and harness Europe’s potential for innovation and social and economic development;
- contribute to the quality and visibility of higher education in Europe by implementing a well-defined joint Master’s programme in seven universities which corresponds to an academic and professional profile within a common framework of comparable and compatible qualifications in terms of profile, learning outcomes, skills, workload and level (comparable level of intellectual academic endeavour); and
- become a world reference as a quality education and training system in the field of humanitarian action offering a programme open to graduates and scholars from non-EU countries which allows mobility between the institutions in the NOHA network and leads to a joint Master’s degree in humanitarian action.

With experience and a track record extending over more than ten years, NOHA has become a driving-force in the constant search for quality in the training of humanitarian personnel, and a concrete example of European solidarity and response to situations of complex emergencies all around the world.

Administration and organisation of the NOHA programme are entirely in the hands of the universities participating. Further information on this training is available at <http://www.nohanet.org>.