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HUMANITARIAN AID FROM THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY Emergency Aid, Food Aid, Refugee Aid

HUMANITARIAN AID
FROM THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY
Emergency aid, Food aid, Refugee aid

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Nota bene :

In this brochure, the abbreviation *EC* and the terms *the Community* and *the European Community* mean the Community as such, as distinct from the Community and its member states together.

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Refugees from Liberia's civil war reach the safety of neighbouring Guinea across the St. John River, February 1990. (*Photo : X. Van der Stappen*)

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INTRODUCTION

The European Community has provided humanitarian aid since 1970, initially in a modest way, recently on a much increased scale: 330 million ECU in 1987, 510 million in 1990, nearly 800 million in 1991.

In the past two years it has made major contributions to international relief efforts in Africa (20% of all humanitarian aid), the Middle East (over 10% of all Gulf crisis relief) and for refugees around the world.

The Community's humanitarian assistance includes emergency aid for victims of natural disasters or conflict, longer-term aid for refugees, food aid for the very vulnerable. It is given impartially, regardless of race, religion or political tendency. In 1991 the Community helped to provide food, shelter, medical care and other basic necessities for those in distress in 40 countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America and Eastern Europe.

The organisations chiefly responsible for distributing this aid - the specialized agencies of the United Nations, national and international Red Cross societies, non-governmental organisations - work in conditions which are often difficult and sometimes dangerous. Recognizing their competence and dedication, the Community has responded to their frequent appeals with substantial contributions.

On several occasions in the past year the Community's member states took a collective decision to grant very large amounts of humanitarian aid, to be provided partly by the Community, partly by individual member states. On each occasion the Commission was asked to co-ordinate the whole. The following pages include examples of their combined efforts.

Although substantial, the Community's humanitarian aid in normal years represents no more than one fifth of its total assistance to the poorer countries of the world. The remaining four fifths are devoted to their long-term development, to help eliminate poverty, which more than any other factor leaves the poor particularly vulnerable to disasters, whether natural or man-made.

HUMANITARIAN AID: INSTRUMENTS AND RESOURCES

The Community provides humanitarian aid in two forms, food and finance. Food aid is financed from its annual budget, whoever the recipients. Emergency and refugee aid are financed from the European Development Fund for African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) states which have signed the Lomé Convention, or, for other countries, from the annual budget. Humanitarian aid for Central and Eastern Europe is also financed from the Community's annual budget. All funds are managed by the Commission.

The different "humanitarian funds" are listed in the table below, together with the resources allocated to each

instrument. For those financed from the annual budget, the figure given is the total amount made available in the course of the year, including transfers from other parts of the budget. For those financed from the multi-annual European Development Fund (EDF), the figure is the amount agreed for a five year period.

In the particular case of food aid, only food for free distribution and emergency food aid are considered as "humanitarian". In recent years the cost of these categories of food aid has represented between 45% and 55% of annual food aid expenditure.

Instrument	Year of introduction	Beneficiaries	Source of funds	Resources
EMERGENCY AID	1970	Disaster victims in ACP states and OCTs ⁽¹⁾	EDF	1986-90: 213 MECU 1991-95: 252.5 MECU
	1971	Disaster victims in developing & other third countries	Budget	1990: 69 MECU 1991: 133 MECU
EMERGENCY & HUMANITARIAN FOOD AID	1972	Disaster victims & vulnerable groups in developing countries	Budget	1990: 288 MECU 1991: 443 MECU ⁽²⁾
REFUGEE AID				
• via UNRWA	1971	Palestinian refugees	Budget	1990: 25.4 MECU ⁽³⁾ 1991: 26.7 MECU
• in Asia and Latin America	1984	Refugees, returnees & displaced persons in ALA countries	Budget	1990: 26 MECU 1991: 45 MECU
• in ACP countries	1986	Refugees, returnees & displaced persons in ACP countries	EDF	1986-90: 100 MECU 1991-95: 100 MECU
HUMANITARIAN AID TO CENTRAL & EASTERN EUROPE	1990	Vulnerable groups in Central & Eastern European countries	Budget	1990: 20 MECU 1991: 78 MECU

(1) OCTS: Overseas countries and territories associated with the Community (Netherlands Antilles, British Virgin Islands, French Polynesia etc.)

(2) Excluding humanitarian food aid to the former Soviet Union (approximately 250 MECU).

(3) Refugee budgets exclude the cost of EC food aid to refugees

Humanitarian aid/development aid

What proportion of the Community's total development aid do these funds represent? Over the five years 1986-1990 :

- emergency aid and emergency food aid accounted for 5.3%
- refugee aid (excluding emergency and food aid to refugees) accounted for 3.5%
- all humanitarian aid, including food for free distribution, accounted for 20%.

Expenditure in million ECU

Year	Food aid for free distribution	+ Emergency food aid	+ Emergency aid	+ Refugee aid	+ Humanitarian aid to Central & Eastern Europe	= Total humanitarian aid	=> % of	Total development aid
1986	207	59	39	68		373	22%	1701
1987	193	44	47	48		332	20%	1632
1988	220	44	71	70		405	18%	2238
1989	254	42	55	86		437	18%	2386
1990	252	36	111	107	4	510	21%	2490
1991	240	203	189	116	38	786	n.a.	n.a. ⁽¹⁾

(1) Figure not available

EMERGENCY AID

When it was first included in the third European Development Fund in 1970, "exceptional aid" as it was then called (65 million ECU for the period 1970-75) was intended by the signatory States of the second Yaoundé Convention ⁽¹⁾ to be used for exceptional economic difficulties - caused, for example, by a drop in world commodity prices - as well as to deal with natural disasters such as famine or flood.

Over the following ten years other instruments were devised, notably Stabex and Sysmin, to deal with difficulties of an essentially economic nature; the notion of "man-made" disasters appeared, as the numbers of refugees and displaced persons increased; and the importance of speed, both of response and implementation, was recognised. By the time Lomé II was signed in 1979, exceptional aid had become "emergency aid", an instrument which has not changed fundamentally in conception or definition since then ⁽²⁾.

Because EDF resources were reserved for countries which had signed the Convention or for "overseas countries and territories", a second emergency fund was introduced in 1971, at the request of the European Parliament, to provide humanitarian assistance to victims of disasters from any non-EC country.

With these two funds - roughly 50 million ECU a year for ACP states and OCTs, 60 MECU a year for other countries ⁽³⁾ - the Community can respond to appeals for emergency aid anywhere in the world.

Fast and flexible, emergency aid is given in the form of cash to provide first essentials - shelter, medicine, medical equipment, personnel, food, fuel, transport - for victims of natural disasters or war, or to finance essential repairs in the aftermath of a disaster.

(1) The predecessor of the Lomé Conventions. Both the Yaoundé and Lomé Conventions have been backed by the European Development Fund, to which all the EC Member States contribute. The EDF is renewed every five years. The present Convention (Lomé IV: 69 ACP states, 12 EC member states) is financed with the seventh EDF (1991-1995).

(2) Article 254 of the Fourth Lomé Convention defines emergency aid as follows:

Emergency assistance shall be accorded to ACP States faced with serious economic and social difficulties of an exceptional nature resulting from natural disasters or extraordinary circumstances having comparable effects. The assistance, which is intended to make, by the most suitable means, a real contribution to remedying the

immediate difficulties: (a) shall be sufficiently flexible to take any form adapted to the circumstances, including the supply of a wide range of relief goods and services and/or the distribution of cash to victims; (b) may also cover the financing of immediate measures to make damaged structures and equipment operational again and to ensure minimum viability; (c) shall be non-reimbursable and made available quickly and easily.

(3) The total amount available from the seventh EDF for the five years 1991-1995 is 252.5 MECU. The amount initially available from the Community's annual budget in 1990 and 1991 was 18.5 MECU. The initial allocation proposed for 1992 is 60 MECU. The substantial increases in the course of 1990 and 1991 - to 69 and 133 MECU respectively - were necessitated by the Gulf crisis.

Swift decisions, swift execution

"He who gives quickly gives twice." (Publilius Cyrus, Sententiae, 1st century B.C.)

A set of simplified procedures, formally adopted in 1981 after lengthy discussions between the Member States and the Commission, ensure speed of reaction in true emergencies:

- emergency aid of up to 1 million ECU from the EDF⁽¹⁾ can be decided without prior consultation of the Member States, who are informed when the decision is taken. For larger amounts, the Member States are consulted by telex before a decision is taken, but must reply, if they have any objections, within three working days at the most;
- emergency aid from the Budget is decided by the Commission. The Member States are informed when the decision is taken;
- the Development Commissioner - or, in his absence, another Commissioner - can decide, on behalf of the

Commission, emergency aids of up to 500,000 ECU from the Budget or 1 million ECU from the EDF;

- once the decision is taken, the emergency aid unit can conclude agreements with the Commission's operational partners by simple exchange of telexes;
- relief goods can be procured by restricted invitation to tender, on the basis of a rapid comparison of prices or drawn from emergency stocks, and immediate repairs can be reimbursed.

If necessary, a decision can be taken a few hours, even a few minutes, after the Commission receives news of a disaster and an appeal for help. The whole process can be completed within a day, and operations launched within hours. Thus, when the most severe of recent earthquakes left tens of thousands of Iranians injured and homeless in June 1990, two quick decisions, combined with the preparedness of the Red Cross and NGOs, enabled the Community to offer timely assistance.

The Community's response to the Iranian earthquake of 1990

20/21 June (night time) :	Severe earthquake, northern Iran
21 June, 10 a.m.:	Commission alerted by UNDRO
21 June, 4 p.m.:	Commission decision 1 million ECU
21/22 June :	Funds allocated to NGOs and Red Cross societies in 9 European countries
22 June :	4 relief flights leave France and Belgium for Iran
22 June :	Second Commission decision 1 million ECU
23-27 June :	8 more relief flights leave Denmark, Ireland, France, Italy and the Netherlands
Total assistance provided :	67,000 blankets, 850 tents, 60 tons of medical supplies and equipment, 38 specialized staff (doctors, nurses, logisticians, etc.)

(1) The initial limit was 500,000 ECU, raised to 650,000 ECU in 1987 and to 1 million ECU in October 1991.

Emergency aid is given quickly and must be used quickly - normally within six months of the Commission's agreement with the implementing agency, after which any unspent funds revert to the emergency fund. This means that, as well as immediate aid, urgent repairs to damaged infrastructure and the restoration of essential services such as water and electricity can be financed from emergency funds - but not post-disaster reconstruction.

Long-term rehabilitation can of course be financed, but from other sources: the national or regional programme funds for ACP, Maghreb or Mashrek countries, the post-disaster reconstruction or rehabilitation fund for Asian and Latin American countries, or food aid counterpart funds (those generated by the sale of food). Special refugee funds exist to finance the long-term settlement or reintegration of refugees and displaced people.

Operational partners

Although the Commission itself and its delegations overseas can and have played an active role on a number of occasions - by purchasing supplies, for instance, or arranging emergency transport, something it has done on a big scale in the Horn of Africa and the Middle East - the bulk of emergency assistance is provided through international and non-governmental organisations.

It was initially intended that "exceptional aid" would be channelled principally through government departments in disaster-affected countries, and this was the case up to 1978. Since then, however, the number and scale of

refugee crises and the transition from exceptional to emergency aid have necessitated increasing reliance on United Nations agencies (particularly UNHCR), the Red Cross family and NGOs with experience of relief work. Repairs to damaged infrastructure - roads, water and power supplies - are now almost the only emergency operations still regularly financed through governments.

The Community's principal partners, their specialised fields and their share of Community emergency aid are shown below.

Organisation	Specialisation *
UNHCR	Refugees
UNICEF	Child health
WHO	Epidemics
WFP	Food distribution
ICRC	War situations
LICROSS	Natural disasters
Red Cross	First aid
NGOs:	
Médecins sans Frontières	Emergency medicine & surgery
Médecins du Monde	Emergency medicine & surgery
Save the Children Fund	Child health, nutrition
Oxfam	Nutrition, water
Concern	Health, sanitation
Deutsche Welthungerhilfe	Food supply
and many others	
(Caritas, Danchurchaid, Lutheran World Federation, etc.)	

* This list is indicative. In emergencies many relief agencies perform a variety of functions, including food distribution.

Share of EC emergency aid (% of total amount)			
	1976	1982-3	1990
Governments	95.2	12.3	5.9
UN agencies ⁽¹⁾	0.15	24.3	10.5
ICRC/Red Cross	4.4	20.1	16.2
NGOs	0.0	39.7	37.0
Commission and others ⁽²⁾	0.25	3.4	30.4

N.B.

(1) The UN share - over 40% in 1982, less than 8% in 1983 - fluctuates considerably from year to year, depending mainly on the existence and scale of new refugee situations.

(2) The high figure in 1990 is attributable to the Gulf repatriation exercise implemented by the Commission, in liaison with the International Organisation for Migration.

Co-ordination

To avoid duplication of effort and inappropriate assistance, donors need information on requirements and on what other donors have given or intend to give. World-wide, this information is provided by the Geneva-based United Nations Disaster Relief Office (UNDRO), set up in 1971 to co-ordinate the international response to disaster appeals. At Community level, the Commission is responsible, by virtue of a Council Resolution of 1977, reaffirmed in 1991 by a new Resolution, for co-ordinating the emergency aids of the Member States and the Community. The head of the Commission's emergency aid unit is the Community co-ordinator.

The co-ordinator's brief is to gather details of the needs of the disaster-affected population from different sources - UNDRO, the Red Cross, other international organisations, the Commission's delegations or Member States' embassies - and pass them on to the Member States; to obtain from the latter details of their decisions or intentions and circulate them, with details of the Commission's own decisions or plans, to all Member States; to suggest additional aid and, if appropriate, propose co-ordinated or combined Commission-Member States operations; and to inform the specialised international organisations and the press of the Community's response.

The resulting exchange of information helps to avoid duplication within the Community (which contains 13 potential donors, since each of the Member States has a disaster relief budget); it makes it possible to keep track of what the Community as a whole gives; and it has led to the organisation of a number of combined operations in which a Member State provides an aircraft, for instance, to transport emergency supplies or relief personnel financed by the Commission.

The Gulf repatriation exercise, which among other things saw five Member States provide aircraft for an Amman-Cairo airlift financed by the Community, called for close co-ordination between the Commission delegations and Member States' embassies in the region as well as between the Commission and the Member States in Europe. The Kurdish relief operation which followed the Gulf war provided many more opportunities for combined activities, including, for the first time, operations involving Member States' armed forces.

The emergency situation created by the flight of 1.5 million Kurds to two remote mountain areas exposed the limitations of the existing international and Community relief system. In the crucial initial stage strong overall co-ordination was lacking. Subsequently relief agencies, heavily engaged elsewhere, did not always come forward, and supplies of appropriate relief items were not always available.

The Community tackled the first problem at its own level, but could do little to remedy the others. Community co-ordinators were despatched to Iran and Turkey to supervise the distribution of EC emergency aid and co-ordinate it with Member States' assistance. They provided a useful focal point and a tangible Community presence on the ground. Their despatch was a step in the direction the Community intends to follow from now on: a more direct, operational role in future large-scale emergencies. A reorganization of the Commission's emergency aid services was decided in late 1991 partly with that object in view.

FOOD AID

Six years after the terrible African drought of 1984/5, when the Community and its member states supplied over two million tons of food to Africa, a combination of civil wars and drought has left millions of Africans perilously short of food. Once again, the Community has been at the forefront of international relief efforts; by speeding up normal food aid, deciding a series of emergency aids and finally, in May 1991, mounting a special Programme to buy, transport and distribute an extra 360,000 tons of food, it was able to deliver 1.4 million tons of food to the worst hit African countries between November 1990 and November 1991.

In terms of truck loads, this quantity would fill **forty thousand 35-ton lorries**. In terms of human lives, it is enough to provide **sixteen million people** with daily survival rations for four months. Together with the contributions of other donors and the efforts of relief organisations in the field, the EC's food aid to Africa helped to avert widespread famine in 1991.

Emergency food aid

In a crisis situation, not foreseen when the annual food aid programme is drawn up, the Commission - which manages Community food aid - can decide an emergency action in order to speed up the delivery of food. Decision and procurement are greatly accelerated, and delivery times can be cut from 5-6 months for normal food aid to 2-3 months from the date of the Commission's proposal to delivery at the port of unloading.

In 1991, with so many people in desperate need of food aid, the whole of the Special Programme for Africa and other quantities - over 600,000 tons in all - were decided on an emergency basis, to ensure speed of delivery.

Emergency procedures for emergency action: an example

1. 27 May 1991 : Community decides Special Programme
2. 5 June 1991 : Commission telexes invitation to tender for 8,000 tons of wheat flour to 32 suppliers in the EC
3. 13 June 1991 : Contract awarded to Spanish supplier
4. 19 July 1991 : *Mv Kopania Kleafas* sails from Cartagena with 8,000t of flour and 160,000 bags
5. 28 July 1991 : *Mv K Kleafas* arrives Port Sudan

For emergency food aid, transport costs are paid by the Community up to the final destination. In the case of Sudan and Ethiopia, this involves long inland truck journeys and, when necessary, even airlifts to Southern Sudan or inaccessible refugee camps in the Ogaden. Transport costs can be two or three times the value of the

food transported: in the Special Programme budget of 140 million ECU the food itself cost 55 MECU - the rest was transport.

In recent years, roughly 10% of the total annual quantity of Community food aid has been decided on an emergency basis. Because of the African crisis the proportion was higher for 1991.

Definition

Article 6 of the basic Food Aid Regulation empowers the Commission to decide on emergency action for countries, refugees or other vulnerable sections of the population having to face serious unforeseen difficulties as a result of natural disasters or comparable exceptional circumstances where famine, or an imminent danger of famine, poses a serious threat to their lives or health.

In addition to emergency food operations which it decides itself, the Community contributes at least 40,000 tons of cereals every year to the International Emergency Food Reserve, set up in 1974 after the 1973-4 Sahel drought. The Reserve is managed by the World Food Programme.

Food for free distribution to vulnerable groups

While just over half of Community food aid is provided direct to food-deficit countries for sale, normally to help encourage positive local food production policies, substantial quantities are distributed free to vulnerable groups who have little or no income to buy food: young children, mothers, pregnant women, school children, sick or handicapped people, the elderly, refugees.

Refugees form the biggest group. In addition to vulnerable Palestinian refugees, for whom the Community has been providing food through UNRWA since 1971, large numbers of refugees in Pakistan, South-East Asia, Central America, the Horn of Africa and Southern Africa have been receiving Community food aid since the late 1970s and early 1980s.

Most food aid to vulnerable groups is indirect, i.e. it is channelled through international agencies - the World Food Programme (WFP), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UNRWA, the League of Red Cross Societies (LICROSS), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) - or non-governmental organisations (NGOs) with proven experience of food distribution and nutritional programmes. These organisations apply directly to the Commission for food allocations.

The big agencies like the World Food Programme, which regularly distributes over 200,000 tons of EC cereals aid a year, have the staff and the experience to handle food purchasing and shipping as well as distribution. NGO operations on the other hand tend to be much smaller. To avoid inundating the Commission with dozens of requests for small quantities and to spare the NGOs the practical problems of procurement, insurance and shipping, a

separate organisation - EURONAIID - was set up in 1980 to centralize NGO food aid applications to the Commission and to act as a purchaser and forwarding agent for them. The existence of Euronaid has greatly simplified the administration of indirect food aid through NGOs, which in recent years have been distributing as much as 200,000 tons of Community products a year.

Distribution of "humanitarian" food aid

EC → WFP	International Emergency Food Reserve Long-term refugee situations
EC → UNRWA	Vulnerable Palestinian refugees
EC → UNHCR	Other refugees
EC → ICRC	War zone populations
EC → LICROSS	Disaster victims
EC → NGOs (via Euronaid)	Vulnerable groups throughout the developing world

Example: EC food aid in 1991

Products supplied	Quantities in tons	Quantities in tons	Distribution	% of total quantity
	Normal food aid (direct & indirect)	Emergency food aid		
Cereals (wheat, wheat flour, rice, maize, sorghum, oatmeal)	1, 360,000	249,389	Direct aid (mainly for sale)	47.1%
Milkpowder	62,803	—	→ Countries with structural food shortages	
Butter oil	6,967	—	Indirect aid (mainly for free distribution)	
Vegetable oil	60,000	10,840	→ International organizations (WFP, UNHCR, UNRWA, ICRC, LICROSS)	32.6%
Sugar	15,000	100	→ NGOs via EURONAIID	20.3%
Other products (beans, lentils, groundnuts, corned beef, dried fish)	75,000	8,500		

Tonnage:	1,579,770	268,729	Total tonnage:	1,848,499
			Special Programme for Africa	358,000
				2,206,499 tons
Cost:	454 MECU	63 MECU	Total cost	517 MECU
			Special Programme	140 MECU
				657 MECU

N.B. This table does not include EC food aid to the former Soviet Union (± 88,000 tons)

REFUGEE AID

Assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons

There are in the world today some 17 million people who have been driven out of their country or forced to leave it to escape war, civil strife, persecution or famine. Millions more, possibly as many, are displaced within their own country for the same reasons. Three quarters are in Asia, Africa or Central America. The vast majority are poor, often exiled among equally poor people. Many are women and children. Dispossessed and landless, they depend on aid to survive until they can support themselves again or return in safety to their homes.

Much of this aid is provided by the European Community and its member states. Together, they are the largest contributors to the relief programmes of the United Nations agencies with special responsibility for refugees: the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). Over the past few years they have contributed on average between 35% and 40% of all assistance provided by these two organisations.

The Community itself has increased its assistance to refugees and displaced persons, from an average level of 90-120 MECU a year before 1987 ⁽¹⁾ to around 190-220 MECU since 1988. This increase is partly due to the introduction in the mid-1980s, at the request of the European Parliament and ACP governments, of specific funds for refugees and displaced persons in developing countries. While they can be used flexibly, the main purpose of these funds is to finance the medium-term assistance required to encourage self-sufficiency between the emergency phase (exodus, arrival in camps) and final settlement (full integration in the country or region of asylum or reintegration in the place of origin). Since a lasting and satisfactory solution to a refugee problem may take years to achieve, these funds fill a gap which the European Parliament quite rightly exposed. Since their introduction in 1984 (1986 for the ACP countries), some 200 operations have been launched, mostly in Pakistan, Afghanistan, S.E. Asia, Central America and Africa.

The Community's assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced people - half food, half finance - now represents about two-fifths of its total humanitarian aid. Most of its food aid for refugees is channelled through the World Food Programme, UNHCR, UNRWA or the ICRC. Since 1989 it has contributed to WFP's food reserve for long-term refugees, set up partly at the Community's request with Afghan and Ethiopian refugees in mind. Its financial assistance - 30-35% emergency aid, 65-70% medium-term aid - is provided through the specialized UN agencies, the Red Cross and other NGOs, and government departments. In channelling a substantial share via UNHCR, which is not primarily a relief agency ⁽²⁾, the Community recognizes the co-ordinating role that UNHCR is often asked to take on, as well as its unique experience of camp administration.

The Middle East

Scene of the world's oldest and most intractable refugee problem, this region contains 2.5 million registered refugees from Palestine. The children and grandchildren of the 750,000 Palestinians uprooted in 1947-49 as a result of the creation of the state of Israel, are mainly self-supporting. Often educated in UNRWA schools they have jobs in Amman, Damascus, Beirut, the Gulf... But there are still some 775,000 living in 61 refugee camps served by UNRWA in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and the Israeli-occupied territories (West Bank, Gaza Strip).

The services provided by UNRWA include education (633 schools), health, food for the most vulnerable, and emergency assistance in crisis situations. Education represents just over half the Agency's annual expenditure, now around 230 million \$.

Over the past 20 years, under a series of 3-year EC-UNRWA Conventions, the Community has provided some 470 million ECU for Palestine refugees in the care of UNRWA, partly in cash contributions to the educational and health programmes, partly in food aid for the elderly, the sick, young schoolchildren and other vulnerable groups. In 1990 it was the biggest donor to the Agency, contributing 20% of UNRWA's income for that year. The Community has also provided emergency aid when necessary (Lebanon 1982, Occupied Territories 1987-91).

For victims of the Gulf crisis - refugees from Kuwait and Iraq, displaced Iraqis - the Community provided 160 MECU in emergency aid in 1990 and 1991. Details of this major humanitarian effort are given in a later section.

Asia and Latin America

In the political turmoil which followed the end of the Vietnam war in 1975, over two million people - Vietnamese "boat people", Cambodians, Laotians - fled to neighbouring countries. More than one million were resettled abroad, many others remained in camps in the vicinity of the Thai border. In Afghanistan, the Soviet invasion of 1979 precipitated the flight of two to three million Afghans to Pakistan or Iran. In Central America, political oppression and civil war in Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala in the early 1980s left at least one million people displaced and a similar number exiled in Mexico, Honduras or Costa Rica.

(1) Except for 1985, when the Community's aid to refugees/displaced persons came to 187 MECU, largely in response to the 1984/5 African drought.

(2) UNHCR's primary tasks are the protection of refugees (ensuring that host governments respect their obligations under the Geneva convention to take in and treat refugees properly) and the quest for lasting solutions.

Honduras. Similarly, democratic elections in Nicaragua in 1990 opened the way for the return of some 70,000 Nicaraguan exiles, whose reintegration is being supported with grants totalling 20 MECU from the Community. EC funds, channelled through specialized European NGOs working in former conflict zones, are used to rebuild villages, promote agriculture and crafts and develop education and health services, for the benefit of the returnees and the local population. In southern Mexico, where the government has made land available for some of the 44,000 Guatemalans in refugee settlements, the Community is supporting, through UNHCR and the Mexican Refugee Relief Committee (COMAR), the development of agricultural and livestock activities to help the refugees become self-sufficient or prepare them for repatriation.

In South East Asia, the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Cambodia and the UN-backed political settlement in that country should facilitate implementation of the Comprehensive Plan of Action for Indochinese refugees adopted at an international conference in 1989. For its part, the Community is making a major contribution to the solution of the refugee problem with an initial 10 MECU pilot programme of repatriation and reintegration in Vietnam for those Vietnamese boat people prepared to return to their homeland. Incentives include business start-up credits, vocational training and improvements to health facilities in the areas of resettlement.

Despite the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan in 1988, the refugee situation there is still largely static. In the meantime the Community is supporting a training centre for Afghan refugees in Pakistan in the hope that they will acquire skills which will make them employable in either Afghanistan or Pakistan. There is a long waiting list to join the courses on offer. A trade apprenticeship scheme has proved particularly popular.

At the time the Community responded to these crises with substantial food and financial aid - emergency aids totalling more than 150 million ECU were decided for Indochinese, Afghan and Central American refugees in the period 1978-1982. Since the mid-1980s, while continuing to provide food aid on a regular basis, especially to refugees in the big camps in Pakistan and Thailand, and helping to improve health and hygiene, the Community has given financial assistance in particular to support income-generating activities - market gardening, poultry farming, small crafts such as sewing and weaving - and vocational training in accessible activities like nursing, teaching or carpentry. The emphasis has been on self-reliance and preparation for return or local integration.

Repatriation is at last gaining momentum, at least in Central America and Indochina. A regional peace process launched by the Central American Presidents in 1987, and reinforced by a successful conference organized by UNHCR two years later (when Italy agreed to fund a 115 million \$ development programme for displaced persons, refugees and returnees) has resulted in the return of thousands of Salvadorians and Miskito Indians from

Africa

By the end of the 1980s Africa contained over four million refugees (and possibly as many displaced persons), the legacy of conflicts dating back to the 1970s or even earlier, and of the 1984/5 drought. From 1984 to 1989 half of the Community's refugee aid was devoted to them.

In the past two years intensification of fighting in the Horn of Africa, the persistence of guerrilla warfare in Angola and Mozambique - aggravated by renewed drought in parts of Eastern and Southern Africa - and the outbreak of civil war in Liberia increased their number dramatically.

The Community's response to these new crises has been swift and substantial. Its efforts to help refugees and the displaced in the Horn of Africa represent well over 100 MECU in the space of two years. In the same period it has contributed nearly 50 MECU in cash and food aid to the victims, inside and outside Mozambique and Angola, of war and drought in those countries. In Liberia and its surrounding countries, the Community has consistently supported the efforts of the international and

non-governmental organisations providing food, medicines, medical care and shelter to those fleeing the fighting - at one stage, half of the country's entire population. Its total relief effort - 57 MECU by the end of 1991 - has been matched only by the United States (100 MECU).

While emergency and food aid represent the lion's share of the Community's overall assistance to refugees and displaced people, the introduction in 1986 of the special "post-emergency" fund, designed essentially to support self-reliance, integration and repatriation, has made it possible for the Community to assist all aspects of refugee situations. The victims of Mozambique's long-running civil war - 900,000 refugees in Malawi, 1.5 million displaced within Mozambique - have been helped not only with food, cooking stoves, medicines and relief workers, but also with wells and boreholes for water, seeds and tools for agriculture, classrooms and materials for schoolchildren. The local authorities have also been helped by Community funds to repair access roads to camps and to plant trees for fuel and firewood.

In Malawi, where the refugees have temporarily increased the population by 10% and actually outnumber Malawians in one province, the Community has made a conscious effort not to neglect the local population. It has gone one step further in Sudan, which has accepted the permanent presence of some 600,000 refugees. Recognizing that the settlers - mainly Ethiopian refugees from earlier stages of their country's civil war or the 1984/5 drought - represent a strain on Sudan's scarce natural

resources and limited facilities, the Community is funding a comprehensive 16 MECU programme of support for educational, health, veterinary and other services in areas where the refugees have settled. Among many other operations nearly 50 schools and 12 hospitals have been rehabilitated - a major effort to support the process of integration in a developing host country.

Happily, refugee movements have not been solely one-way. The return of Namibian refugees in 1989 is perhaps the best known instance, but not the only one. Over the past few years the Community has contributed to the costs of repatriating Chadians from Sudan, Ugandans from Sudan and Zaire, Rwandans from Burundi, Ethiopians from Somalia, Mauritians from Senegal - in all, roughly half a million returnees.

HUMANITARIAN AID TO CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

Political change in Central and Eastern Europe following the withdrawal of the Soviet presence in 1989 implied economic change, from a state-controlled system to a free market economy. This process called for long-term economic aid, which the advanced industrialized countries agreed to provide in the form of credits, bank loans and technical assistance.

The Community, called upon to co-ordinate this aid, made its own contribution in the form of a programme of aid for economic "restructuring", initially for Poland and Hungary. In the course of 1990 this programme, christened "PHARE", was extended to Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Romania and Yugoslavia. At the same time it became apparent that economic hardship was causing or could lead to severe distress in some countries. It was therefore agreed that part of the PHARE annual budget could be used for humanitarian aid. The proportion, initially fixed at 5%, was raised to 10% (about 75 MECU) in the course of 1991. These resources supplemented an existing fund of 5 MECU a year, which could be used for humanitarian purposes throughout Eastern Europe, including the then Soviet Union and Albania.

With the humanitarian funds thus available, the Community has so far concentrated on three problems: disadvantaged children in Romania (infant foods and medicines) and Romanian orphanages (heating, refurbishment, training in child care); the acute lack of basic drugs and medical equipment in Romania, Bulgaria and Albania (the equivalent of 3 months' supply for each country); and the situation in Yugoslavia.

All assistance is provided in co-operation with the national authorities, using European NGOs in a supporting role where appropriate. Counterpart funds obtained from the sale of EC-financed food and drugs help to cover the local costs - storage, distribution etc. - of these operations.

Over the past two years emergency aids totalling 27 MECU have been granted to meet the immediate needs of people seriously affected by civil unrest or acute economic difficulties in Albania (including Albanian refugees), Bulgaria, Romania, the former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia.

EC humanitarian aid decided in 1990-1991

Humanitarian funds :	million ECU
Orphanages & disadvantaged children in Romania	28
Medical supplies for Romania, Bulgaria & Albania	24
Medical, food & other humanitarian assistance for Yugoslavia	10
Other assistance	24
Emergency aid	27
Total	113

Food aid

Assistance in the form of food or grain has been given to Poland, Romania, Bulgaria and Albania. In 1991 the Community responded to a Soviet request for food aid for particularly vulnerable institutions - old people's homes, hospitals, kindergartens, schools, etc - with a massive 250 MECU operation involving the purchase of some 90,000 tons of prepared food (baby food, tinned meat, milk powder ...) for free distribution to several hundred destinations. Shortly before Christmas 1991 further substantial food aid was agreed for the very needy in St. Petersburg and Moscow over the coming winter.

TWO YEARS OF CRISIS: 1990-1991

In the first two turbulent years of the new decade, Community spending on emergency operations was exceptionally high - 540 million ECU, more than for the previous four years put together.

War and drought were principally responsible for this massive expenditure ⁽¹⁾. Political upheaval in Eastern Europe, civil war in Liberia, war in the Middle East, drought combined with civil war in Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia, Angola and Mozambique: these different but not entirely unrelated events accounted between them for 90% of the total.

Two areas alone - the Horn of Africa and the Middle East - each absorbed nearly 40% of all EC emergency aid and emergency food aid in 1990 and 1991. They called for relief operations on a scale not seen since the African drought of 1984-5. These are related in some detail in the following pages.

At the height of the Iraqi refugee crisis, and in the middle

of preparations for the Special Programme for Africa, the worst cyclone for 20 years struck Bangladesh. The Community's overall response - Commission and Member States - to this natural disaster is also summarized, as an example of post-disaster rehabilitation efforts as well as immediate relief.

Despite the complexity of the major relief operations (the Kurdish relief exercise involved 55 separate decisions, the Special Programme 67 operations, the Liberian emergency 26 successive aids), those affected by disasters of lesser magnitude were not neglected. Outside the main areas of conflict, the EC responded to appeals for help in 40 emergency situations which occurred in 31 countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

The spring of 1991 was particularly hectic. The Commission's records show that the following decisions were taken in the space of two months:

3 April:	Iraqi refugee crisis	• first emergency aid, via 7 organisations
10 April:	Conflict in Rwanda	• emergency aid via a Belgian NGO
11 April:	Drought in Ethiopia	• emergency aid via British and Irish NGOs
12 April:	Iraqi refugee crisis	• second emergency aid, via 39 organisations
16 April:	Riots in Sri Lanka	• emergency aid via a French NGO
22 April:	Civil war in Somalia	• emergency aid via ICRC, German and Italian NGOs
25 April:	Civil war in Liberia	• emergency aid for displaced Liberians, via ICRC and a French NGO
25 April:	Earthquake & cholera in Peru	• emergency aid via LICROSS and several European NGOs
26 April:	Fire in Myanmar (Burma)	• emergency aid via LICROSS
26 April:	Earthquake in Costa Rica & Panama	• emergency aid via Commission Delegation, LICROSS and a Belgian NGO
2 May:	Famine in Africa	• Special Programme emergency food aid budget approved
2 May:	Cholera epidemic in S. America	• emergency aid via several European NGOs
3 May:	Cyclone in Bangladesh	• first emergency aid via Commission Delegation, Bangladesh Red Crescent, local and European NGOs
		• emergency food aid via Bangladesh Government
7 May:	Conflict in Cambodia	• emergency aid via Belgian and French NGOs
7 May:	Civil war in Sudan	• emergency aid for Sudanese refugees, via a French NGO
22 May:	Civil war in Ethiopia	• emergency aid for Ethiopian refugees in Kenya, via UNHCR, LICROSS and a British NGO
22 May:	Cyclone in Bangladesh	• supplementary emergency aid via Spanish Government, LICROSS and local NGOs
27 May:	Floods & riots, Ossetia, USSR	• emergency aid via a Belgian NGO
27 May:	Famine in Africa	• Special Programme details approved, mobilisation of emergency food aid begins

(1) Civil strife and drought claimed more lives in the 1980s than any other type of disaster, according to data compiled by the Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance, published in 1990 ("Disaster History - significant data on major disasters worldwide"). These show that of a total of 1,165,000 deaths due to disasters in the period 1980-89, nearly 88% were caused by civil war or drought. The full breakdown

is the following:

Civil strife	48.6%	Cyclone	1.7%
Drought	39.2%	Epidemics	1.6%
Earthquake	4.7%	Floods	1.6%
Volcanic eruption	2.1%	Others	0.5%

EMERGENCY AID AND EMERGENCY FOOD AID DECIDED BY THE COMMISSION IN 1991

Month of decision	Reason for aid	Amount of aid ('000 ECU)
JANUARY	Somalia, civil war	650
	Albania, civil unrest (Albanian refugees in Greece)	500
	ACP countries (Malawi, floods and Mozambican refugees; Uganda, drought; Mali, unrest; Kenya, Somali refugees)	650
	Iraq/Kuwait, war (repatriation of Gulf evacuees, civilian population)	7,500
	Ethiopia, drought	500
	Mozambique, drought/civil war	640
	Somalia, civil war (Somali refugees in Ethiopia)	650
	Sudan, drought/civil war	640
	Sudan, drought (50,000t cereals and other products)	7,650
FEBRUARY	Afghanistan, Pakistan, earthquake/floods	500
	Peru, cholera epidemic	1,000
	Somalia, civil war	650
	Ethiopia, drought (60,000t cereals, 2,000t vegetable oil)	21,940
	Gulf crisis, Palestinian refugees (20,000t cereals, 3,300t vegetable oil, other products)	8,210
	Burkina Faso, drought (8,000t cereals)	2,275
MARCH	Liberia, civil war	4,000
	Iraq/Kuwait war (civilian population)	5,000
	Albania, civil unrest (Albanian refugees in Italy)	1,000
	Sudan, drought/civil war	5,000
	Brazil, ethnic unrest	280
	Malawi, floods	650
	ACP countries, various emergencies	650
	Cameroon, drought (2,800t cereals)	670
APRIL	Iraq, Kurdish uprising (refugee/displaced Iraqis in Turkey, Iran and N.Iraq)	105,000
	Sri Lanka, civil strife	300
	Rwanda, civil strife	150
	Ethiopia, drought/civil war	650
	Somalia, civil war	3,000
	Liberia, civil war	630
	Peru, earthquake/cholera epidemic	500
	Costa Rica, Panama, earthquake	250
	Myanmar (Burma), fire	70
MAY	South America, cholera epidemic	500
	Bangladesh, cyclone/tidal surge	2,500
	Bangladesh, cyclone (45,000 t cereals, 1,500 t vegetable oil)	5,200
	Cambodia, civil war	500
	Sudan, civil war (Sudanese refugees in Zaïre)	300
	Ethiopia, civil war (Ethiopian refugees in Kenya)	435
	Soviet Union, floods/civil unrest (in Ossetia)	65
	Africa, famine (Special Programme, 400,000 t cereals equivalent)	140,000
JUNE	Ethiopia, civil war (displaced civilians and ex-servicemen)	1,300
	Ethiopia, civil war (Ethiopian refugees in Djibouti)	350
	Philippines, volcanic eruption (Mt. Pinatubo)	300
JULY	Chile, torrential rains/landslide	130
	Somalia, civil war	3,500
	Ethiopia, drought/civil war	3,750
	China, floods	500
	Albania, civil unrest	500
	Liberia, civil war	650
	Rwanda, civil strife	300
	Mozambique, civil war	1,150

Month of decision	Reason for aid	Amount of aid ('000 ECU)	
AUGUST	Sudan, drought/civil war	2,500	
	Philippines, volcanic eruption (Mt. Pinatubo)	300	
	Romania, floods	200	
	Angola, civil war/drought	1,000	
	Mozambique, civil war	650	
	Albania, civil unrest	50	
	ACP countries (Nigeria, Cameroon), epidemics	1,300	
	ACP countries, various emergencies	650	
	Somalia, Sudan, Ethiopia, Rwanda, conflict (20,000t vegetable oil, cereals and other products via ICRC)	4,065	
SEPTEMBER	Yugoslavia, civil war	1,000	
	Cambodia, floods/conflict	1,000	
	Cambodia, floods/conflict (1,485t cereals)	380	
	Myanmar (Burma), floods	100	
	Guatemala, earthquake	200	
	Angola, civil war/drought	2,000	
	Zaire, civil unrest	1,000	
OCTOBER	Sudan, drought/civil war	1,000	
	Malawi, Mozambican refugees	1,000	
	Yugoslavia, civil war	1,000	
	Haïti, civil unrest	300	
	Liberia, civil war (Liberian refugees in Sierra Leone)	1,000	
	Philippines, volcanic eruption (Mt. Pinatubo)	280	
	Ghana, floods	210	
	Mali, civil unrest	200	
NOVEMBER	Bangladesh, floods	300	
	Bangladesh, floods (20,000t cereals)	3,000	
	Philippines, floods	500	
	Yugoslavia, civil war	11,000	
	Ethiopia, conflict	1,000	
	Sudan, drought/conflict	5,000	
	Somalia, civil war	3,000	
	Somalia, Ethiopia, Liberia, conflict (20,840t cereals, 960t vegetable oil and other products via ICRC)	4,755	
DECEMBER	Zaire, civil unrest (1,910t cereals)	360	
	Angola, returnees from Zaire (beans and other products via UNHCR)	180	
	Zaire, civil unrest	1,000	
	Algeria, civil unrest	300	
	Liberia, civil war	3,000	
	Soviet Union, acute economic difficulties	5,000	
		1990 (ECU)	1991 (ECU)
Total Community emergency food aid		36,000,000	203,000,000
Total Community emergency aid		114,855,000	189,020,000
Total EC Member States' emergency aid ⁽¹⁾		202,603,000	696,983,000 ⁽²⁾
All donors' emergency aid ⁽³⁾		715,350,222 ⁽⁴⁾	1,885,570,195 ⁽⁴⁾

(1) As reported to the Commission under the co-ordination procedure

(2) As of 7.2.92

(3) As reported to UNDRO

(4) In US dollars, as of 7.1.92. In ECU, at 1.25 US\$ = 1 ECU (average rate 1990-91), these totals would be approximately 575 MECU and 1,510 MECU.

THE GULF CRISIS

Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990 triggered a chain of events - an exodus of foreign workers from both countries, the bombardment of Baghdad and Basra during the war, the uprising and flight of Kurdish Iraqis after the war - which caused much human suffering and placed great strain on neighbouring countries.

The plight of the evacuees, of the civilian population in Iraq and Kuwait, and of the Kurdish refugees provoked a swift and generous response from individuals, private organisations and governments around the world. In all, they provided some 1,900 million dollars' worth of emergency humanitarian aid in cash and kind, of which nearly 40% came from the European Community and its member states. The Community itself contributed 172 million ECU - over 200 million dollars - in financial and food aid, and played a significant role in the repatriation and Kurdish relief operations.

REPATRIATION OF THE GULF EVACUEES

August 1990 - January 1991

Three weeks after the invasion of Kuwait, the Commission received an urgent appeal for help from the Egyptian government: nearly forty thousand Egyptians had arrived in Jordan from Iraq and Kuwait, and had to be repatriated as fast as possible. Meanwhile they were accommodated in makeshift camps in the desert, where shelter, medical care and food were urgently needed. The Egyptians were followed by Bangladeshis, Indians, Sri Lankans, Pakistanis, Filipinos, Vietnamese - over 91,200 Asians in all - and Sudanese. It was not long before Jordan too turned to the Community for help.

The Commission responded swiftly. The day after the Egyptian request was received, an emergency aid was decided to help finance an airlift between Amman and Cairo. A co-ordination meeting was called, Member States agreed to provide five planes and extra funds, transport from the transit camps to Amman airport was arranged with Royal Jordanian Airways. The first evacuees left Amman for Cairo two days after the Commission's decision. For those with vehicles, ferries were hired, with the help of the delegations in Cairo and Amman, to cross the Red Sea from Jordan to Egypt. Six weeks later all the Egyptian evacuees were back in their country.

The decision to organise and finance the Amman-Cairo airlift was the first of several: tents, blankets, foodstuffs, cooking utensils, medicines and medical personnel were flown out to the transit camps in Jordan, via the International Committee of the Red Cross, the Jordanian Red Crescent Society and several NGOs; large quantities of emergency food aid - cereals, milkpowder and edible oils - were supplied to both Jordan and Egypt; transport by bus from transit camps to airports was arranged and financed in Jordan, Egypt and Turkey; and more than 200 flights to Egypt, the Indian sub-continent, Vietnam and the Philippines were financed or co-financed with the International Organisation for Migration, the Member States and the Indian or other governments concerned.

On 11 October the 100,000th evacuee boarded a plane bound for Manila. By mid-January 1991 some 180,000 refugees from the Gulf had been flown home. Most of the remainder, chiefly Sudanese, were evacuated by March. The whole operation had involved more than 500 flights for over 200,000 refugees. The Community and its member states contributed nearly 30% of total costs.

The Gulf crisis at a glance

August 1990:

Invasion of Kuwait, formation of coalition, exodus of foreign workers

January 1991:

Hostilities begin mid-January and last for 6 weeks.

March 1991:

Liberation of Kuwait. Abortive uprising of Kurdish & Shia minorities. Flight of 1.5 million Kurds

April 1991:

Coalition forces launch Operation Safe Haven in Northern Iraq

May-July 1991:

Return of the Kurds, withdrawal of coalition forces

The donor community's response

Emergency humanitarian aid, in million \$

	All donors	EUR 12 ⁽¹⁾	of which EC
REPATRIATION OF EVACUEES	492	137	82
CIVILIANS IN IRAQ & KUWAIT	n.a.	n.a.	16
KURDISH RELIEF OPERATION	1,424	605	120
Total	1,916	742	218

(1) The Community & its member states

n.a. : not available

Source : UNDRO - EC Commission - US Government

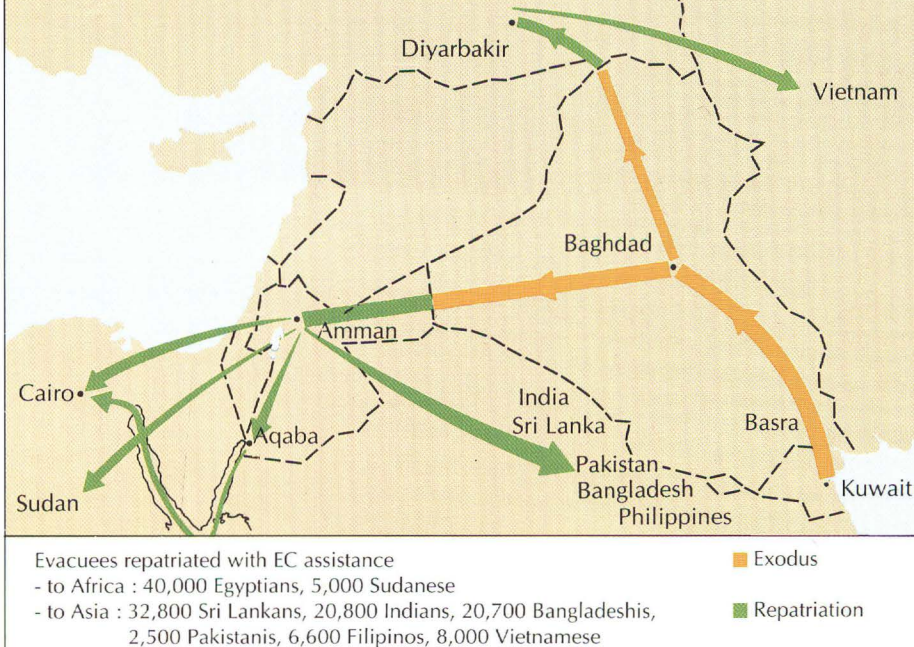
Repatriation of Gulf evacuees

Contributions of all donors:

	million \$
Saudi Arabia	223
EUR 12	137
USA	29
Japan	23
Others	80
Total	492

Source: UNDRO - EC Commission

Exodus and repatriation of foreign workers in Kuwait and Iraq



HELP FOR CIVILIAN POPULATION IN IRAQ AND KUWAIT

February - March 1991

Towards the end of the Gulf war it became increasingly clear that, however carefully targetted the bombings had been, military operations had severely disrupted life throughout the country. Water and food supplies and hospital services in particular were badly affected. Under difficult and dangerous conditions, the ICRC mounted an emergency programme, to which the Community made a cash contribution to finance a mobile water treatment station for hospitals and clinics in Baghdad, water purification equipment, medical staff and medicines for other areas in Iraq.

Immediately after the war UNICEF and several NGOs received donations for feeding and medical programmes in Northern and Southern Iraq as well as in the capital; doctors, nurses and medicines from Algeria and Morocco were flown into Baghdad; and the Kuwaiti and Bahrain Red Crescent Societies received 100 tons of baby food, via the Dutch Red Cross, for distribution in Kuwait.

Later on in the year the Community was in a position to make a substantial contribution to WFP's nutritional programme for vulnerable groups throughout Iraq.

KURDISH RELIEF OPERATION

April - August 1991

Encouraged by the outcome of the war, Northern Iraq's Kurdish population rose against the government in March. The authorities in Baghdad, who had not in fact been brought to their knees, despatched a strong and heavily armed force to quell the uprising. Fearing with good reason for their lives, the Kurds fled north and east to the mountainous Turkish and Iranian borders. Those with vehicles drove as far as they could and then walked. Others just walked - for up to ten days in bitter weather. By the beginning of April nearly half a million people were camping out just below the snowline on the 250-mile Turkish border. Another million had reached Iran, where they headed for the nearest towns and villages. The local population in both countries responded generously, providing what food and clothing they could, while the Turkish and Iranian armies and Red Crescent societies began to organize supplies and medical care. But they could not cope alone with hundreds of thousands of cold and hungry people. Outside help was urgently needed.

The Commission received early warning of the Kurdish exodus. An emergency aid of 5 million ECU was decided on 3 April. The first of many subsequent flights left for Turkey and Iran on 6 April, carrying medicines, surgical materials, medical personnel, food, tents and blankets.

The scale of the problem rapidly became apparent as television crews began relaying pictures of starving refugees and food trucks stuck on muddy slopes. Helicopters were called in to drop supplies; Médecins sans Frontières and other agencies moved quickly to establish teams in both countries; and on 8 April the European Council meeting in Luxembourg decided to provide an emergency aid of 150 million ECU, two-thirds to be financed from the Community budget and managed by the Commission.

Over the following weeks this huge sum was used to finance relief operations mounted by 24 NGOs, 2 UN agencies, the ICRC, LICROSS, 5 European Red Cross societies, the Turkish Red Crescent and the ministries of 6 member states. One and a half million blankets, over 60,000 tents, mammoth quantities of shoes, clothing and medical supplies were flown out - the Community financed more than 300 humanitarian flights in all; over a thousand doctors, nurses and other relief workers were involved; and a timely grant to the World Food Programme enabled enough food to be bought on the local markets to feed 600,000 refugees for a month. For the first time, co-ordinators were appointed by the Commission to supervise the distribution of Community aid and handle relations with the local authorities.

Once Operation Safe Haven⁽¹⁾ was underway and Kurdish refugees began to leave the border areas, a number of relief agencies receiving EC funds moved down with them into Northern Iraq, where they found themselves working alongside American and European soldiers in camps, field hospitals and way stations, set up in several cases with EC finance. Mobile teams of firemen, engineers and other volunteers from Britain, also supported by the Community, added yet another element to this civilian/military effort which worked wonders. By mid-June, when the armies began to withdraw, water and electricity had been re-stored in a number of towns and villages, hospitals and schools had re-opened and work had started in the fields. By the end of August, the harvest was in and more than 90% of the refugees had returned to Iraq.

September - December 1991

The whole area had suffered badly. As summer gave way to autumn, the United Nations, in charge of relief operations inside Iraq, found that as many as 60,000 families were camping out in the mountains in Northern Iraq, either because their homes had been destroyed or because they feared a fresh outbreak of violence. The operation launched by UNHCR to provide shelter for up to 350,000 displaced Iraqis through the freezing winter months in the provinces of Sulaymaniyah, Arbil and Dahuk involved the

provision of some 1500 lorry loads of simple building materials, reserves of winter tents, blankets, heaters and food supplies. The Community, together with some of its member states, lent its support to this operation, helping to provide substantial quantities of both food and building and heating materials. All relief supplies, many of them trucked from Western Europe, had been safely delivered by mid-December, before the worst of the winter.

Kurdish relief operation

All donors:	million \$
EUR 12	605
USA	581
Japan	107
Canada	18
Sweden	18
Others	95
Total	1,424

N.B. The US contribution included 449 million \$ for Operation Provide Comfort

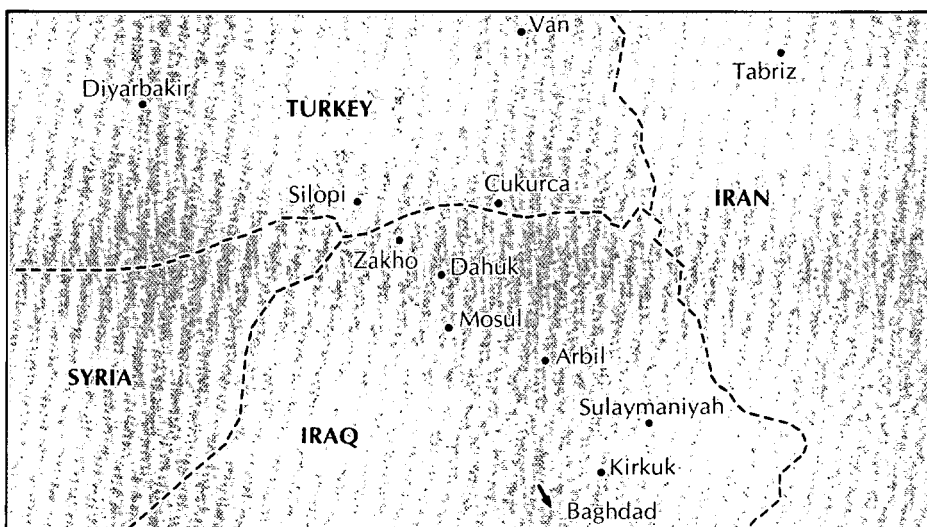
Source : UNDRO - EC Commission - US Government

EC emergency aid (105 MECU) financed:

337 humanitarian flights	1140 relief workers
1.5 million blankets	4 field hospitals
64,000 tents	4 emergency hospitals
210,000 pairs of shoes	4 camps
59,000 tons of food	1 way station
substantial quantities of medicines and medical equipment	and over 100 truckloads of building materials and other winter supplies

Geographical distribution of EC aid

60%	Iran & Iran/Iraq border
32%	Turkey & Turkey/Iraq border
8%	Iraq



(1) Designed to encourage the Kurdish refugees to return home by offering them military protection inside Iraq, Operation Safe Haven was launched at the end of April and completed two months later. 20,000 US, British, French, Dutch, Belgian, Spanish and Italian troops were involved.

BANGLADESH CYCLONE

During the night of 29-30 April 1991 a cyclone of exceptional force struck the densely populated low-lying off-shore islands and south-eastern coast of Bangladesh.

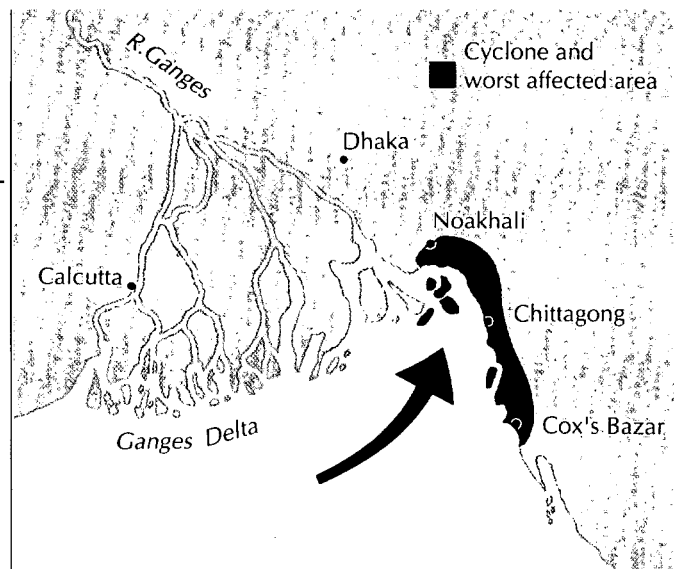
Winds of over 200 km per hour and torrential rains lashed the area all night; far worse, mountainous seas, piled up by the gales into a tidal surge 6-7 metres high in places, swamped the islands, raced inland and burst over the coastal embankments, submerging parts of the mainland from Noakhali to Cox's Bazar - a distance of 150 km.

An estimated 140,000 people died, mostly by drowning ⁽¹⁾. Thousands more were injured and countless survivors lost relatives, homes and their livelihood. 840,000 houses were destroyed, 6,700 schools destroyed or damaged. Livestock losses - cattle, sheep, goats, poultry - ran into millions. Damage to fisheries, forests and infrastructure was extensive. Altogether at least 12 million people were seriously and directly affected.

Emergency relief

Rescue and relief operations were launched immediately by the Bangladesh authorities and local volunteer organisations. A military task force and 200 medical teams were despatched to the disaster area. Deliveries of food, water and medicines began on 1 May, but continuing bad weather - high winds, heavy rain, rough seas - hampered civilian and military efforts. The adverse conditions and the scale of the disaster made outside help necessary.

The international community was quick to respond to the government's appeal. Air- and sea-borne operations were reinforced with helicopters, planes and vessels from the United States, India, Pakistan, Egypt, Thailand, Japan and the United Kingdom. Many donors, including several EC member states, made prompt and substantial cash contributions to NGO relief activities. The Commission decided



an emergency aid of 2 million ECU for immediate relief supplies - food, clothing, shelter and medicines - to be bought and distributed by the Bangladesh Red Crescent, two local and two European NGOs. At the same time EC emergency food aid was approved: 45,000 tons of wheat and 1,500 tons of vegetable oil, to be drawn from existing food stocks in the country which the Community would replenish in the following months. These quantities were for distribution to especially vulnerable cyclone victims and, as food for work, to people employed on temporary repairs to embankments.

On 22 May the Commission granted a second emergency aid of 500,000 ECU, to finance temporary housing for another 1500 families (its initial aid had included shelter for over 5000 households), the de-watering of contaminated ponds and the removal of debris.

Post-cyclone assistance

By early June the emergency relief phase was drawing to a close and the government was seeking help for rehabilitation. The tidal surge had washed away one third of the 1200 km of coastal embankments, leaving agricultural land exposed to salt water flooding. More than 2000 km of roads had been damaged. Houses, schools, factories, power lines, rice fields, shrimp farms... Faced with multi-million dollar damage, the government could only indicate the most pressing needs:

- food aid for the destitute
- housing, water, sanitation
- schools
- flood control works
- cyclone shelters (the 300 existing ones had protected 230,000 people - the early warning system had functioned well - but many more lives could have been saved if there had been more shelters).

The representatives of the Member States in the EC Council of Ministers had already agreed that part of the Member States' combined minimum contribution of 60 MECU would include funds for rehabilitation, and that at least an

(1) The tidal surge was chiefly responsible for the very high death toll, the highest for any natural disaster since the 1984/5 African drought, and the heaviest in Bangladesh since 1970, when a similar cyclone and storm surge claimed 300,000 lives.



Anwara, Chittagong, 6 May 1991 : A mother and her surviving child amongst the ruins of their home.
(Photo : Dr. Shahidul Alam, © Shahidul Alam/Drik Picture Library / CARE)

extra 20 MECU would be provided from the Community budget for post-cyclone aid. To propose a coherent overall response, the Commission despatched a mission to Bangladesh in June. Armed with first hand knowledge of the situation, and after discussions with the local authorities and other donors, the mission recommended, for the Community contribution, a mixture of food aid, financial aid and technical assistance: the first to help the most vulnerable families - those left with virtually nothing after the cyclone - and to support repairs to embankments and roads; the second to finance the construction of primary

schools that would also serve as cyclone shelters, and the rehabilitation of damaged food storage depots; and the third to design and supervise the construction of new embankments (to be financed by the World Bank). The mission also suggested opportunities for Member States' bilateral aid.

Community projects based on these proposals were approved in the autumn. Work on the new shelters-cum-schools was due to start in early 1992.

The EC's overall response to the cyclone

Emergency relief	EC	8 MECU	shelter, medical care, food (46,500 tons)
	Member States	29 MECU	logistic support, aid for NGO relief work, food (20,000 t)
Rehabilitation	EC	23 MECU	food aid (60,000 tons)
			- for destitute families
			- for work (embankment and road repairs)
			financial aid
			- for 200 primary schools-cum-shelters
			- for repairs to food storage depots
			technical assistance for construction of new embankments
	Member States	33 MECU	schools-cum-cyclone shelters
			road repairs
			flood control rehabilitation
			drinking water supplies
			fishing boats
			general infrastructure repairs (Chittagong port, radio tower etc.)

FAMINE IN AFRICA

By the autumn of 1990 a combination of civil war in several countries and the prospect of poor harvests in many areas led the World Food Programme and other relief organisations to predict widespread famine in the following year, unless rapid action was taken to counter-act the threat.

The situation was particularly bad in the Horn of Africa. In Sudan, long-standing host to 750,000 refugees and the scene of an increasingly bitter North-South struggle, the summer rains had failed in the western and central provinces (Darfur, Kordofan, White Nile) and the Red Sea Hills. In Somalia, which still contained some 300,000 Ethiopian refugees from the Ogaden, the security situation was deteriorating fast. Between the two, Ethiopia was having to contend with refugees from both Sudan and Somalia while diverting more and more men and resources to its own civil war. In the north - Eritrea and Tigray - the rains had also failed, although a good harvest was predicted in the more fertile centre and south.

The Commission, which earlier in the summer had granted emergency aids for relief operations in Sudan (for 8 million ECU), Ethiopia, Somalia and Liberia (where half the population was on the move), now alerted the Mem-

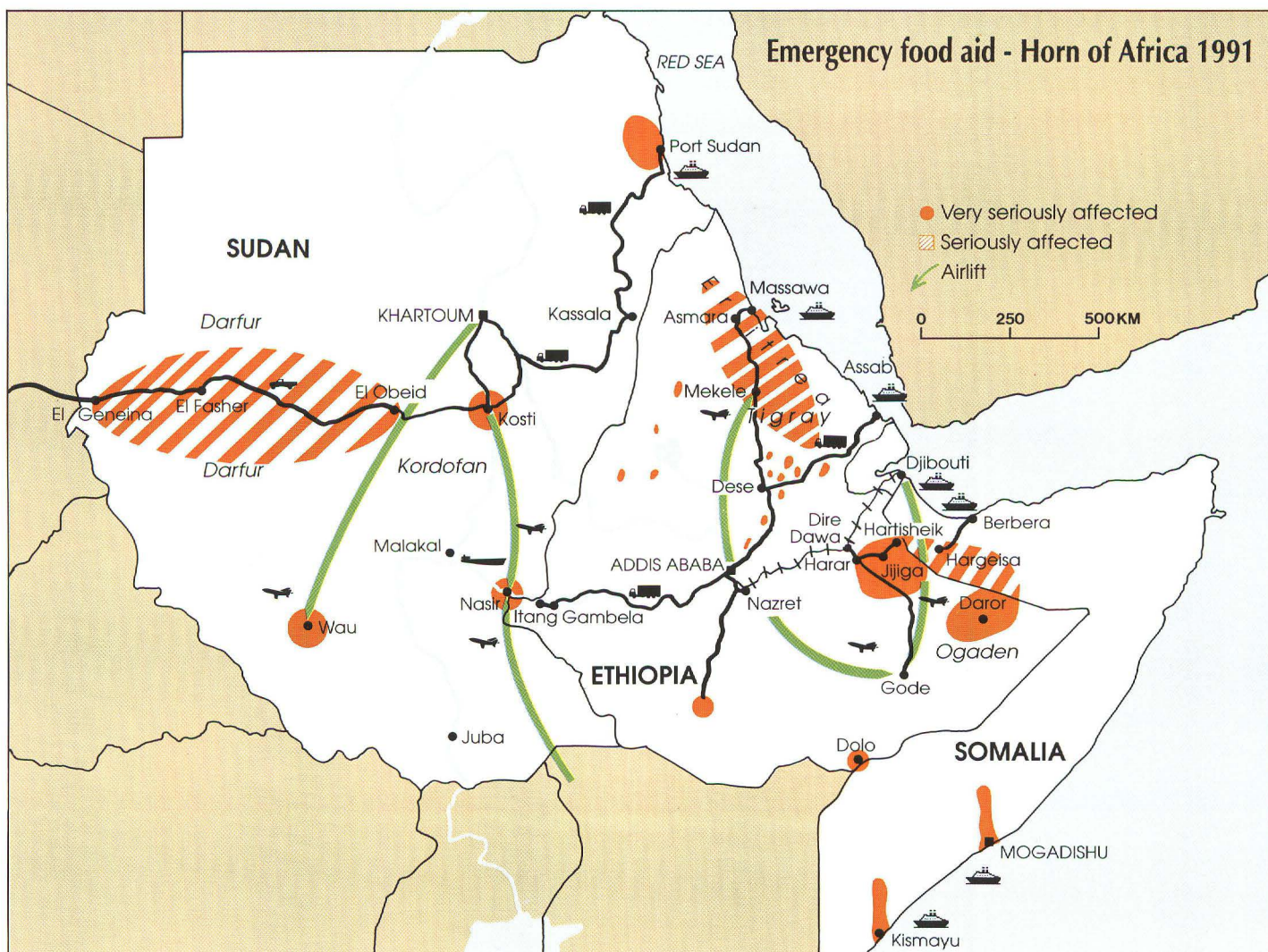
ber States. The Development Ministers of the Twelve discussed the situation in November. The Commission was asked to co-ordinate the Community's response to the impending crisis.

November 1990 - March 1991

The first step was to respond to an immediate crisis in Ethiopia, where funds were urgently needed to finance emergency flights to the Eritrean capital, Asmara, and road transport of food aid from the port of Assab to Tigray and other inland destinations. An emergency aid of 6 MECU was decided, to pay for over 100 flights between Assab and Asmara, and contribute to the haulage of 340,000 tons of food aid over the next six months.

That done, the Commission then took action to ensure a regular and adequate flow of EC food aid throughout the year ahead:

- substantial emergency food aid was decided for Sudan (111,600 tons) and Ethiopia (162,500 tons), using the last of the 1990 reserve and a large share of the 1991 emergency food aid funds;



- the 1991 food aid programme was rearranged in favour of famine-threatened countries in Africa;
- the procurement and delivery of aid previously decided was speeded up.

When the bilateral aids announced by the Member States (360,000 tons) were added to EC food aid, the total came to just over one million tons. With the contributions of other donors, especially the United States (900,000 tons), it looked as though annual requirements would be covered.

In the meantime, however, the situation in the Horn of Africa had deteriorated further. By the end of January, the Somali capital was in ruins, its former president in hiding with several thousand armed men somewhere in the south of the country, its ports closed. The cessation of food aid to the refugee camps, supplied from Berbera and Mogadishu, had forced the remaining refugees back across the border in search of food. Some 70,000 Somalis had also fled to Ethiopia or Djibouti, to escape attacks by armed bandits. In Ethiopia itself, fighting intensified in February, and the movement of rebel troops southwards and westwards from Eritrea and Tigray hampered the distribution of food from central areas (which had had a record harvest) to the northern districts.

In the light of these developments, and of precarious situations elsewhere in Africa - Liberia, the Sahel, Angola, Mozambique - it was clear by mid-March that existing commitments would not be enough to meet food needs to the end of the year. More food, and more funds for inland transport, would be required to avert the threat of famine.

The European Community's Special Programme

To cover the predicted shortfall, the Commission proposed in March that the Twelve supply an extra 600,000 tons, two-thirds as EC food aid, one third from the Member

States. The whole of the Community's share would be given as emergency food aid: accelerated delivery, free distribution, all transport costs paid to final destination.

The plan was approved in April by the Council and the European Parliament. The budget for the Community's share - 140 MECU - was agreed in May. The details - how many tons per country, which products - were decided immediately afterwards. The first calls for tender were issued before the end of the month.

Two-thirds of the extra 400,000 tons ⁽¹⁾ to be supplied by the Community was destined for the Horn of Africa, the bulk to be routed through Port Sudan, Assab and Djibouti. Consignments were planned to arrive in July, August and September, following on from earlier food aid deliveries, with final shipments arriving in October and November. Staggering deliveries in this way would reduce the risk of saturating port and storage facilities.

To help tackle the formidable problems of storage and distribution - aggravated in the Horn by military activity - the Commission appointed a number of logistics experts to work in Sudan and Ethiopia with its delegations in those countries, the national administrations and the organisations responsible for the transport and distribution of food aid: local and European NGOs, WFP, LICROSS, ICRC and UNHCR.

As its contribution to the Special Programme, the German government financed a major operation (17 MECU) to rehabilitate the Red Sea ports and reinforce road transport in Ethiopia and Sudan with trucks, spare parts and mechanics. Other contributions included 60,000 tons of food from the United Kingdom, 39,000 tons from Italy, aircraft and crews for a Djibouti-Ogaden airlift (France

(1) The products actually supplied, which included rice and wheat flour, came to 358,000 tons, the equivalent of 400,000 tons of wheat.

and Spain) and cash and food donations from other member states.

June - November 1991

Thanks to these combined efforts and careful planning, shipments of food were arriving at regular intervals in the Red Sea ports. This was just as well, because the fall of the Ethiopian government in May created new humanitarian problems: the presence over a large area of 300,000 ex-government soldiers, disarmed and penniless; the expulsion from Eritrea of 200,000 Ethiopian civilians; the hasty return to Sudan of over 200,000 Sudanese refugees; and the flight of some 80,000 Ethiopians to neighbouring countries.

Community food and emergency aid proved helpful for all four groups, and vital for the ex-soldiers, who were given

food, shelter and medical care in transit camps along the main north-south roads before receiving a little money from the Red Cross to go back to their home areas. The tents, blankets and medicines as well as the food were largely donated by the Community. The Sudanese returnees were supplied by air with immediate essentials, seeds and tools paid for from EC emergency funds.

All along emergency aid had supplemented food aid, financing shelter, medical supplies, personnel and transport throughout the Horn of Africa and in Liberia and Southern Africa. In Somalia it was for some months the only possible form of Community assistance, funding in the first instance the heroic efforts of NGO and Red Cross doctors, and later the restoration of water supplies in Mogadishu and even the de-mining of Hargeisa ⁽¹⁾.

(1) The principal city of northern Somalia was shelled and mined by government forces in 1988.

Altogether, some seventy emergency operations were financed in the famine-affected countries in the space of a single year, for a total of over 30 million ECU.

Overall, the Special Programme was implemented very much according to schedule. By the end of November nearly all the total quantities sent from overseas had reached or passed the port of landing. In the Horn of Africa, only one consignment, for southern Sudan, had not

been organised due to security problems. In Somalia, the ports had re-opened, making deliveries possible from September onwards. Elsewhere, maize was delivered to Angola in August, in Malawi distribution of food to Mozambican refugees began in September, and rice was delivered to Liberia in October.

The immediate objective had been achieved. Widespread famine had been averted.

The Special Programme : contributions at end November 1991

	Food	Transport	Other	Total cost
EC	358,000 tons	All associated transport costs	Logistics experts	140 MECU
Member States	131,000 tons	Airlifts Djibouti-Ogaden	Logistic support	90 MECU
			Total	230 MECU

Overall Community effort for most-affected African countries, November 1990 - November 1991

EC	1,430,000 tons of food	Transport costs for 2/3 of that quantity	Emergency aid totalling 30 MECU
Member States	490,000 tons of food	Logistic support	Emergency aid totalling n.a.

CONCLUSION

The major crises of the past two years called for a sustained, possibly unprecedented effort from donors and relief agencies. Occurring in rapid succession in different parts of the world, they strained human, physical and financial resources to the limit. They confirmed the existence of a deep store of goodwill and generosity. At the same time they exposed certain practical weaknesses, prompting reflection on ways and means of reinforcing the international community's capacity to respond to large-scale emergencies.

The European Community, as an initiator and organiser of relief operations as well as a major donor, has played a significant part in this global effort. It too has felt the strain and detected flaws in its internal arrangements. It has decided to simplify these, in the interests of speed and efficiency, by establishing, from March 1992, a single service to manage all aspects of its emergency humanitarian aid.

The service, to be called the European Emergency Humanitarian Aid Office, will continue to work closely with the Community's traditional partners while gradually building up an operational capability to fill gaps which exist in the present international relief system. Simpler procedures, a stronger presence on the ground, closer co-ordination with its counterparts in the Member States, other donors and relief agencies: in working to achieve these aims, the Office will be contributing to the collective effort to enhance the international community's ability to provide immediate, appropriate and co-ordinated relief in the aftermath of natural or man-made disasters.

EUROPEAN EMERGENCY HUMANITARIAN AID OFFICE

The Office, a new Commission service, will be established in 1992 with the aim of heightening the effectiveness of the Community's relief operations and contributing to a clearer perception of its overall humanitarian assistance.

The Office's responsibilities will include traditional emergency aid, emergency food aid and emergency assistance for refugees, for all countries outside the Community (developing countries, Central and Eastern European countries and others). It will also be responsible for humanitarian operations which would not normally be defined as emergency aid but which in practice need to be implemented on an emergency basis.

At a later stage the Office should be in a position to play a more operational role, taking over the running of certain stages of some operations during a trial period.

The creation of a single service to manage all emergency humanitarian aid should also provide an opportunity to improve current working arrangements, by for instance securing agreements on genuine partnership with NGOs, the Red Cross and United Nations agencies, outline agreements on combined operations with Member States, and possibly a financial reserve to provide for large-scale emergencies.

Glossary

- EC:** European Communities (Economic, Coal and Steel, Atomic Energy), commonly called the European Community. In this brochure, the abbreviation *EC* and the terms *the Community* and *the European Community* mean the Community as such, as distinct from the Community and its member states together.
- EEC:** European Economic Community
- CEC:** Commission of the European Communities, the institution which *inter alia* manages the European Development Fund, the EC's annual budget and its network of overseas offices (delegations).
- ECU:** European Currency Unit (average value 1990-91: 1.25 US dollars, 0.7 pounds sterling, 0.75 Irish punts)
- MECU:** million ECU
- TON:** metric ton (1,000 kilogrammes)
- NGO:** non-governmental organisation (Save the Children Fund, Médecins sans Frontières, Caritas, etc.)
- ICRC:** International Committee of the Red Cross
- LICROSS:** League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
- UNDRO:** United Nations Disaster Relief Office
- WFP:** World Food Programme
- UNHCR:** Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
- UNRWA:** United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine refugees in the Near East.

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