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## January

The humanitarian crisis in **Somalia** worsens after torrential rains at the end of 2006 affect hundreds of thousands in the first weeks of the new year.

A state of emergency is declared in **Bolivia** after El Niño style flooding destroys more than 200,000 homes.

## February

Cyclone Favio strikes **Mozambique** causing loss of life and destruction of homes and infrastructure.

Severe flooding in **Indonesia's** capital Jakarta makes around 340,000 people homeless.

Continued violence against civilians and deteriorating security for humanitarian organisations in the Darfur province of **Sudan** are denounced by the European Commission.

A state of emergency is declared in **Guinea** following violent protests. Several people are killed in clashes between demonstrators and the police.

The UN warn that the number of people in **Iraq** being forced to leave their homes constitutes a humanitarian disaster with around four million people either displaced within Iraq or living as refugees in neighbouring countries.

## March

An escalation of the conflict between the government and the Tamil Tigers forces thousands to flee their homes in **Sri Lanka**.

Two earthquakes hit Sumatra in **Indonesia** killing at least 82 people. The earthquakes' effects are felt as far as Malaysia and Singapore.

A state of emergency is declared in the **Marshall Islands** as a severe drought leaves thousands without drinking water.

## April

An 8.1 magnitude earthquake causes a tsunami to strike the **Solomon Islands**, leaving more than a dozen villages destroyed and thousands stranded.

The humanitarian situation deteriorates in the north of the **Central African Republic** due to increasing activities of domestic and foreign rebels and bandits as well as efforts of government forces to fight these groups. More than 200,000 people are displaced as a result.

The UN warns that **Chad** faces an impending refugee crisis as the country struggles to cope with thousands of refugees from Darfur in neighbouring Sudan.

Intense fighting in **Somalia's** capital Mogadishu. More than 420,000 have fled since December 2006.

## May

Fighting between the Islamic Fatah group and the Lebanese army in the Palestinian refugee camp Nahr el Bared in **Lebanon** leads to the displacement of over 31,000 camp residents.

## June

Hamas takes control of the **Gaza Strip** prompting Israel to close the border. EU Commissioner Louis Michel calls for humanitarian access to the Strip to enable the delivery of vital relief supplies.

The International Committee of the Red Cross publicly highlights violations of international humanitarian law in **Burma/Myanmar**.

The winter season in the central and southern Andean region of **Peru** starts with a cold wave and the coldest temperatures experienced in 30 years. The government declares a state of emergency.

## July

The official inflation rate in **Zimbabwe** goes above 7,600%, the highest in the world. A crumbling economy, poor governance, food insecurity, erratic weather conditions and an HIV/AIDS pandemic are elements of the country's humanitarian crisis.





## August

**Peru** is hit by an 8.0 magnitude earthquake and a series of aftershocks which destroy lives, homes and land.

Hurricane Dean causes destruction across the **Caribbean**.

Floods in **South Asia** affect millions of people in Bangladesh, India and Nepal.

500,000 people are affected by severe floods in **North Korea**.

Floods in **Colombia** affect more than 580,000 people.

## September

Hurricane Felix hits **Nicaragua**. 200,000 people are affected.

Torrential rains cause floods across **Africa** with Uganda, Ethiopia, Ghana, Togo, Mauritania and Burkina Faso particularly hit.

Increasing violence and military confrontations between the Congolese army and rebel forces in the North Kivu region of the **Democratic Republic of Congo** causes widespread human suffering and displaces hundreds of thousands people.

African Union peacekeepers in the Darfur region in **Sudan** are attacked.

Buddhist monks lead a series of anti-government protests in **Burma/Myanmar** which are violently suppressed by the authorities.

Forest fires in **Paraguay** affect around 200,000 people directly with a million hectares of land, forests and crops ruined.

The situation in parts of **Moldova** becomes critical following a long period of severe drought.

## October

EU Commissioner Louis Michel proposes an EU strategy for peace, security and development in the **Horn of Africa**.

Typhoon Lekima hits **Vietnam** followed by heavy rains and extensive flooding. 400,000 people are evacuated.

Tropical storm Noel hits the **Dominican Republic** followed by a tropical wave of torrential rains, affecting 80% of the country.

## November

Cyclone Sidr strikes **Bangladesh** killing 3,363 people and causing wide-spread devastation. The homes of more than two million people are swept away.

More residents flee **Somalia's** capital Mogadishu as the battle between government forces and Islamist-led insurgents rages. Hundreds of thousands of civilians have fled the capital in 2007.

## December

**Algeria**: UN offices in Algiers are targeted by a suicide attack, killing 17 UN workers.

The **EU** adopts a European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid.

Violent clashes in **Kenya** after the disputed election victory of President Kibaki.

The European Commission and its humanitarian non-governmental partner organisations sign a new Framework Partnership Agreement, laying down the principles, procedures and rules of EU humanitarian assistance and setting out the criteria for becoming a partner.



## European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid

### Boosting EU coordination and good donor practice

Darfur, Hurricane Dean, Cyclone Sidr, Somalia, Afghanistan, Peru: names and places that conjured up tragic images in 2007. Across the globe, natural disasters and war affected millions of people.

25 million people are internally displaced and 14 million more are refugees who have fled their countries altogether. These are people whose lives often hang by a thread, and who depend on international solidarity. Elsewhere, children are still being recruited to fight in conflicts, civilians are targeted in military campaigns and sexual violence is increasingly used as a weapon of war.

The international laws designed to protect non-combatants are openly flaunted. Humanitarian staff working to ease human suffering face ever greater risks. In 2006 alone, 85 relief workers were killed "in the line of duty". To make matters worse, climate change is starting to take its toll as extreme weather events increase in both frequency and severity.

It has become increasingly clear that the environment for humanitarian aid delivery is changing, and becoming more challenging. This was why Louis Michel, the European Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, launched an initiative in late 2006 which culminated in the adoption of a "European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid" on 18 December 2007.

The Consensus, signed by the Presidents of the Commission, Parliament and Council (on behalf of the 27 Member States), is a collective effort by the European Union to shape the future of the EU's humanitarian aid, tackling the new challenges and responding with a single, more effective voice.

As one would expect, the document reconfirms the EU commitment to humanitarian principles, international



humanitarian law and the central coordinating role of the United Nations. It also identifies the need for more resources and emphasises that the aid should be delivered by dedicated professionals from civil society, the Red Cross/Red Crescent movement and the United Nations.

In a world where military intervention is often the response to complex problems, the Consensus insists on a clear definition of tasks, spelling out that humanitarian aid is provided impartially with the sole aim of preserving life and preventing human suffering. It is not a crisis management tool.

It also clearly delimits the role of state actors and, in particular, their armed forces, in the humanitarian system. Ideally, relief operations are kept at arm's length from the military, so as to underpin the core principle of neutrality in humanitarian aid delivery. The Consensus recognises, however, that military logistics are sometimes needed to reach vulnerable people in insecure places. They should, however, only be used as a last resort in meeting critical humanitarian needs.

The Consensus represents a significant landmark for EU humanitarian aid. The next stage, to be undertaken in the early part of 2008, is the adoption of an Action Plan for implementation by the Commission and EU Member States. Through this collective initiative, the EU hopes to restore respect for the principles of international humanitarian law and ensure that, in a rapidly changing global landscape, relief aid continues to be delivered effectively and impartially to those who are most in need.

The full text of the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid can be found at:

[http://ec.europa.eu/echo/whatsnew/consensus\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/whatsnew/consensus_en.htm)



## Bangladesh: Battling the elements

Floods, landslides and Cyclone Sidr bring misery to millions

Floods and other natural disasters are common in low-lying Bangladesh, a densely populated country that also has to contend with widespread poverty. But 2007 was one of the cruellest in recent times: large-scale humanitarian needs were generated by a series of landslides and floods, culminating in the terrible destruction of Cyclone Sidr.

The extreme weather began in June when torrential and relentless rain caused havoc in Chittagong, the country's second largest city. The downpours were the heaviest in more than 25 years and large areas of the city were submerged. During the night of 11 June, the rain set off a series of devastating landslides: a tide of mud and water swept down the hillsides, burying sleeping families in their homes. At least 95 people died. However, volunteers in the area were on hand to respond to the disaster, helped by the training they had received through DIPECHO, the Commission-financed disaster preparedness programme. Living close to the scene of the tragedy, they were the first to provide aid, evacuating families and searching for victims.

Shortly after the floods and landslides in Chittagong, the impact of heavier than usual monsoon rains was felt across the rest of the country. Severe flooding began in July, leading to food shortages and water contamination. Many homes became uninhabitable, with people forced to seek shelter in roadside camps. More than a million families were affected. The Commission responded quickly to this emergency, working with the International Red Cross/Crescent Federation (IFRC), UN agencies and non-governmental relief organisations to meet the most immediate needs. €2.5 million was provided for emergency shelter, food, medical assistance and basic household items.

In November, before Bangladeshis had had the chance to recover fully from the summer floods, Cyclone Sidr swept in from the Bay of Bengal. Millions were affected as 250 km/h winds swept the country. Southern Bangladesh was worst hit: 3,400 people lost their lives and



hundreds of thousands were made homeless. The day after the disaster struck, experts from the Commission's Humanitarian Aid department were on site to assess the situation, working with partner organisations so that relief could be distributed as quickly and effectively as possible. Fast track funding was allocated speedily, followed up by further assistance. A total of €8.5 million was provided to meet the vital needs of vulnerable people who had lost everything in the catastrophe.

The Commission's other humanitarian intervention in Bangladesh was in response to the very specific needs of around 10,000 undocumented Rohingya refugees from Burma/Myanmar. They were living in very bad conditions on a flood-prone strip of land in the south east of the country. €1.5 million was provided to relocate them from their overcrowded, makeshift camp to a safer site with better living conditions.



## Middle East: Being a refugee

### Focus on uprooted Palestinians and Iraqis

Sitting in front of his home in the Jerash refugee camp in Jordan, Khalil remembers the first time he was forced to flee his home as if it was yesterday. At the age of 12, he recalls trudging through torrential rains in search of a new life. Khalil's parents became refugees in 1948 following the first Arab-Israeli war, and were forced to move again with Khalil after the second war in 1967. Decades later, little has changed.

The number of Palestinian refugees rose from 914,000 in 1950 to more than 4.4 million in 2005. Most found refuge in Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. These are also the countries that today host the Middle East's other large refugee caseload: Iraqis who have fled the violence in their homeland. In 2007, around two million crossed into neighbouring countries. Another 2.3 million were internally displaced (IDPs) inside Iraq.

The Commission is committed to helping those in need, regardless of their race, religion or politics. It remains the largest donor in the Middle East, providing more than €77 million in relief aid to vulnerable Palestinians and Iraqis in 2007. The focus is on those who are the most vulnerable.

With such large numbers, one of the biggest problems facing the refugees is a lack of access to basic services. Even if families have come to terms with the loss of their jobs and belongings, and are receiving the basics of life from the relief organisations, their living conditions remain precarious.

Initially, Khalil's family were given two rooms with a leaking roof and almost no access to daylight. Sewage overflowed into the kitchen area when it rained. Thanks to the Commission and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNWRA), the family benefited from a shelter rehabilitation scheme. The roof was repaired,



the sewage problems solved, a toilet provided and the rooms improved to ensure ventilation, light and privacy.

The refugees in Jordan, Syria and Lebanon have various needs. One problem is that not all the Palestinians are in official UNWRA camps. Those in "unofficial gatherings" have no access to camps facilities. Jordan and Syria provide some support for these excluded people but Lebanon does not. Given that refugees cannot access state services or work in most professions, it is almost impossible for them to support themselves. UNHCR has tried to alleviate the problem with schools and health centres outside the camps. Commission humanitarian funding for health, shelter, water, sanitation, protection and psycho-social support has also had a positive impact.

The living standards of many Iraqi refugees have also deteriorated with growing problems of access to food, healthcare and education. Again, the situation is particularly acute for those without official refugee status. In 2007, the Commission provided €10 million to help meet basic needs, with an emphasis on Syria and Jordan where most of the Iraqi refugees are located. It also allocated €7.8 million for IDPs inside Iraq.

It is clear that Iraqi and Palestinian refugees are among the most vulnerable people in the Middle East. Even in long-established camps such as Jareh, the inhabitants continue to dream of a better life. As Khalil's children play in the mud, next to an open sewer, it is clear that a lot still needs to be done.





## Humanitarian funding by country, territory and region

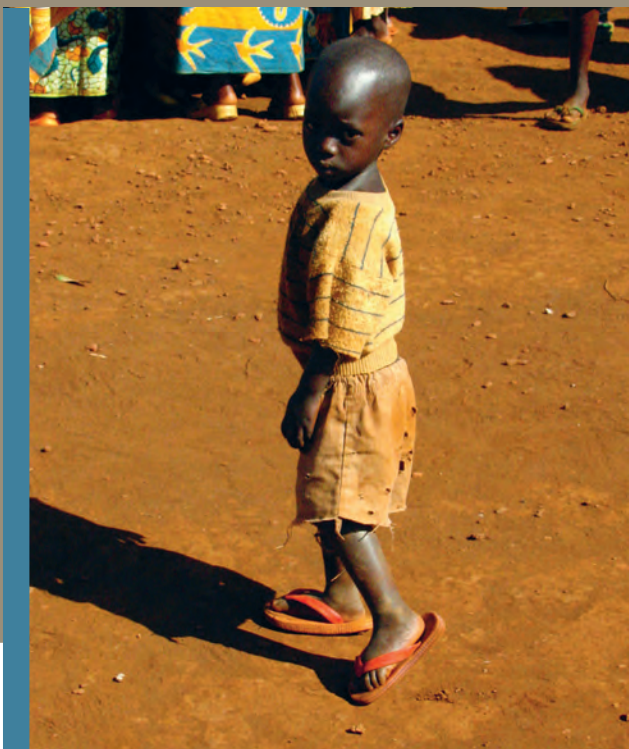
### Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan - Funding €27 million

After 23 years of war and the continual threat of natural disasters, the Afghan population remains extremely vulnerable. Of the more than eight million Afghans who fled their homes and took refuge in Iran and Pakistan, around three million still remain there. One of the biggest challenges in 2007 was to assist those willing to return home but without the means to do so. The Commission therefore supported UNHCR activities, facilitating the return and reintegration of returnees from Iran and Pakistan, as well as assisting the return process for internally displaced Afghans. Aid was also used to ensure protection for vulnerable civilians and detainees affected by the Afghan conflict, to provide basic shelter to the most vulnerable returnees and to increase access to safe drinking water and sanitation, especially in remote areas of Afghanistan. €6 million was allocated from the food aid budget to help mitigate the consequences of the 2006 drought. This included the distribution of seeds and tools to Afghan farmers affected by drought (see also "Disaster preparedness", p. 18).

### Africa (general) - Funding €2 million

Communicable diseases such as cholera and meningitis are endemic in many parts of Africa. The effect is often exacerbated by poverty, nutritional deficiencies, lack of sanitation, poor hygiene and conflict. The Commission funded operations to improve capacity so that reported disease outbreaks were rapidly assessed by qualified personnel and measures to contain and control confirmed epidemics were swiftly implemented. Commission funds allowed for early and effective actions to prevent small initial outbreaks from escalating into large scale epidemics.

### Algeria (see "Western Sahara refugees")



### Azerbaijan (see "Northern Caucasus")

### Bahamas (see "Disaster preparedness", p. 18)

### Bangladesh - Funding €9.925 million

Bangladesh, which is prone to natural disasters, was affected by severe flooding during the summer monsoon season. Over 13 million people struggled to cope with the trauma of losing relatives and the destruction of their homes, land and livelihoods. Before the population could begin to recover, cyclone Sidr hit Bangladesh on 16 November, leaving further extensive damage and a population in critical need of humanitarian assistance. The Commission responded immediately with €1.5 million of emergency relief. This was quickly complemented by further emergency funds worth €6.925 million to distribute vital food and basic items, to repair houses and water and sanitation facilities and to assist the recovery of livelihoods. Bangladesh also hosts large numbers of Rohingya people who fled their homes in Myanmar. Among this destitute population, around 10,000 undocumented Rohingyas were living in appalling conditions in a makeshift camp on an overcrowded and flood-prone strip of land. The Commission allocated €1.5 million to relocate them to a safer site with better living conditions.

In addition to the aforementioned funds for cyclone victims, the Commission made a further €6.5 million of relief assistance available to flood victims in Bangladesh through two regional aid decisions (see "South Asia"; see also "Disaster preparedness", p. 18).

### Belize (see "Caribbean" and "Disaster preparedness", p. 18)

### Bolivia - Funding €1 million

Intense rainfall in early 2007 led to the worst flooding Bolivia had seen in 40 years, leaving the population extremely vulnerable. More than 350,000 people were affected, especially in the northern regions. The Commission's funding was used to assist the most vulnerable, addressing essential needs such as the provision of safe drinking water, sanitation, temporary shelter and emergency livelihood recovery (see also "Disaster preparedness", p. 18).

### Burkina Faso (see "Sahel" and "West Africa")

### Burundi - Funding €19.5 million

Burundi is still in a period of reconstruction and development. Many people were displaced during the twelve years of armed conflict and living conditions remain difficult. The Commission's humanitarian aid of €15 million and €4.5 million in food aid targeted the most vulnerable people: the elderly, the disabled, female-headed households, those suffering from HIV/AIDS and returnees from refugee camps in Tanzania. Particular emphasis was placed on helping with the resettlement process and facilitating the transition to longer term development.

# Caribbean

When Hurricane Dean struck the Caribbean, it left in its wake a path of destruction that affected several Caribbean islands, as well as Belize. The hurricane's impact left thousands of poor families in need of emergency assistance. The Commission and its Humanitarian Aid department (ECHO) supported relief actions, primarily in St Lucia, Dominica, Jamaica and Belize. Projects implemented by the Red Cross, the Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO) and Oxfam provided livelihood support for hundreds of farmers and fishermen, reconstruction of the health sector (especially in Jamaica) and emergency distributions of food and essential relief items.

Among the various projects in Belize, the national Red Cross society, supported by the Norwegian Red Cross and ECHO, implemented an emergency operation for the distribution of food packages and relief items (kitchen sets, blankets, jerry cans), as well as the delivery of safe water to several communities in the most affected northern parts of the country. The health component of the project also helped to protect the population from vector-borne diseases, such as malaria and dengue fever.



## Caribbean - Funding €7.26 million

Hurricanes and tropical storms severely affected the Caribbean in 2007. Hurricane Dean struck in August and the Commission provided emergency aid to deal with its aftermath. Funds were provided for temporary shelters, medical care, drinking water, sanitation, food and other necessities, urgent repairs to homes and efforts to restore people's livelihoods. Crisis victims in Belize, Dominica, Haiti, Jamaica and Saint Lucia benefited from this aid. In November, the Commission provided emergency aid in the Dominican Republic for victims of floods caused by torrential rain in the wake of Tropical Storm Noel. The funds covered the most urgent needs of almost 100,000 flood victims.

Aid was also provided for victims of Hurricane Felix that struck Nicaragua in September (see "Nicaragua"). In all these natural disasters, many lives were saved by the Commission's disaster preparedness programme (see p. 18).

## Central African Republic - Funding €8 million

The population of the Central African Republic has suffered from the effects of a decade of civil war and continued violence and instability. Fighting in the north of the country was particularly intense in 2007 forcing hundreds of thousands of civilians to flee their homes. Commission funding was used to help protect civilians from the violence, as well as for essential healthcare, access to clean water and emergency shelter. €4 million was allocated to tackle food insecurity and malnutrition through the provision of food aid.

## Chad - Funding €30.5 million

Chad continued to host more than 233,000 refugees from Sudan's Darfur region and some 48,000 from the Central African Republic. In addition, Chadian inter-community conflicts and a spill-over of violence from Darfur led to an increase in the number of IDPs in the eastern part of the country: 120,000 people were displaced during 2007, bringing the total number of IDPs to more than 180,000. Due to poverty and food insecurity in Chad itself, many communities were poorly equipped to deal with this large influx. The Commission's aid efforts covered all traditional sectors of humanitarian assistance: food aid (worth €10 million), health/nutrition, water/sanitation, shelter, emergency non-food items such as soap, water containers and blankets, humanitarian coordination and air transport.

## Chechnya (see "Northern Caucasus")

## Colombia - Funding €13 million

The Commission provided humanitarian aid to support some 195,000 of the most vulnerable victims of the long-standing internal conflict as well as around 45,000 victims of heavy floods and landslides, particularly in the northwest of the country (see also "Disaster preparedness", p. 18). The Commission's aid addressed the most urgent needs, including water and sanitation, shelter, healthcare, food, livelihood support, psychological support and protection. With more than €3.9 million IDPs, Colombia has one of the largest displacement caseloads in the world. Beneficiaries of the Commission's aid also included 64,000 victims of the Colombian conflict who had fled to Ecuador, Venezuela and Panama.

**Costa Rica** (see "Disaster preparedness", p. 18)

**Côte d'Ivoire - Funding €500,000**

The Commission's humanitarian aid targeted IDPs and their host communities in the west of the country, improving access to water, medical support and establishing a health monitoring system for timely alerts about possible epidemics. The improved situation and the shift away from short-term humanitarian needs towards reconstruction and development allowed the Commission's Humanitarian Aid department (ECHO) to close its office in Abidjan on 30 June after four and a half years of operations.

**Dagestan** (see "Northern Caucasus")

**Democratic Republic of Congo - Funding €50 million**

Humanitarian needs remained high in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) despite some positive developments, in particular the democratic elections of 2006. The country still hosts the largest UN peace-keeping mission in the world. In the Kivu region in eastern DRC, the conflict with rebel forces intensified throughout the year, resulting in around 450,000 IDPs and many victims of sexual violence. Commission funds provided direct humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable groups such as displaced people and returnees with the aim of reducing high mortality rates, promoting stabilisation, supporting voluntary resettlement and re-establishing basic livelihoods. Aid measures included the provision of primary healthcare, nutrition and emergency food security, basic household equipment, community-based rehabilitation and protection, as well as logistics and the overall coordination of humanitarian actors in the country. A number of humanitarian projects in the DRC can only be reached by air and, to meet the need for safe humanitarian access, the Commission continued its ECHO Flight service.

**Dominica**

(see "Caribbean" and "Disaster preparedness", p. 18)

**Dominican Republic**

(see "Caribbean" and "Disaster preparedness", p. 18)

**Ecuador** (see "Colombia" and "Disaster preparedness", p. 18)

**El Salvador** (see "Disaster preparedness", p. 18)

**Eritrea - Funding €6 million**

The aim of the Commission's humanitarian assistance was to strengthen the resilience of vulnerable people in Eritrea against the degradation of livelihoods, climatic hazards and conflicts. The country continued to face the huge challenges caused by years of chronic drought, desertification, poor infrastructure and insecurity along the border with Ethiopia. 500,000 people directly benefited from the Commission's support through nutrition and feeding programmes, basic medical care, improved water and sanitation, livelihood recovery and IDP assistance.

**Ethiopia - Funding €20 million**

In 2007, Ethiopians experienced drought followed by floods. The latter aggravated their vulnerability to water borne diseases like cholera in a country which is, at the same time, the most malaria prone in Africa. The Commission's humanitarian assistance of €5 million supported around 750,000 vulnerable people, including IDPs, in the sectors of health, water/sanitation and protection. By providing food aid worth €15 million, the Commission also continued to tackle food insecurity and chronic food shortages, one of the biggest problems faced by the population. Pockets of acute malnutrition throughout Ethiopia were also addressed through these funds.

**Georgia - Funding €2 million**

The Commission supported vulnerable people affected by the unresolved conflict in Abkhazia. Assistance focused on small income generation projects for around 3,500 people to ensure food security, and the rehabilitation of destroyed houses for around 2,000 returnees to the Gali district of Abkhazia.

**Ghana** (see "West Africa")

**Guatemala** (see "Disaster preparedness", p. 18)

**Guinea - Funding €2 million**

In January, the country came to a standstill after violent protests during strikes called by unions against the government. The army was deployed to end the protest, resulting in many deaths and injuries. A new government was formed by the end of March but the situation remained precarious throughout the year in particular for the most vulnerable populations. The Commission's humanitarian aid consisted of basic healthcare and adequate water/sanitation actions. Activities funded at the end of 2006 to assist the many Liberian refugees in Guinea continued during 2007, but were gradually being phased out.





**Guyana** (see "Disaster preparedness", p. 18)

### Haiti - Funding €4.5 million

Following torrential rains in October, the Commission provided emergency aid to help the most vulnerable and to boost the country's coping mechanisms. Initial funding was used for emergency shelter, food, household goods and repairs to infrastructure, as well as helping minimise the impact on the agricultural sector. Persistent heavy rains in the north of the country limited recovery and caused more flooding. In addition, a cold wave in the south of Haiti added to the vulnerability of the population. The Commission therefore provided further humanitarian and food aid so that additional shelter, food, healthcare, water, and non-food items could be made available (see also "Disaster preparedness", p. 18).

### Honduras - Funding €500,000

Since 2006, drought had severely affected the southern departments of Honduras, resulting in a series of failed harvests and exacerbating the already low levels of food security. By providing food aid to the most vulnerable, in particular pregnant women and children under five, the Commission helped prevent a further deterioration of the situation (see also "Disaster preparedness", p. 18).

### India - Funding €2.63 million

The Commission provided €2 million in humanitarian aid to mitigate the effects on the civilian population of the ongoing conflict in Kashmir and Jammu. Funding was used to increase the level of protection for vulnerable civilians and to provide care to those most traumatised,

through health and psychosocial support. The Commission also started supporting vulnerable people affected by the Naxalite (Maoist) insurgency in the Indian state of Chhattisgarh with humanitarian aid worth €630,000. Both villagers living in the conflict area and IDPs were cut off from basic services like healthcare. The Commission support covered mobile health clinics, grassroots health and hygiene education, water and sanitation and protection.

Flood victims in India also benefited to the tune of €11 million from regional funding decisions (see "South Asia" and "Disaster preparedness", p. 18). In addition, Tamils from Sri Lanka who had sought refuge in India received humanitarian support from the Commission (see "Sri Lanka").

### Indonesia - Funding €1.6 million

The extensive flooding in Sumatra at the end of 2006 left many people extremely vulnerable and in need of humanitarian assistance. The Commission's emergency aid targeted people in need in the most isolated areas, focusing on the rehabilitation of water points and sanitation facilities and on the emergency rehabilitation of roads and bridges. Emergency livelihood recovery projects were also funded. In addition, after torrential rains caused severe flooding in Jakarta and the surrounding area, further primary emergency aid was given for food rations, drinking water and emergency healthcare.

**Ingushetia** (see "Northern Caucasus")

**Iran** (see "Afghanistan")

### Iraq - Funding €17.8 million

Commission humanitarian assistance was used to help meet the needs generated by the humanitarian crisis in Iraq. As well as contending with water shortages, poor sanitation and health problems, the population was confronted with ongoing violence, prompting large numbers of Iraqis to flee their homes. According to the UN, in 2007 there were at least 1.8 million displaced people in Iraq and a further two million living as refugees in neighbouring countries. Inside Iraq, a third of the population required assistance, with four million facing food shortages. Commission funding was used to address food insecurity and child malnutrition, improve water and sanitation facilities, rehabilitate healthcare and address the needs of detainees and their families. The Commission also supported Iraqi refugees in neighbouring countries – Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Turkey and Egypt, providing protection, food, healthcare, education and household items.

**Jamaica** (see "Caribbean")

### Kenya - Funding €9 million

The Commission supported vulnerable communities in northern Kenya affected by drought. Its aid package which included €5 million in humanitarian assistance and €4 million in food aid targeted 3.5 million pastoralists and "pastoralist drop outs" who could no longer sustain their traditional rural way of life. The humanitar-

ian assistance addressed their needs for nutrition, health, water/sanitation, public health and hygiene. The provision of food aid was in response to the new influx of around 35,000 Somali refugees into Kenya.

### Lebanon - Funding €10.3 million

The Palestinian refugee camp "Nahr el Bared" near Tripoli in northern Lebanon was almost completely destroyed in May after intense fighting initiated by the "Fatah al Islam" faction. More than 31,000 camp residents were forced to flee, many seeking shelter in the nearby "Beddawi" camp, where the population almost doubled. Lebanese living around the camps were also affected. The Commission's humanitarian support covered a range of vital needs. These included emergency food provision and basic shelters for those whose dwellings had been destroyed or badly damaged, as well as access to essential supplies and services. Funding was used to set up an emergency health clinic and to assist the most vulnerable victims, such as children and adolescents suffering trauma. Finally, emergency job creation initiatives were supported as the majority of those affected by the fighting worked inside the camp and thus lost their livelihoods along with their dwellings.

### Liberia - Funding €16.6 million

International relief efforts remained crucial in a country devastated by 14 years of civil war despite the positive developments and a government committed to building a well-governed, democratic state. Half the population still lived in extreme poverty. The continued objective of the Commission's aid in 2007 was to alleviate the suffering by supporting the provision of access to adequate drinking water, sanitation, healthcare and shelter, during a period when opportunities for earning a living remained extremely limited. In addition, the Commission focused on reintegrating returnees and refugees into the local communities. The funding also included €3 million in food aid.

### Madagascar - Funding €5.381 million

After a series of cyclones, tropical storms and heavy rainfall, Madagascar experienced severe flooding. This led to the displacement of at least 33,000 people, destroyed vast areas of land, drastically increased the risk of water-borne illnesses and left 110,000 in urgent need of food aid. When the government called for international assistance, the Commission swiftly responded. Food aid, temporary shelters, healthcare and improved sanitation were provided. When the winds and rains of Cyclone Indlala caused further damage, additional support was given to reinforce emergency relief operations, evacuate the injured, supply further food aid and healthcare, and implement disease prevention measures.

**Mali** (see "Sahel")

**Mauritania** (see "Sahel")

### Moldova - Funding €3 million

Moldova, one of the poorest countries in Europe, found it particularly hard to cope when a severe drought affected 80% of the country. The Commission provided emergency funding to ensure the availability of fodder to small farmers and agricultural workers in the most affected southern part of Moldova, including Transnistria. More than 15,000 of the most vulnerable rural households were assisted.

### Mozambique - Funding €7 million

Mozambique's geographical location exposes it to extreme weather conditions, such as cyclones, floods and drought. In 2007, flooding was particularly problematic, damaging the country's infrastructure, forcing thousands to flee their homes and drastically increasing the risk of water-borne diseases. The Commission provided emergency aid to the 300,000 people affected. The arrival of Cyclone Favio in February aggravated an already difficult situation. The Commission responded with additional funding to cover emergency needs including the provision of clean water, emergency shelter and medical assistance, principally for women and children. This aid was particularly important for those in coastal regions who were displaced by the cyclone.

### Myanmar (Burma) and Thailand - Funding €19 million

Soldiers have run Myanmar since 1962 and the ongoing conflict between the armed forces and ethnic minority groups led to an influx of more than 150,000 refugees to Thailand, and the internal displacement of an estimated 500,000 people. Through its aid, the Commission targeted vulnerable groups in the country, notably ethnic minorities, and the refugees living in camps in Thailand close to the border. The latter are almost entirely dependent on international aid. Commission funds covered basic humanitarian needs including healthcare, food and nutrition, water, sanitation and the protection of certain threatened groups.





# Mozambique

Mozambique is prone to cycles of natural disasters: flooding in the central areas, compounded by cyclones, and prolonged droughts in the south. The greatest damage from flooding was in the Lower Zambezi basin, where around 163,000 people were displaced; people who rely on fishing and farming. Many remained in makeshift camps awaiting resettlement. With funding from the Commission, the Portuguese NGO Oikos supported the resettlement of the flood affected displaced, ensuring adequate access to food and water. Based on a government initiative to increase the awareness of measures which reduce the risks of disasters, Oikos also targeted children in twelve schools to promote alternative agricultural practices.

## Nepal - Funding €6 million

After ten years of internal conflict, thousands have been left dead, displaced or missing, and despite the peace agreements of 2006, the situation remained fragile in 2007. The Commission's humanitarian assistance focused on the re-integration of IDPs and support for children who had been recruited by armed groups. The provision of protection was particularly important in the light of continued human rights abuses. Commission funds were also used to build and improve drinking water systems and sanitation/latrines and to finance hygiene campaigns. In addition, the Commission financed the training of medical staff and helped improve healthcare facilities. It also assisted in establishing out-reach medical clinics and tackled malnutrition through the provision of fortified foods for pregnant or lactating women and their children. The funding included €1.5 million in food aid to tackle the food insecurity of the Bhutanese refugees living in camps in eastern Nepal who depend entirely on external aid.

In addition to the €6 million, the Commission provided a further €2 million in relief assistance to Nepalese flood victims through a regional aid decision (see "South Asia" and "Disaster preparedness", p. 18).

## Nicaragua - Funding €6 million

When Hurricane Felix struck the Northern Atlantic region of Nicaragua in September, the Commission provided fast track emergency assistance and follow-up support, covering emergency shelter, food, healthcare and sanitation as well as infrastructure repairs. Given the destruction of crops and land in the affected area, livelihood recovery was also important. Many of the worst hit communities depend on fishing, hunting and agriculture for their survival (see also "Caribbean" and "Disaster preparedness", p. 18).

**Niger** (see "Sahel")

## Northern Caucasus - Funding €20.807 million

Although the conflict in Chechnya receded, humanitarian needs remained acute. Beneficiaries of the Commission's humanitarian assistance included IDPs who were still

unable to go back to their land, and other vulnerable groups in Chechnya. Beneficiaries also included IDPs in Ingushetia and Dagestan and Chechen refugees in Azerbaijan and Georgia. Assistance was provided in the following sectors: protection, shelter, income-generation, primary/mother-and-child healthcare, water and sanitation, psychological assistance (especially for children) and mine-risk education. While basic food aid became less crucial, €3.3 million was used to continue providing food for children at school and to finance food security projects for the most vulnerable households no longer on food aid lists. The focus of aid also moved towards the restoration of livelihoods, especially in the agricultural sector.

## North Korea - Funding €2 million

In August, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea experienced the heaviest rainfalls in over 40 years. In an emergency decision, the Commission helped around 500,000 flood victims, focusing on the provision of essential drugs and basic medical equipment and the restoration of essential water supplies. The Commission also continued to phase-out its other, non-emergency relief assistance in health and water and sanitation, while it scaled up its long-term food security operations.

## Pakistan

(see "Afghanistan" and "Disaster preparedness", p. 18)



## The Palestinians - Funding €60 million

Ongoing violence and the political crisis in the Middle East continued to have an impact on the lives of people in the West Bank and Gaza Strip where poverty and unemployment continued to increase. The Commission's relief package for the most vulnerable Palestinians ranged from emergency food aid and job creation activities to health services, improved access to clean water and psychosocial support, especially for children. The Commission continued its support for the coordination of humanitarian aid in the West Bank and Gaza Strip through the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. However, humanitarian access to the Strip and the delivery of vital relief supplies was hampered by escalating violence between "Fatah" and "Hamas" and the closure of the border between Israel and Gaza. Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, Jordan and Syria also benefited from the Commission's humanitarian aid. Funding was provided for shelter, healthcare, water and sanitation, protection, and for tackling unemployment. (see also "Lebanon")

**Panama** (see "Colombia" and "Disaster preparedness", p. 18)

## Paraguay - Funding €1.5 million

After severe drought and forest fires struck the country, the government declared a state of emergency in September. Around 200,000 people were affected and more than a million hectares of forest and agricultural land destroyed. In regions that were least prepared for the extreme conditions, the Commission's humanitarian aid helped to save and preserve the lives of the most vulnerable groups, in particular indigenous communities, small-scale farmers, children and the elderly (see also "Disaster preparedness", p. 18).

## Peru - Funding €10.065 million

On 15 August, an 8.0 magnitude earthquake hit the region of Ica in southern Peru causing extensive damage and more than 330 deaths. 250,000 people lost their homes and belongings. The Commission reacted swiftly with primary emergency aid for relief operations in the stricken zone. Initial needs covered included temporary shelter, medical assistance, food and hygiene kits and the establishment of telecommunication facilities. One month later, it became clear that the humanitarian consequences of the disaster went far beyond initial estimates. The Commission therefore provided further assistance so that the needs for shelter, healthcare, protection and livelihood rehabilitation could continue to be met. Peru also experienced a severe cold wave during the year. Temperatures dropped to -27°C – the coldest in the country for 30 years. The Commission assisted 60,000 of the most vulnerable people in the central and southern Andean region which was hardest hit by the extreme cold. Commission-funded projects included a "food for work" programme to minimise the effect on livelihoods and food security. Peru also continued to benefit from the Commission's disaster preparedness programme (see p. 18).



## Philippines - Funding €2.15 million

The humanitarian consequences of four typhoons, which struck the Philippines between September and December 2006, were still being felt in 2007 and thousands of affected people continued to require humanitarian assistance. Further to the emergency aid that the Commission had already granted at the end of 2006, it provided additional humanitarian funding in particular for families still living in evacuation and transit centres.

## Sahel Region - Funding €25.5 million

One of the greatest challenges in the Sahel region is persistent malnutrition and food insecurity. This affects people who are already extremely susceptible to poverty and external shocks such as droughts and floods. Recognising the severity of the problem, the Commission provided a total of €25.5 million in humanitarian and food aid to vulnerable people in five countries in the Sahel: Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger. With food aid worth €10.5 million, the Commission responded to short-term nutritional needs. Also, with the €15 million global humanitarian aid plan for the Sahel, the Commission took a proactive approach. It looked at risk analysis and matching vulnerabilities and possible stress indicators as well as drawing on food security and rural development programmes, nutritional surveillance and contingency plans. The Commission's support helped local communities to better manage future external shocks. This included, for example, the treatment of moderately malnourished children, which had a significant impact on reducing acute malnutrition and mortality rates. The survival odds are much higher for children receiving help before severe malnourishment sets in. The Commission also recognised that the problem of malnutrition was multifaceted and that funding should be directed to activities assisting families to improve their overall coping mechanisms, such as giving them access to healthcare and clean water.

**Saint Lucia** (see "Caribbean")

## Solomon Islands - Funding €550,000

In April, an earthquake in the Pacific generated a tsunami several metres high which hit the Solomon Islands. This was followed by eighteen aftershocks causing further damage to homes, schools, crops and infrastructure. The Commission quickly provided €550,000 to assist the thousands of victims in need of emergency aid, especially those who had lost their homes and had to take refuge in camps.

### Somalia - Funding €18 million

Somalia continued to suffer enormous deprivation. The vulnerability of the population is a result of a complex mix of factors: frequent natural disasters, persistent epidemics, and the continued impact of violence from a 16-year long civil conflict. Despite peace talks, the security situation drastically declined in 2007. The most intense fighting seen in the region since the start of the conflict resulted in massive population displacement. Given the precarious situation, the Commission's humanitarian aid, including €4 million in food aid, was targeted to help meet the immediate needs of the most vulnerable sections of the population, especially in central and southern regions. Here, people's coping mechanisms are largely exhausted and clan-based violence has rendered humanitarian assistance difficult. The main focus of aid has thus been to ensure the survival of the most marginalised groups in society. The main sectors that received funding were health and medical facilities, feeding programmes, water and sanitation and livelihood support.

### South Asia - Funding €19.5 million

The Commission provided emergency aid after intense rainfall caused severe flooding in India, Nepal and Bangladesh in August. In addition to widespread loss of life, millions of families were displaced, their homes and livelihoods destroyed. Health problems developed due to water contamination. The Commission provided emergency relief to the most vulnerable flood victims, supporting the distribution of drinking water and the provision of food rations, emergency shelter and healthcare to prevent outbreaks of water-borne diseases. Initiatives to repair houses and help people regain their livelihoods were also covered. €5 million of aid was used to finance humanitarian activities in India, €2.5 million in Bangladesh and €2 million in Nepal. In November, the Commission increased relief funds by another €10 million – €6 million for India and €4 million for Bangladesh – after successive periods of flooding hampered the recovery of millions of victims. The Commission's support ensured the continued provision of food aid, emergency shelter, medical support, water and sanitation improvements and livelihood recovery activities for those most in need.

### Southern Africa - Funding €5.819 million

Harvests in Lesotho and Swaziland were critically reduced because of adverse weather conditions and an



uneven distribution of rainfall in the region. The resulting increase in grain prices worsened the situation for already highly vulnerable populations. Additionally, the poor harvest in South Africa reduced maize imports to Lesotho and Swaziland. Around 150,000 people exposed to this growing food crisis in both countries benefited from the Commission's emergency food assistance.

### Sri Lanka - Funding €15 million

The conflict between the Sri Lankan government and the "Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam" entered its 25<sup>th</sup> year with a devastating effect on the population. The Commission allocated a humanitarian package to help the most vulnerable conflict-affected people on the island, in particular among the estimated 800,000 IDPs and the 100,000 Sri Lankan refugees living in Tamil Nadu in India. IDPs received support through a wide range of humanitarian interventions such as protection, shelter, food, water/sanitation and healthcare. Funding also helped to provide clothing, household items, livelihood support and education, and to finance natural disaster preparedness projects. Support for the Sri Lankan refugees in India focused mainly on improved sanitation and hygiene in the camps in Tamil Nadu (see also "Disaster preparedness", p. 18).

### Sudan - Funding €110.45 million

The humanitarian situation in Sudan's Darfur continued to deteriorate in 2007 and is considered the most severe humanitarian crisis in the world today. Despite previous peace agreements, the security situation failed to improve. Violence increased in severity and gross human rights violations persisted. The extreme vulnerability of the inhabitants combined with recurrent outbreaks of disease, meant that the needs of the population were immense and critical. By providing €45 million in humanitarian aid, the Commission helped to prevent the further loss of human life and to improve the situation of those finding it impossible to cope. Funding targeted health-





# Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka has suffered many hardships over the past 25 years. The conflict which began in 1983 has claimed over 70,000 lives and displaced hundreds of thousands of civilians. In 2005, the Tsunami hit the island with full force and claimed over 30,000 lives. It also displaced entire populations thus exacerbating the humanitarian needs even further. The Commission has funded humanitarian programmes in Sri Lanka since 1994 in support of populations affected by the conflict and natural disasters. Dutch NGO ZOA Refugee Care, an ECHO partner, has provided shelter, drinking water, food, psychological support and income generation kits to thousands of families who lost everything. Most displaced families are unable to provide their children with enough food. In order to improve their health, children under 5 years receive a daily meal at school. Additional food aid is provided to their families and those displaced as a result of the hostilities.



care, medical facilities, disease control and water/sanitation to reduce mortality rates. A further €65.45 million of Commission-funded food aid targeted the enormous problem of food insecurity suffered by one in three people, and, in some conflict zones, up to half the population. The protection of civilians, especially refugees and returnees, was also critical. However, given the presence of mines and other unexploded ordnance, and an increasing number of attacks on aid workers, access was often limited, posing a continuing obstacle to the provision of aid. Because of the increased risks, funding was also used to improve the coordination and resources of aid agencies, and to maintain an adequate level of technical assistance in the field.

**Suriname** (see "Disaster preparedness", p. 18)

## Tanzania - Funding €12 million

The Commission continued to support the large number of refugees living in camps in Tanzania (around 110,000 from Burundi and 92,000 from either the DRC or of mixed origin at the end of 2007). The objective was to maintain integrated humanitarian aid to camp residents in the form of water and sanitation, health, nutrition, housing, protection and transport. The Commission also assisted in the voluntary repatriation of refugees, as well as programmes to reintegrate returnees into their countries of origin.

**Thailand** (see "Myanmar")

## Timor-Leste - Funding €3 million

The Commission continued to provide humanitarian and food assistance to vulnerable Timorese displaced as a result of the internal crisis in 2006. The 2006 rioting caused large numbers of people to flee and around 100,000 were still displaced in 2007. Combined with underlying poverty, food security issues and malnutrition, humanitarian needs remained high. Commission funding was therefore used to provide basic goods and services such as access to water and sanitation and food aid to the most vulnerable IDPs, particularly the 30,000 living in camps in and around the capital of Dili.

**Togo** (see "West Africa")

## Trinidad and Tobago

(see "Disaster preparedness", p. 18)

## Uganda - Funding €24 million

The biggest humanitarian challenges in Uganda stem from the 20-year conflict between the government and the "Lord's Resistance Army" in the north of the country as well as climatic hazards, in particular drought and floods. A decrease in the intensity of the conflict prompted an initial return process, accelerating the movement out of camps by the original 1.8 million IDPs. Commission funds of €13 million of humanitarian aid and €8 million of food aid supported this return process, and provided appropriate assistance to returnees, while continuing to relieve the suffering of the most vulnerable IDPs in the camps. Following the floods in the north and east of Uganda, the Commission provided emergency aid worth €3 million to help the most affected local populations.

## Venezuela

(see "Colombia" and "Disaster preparedness", p. 18)

## Vietnam - Funding €2 million

Vietnam suffered extensive flooding, first in August and again in October after typhoon Lekima struck. The Commission funded humanitarian relief to 200,000 of the most vulnerable flood victims. Food, safe drinking water, jerry-cans, blankets and seeds to replace lost crops





were amongst the supplies provided. There was also a component for the purchase of school uniforms and materials to help traumatised children regain a sense of normality.

### West Africa - Funding €2 million

Heavy flooding occurred after torrential rains struck the West African countries of Burkina Faso, Ghana and Togo in August. Over 550,000 people were affected and homes, roads, farmland and infrastructure were damaged. The Commission provided humanitarian aid to help the victims of the flooding. Relief and assistance was multi-sectoral, including food, shelter, health, water, sanitation, and livelihood recovery.

### Western Sahara Refugees in Algeria - Funding €10 million

The Commission maintained its humanitarian assistance to the Sahrawi refugees who have lived in camps in the Algerian desert near Tindouf for more than three decades. Harsh living conditions mean that they remain largely dependent on international aid for their survival. The Commission funds helped to meet the refugees basic needs for food aid, healthcare, clean water and proper sanitation. They also included essential items such as tents, hygiene products and basic household equipment as well as specific assistance for handicapped people.

### Yemen - Funding €990,000

Yemen, one of the poorest countries in the world, continued to face an influx of refugees escaping from the Horn of Africa. The 20,000 most vulnerable, half of them living in Yemen's only refugee camp, and 55,000 vulnerable people in remote rural areas required humanitarian assistance. Commission funding was therefore used for shelter, basic healthcare and education services. It also helped to ensure the sustainability of access to basic water and sanitation.

### Zambia - Funding €2 million

Zambia has hosted a large number of Congolese refugees for many years. The difficult situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) forced many people to flee the violence and take up residence in neighbouring countries. The increased stability in 2007 meant that many of these refugees wanted to return home but

lacked the resources to do so. To facilitate the return process and ease the burden on host communities in Zambia, the Commission funded organised repatriation operations for 20,000 Congolese refugees, covering registration, transport, healthcare provision and immediate accommodation needs.

### Zimbabwe - Funding €30.2 million

Zimbabwe's profound crisis, which worsened during the course of 2007, has many aspects: poor governance, a disintegrating economy with the highest inflation rate in the world, an HIV/AIDS pandemic, food insecurity and erratic weather conditions. The first half of the year saw a series of natural disasters affect the region. These were followed by extreme drought in the second half of the year. With its humanitarian aid, the Commission aimed at mitigating the impact of the enduring crisis on the most vulnerable population groups. These included people living with HIV/AIDS, orphans and other vulnerable children, the elderly, widow- and children-headed households and IDPs. Commission funding was used to increase access to safe water supplies, healthcare, sanitation and basic food needs. Food aid alone was worth €15 million, as the severe drought had greatly reduced the amount of food produced – in addition to the economic difficulties of purchasing food and the effect of price controls. Around one in six people required food assistance (1.9 million out of 11.8 million).



## Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe is in the midst of a humanitarian crisis caused by a collapsing economy and poor governance, and compounded by erratic weather conditions, food insecurity and an HIV/AIDS pandemic. The government's fast track land reform and its subsequent operations to "restore order" or "clean up" have caused the continued displacement of many poor Zimbabweans. Commission funds helped the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) to support the vulnerable displaced in rural and urban areas. These people have no land and are forced to move often. IOM assistance focussed on immediate emergency assistance, health services, camp coordination and HIV/domestic violence prevention.

## Thematic funding

### Supporting humanitarian reform

The Commission's commitment to working closely with international institutions in improving global humanitarian response capacity is demonstrated through its thematic funding programme. Funding allocations have helped aid organisations such as the UN agencies and the Red Cross/Crescent movement. In 2007, a thematic funding decision was taken to support humanitarian reform, especially the cluster approach, and coordination through information management. The following organisations received support:

#### United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) - Funding €6 million

The Commission's thematic funding support for UNICEF was designed to strengthen capacity in order to (1) protect children in emergencies and (2) prepare for and respond to the needs of vulnerable populations in emergencies, in line with UNICEF's Core Commitments for Children and with the cluster approach.

#### United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) - Funding €775,000

UNHCR traditionally provides protection for refugees who have fled crises in their own countries. However, the UN body is also involved in assisting the internally displaced (IDPs) and leads the global emergency shelter cluster dealing with conflict-generated IDPs. Commission support, provided in the context of the global humanitarian reform agenda, focused on training and capacity-building.

#### United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) - Funding €3.5 million

The ability to collect, analyse and disseminate accurate information and to act on it is essential to an effective and timely humanitarian response. Good coordination among international actors is equally important. OCHA's information systems are pivotal in ensuring that there are no gaps or duplications in humanitarian responses worldwide. Commission funding was used to further strengthen OCHA's capacity for humanitarian information management and to develop a common approach to needs assessment and classification.

#### United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) - Funding €4.3 million

Humanitarian response depots (HRD) are the cornerstone of a worldwide global response system that prepositions strategic reserves in five key locations around



the globe: Dubai/United Arab Emirates, Accra/Ghana, Brindisi/Italy, Subang/Malaysia and Panama City/Panama. The WFP manages the HRD network on behalf of the humanitarian community. Commission support was used to strengthen the depot network, and the pre-positioning of logistical supplies and relief items at all depots, with an emphasis on Dubai.

#### United Nations World Health Organisation (WHO) - Funding €4.3 million

Cholera, haemorrhagic fevers, malaria, meningitis, HIV/AIDS, TB, yellow fever – there often is a deadly link between diseases and humanitarian crises. Crisis situations with massive population displacements provide a favourable breeding ground for germs to spread rapidly. Wars and conflict, especially in Africa, have also disrupted health systems that were already under pressure, again making epidemics more likely. The WHO has an important role to play in the health sector in humanitarian crises. The Commission supported the WHO's Health Action in Crisis performance enhancement programme and its lead role in the UN health cluster.

#### International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) - Funding €4 million

Droughts, floods, landslides, earthquakes, storms – the effects of natural disasters on people are increasing due to population growth, urbanisation, environmental degradation and climate change. Through thematic funding to the IFRC, the Commission supported the strengthening of the international humanitarian response to natural disasters, and helped boost IFRC's emergency shelter capacity in the framework of the cluster approach.



## Disaster preparedness

### Commission support for people-centred initiatives

Hazards such as earthquakes, floods, drought, storms, cold waves and volcanic eruptions are impossible to avert. However, their negative impact can often be reduced or prevented. The Commission is committed to improve the capacity of communities exposed to high levels of risk from natural disasters so that they can better prepare for them and protect themselves. Its Humanitarian Aid department (ECHO) has since 1998 funded community-based disaster preparedness activities, among those the disaster preparedness programme called DIPECHO, well above €130 million.

Nearly all of natural disaster-related deaths (around 97%) occur in developing countries and in terms of socio-economic losses, those most affected live in the poorest and thus most vulnerable communities.

DIPECHO targets the communities and their institutions facing the greatest risk from natural hazards and with low coping capacities, so that they will be better able to save lives and protect livelihoods if disaster strikes.

The focus on "people-centred" initiatives ensures that in the event of the disaster, those most likely to be affected possess the knowledge and skills to react quickly and effectively, reducing the impact of the hazard as much as possible.



An additional aim is to improve advocacy for disaster risk reduction measures by means of better exchange of information, documentation of lessons learned and best practices which can be replicated and scaled up by governments and development agencies.

Four new DIPECHO decisions were launched in 2007 to strengthen local response capacities in:

- **South Asia** (€7.5 million): Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan as well as regional projects which also included Bhutan and Sri Lanka;
- **South America** (€6.5 million): Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela; as well as a regional project which also includes Paraguay and Argentina;
- **Caribbean** (€4 million): Bahamas, Belize, Dominica, the Dominican Republic, Guyana, Haiti, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, as well as regional projects involving several Caribbean islands;
- **Central America** (€1.5 million): El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama to complement the €6 million funding decision for Central America launched in December 2006.



## Food aid

### An integral part of a comprehensive European humanitarian response

The Commission is one of the major donors of food aid in the world. The transfer of the food aid budget from the Directorate-General for Development to its Humanitarian Aid department (ECHO) in 2007 provided an unprecedented opportunity and challenge to further improve the distribution of food aid as an integral part of a more robust and comprehensive European humanitarian response.

To plan for food aid in 2007, ECHO allocated funds based on evolving needs. As such, the two major food aid funding decisions totalling €135 million and €85 million respectively complemented global humanitarian aid plans and country based decisions.

The first food aid decision in February covered countries and regions facing on-going humanitarian food crises. These included: Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Burundi, the Caucasus, Chad, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Myanmar (Burma), Nepal, Niger, the Palestinian Territories, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Tanzania, Timor-Leste, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

In May 2007, following a further assessment of global nutritional needs, an additional list of priority beneficiaries and locations was established. Some regions still required additional assistance, such as Darfur in Sudan and the Palestinian Territories, due to a worsening of the humanitarian situation. Other countries and regions not included in the first decision were identified as being in need of food aid and livelihood recovery. The full list for the second decision was: Afghanistan, Algeria (Sahrawi refugees), Burundi, the Caucasus, Central African



Republic, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Haiti, Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Myanmar (Burma), the Palestinian Territories, the Sahel (Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Togo), Somalia, Southern Africa (especially Lesotho, Zimbabwe and Swaziland), Sri Lanka, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda.

These 2007 funds helped to ensure the provision of food aid where food shortages, food security and livelihood deterioration had reached crisis point. The assistance helped to improve the nutritional status and well-being of the most vulnerable people in these emergency situations. Projects included:

- Distribution of food to distressed populations in the aftermath of natural disasters, epidemics, sudden economic crises or armed conflicts;
- Assistance for the nutritional recovery of vulnerable groups in both sudden and protracted crises, specifically targeting children under five and their mothers;
- "Food-for-work" activities, allowed the provision of food aid to be combined with re-establishing rural community assets and self-sufficiency;
- Restoring the basic livelihood of vulnerable people returning home or resettling after a crisis. Activities included short-term support for family food production, for example through the distribution of seeds, tools and fertilisers, and the diversification of food resources.

Many of the projects funded by the Commission's food aid decisions were implemented by the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP). Nutrition and short-term food security support were also channelled through other humanitarian partners, such as non-governmental relief organisations and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

The second food aid decision also included funding to reinforce the capacity of UN agencies. This was to ensure the accurate assessment and analysis of both humanitarian needs in the food and nutritional sector and the impact on livelihoods during emergencies and their immediate aftermath. The Commission continued to support the WFP's "Strengthening Emergency Needs Assessment Capacity" (SENAC) with € 3.5 million. The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) received €600,000 to implement its "Integrated food security and humanitarian Phase Classification" (IPC) in central and eastern Africa. The UN's Children Fund (UNICEF) received €400,000 for the NIPHORN project – emergency nutrition information systems in the Horn of Africa.

## Sudan: Displaced in Darfur

"My two sons, my sister's husband and their two boys are all gone", Ismaël told us. "It has been almost a year and we can't confirm if they are alive, so we have to assume they are dead." Ismaël, who did not want to be further identified for fear of reprisals, described how raiders struck his home village of Tamar, 50 kilometres north-west of Nyala in southern Darfur. "People came on camels and horses and started shooting. Some of us were already awake, others were roused by the gunfire. We ran off in all directions." The village used to have livestock, businesses and 150 hectares of land. The people living there were driven out with nothing but the clothes on their backs.

Ismaël is one of an estimated two million Darfurians forced to flee because of the conflict which started in 2003. After an odyssey with some stops in-between, he and his family and other villagers arrived in Kalma camp on the outskirts of Nyala. Kalma is one of the world's largest camps for internally displaced people (IDPs) with more than 91,000 inhabitants. "We have decided not to move from here because we feel more secure", said Ismaël. Camp residents depend entirely on international humanitarian aid. Relief organisations provide them with food, shelter, health services, water/sanitation and protection – and children can go to school in the camp.

In 2007, the Commission provided €45 million in humanitarian aid and €65.45 million in food aid to the extremely vulnerable populations in Darfur, continuing to support life-saving aid operations both for people displaced by the conflict and, where needed, for host communities that were also stretched to the limit. Four million people have been directly or indirectly affected by the conflict. The spill-over to Chad and the Central African Republic has added a worrying regional component.



At the same time, insecurity in Darfur has further increased. Growing violence was reported against civilians and entire villages were still being emptied. Reaching the millions of vulnerable people became even more difficult with an increasing number of "no go" areas for humanitarian aid workers. The international community condemned the many attacks that were mounted on humanitarian organisations and Commissioner Louis Michel launched a new appeal to all Sudanese parties involved in the conflict to guarantee the integrity of humanitarian organisations and respect for their personnel.

It is the kind of appeal that Ismaël and millions of others caught up in the Darfur tragedy, the worst humanitarian crisis in the world, fervently hope will not fall on deaf ears.



## Peru: "I just called to say ... I'm alive"

On 15 August, an 8.0 magnitude earthquake hit the coastal region of southern Peru

The Tupac Amaru district is one of the poorest in the Pisco region of Peru. For an already struggling population, the threat of natural disasters is ever present. On 15 August, the threat became a reality. One of the worst earthquakes in Peru's recent history hit the southern coast, destroying entire villages and thousands of homes.

Following the quake and amidst the rubble of crumbling homes and buildings, town squares and football fields had to be transformed into camps for thousands of families. In the cold temperatures of the Peruvian winter, their first thought was survival.

The very next thought was to contact loved ones, as Gloria described. The earthquake, which lasted only two minutes, reduced her house to dust, but she escaped injury. Her main concern was now making sure that her daughter in Lima knew she was alive. In a disaster on such a scale, the electricity and phone lines are usually put out of action, rendering the usual forms of communication impossible.

However, against the odds, Gloria was able to speak with her daughter. She did this by accessing a free telephone service set up in the middle of one of the camps. With Commission funding, the French non-governmental organisation "Télécoms sans Frontières" (TSF) had deployed satellite telephones to Pisco so that earthquake victims could get in touch with loved ones.

These temporary telecommunication networks were vital, enabling survivors to reassure their families and plan their next steps. Around two hundred calls were



placed every day, in every centre, with each person being allowed to talk for up to three minutes. TSF, which is one of the Commission's fastest reacting humanitarian partners, arrived the day after the earthquake.

As well as setting up facilities in shelters and camps, TSF's work was essential for the delivery of humanitarian aid to victims. By immediately establishing a telecommunications centre at the Pisco airport, they gave other relief organisations the means to communicate. Essential information about the situation could be passed to headquarters – and to the Commission's Humanitarian Aid department (ECHO). The Commission provided emergency aid worth €2 million for the earthquake victims, had its own emergency experts on the ground and covered most of TSF's costs.

It is a good example of the partnership in action – and Gloria's daughter can testify that she has never been happier to hear her mother's voice.



## Sahel: A plan and the “magic potion”

### A proactive approach to tackle malnutrition

With her baby girl Issa strapped to her body, Aïsha took half a day to walk to the “integrated” health centre in Tamaské in southern Niger. At the reception, she explains that a village elder has told her to come to the nutritional feeding unit.

At first Aïsha didn’t want to leave her husband and their three other children. But she is worried about Issa. The little girl’s stomach is distended and her belly button protruded, an indication that she is malnourished. The elder finally convinced her with a simple demonstration: a bangle made up of coloured segments placed around the baby’s arm. The colours show the amount of muscular wastage and thus the extent of any malnutrition. The reading for Issa was alarming.

The elder belongs to a local voluntary system to detect malnourished children as early as possible. Covering 300 villages in the district, it was set up by the Spanish non-governmental organisation *Accion contra el Hambre*. Aïsha is relieved to learn that the health service is for free for young children.

Tens of thousands of children in Niger and other Sahel countries are malnourished. Malnutrition is associated with six out of ten infant deaths and child mortality in the Sahel is among the highest in the world – a fifth of children die before reaching their fifth birthday.

The Commission has recognised the importance of helping severely malnourished children but also that treatment should start as early as possible. By the time they are diagnosed as severely malnourished, it is often too late to help them and those who survive can be stunted for life. With the adoption of a €25 million global humanitarian aid plan for the Sahel in June 2007, the



Commission put more focus on risk reduction, drawing on food security and rural development programmes, as well as nutritional surveillance and contingency plans. The Sahel plan covers five countries: Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger.

Regarding children, the aim is to act before the severe malnutrition stage by treating infants who are moderately malnourished. The Commission’s support for the nutritional feeding operation at Tamaské’s health centre, channelled through the French NGO *Médecins du Monde*, is part of the Sahel plan.

Back at the centre, it turns out that Aïsha’s daughter is already severely malnourished. However, doctors are optimistic that Issa and her mother won’t have to stay too long. With no complications and provided with enough supplies of Plumpy’nut®, a high-protein, high-energy, peanut-based paste, they can return home in just a few days.

Plumpy’nut® is called the “magic potion” in the Sahel as it helps severely malnourished under-fives to recover quickly. They normally return to a healthy weight within three to four weeks. It can be eaten immediately without any preparation. Children like its taste and mothers like it because it reduces the amount of time they have to spend in feeding centres. Like Aïsha, it allows them to return home sooner to look after the rest of the family. This is important as the absence of the mother can impact on the condition of the rest of the children back home.

The Sahel plan is a good example of how the Commission’s Humanitarian Aid department is proactively tackling not just acute malnutrition, but also its root causes. It finances therapeutic food and medical care as well as the provision of treated mosquito nets, training for health workers and malnutrition prevention programmes. The wide range of Commission-supported activities includes local voluntary systems to detect malnourished children as well as identifying new crops that are more suitable for farmers in the changing climate conditions in the region.

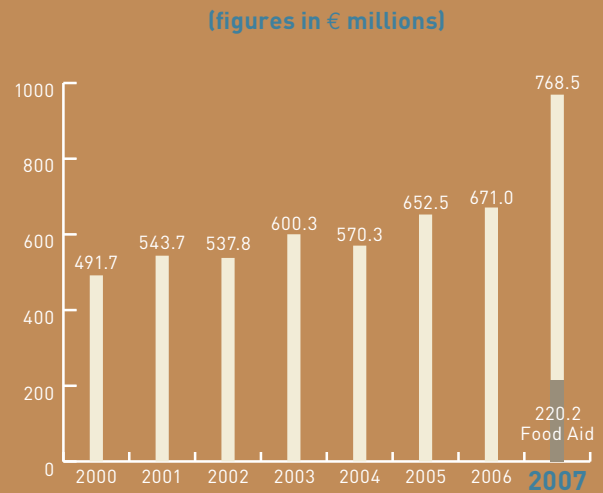
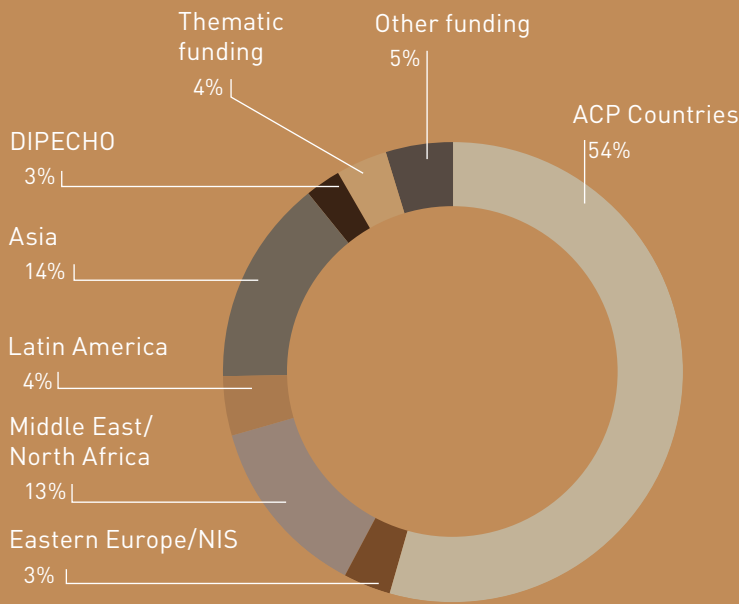




## Financial decisions for humanitarian aid by region in 2007

Country/region	Decisions in €	Country/region	Decisions in €
<b>AFRICA, CARIBBEAN, PACIFIC</b>	<b>418,760,000</b>	<b>ASIA</b>	<b>109,800,695</b>
All Africa	2,000,000	Afghanistan/Iran/Pakistan	27,000,000
Burundi	19,500,000	Bangladesh	9,925,000
Caribbean	7,260,000	India	2,630,000
Central African Republic	8,000,000	Indonesia	1,600,000
Chad	30,500,000	Myanmar (Burma)/Thailand	19,000,000
Congo (Democratic Republic)	50,000,000	Nepal	6,000,000
Côte d'Ivoire	500,000	North Korea	2,000,000
Eritrea	6,000,000	Philippines	2,145,695
Ethiopia	20,000,000	South Asia	19,500,000
Guinea	2,000,000	Sri Lanka	15,000,000
Haiti	4,500,000	Timor-Leste	3,000,000
Kenya	9,000,000	Vietnam	2,000,000
Liberia	16,600,000		
Madagascar	5,380,833	<b>LATIN AMERICA</b>	<b>32,064,983</b>
Mozambique	7,000,000	Bolivia	1,000,000
Sahel	25,500,000	Colombia	13,000,000
Solomon Island	550,000	Honduras	500,000
Somalia	18,000,000	Nicaragua	6,000,000
Southern Africa	5,819,167	Paraguay	1,500,000
Sudan	110,450,000	Peru	10,064,983
Tanzania	12,000,000		
Uganda	24,000,000	<b>DIPECHO</b>	<b>19,500,000</b>
West Africa	2,000,000	Caribbean	4,000,000
Zambia	2,000,000	Central America	1,500,000
Zimbabwe	30,200,000	South America	6,500,000
		South Asia	7,500,000
<b>EASTERN EUROPE/NIS</b>	<b>25,807,118</b>		
Georgia	2,000,000	<b>THEMATIC FUNDING</b>	<b>27,500,000</b>
Moldova	3,000,000	Supporting humanitarian aid reform	23,000,000
Northern Caucasus (Chechnya crisis)	20,807,118	Assessment & analysis of hum. needs	4,500,000
<b>MIDDLE EAST/NORTH AFRICA</b>	<b>99,090,000</b>	<b>OTHER FUNDING</b>	<b>36,007,038</b>
Algeria (Sahrawi refugees)	10,000,000	Technical assistance	25,400,000
Iraq	17,800,000	Evaluation/Communication/Audit	5,550,000
Middle East (Palestinians and Lebanon)	70,300,000	Grants and Services	1,400,000
Yemen	990,000	Other	3,657,038
		<b>Total</b>	<b>768,529,834</b>

## Funding decisions for humanitarian aid: 2007



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## Useful web links

**ECHO aid strategy:** [http://ec.europa.eu/echo/information/strategy/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/information/strategy/index_en.htm)

**European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid:** [http://ec.europa.eu/echo/whatsnew/consensus\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/whatsnew/consensus_en.htm)

**Funding decisions:** [http://ec.europa.eu/echo/information/decisions/2007\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/information/decisions/2007_en.htm)

**Country operations:** [http://ec.europa.eu/echo/field/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/field/index_en.htm)

**Publications and documents:** [http://ec.europa.eu/echo/information/publications/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/information/publications/index_en.htm)

**Photo library:** [http://ec.europa.eu/echo/information/library/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/information/library/index_en.htm)

**ECHO partners:** [http://ec.europa.eu/echo/partners/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/partners/index_en.htm)

**Links to other useful web sites:** [http://ec.europa.eu/echo/partners/links\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/partners/links_en.htm)

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# The European Commission's humanitarian aid

The European Commission's Humanitarian Aid department (ECHO) is a service under the direct responsibility of Commissioner Louis Michel.

Since 1992, the Commission has funded relief to millions of victims of natural and man-made disasters outside the European Union (EU).

Aid is channelled impartially to the affected populations, regardless of their race, ethnic group, religion, gender, age, nationality or political affiliation.

Part of the department's mission is to raise public awareness of the issues at stake.



## Working with partners in the field

For humanitarian aid, the Commission works with about 200 operational partners, including specialised United Nation agencies, the Red Cross/Crescent movement and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

## A key donor

The European Commission is one of the biggest sources of humanitarian aid in the world. In 2007, it provided over €768 million for humanitarian programmes. This does not include the aid given separately by the EU's 27 Member States. Commission support went to projects in more than 70 countries. The funds are spent on goods and services such as food, clothing, shelter, medical provisions, water supplies, sanitation, emergency repairs and mine-clearing. The Commission also funds disaster preparedness and mitigation projects in regions prone to natural catastrophes.

## A strong presence on the ground

To boost its presence in the field, ECHO has established regional offices in six capitals around the world: Dakar (Senegal), Nairobi (Kenya), Amman (Jordan), New Delhi (India), Bangkok (Thailand) and Managua (Nicaragua). It also has around 30 field offices located in crisis zones.

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