



European
Commission

Annual Report

on the Implementation of the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid 2012

Humanitarian
Aid and Civil
Protection

**ANNUAL REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EUROPEAN
CONSENSUS ON HUMANITARIAN AID - 2012**

1. TEN BASICS OF THE EUROPEAN CONSENSUS ON HUMANITARIAN AID

1. The European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid (the Consensus) was signed by the Presidents of the Council of the European Union, the European Parliament and the European Commission on 18 December 2007. The three institutions expressed this way the **highest political commitment** to the principles enshrined in the Consensus¹.
2. The Consensus defines the **common objective** of the EU humanitarian aid as to provide needs-based emergency response aimed at preserving life, preventing and alleviating human suffering and maintaining human dignity wherever the need arises if governments and local actors are overwhelmed, unable or unwilling to act.
3. The Consensus confirms the **scope of the EU humanitarian aid**, which encompasses assistance, relief, and protection operations, according to the common objective, in natural and man-made disasters, during the crisis and in their immediate aftermath.
4. The Consensus groups **common principles and good practice** underpinning the EU humanitarian aid: 1) the fundamental humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and independence; 2) the international humanitarian, human rights, and refugee law; 3) Good Humanitarian Donorship principles on donor best practice.
5. The Consensus establishes **common framework to deliver humanitarian aid** based on: a) coordination, coherence and complementarity within the EU as well as with other humanitarian actors; b) adequate and effective aid reflecting the needs and degree of vulnerability; c) quality, effectiveness and accountability based on internationally recognised standards; d) support for a plurality of implementing partners, both governmental and non-governmental organisations; e) use of civil protection assistance in support of humanitarian aid strictly based on relevant guidelines ensuring, in particular, the respect for the humanitarian principles.
6. The Consensus reiterates EU support for the development of the **international humanitarian action**, led by relevant UN bodies, to increase global capacity to respond to humanitarian crisis and to avoid duplication of efforts.
7. The Consensus stresses the need to ensure **aid continuum** by reducing risk and vulnerability through enhanced preparedness as well as transition to early recovery and link to development aid.
8. The Consensus confirms that EU humanitarian aid is **not a crisis management tool**.
9. The Consensus states that the use of **military assets in response to humanitarian situations must be in line with the Guidelines** on the Use of Military and Civil Defence Assets in complex emergencies and the Oslo Guidelines on the use of Military and Civil Defence Assets in International Disaster relief.
10. The Consensus **recognises a special role of the European Commission** in delivering humanitarian aid as a result of its global field presence, its role as a facilitator of coordination and coherence, its long-lasting promotion of good humanitarian practice internationally, and its recognition by the international community as a reference donor and important contributor to humanitarian action.

¹ European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid, Official Journal C 25/1 30.1.2008.

2. BACKGROUND

Following the adoption of the Consensus, the European Commission presented on 29 May 2008 a five-year Action Plan outlining practical measures to implement the provisions of the Consensus². It contains actions divided into the following six areas:

- Area 1: Advocacy, promotion of humanitarian principles and international law;
- Area 2: Implementing quality aid approaches;
- Area 3: Reinforcing capacities to respond;
- Area 4: Strengthening partnership;
- Area 5: Enhancing coherence and coordination;
- Area 6: The aid continuum.

As part of the Action Plan, its Mid-Term Review was released on 8 December 2010³ followed by Council Conclusions on 17 May 2011⁴, which stated that "further joint EU efforts" should be pursued on "coherence and consistency in EU humanitarian aid and its interaction with other policies, including [...] through COHAFA [Council Working Party on Humanitarian and Food Aid], undertake[ing] an **annual monitoring and reporting of progress on Consensus implementation**".

Consequently, an annual report has been prepared to provide an overview of actions undertaken by the EU as a whole, meaning EU Member States and the European Commission, to implement the Consensus in the six 'action areas'. The first report that covered activities in 2011 was published in 2012.

This report reflects actions undertaken in 2012. It is based on contributions received from EU Member States as well as a mapping exercise carried out by the European Commission. The aim of the report is to highlight some of the actions taken by the EU in order to illustrate the overall effort, and not to give an exhaustive list of all the developments that have taken place during the year. This report has been approved by the Council Working Party on Humanitarian and Food Aid in 2012.

² Commission Staff Working Paper "European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid – Action Plan", SEC(2008)1991.

³ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council "The mid-term review of the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid Action Plan - implementing effective, principled EU humanitarian action", SEC(2010) 1505 final.

⁴ Council conclusions on the mid-term review of the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid Action Plan – implementing effective, principled EU humanitarian action, 17 May 2011.

3. IMPLEMENTATION OF ACTION AREAS

Area 1: Advocacy, promotion of humanitarian principles and international humanitarian law

The EU was active in promoting international humanitarian law (IHL) at the **United Nations** throughout 2012. In a statement to the UN Security Council on 25 June on protection of civilians in armed conflict, the EU expressed its regret at the frequent failure by parties to armed conflicts to comply with their obligations under applicable IHL, international human rights law and refugee law to protect civilians. In a statement to the United Nations General Assembly Sixth Committee on 22 October 2012 on the Status of the Additional Protocols to the Geneva Conventions, the EU stressed that promotion and respect of IHL was crucial to ensure the protection of victims of armed conflicts. In a statement on Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People made to the Fourth Committee on 9 November, the EU recalled the applicability of IHL in Palestine, including of the fourth Geneva Convention relative to the protection of civilians, and called for full respect of IHL in this context. Addressing the General Assembly on 13 December on strengthening the co-ordination of UN humanitarian and disaster relief assistance, the EU urged all states and parties to fulfill their obligations under IHL and called on warring parties to protect medical and healthcare personnel assigned to medical duties, their means of transport, property and other medical facilities in accordance with all relevant international laws, including IHL.

During the UN Conference on an **Arms Trade Treaty**, the EU and its Member States made clear their conviction that in cases where there was a clear risk that arms will be used for serious violations of international human rights law or IHL, such arms transfers must be denied under the terms of the treaty under negotiation.

Member States moved forward with implementation of their **pledges made to the 31st International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent** in 2012. Austria ratified the 2006 Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance on 7 June 2012, while Finland and Poland ratified the 1997 Ottawa Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction on 9 January 2012 and 27 December 2012 respectively. As a result, all EU Member States are now party to the Ottawa Convention. In fulfilling its national pledges to the 31st International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, Austria moreover co-organized in cooperation with the Austrian Red Cross a **seminar on the humanitarian aspect of nuclear disarmament** in November 2012 and Germany supported IFRC activities in Africa – e.g. financing several workshops on improving national disaster response laws. The Netherlands supported the **Code of Conduct of the Red Cross and Red Crescent** movement on the basic principles of humanitarian aid. Adherence to this Code of Conduct is a requirement for NGO financing. Annually the Netherlands provides an unearmarked contribution of 25 million euro to the International Committee of the Red Cross, the keeper of IHL. Sweden's support to the International Committee of the Red Cross amounted to 58 million euro.

The Austrian **national commission on the implementation of IHL** includes representatives of the Austrian government, the Austrian Red Cross as well as scholars, and met in March 2012 in order to provide for dialogue on the implementation of IHL and for the exchange of information on IHL-related actions and processes. Furthermore, training and programmes on IHL for military personnel and at national education level as well as for other humanitarian actors was provided by the Austrian Red Cross. The Austrian Red Cross also engaged in

active dialogue and awareness raising activities with various stakeholders to promote humanitarian principles and the importance of independent, neutral and impartial humanitarian aid.

In March 2012, the Polish Red Cross Society hosted the 14th Annual Polish **School of International Humanitarian Law**, which was attended by participants representing armed forces, fire fighters, civil servants, NGOs and other national stakeholders. In August, the 30th Annual Warsaw Summer School of International Humanitarian Law for humanitarian professionals from all over the world was organized in Warsaw in cooperation with the International Committee of the Red Cross. Thanks to the Polish Red Cross Society, the annual Remigiusz Bierzanek **contest for the best BA or MA thesis on IHL** was carried out in Poland, as well as **courses** aimed at improving knowledge of IHL among school teachers, students and journalists. Moreover, the Polish **Inter-ministerial Taskforce on IHL** was convened twice in 2012 in order to discuss current issues relating IHL, including preparations to the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, protection of the Red Cross and Red Crescent emblems, Polish participation in the international humanitarian action.

The EU on numerous occasions voiced its **concerns relating to respect of IHL in third countries**. The EU repeatedly called on all parties to the Syrian conflict to respect IHL and condemned the violence against civilians in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Council conclusions on the Middle East Peace Process recalled the applicability of international humanitarian law in Palestine, including the applicability of the fourth Geneva Convention relative to the protection of civilians. Council conclusions on Sudan urged the Sudanese authorities to permit immediate unhindered humanitarian access for international humanitarian agencies. Council conclusions on Mali called on all parties fully to respect international humanitarian law and human rights and to allow immediate and unhindered access for humanitarian aid.

The **EU financed projects to enhance the practical implementation of IHL on the ground**. The European Commission provided funding for a project, implemented by the Norwegian Refugee Council, to identify how humanitarian principles are applied in practice, with a view to strengthening their implementation (in this context, a high-level conference on the humanitarian principles took place in Brussels in December 2012), and a further project, implemented by the Swiss Foundation for Mine Action and Geneva Call, to provide training in IHL and related humanitarian norms to armed non-state actors. The Commission also funded a project by the Finnish Red Cross on increasing awareness of IHL and humanitarian principles among European humanitarian organisations and their implementing partners working in conflict-prone or post-conflict countries. The International Institute of Humanitarian Law, based in Sanremo in Italy and co-financed by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, carried out numerous activities and trainings to promote the respect of humanitarian law. Sweden financed projects to enhance practical implementation of IHL on the ground. In addition to support to ICRC, Sweden provided funding to Diakonia in oPt.

The EU Delegation in Geneva hosted in November 2012 a conference with NRC on **principled humanitarian action** which was attended by over 80 participants representing diplomatic missions, humanitarian agencies including ICRC, NGOs and other stakeholders. The meeting was linked to the ECHO/NO funded project on principled action. A panel discussion chaired by the EU HoD with the Geneva based ambassadors from Colombia and India, the Secretary General from NRC and the Director General from ICRC, confirmed the abidance by humanitarian principles in general. The meeting however also illustrated the need for continued dialogue on the application of principles in practice, notably in complex crisis

situations. The discussions revealed the need for continued trust building among states, humanitarian agencies and affected populations.

Both under the German/Polish as the Czech/Danish Chairmanships of the **GHD Initiative**, in plenary as well as work stream meetings, representatives from up to 41 humanitarian donors, including all EU MS and the European Commission, continued to develop and explore modalities for mainstreaming good humanitarian donorship principles in humanitarian policies. The important work started under the German and Polish Chairmanship on the issue of mainstreaming preparedness, disaster risk reduction and resilience in humanitarian assistance was continued in focused work stream discussions, including humanitarian partners from both the international NGO community and other Inter Agency Standing Committee members (e.g. IASC Sub-Working Group on Preparedness and Task Team on Humanitarian Financing). The EU Delegation and the Danish mission to Geneva hosted in March 2012 a stakeholder meeting on preparedness and resilience, which allowed taking stock of progress made and challenges faced, notably with bridging the relief-development gap. The different meetings also allowed for a useful exchange among GHD members on bilateral policy developments and best practices. The High Level Meeting in New York in July 2012 confirmed the importance of this policy area as well as of other issues covered during Geneva-based meetings such as: safety and security; needs assessment; humanitarian financing; GHD local groups. Another important achievement included the agreement among GHD members on a method for self-assessment of humanitarian performance (based on some 20 qualitative questions), which will enable comparing donors' experiences with implementing GHD principles in day to day humanitarian policy. The initiative gained momentum under the German chairmanship of the ODSG: Germany supported OCHA's internal preparedness evaluation as well as Phase 2 of the "Analysis of financing mechanisms and funding streams to enhance emergency preparedness", a study executed by FAO on behalf of the IASC.

Against the background of the development of a humanitarian programme cycle approach, which was confirmed by IASC Principals in December 2012, the European Commission and Sweden hosted workshops on needs assessment and humanitarian financing. They enabled a discussion among donors, representatives from OCHA and other agencies on synergies between good humanitarian donorship, evidence-based and strategic humanitarian programming and financing.

The humanitarian adviser from OECD/DAC participated in a number of GHD meetings, notably in the context of the self-assessment methodology mentioned above, as well as at a meeting hosted by the EU Delegation in May 2012, whereby she highlighted conclusions of the peer review of the EU's humanitarian aid policy.

GHD meetings were occasionally also useful triggers for broader consultations with humanitarian partners, such as in the margin of the GHD High Level Meeting in July when GHD members met with representatives from the IASC Working Group. At a meeting organised by EC with the GHD co-chairs and hosted by EU Del in NY, GHD members highlighted the importance attached to humanitarian reform (Transformative Agenda).

Also in 2012, the Danish and Czech co-chairs launched a reflection process on the future of the GHD Initiative, starting with a consultancy study with a view to having agreement in July 2013 (during the High Level Meeting) on the main focus areas for the Initiative. The review will be concluded ten years after the agreement among donors on GHD principles and should lead to a 'refreshed' GHD Initiative taking into account the expanded membership and a substantially changed humanitarian landscape.

As regard **developments in EU Member States**, on 1 January 2012 the Development Co-operation Act of September 2011 came into force in Poland. It introduced a specific legal basis for Poland's humanitarian assistance. The Development co-operation Act defined humanitarian aid as: providing relief, assistance and protection of a population affected by armed conflict, natural disaster or other humanitarian crises caused by nature or man. It introduced a simplified granting procedure for Polish NGOs in the event of the provision of humanitarian assistance and indicated the coordination of humanitarian aid as one of the tasks of the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

On the 8 June 2012, Italy approved its Guidelines for Humanitarian Aid (Linee Guida per l'Aiuto Umanitario), which endorse the 23 principles contained in the Good Humanitarian Donorship Initiative and define appropriate future actions to update its internal humanitarian structure to the GHD principles. The Italian GHD Guidelines also support the promotion by the MFA of training initiatives in the humanitarian assistance and advocacy spheres. Moreover, a specific section of the Italian first forum on International Cooperation held in Milan in 2012 was dedicated to the humanitarian aid.

Finland launched its new humanitarian aid policy in October 2012. The policy is in line with the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid and defines the key principles, objectives, channels and priorities of Finnish humanitarian aid. In addition, Finland commits to working toward four goals aimed at improving the effectiveness of humanitarian action. First, Finland aims to be a responsible, timely and predictable donor. Second, it strives toward an effective, well-led and coordinated international humanitarian assistance system. Third, Finland commits to channelling its humanitarian funding through capable and experiences non-governmental organisation. Fourth, Finland works towards greater awareness of and adherence to humanitarian principles.

In autumn 2012 Germany published a new humanitarian strategy with the following objectives:

- to provide assistance swiftly, flexibly and without unnecessary bureaucracy, according to need and in line with international standards;
- to boost self-help capabilities, by involving local stakeholders and recipients of aid and transforming into self-help;
- to achieve preparedness, improving response capabilities before disaster strikes and strengthening local structures;
- to support international coordination, reinforcing the UN-led international humanitarian assistance system constantly and sustainably;
- to enable quality management, learning from experience and integrating innovations and quality control into humanitarian;
- to make use of humanitarian diplomacy, developing new humanitarian assistance partnerships and intensifying dialogue with regions at risk of crisis and disaster.

The Federal Foreign Office aspires to supply coordinated humanitarian assistance. Rapid and non-bureaucratic assistance in acute crisis goes hand in hand with transitional assistance, enhanced crisis response capabilities and disaster reduction measures. Through its Crisis Response Centre, the Federal Foreign Office can be contacted around the clock and can, if necessary, get relief measures underway within hours. The network of German missions abroad is crucial to early warning and to quickly establishing contact with those affected and relief organizations on the ground.

In keeping with the commitments set out in the Humanitarian Strategy of the French Republic, adopted on July 6th 2012, the French Humanitarian action respects international humanitarian law and international human rights law. France also plays a role in ensuring the safeguarding of principles and good practices for humanitarian aid, and is involved in the GHD initiative and in the protection of the Oslo guidelines.

Area 2: Implementing quality aid approaches

The EU continued its support on improving **needs assessment** for humanitarian response. In 2012 Global Needs Assessment (GNA) and Forgotten Crisis Assessment (FCA) results were transferred to a new dedicated web-based system: <http://humanitarianneeds.gdacs.org/> that is currently being piloted and will allow not only the sharing of overall results but also easier shared access to composite indices/data. A new Administrative Arrangement with the Joint Research Centre (JRC) was signed to continue the methodological development and dissemination of the Global Needs Assessment (GNA)/Forgotten Crisis Assessment (FCA).. GNA and FCA outcomes were circulated proactively through the Humanitarian Aid Committee (HAC) and the Council Working Party on Humanitarian Aid and Food Aid (COHAFA) and to Good Humanitarian Donorship networks. Additionally the outcomes have been presented to MS in COHAFA (in October 2012) on GNA/FCA for 2013-14, together with main elements of new web-based system. DG ECHO is working with a number of other humanitarian donors on developing a Global Humanitarian Risk Index that would be widely accepted in the humanitarian community. The technical work is being carried out by JRC as part of this year's Administrative Arrangement with DG ECHO.

At the international level, the European Commission together with other member states such as Sweden, supported OCHA by funding the Assessment Capacity Project (ACAPS), a consortium of four NGOs, to support the operational rollout of the Needs-Assessment Task Force (NATF) Work Plan at field level through training and deployment of needs assessment experts with a view to enhance joint needs assessment and the development of additional tools, namely, Secondary Data Reviews. DG ECHO also continued to support OCHA in the framework of the Enhanced Response Capacity on a multi-dimensional project aimed at strengthening evidence-based decision-making by providing guidance for Humanitarian Country Teams in applying needs assessment tools, training to humanitarian coordinators, OCHA staff and clusters on needs assessment, and enhancing information management via a web-based platform, www.humanitarianinfo.org. In June 2012, Italy introduced in its programme management system GHD qualitative indicators - called "Marker" - to verify and measure the actual application of the GHD principals to bilateral humanitarian initiatives.

The EU continued work on support to the most **vulnerable groups**. In 2012 DG ECHO and DG DEVCO started preparations to a Communication on Enhancing **Maternal and Child Nutrition** and its accompanying Staff Working Document on Undernutrition in Emergencies, presenting European Commission's strategic approach on nutrition and operationalizing this approach for the humanitarian response. This work was preceded by a number of stakeholder consultations. The European Commission continued comprehensive annual exercise to determine the food and nutrition needs in countries at risk or in countries with recurrent crisis, with the aim of contributing to an evidence-based allocation of funds.

In order to further mainstream **gender** and in view of finalising a policy paper on this issue, the European Commission conducted a stakeholder consultation on gender in humanitarian aid. A proposal for a gender marker for humanitarian assistance was developed and started being piloted in late 2012. Moreover, the European Commission funded a humanitarian

project led by UNICEF, which aims at strengthening rapid response capacity, namely in the fields of gender-based violence and child protection. In order to strengthen the UN system capacity to mainstream gender, Sweden supported the GenCap project which continued the application of gender markers in consolidated appeals. The UK launched a new research and innovation fund on violence against women and girls in November 2012. Part of this will focus on testing new approaches to the prevention of and response to violence in humanitarian settings

In 2012, a new multi-annual EU funding line specifically dedicated to **children affected by conflict** was launched. As the recipient of the 2012 Nobel Peace Prize for its contribution of over six decades to the advancement of peace and reconciliation, democracy and human rights in Europe, the EU decided to devote the award to help children affected by conflict. The European Commission doubled the prize amount to a joint sum of 2 M €, which was allocated to humanitarian projects supporting education in emergencies.

The European Commission was also active in the field of **food assistance**. The European Union was among the first parties to ratify the new Food Assistance Convention in November 2012, which entered into force on 1 January 2013. In 2012, the European Commission has provided € 515 M for humanitarian food assistance through its partner organisations in 58 countries with top beneficiaries including Sahel, Syria, and South Sudan. The Netherlands was a large donor to **UNICEF and WFP**, thus enabling these organisations to implement their priorities in the field of nutrition and food assistance, including the WFP instrument of cash and vouchers. NL supports further improvement of accountability and evaluations through its financial support for ALNAP.

The European Commission also started in 2012 preparations for an update on the DG ECHO Guidelines on **cash and vouchers** to meet the requirements of the new EC Financial Regulation and expand its coverage to all aid sectors.

The **humanitarian evaluation** methodology was revised and updated in 2012 to expressly promote the participation in the evaluation exercise of all actors concerned, including beneficiaries and local communities and authorities. The ECHO-commissioned evaluations were regularly disseminated amongst EU MS through HAC as was the annual indicative evaluation planning. DG ECHO participated in the annual ALNAP meetings on evaluation issues for the sector more generally. An independent review on the issue of local participation in humanitarian aid was completed in 2012. Italy continued monitoring its programmes through its newly established **RBM system** and implemented in 2012 its first **evaluation plan**, setting up evaluations for 4 bilateral programmes in Lebanon and in Afghanistan. The humanitarian aid office is also engaged in further updating its system in order to streamline and simplify grant procedures, introducing new NGOs' project formats (project proposals and monitoring reports) based on GHD principles and consistent the new result-based management system adopted at HQ level.

Ireland has a clear policy of focusing on **forgotten emergencies** and to allocation funding on a **needs basis** (in both natural disasters and complex emergencies). A prioritisation process is conducted annually, using EU, UN data, international statistics, projected humanitarian needs, up to date situation reports, funding levels, partner feedback and the results of Ireland's monitoring visits on the ground. Countries are categorised into different priority levels and it is subsequently ensured that funding is allocated accordingly across Ireland's humanitarian funding portfolio. This categorisation process was highlighted as an example of best practice in the 2012 review of the Good Humanitarian Donorship initiative. In order to strengthen Sweden's capacity to allocate funding according to needs in larger ongoing crises, criterias for

allocation were developed, based on ECHO's Global Needs Assessment (GNA), number of affected people, key funding facts and other evidence. Accordingly, funding was allocated to the crises with largest humanitarian needs and highest vulnerability.

Area 3: Reinforcing capacities to respond

In May 2012 an awareness raising seminar took place in the framework of the Danish Presidency, and the NOHA Fall School which took place in November in Brussels was attended by 11 ECHO staff members. In September 2012 for the fourth time the University of Warsaw, Poland, in collaboration with the University of Deusto, Spain organized the NOHA Intensive Programme, which took place in Warsaw. NOHA IP 2012 was devoted the topic of Humanitarian System, trying to introduce the participants to its limitations and potential.

DG ECHO continued to invest heavily in training on the Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA), the Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement (FAFA) and the implementation modalities governing the management of ECHO funded projects. This training targets both ECHO staff and partners. Several training modules have been developed covering the management of the project cycle. In 2012 DG ECHO, gave extensive training to its partners notably:

Several sessions in Brussels (January, June and November 2012) and in other cities in the European Union, notably:

- London (February 2012)
- Paris (March 2012)
- Bonn (March 2012)
- Madrid (April 2012)
- Vienna (April 2012)

Several training sessions in the field for all DG ECHO partners, notably in:

- Amman (January 2012),
- New Delhi (May 2012),
- Haiti (May 2012),
- Bangkok (June 2012)
- Nairobi (July 2012),
- Ouagadougou (September 2012)
- Jerusalem/Gaza (November 2012)
- Quito (November 2012)

Moreover, in order to more easily reach staff working all over the world, DG ECHO has stepped up its investment in distance learning tools. Three new distance learning modules have been developed in 2012 which can be followed through an internet connection. Seventy distance learning sessions were delivered to nearly 982 participants.

Through its support to the Advance Training of Humanitarian Action (ATHA), Sweden supported 7 trainings for humanitarian partner organisations and their partner in areas such as international humanitarian law, gender and link between humanitarian and development assistance.

In 2012, Austria has developed a unique interdisciplinary **training programme on the protection of civilians in armed conflict for senior decision-makers** in military, police and civilian administrations. The objective is to help operationalize the concept of protection of civilians and international humanitarian law principles. A pilot course was successfully completed at the Austrian Peace Centre in Stadtschlaining in December 2012.

Throughout 2012, Ireland continued to work to enhance capacities to respond to emergencies, through its **Rapid Response Initiative**. Under this initiative, Ireland has established stockpiling and **Standby Partnership agreements** with WFP, contributing towards the running costs of the UN Humanitarian Response Depots (UNHRDs) in Brindisi (Italy), Dubai (UAE), Panama, Accra (Ghana) and Subang (Malaysia). Seven shipments of Irish stocks were airlifted to emergencies in Burkina Faso, Jordan, Niger, Ukraine, the Philippines and Turkey.

Ireland's **Rapid Response Corps**, a roster of highly-skilled experts available to deploy at short notice, also forms part of this initiative. Recruitment in 2012 focussed on four key areas of expertise, in which gaps existed: information management; water, sanitation and hygiene; child protection; and, protection. 36 deployments to support partners' humanitarian operations took place in 2012. In addition, Ireland hosted a five-day **training course** on prevention of, and response to, gender-based violence in emergencies in June 2012. This training course was jointly provided by Irish Aid and UNICEF, with the objective of increasing the pool of qualified roster members capable of supporting efforts to address GBV in emergency settings. Irish Aid, in partnership with the Permanent Defence Forces of Ireland, also hosted OCHA's Field Response Surge Training (FIRST) in September – October 2012. The training was delivered by OCHA's Emergency Services Branch as part of its surge staff development training programme.

Luxembourg continued to strengthen the **response capacity** of the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster by hosting and funding IT training for first responders from numerous organisations, within the framework of the project "emergency.lu".

The Netherlands provided **internal training to its staff members** and has regular exchanges with Dutch NGO's, amongst others on lessons learning from the field. Germany supported in 2012, too WFP and UNHCR initiated **seminars** facilitated by THW e.g. on logistics and information management with participants from various national and international organisations.

In August 2012, for the first time, the UK activated DFID's new Rapid Response Facility (RRF) for humanitarian emergencies to respond to the cholera outbreak in Sierra Leone. Using partnerships with the private sector and specialist aid organisations to expand emergency water and sanitation activities, DFID delivered lifesaving support to 2 million people within 72 hours of activating the RRF.

DFID also produced its first Global Humanitarian Risk Register and Report. This will help anticipate and prioritise investments in resilience and disaster preparedness, mitigating the impact of disasters before they occur. Additionally, the UK International Emergency Trauma Register was incorporated into DFID's humanitarian response. DFID support for the register will see over 400 medical personnel registered, trained and able to join the UK's humanitarian emergency response by 2014.

To ensure a quick response to smaller sudden crises, Sweden further developed its Rapid Response Mechanism with 8 partner organisations, which resulted in over 130 quick efforts to meet needs in 41 crises.

Area 4: Strengthening partnership

The European Commission worked closely in **partnership with its implementing partners** i.e. NGOs, Red Cross family and the UN. 2012 was particularly important for the partnership, as it marked the start of the discussions on the revision of the partnership agreements; the first sets of agreements to be approved after the adoption of the Consensus. As a starting point, DG ECHO contracted out an evaluation of its contractual framework to establish whether it has achieved its objectives and produce recommendations for improving the effectiveness of future agreements. Partners' and stakeholders' participation in this evaluation through direct interviews or through online survey was very high and produced constructive recommendations and feedbacks. Building on the results and recommendations of this external evaluation and brainstorming sessions, DG ECHO developed in October a concept note establishing the main principles of the revision, including a stronger partnership through quality selection of partners, promoting the quality and effectiveness of aid through a greater focus on policy coherence and results-based approach, simplifying and streamlining contract management, ensuring enhanced accountability towards citizens and stakeholders through increased visibility and communication requirements. DG ECHO continued throughout 2012, its strategic dialogues with its partners (UN agencies, ICRC, IFRC, VOICE) and organised its Annual Partners Conference. Continued efforts have also been made, through the FPA helpdesk, to provide training, distance learning and support to partners.

In 2012, with a view to strengthening **partnership with key UN humanitarian agencies**, Poland joined the OCHA Donor Support Group as a first EU-12 country. In addition to its Strategic Partnership Agreement with ICRC, UNHCR, WFP and OCHA, **Luxembourg** signed a new Strategic Partnership Agreement (2012-2015) with UN-ISDR.

The EU continued close **cooperation with other DAC donors**. The European Commission held high- and working-level meeting with representatives of Australia, Japan, Norway and Switzerland to discuss issues of common interest, such as resilience, disaster risk reduction, and humanitarian access. DG ECHO also continued the strategic dialogue with the USA, which took place in Washington in November, as well as regular monthly videoconferences, both covering thematic issues and operations.

The European Commission also **cooperated with non-DAC donors**. Some examples of bilateral relations include: Commissioner Georgieva's meeting with representatives of Kuwait, Qatar and United Arab Emirates (UAE) at the margins of UNCTAD XIII, Commissioner Georgieva's meeting with UAE State Minister for Foreign Affairs at the margins of the Friends of Yemen conference in Riyadh, visit of Commissioner Georgieva to Turkey and China, a joint ECHO-Brazil twinning operation aimed at providing Brazilian food by ECHO to Sahel. As regard cooperation with regional organisations, the European Commission strengthened relations with for instance ASEAN (via regular visits to ASEAN countries for the implementation of AADMER Partnership Group funding, study tour of ASEAN to EU in July 2012, support to READI programme on response and preparedness capacity) and the Organisation of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC) (through a number of high- and working-level meetings, participation in donor coordination meetings, and the OIC visit to ECHO in December). In 2012 Poland hosted a visit of the Director of Azerbaijan International Development Agency (AIDA) Mr. Ashraf Shikhaliyev in the MFA and National Headquarters of the State Fire Service in Warsaw, during which Azerbaijan and Poland shared their experiences and good practices concerning international humanitarian action.

Under the UK-UAE Memorandum of Understanding, DFID hosted a delegation from the UAE for a four-day Learning Exchange covering all aspects of development cooperation, including a half-day on respective approaches to humanitarian assistance.

In New York, Sweden together with Brazil continued to lead the “Dialogue on Humanitarian Partnerships”, which is an informal dialogue group of Member States, including DAC and non-DAC donors, which aims to broaden understanding, ownership and partnership on the humanitarian agenda.

Cooperation developed specifically as regard **civil protection** through dialogue with strategic partners helps to facilitate operational coordination during emergencies where both parties are affected and involved in response activities (e.g. the on-going dialogue between the Monitoring and Information Centre and the Russian EMERCOM during emergencies has helped to avoid duplication of efforts) or where both have a specific common interest (e.g. Turkey or China on Somalia or Sudan), and to strengthen policy work by exchanging best practices and agreeing common positions in international fora (Post-2015 HFA, MDG, SDG, Rio+20 follow-up, etc.). Cooperation with US-FEMA and China are good examples where work was progressing on all three areas. In 2012 other significant developments took place. For example, ECHO signed an Administrative Arrangement (AA) with Moldova in May. FYRoM became the 32nd Participating State of the MIC by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with ECHO in February. PPRD South and East (Programme for Prevention, Preparedness and Response to natural and man-made Disasters) were implemented by DEVCO with the technical leadership of ECHO. Thanks to the programmes, ECHO is in the frontline of discussions with southern Mediterranean countries for a renewed dialogue following the "Arab Spring".

EU Member States also developed their civil protection policies and capacities. In Luxembourg, the collaboration between the Directorate for Development Cooperation and Civil Protection (Administration des services de secours) developed into an operational and dynamic partnership, thanks to the joint involvement in the project “emergency.lu”.

The Italian GHD Guidelines, approved in 2012, support the establishment of a mechanism of multi-stakeholder coordination through the creation of a **Steering Group for Emergency and Humanitarian Aid**. The Steering Group, convened as necessary by the MFA/DGDC/DGCS in response to complex calamities, can be opened up as the situation requires to other stakeholders or parties involved in the emergency in question. These may include, in addition to the MFA itself: NGOs, Civil Protection, Italian Red Cross (IRC), Ministry of Defence and Decentralised Cooperation bodies (Regions, Provinces, Municipalities). In 2012, the MFA set up two roundtables with civil society organisations, universities and decentralised cooperation bodies to debate about strategies and programmes implemented in the Middle East, with special regard to the Syrian and Palestinian crisis.

The Netherlands advocated for the application of the **Principles of Partnership**, in order to enhance the efficiency, timeliness and effectiveness of the cooperation between the UN and NGOs. The Netherlands also worked to improve adequate access by Dutch NGOs to its finance for transition and recovery programmes.

In addition to **supporting NGOs’** field activities, France has developed an in-depth dialogue with them on humanitarian, thematic or geographic issues. The Crisis Centre is consistent with the commitments of the Humanitarian Strategy and has created a Consultation Group on humanitarian issues so as to reinforce its partnership with NGOs. Moreover, the percentage of ODA channeled through NGOs will double over the next five years.

Poland placed special attention to improving its civil protection mechanisms and adapting them to **international standards** throughout its participation in bodies of international emergency response system: United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) and International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG). There are

regular consultations between Development Cooperation Department of Ministry of Foreign Affairs and National Headquarters of the State Fire Service regarding civil protection and humanitarian assistance issues. In accordance with the INSARAG guidelines, Hungary successfully classified and reclassified a medium and a heavy urban search and rescue (USAR) team in October 2012. Hungary has also decided to join the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) Team.

Area 5: Enhancing coherence and coordination

COHAFA remains the main forum to further improve coherence and coordination. Systematically major, sudden-onset and forgotten crises are discussed with Member States in quest of a coordinated EU donor response. In 2012 ad-hoc meetings of COHAFA were for example convened on the crisis in Sahel or Syria. The Commission and the Presidency endeavour to put current but also "forgotten" humanitarian crisis on the agenda. In addition, the Commission convened last year at several lessons-learned conferences/seminars involving Member States and key partners. ECHO presented its own operational strategy on that occasion and, in liaison with the Presidencies, circulated a detailed questionnaire on funding levels and intentions for 2012. The findings of the questionnaire are consolidated and shared with members. In order to enhance EU coordination and coherence, DG ECHO has taken practical steps to share with EU Member States its operational and context knowledge, most notably through the sharing of its crisis and Flash reports. MS presented reviews or newly elaborated national humanitarian strategies to COHAFA (in 2012 FR, DE, FI, PL and CY came with such information) and actively sought exchanges of best practice in this regard. Equally, COHAFA discussed the performance of EU donors in OECD-DAC Peer reviews. In 2012 two Informal COHAFA meetings were held during DK and CY Presidency allowing for more in-depth discussions on cross-cutting issues like DRR, resilience, civil-military relations or common challenges to the delivery of humanitarian aid. Finally, joint meetings with the working party on development cooperation were held to discuss the EU approach to the Sahel crisis and to resilience in general.

On **civil-military coordination**, ECHO has developed close ties with the European External Action Service (EEAS) Crisis Management structures, including the EU Military Staff, the Crisis Management and Planning Directorate and the Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability. This allowed humanitarian expertise to be incorporated into EU Common Security and Defence Policy engagements from the outset, in planning and deployment of CSDP missions and operations, with the objective of ensuring compliance with International Humanitarian Law, respect for humanitarian principles and consequently access for humanitarian actors. Recent examples of this good cooperation include EUTM Mali and EUTM Somalia, in which ECHO suggested the inclusion of IHL training component. To make sure that when military assets are mobilised for assisting the humanitarian community, it is done in line with the MCDA and Oslo guidelines. This is done in CSDP operations, as well as in ad hoc assistance outside CSDP. For this reason, ECHO has formed a link with the Movement and Planning Cell (MPC) of the EUMS for coordination of Member States contribution of military and civil defence assets. These two strands are reinforced by the fact that ECHO also takes part in crisis management exercises of the EU. These exercises also foster understanding of the role of the humanitarian community, International Humanitarian Law, humanitarian space, as well as the guidelines on the use of military assets in disaster relief. Beyond EU actors, ECHO has also established strong ties with other actors in this area, including OCHA and UN members states through the Annual Consultative Group on the Use of MCDA. Advocacy work similar to that in EU planning is also done with UN, regional and specialised organisations like NATO, ECOWAS and ASEAN as well as with specialised civ-

mil initiatives such as HOPEFOR. ECHO participated actively in international fora devoted to formulating policy on the use of MCDA assets, partly through the annual consultative group on the use of MCDA and in regional harmonisation groups charged with formulating regional guidelines on the use of military assets in international emergency relief operations. Additionally, ECHO, through the Enhanced Response Capacity Programme, is funding UN OCHA to help it strengthen capacities and knowledge of humanitarian and military stakeholders in humanitarian civil-military coordination. ECHO funded a study to map existing policy and practice of Member States in the area. Building on the study, ECHO will engage with Member States to help further develop policy. ECHO involved humanitarian NGOs and the ICRC in an EU crisis management exercise for the first time. ICRC injected input in the scenario, which contributed to a wider understanding of the role of humanitarian organisations within the CFSP domain. NGOs were kept abreast of the development of the crisis management exercise through ECHO.

In relation to civil-military coordination, Ireland supported the delivery of OCHA's **CMCoord Training for Standby Partners**, hosted by Finland in January 2012, through the deploying an experienced member of the Rapid Response Corps to act as training officer and facilitator. Irish Aid deployed a CMCoord Officer to Mogadishu for six months to support OCHA Somalia operations. This officer's responsibilities included the provision of a forum for humanitarian organisations to discuss CMCoord issues, ensuring that the humanitarian community is better informed, and training incoming AMISOM staff on humanitarian structures, principles, practices and coordination mechanisms. Irish Aid also supported the Irish Permanent Defence Forces in the delivery of the Second International Tactical CIMIC course, held at the United Nations Training School Ireland (UNTSI) in November 2012. An essential element of this certified course is to ensure that officers and non-commissioned officers are aware of the specificity of humanitarian action, highlighting the importance of a positive, mutually respectful and open working relationship between military forces and humanitarian actors.

Coordination within the EU as regard **civil protection** operations further improved in 2012. The Commission adopted a proposal for new legislation on the Civil Protection Mechanism in December 2011. The proposal is subject to the ordinary legislative procedure, with the Council and the European Parliament as co-legislators. EP voted its position end November 2012 and a Council position is awaited for spring 2013, after which the two institutions will start negotiating a final position. The proposal builds on previous legislation, but puts an increased emphasis on prevention and preparedness. It is underpinned by the objective of creating increased efficiency and effectiveness, and therefore contains a number of proposals aimed at a more targeted, pre-planned response. The main suggestions for improved resource management are the principle of member states sharing information on risk assessments (Article 6), the set-up of a voluntary pool of pre-committed assets (Article 11) for a more targeted approach, and the process of identifying gaps in response capacity which would in certain circumstances be co-financed by the EU (Article 12). The new instruments not only ensure a more efficient use of resources, but also create a more robust EUCP cooperation, more apt to respond to the significantly growing needs of today.

Throughout 2012, ECHO and other donors liaised closely with IASC member organisations on the **Transformative Agenda** which aims to improve the rapidity, efficiency and effectiveness of humanitarian response - both in the context of sudden onset major disasters as of other crisis situations, including protracted crises. In December 2012 agreement was reached among IASC Principals on normative documents centered on humanitarian leadership, accountability and coordination. A meeting of Emergency Directors from humanitarian agencies with senior officials from donor countries and organisations (including

ECHO), hosted by the US mission in Geneva in December, enabled donors to stress the importance of an effective implementation of the humanitarian reform in the field. Advocacy on the issue also took place in executive boards of humanitarian agencies and important preparatory work on common humanitarian messaging continued to be done in the margin of ODSG meetings, as these gatherings bring together the main humanitarian funders.

ECHO continues to value the key role of NGOs in humanitarian coordination and reform. In that context, linked to an ECHO-financed project, the EU Delegation in Geneva organised two meetings with the NGO consortium ICVA - in September of cluster co-leadership and in December of NGO involvement in the Transformative Agenda.

The Austrian Humanitarian Coordination Platform, which was established in 2011, provided throughout 2012 a useful tool for an enhanced **interaction with humanitarian NGOs** as well as institutional actors in the humanitarian field.

Sweden supported strengthened humanitarian coordination and leadership through its support to consolidated appeals, unearmarked and country-based funding to numerous multilateral organisations and cluster leads such as OCHA, UNHCR, WFP, UNICEF, FAO and IOM and support to the pooled funds such as the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), Common Humanitarian funds and Emergency Response funds To strengthen country-based pooled funds mechanisms, Sweden, co-chaired the pooled-fund working group together with OCHA. Through support to the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency, Sweden has seconded over 50 experts to key humanitarian organisations and supported ICVA to strengthen national NGO-capacity.

The Netherlands supported the Transformative Agenda, notably the further improvement of coordination, leadership and accountability. It also provided support through its financing of pooled funds, notably the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (**CERF**), country-based Common Humanitarian Funds and the Humanitarian Response Fund for Ethiopia. Moreover, the majority of Netherlands' contributions were un-earmarked, thus providing flexibility for recipient agencies to apply funding according to their most acute needs and priorities.

Area 6: The aid continuum

The adoption of the Communication "the EU Approach to **Resilience**: learning from food security crisis" in October represented a significant step forward in setting up a conducive framework for a more effective coordination between humanitarian aid and development, starting with common analysis of a crisis situation, joint definition of strategic priorities, coordinated planning and programming between the different instrument in order not only to respond to the needs of the most vulnerable but also to address in a sustainable way the root causes of the crisis. Resilience has been one recurrent theme for COHAFA (and CODEV) discussions (including in informal COHAFA sessions). The implementation of the resilience agenda offers a framework for joining up efforts of the different stakeholders at policy level (Resilience Dialogue at the margin of the IMF-WB meetings, Political Champions), at regional level (Global Alliance, AGIR initiative) as well as at country level.

Throughout 2012 and into 2013, Austria has co-financed the work of several Austrian NGOs in the Sahel region. Together with their local partners these NGO have been focussing on enhancing the **resilience to food and nutritional crises** of local pastoralists, agro-pastoralists and refugees as part of their humanitarian response to the food and refugee crisis in the Sahel region.

Throughout 2012, Ireland worked to strengthen the results/evidence-based approach to appraisal of applications under its **Humanitarian Programme Plans (HPP) scheme**. The HPP is designed to provide funding for predictable humanitarian related interventions in situations of protracted and recurring crises. It is intended that the HPP addresses acute humanitarian needs in a way that addresses underlying causes of vulnerability, builds resilience and lays the groundwork for sustainable development. For this reason, the HPP may also incorporate elements of preparedness, disaster risk reduction and early recovery. HPP submissions are prepared by invited agencies on an annual basis. The results/evidence-based appraisal process now in place focuses on the strategic level and is grounded in a strong contextual analysis. The appraisal areas reflect Irish Aid's commitment to results and focus on quality standards and best practice principles. The aim is to develop a funding mechanism that is transparent and results-focused, whilst retaining the needs-based approach and flexibility necessary in responding to humanitarian crises. Funding allocations for 2013 have been calculated using a base amount linked to historical levels of funding, combined with the agencies' appraisal scores.

Sweden worked to find innovative ways to better link humanitarian assistance with development efforts. It supported **Disaster Risk Reduction (DDR)** and recovery efforts flexibly through both development and humanitarian budgets. To strengthen the international system for DRR, Sweden continued its support to the Worldbank's Facility for Disaster Risk Reduction (GFDRR) and UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR). To strengthen DRR at local levels, Sweden supported a global network of local women's organisations and promoted humanitarian partner organisations to integrate a DRR perspective. To strengthen the link between humanitarian and development efforts in post-conflict contexts, humanitarian capacity was integrated into country development units. The Netherlands started embedding Disaster Risk Reduction in broader development policy. The Netherlands is looking forward to working with all stakeholders in developing joint multi-hazard risk analyses. Additionally, The Netherlands started the development of a DRR Facility which will make it possible to share this country's world-renowned water expertise internationally.

The **LRRD** has been one of the priorities for the Czech/Danish GHD chairmanship as a highly relevant component of the resilience agenda. The GHD Initiative focused in particular on LRRD in food security a nutrition, with stress on learning and sharing of good practices from the field.

In line with the 2012 Development Cooperation Plan, Disaster Risk Reduction and resilience building were integrated into the priority actions in selected partner countries. In result, DRR and resilience building project were implemented by Polish NGOs and State Fire Services in Georgia, Ukraine and Eastern Africa countries. . Poland was also engaged in the promotion of DRR in the framework of the Good Humanitarian Donorship leading - together with Germany - a GHD workstream called PDR4 (Preparedness, Disaster Risk Reduction, Response and Resilience).

The UK began work to embed disaster resilience in a first group of 8 countries. This is the first phase, completed in April 2013, that will see disaster resilience embedded in all DFID's programmes by 2015. The UK also continued research on disaster resilience, publishing case studies from some of the first countries embedding disaster resilience and a paper on the cost effectiveness of early humanitarian response and building resilience.

Contact: Gosia Pearson, European Commission, DG Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection