European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations

Emergency Toolbox
EU funding for sudden onset humanitarian crises

What is it?
As part of the European Commission's Directorate General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), the Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC) coordinates rapid response to sudden onset disasters. One of the instruments at its disposal is the Emergency Toolbox, a fund that specifically provides humanitarian assistance to respond to fast onset crises that could not be foreseen in ECHO’s humanitarian implementation plans.

Why is it relevant?
The Emergency Toolbox is specifically dedicated to emergency response for vulnerable people outside the EU. It has three main added values.

Firstly, it aims to respond as rapidly as possible to emergencies. Special procedures apply to the Toolbox, such as short deadlines to decide on allocations, close cooperation between the ERCC and humanitarian experts and simplified obligations for partners to submit project proposals.

Secondly, it is designed to provide first-line funding in the immediate aftermath of a crisis. The maximum duration of an action is limited to either 6 or 12 months. After initial funding has been swiftly allocated through the Toolbox, ECHO can decide to provide additional and complementary support.

Thirdly, it aims to respond to emergencies that were not anticipated. This is why the Toolbox is separate from – and complementary to – other humanitarian funds (Humanitarian Implementation Plans - HIPs) which are allocated on an annual basis to specific geographical areas and managed by humanitarian experts. The Toolbox reduces the need for country HIPs to respond in an ad-hoc way to unexpected needs and allows them to respond to strategically planned goals.
What are the 4 tools within the Toolbox?

- The **Acute Large Emergency Response Tool (ALERT)** is used to respond to large natural hazards and technological disasters where over 100,000 people or over 50% of the population are affected.
- The **Small-scale Tool** is used to assist a limited number of people (below 100,000) affected by a natural hazard or man-made disaster. The maximum allocation per action is €500,000.
- The **Epidemics Tool** is used to respond to and prevent epidemic outbreaks.
- The **Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF)** is the International Federation of the Red Cross' worldwide fund that provides support to national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies in the immediate aftermath of a disaster. ECHO contributes to this fund up to a maximum of €200,000 per action.

How are we helping?

In 2019, €27.88 million were allocated through the Emergency Toolbox.

- The **ALERT** was activated for 11 disasters in 2019: for floods in Iran, Afghanistan, India, Bangladesh, Sudan, South Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Congo-Brazzaville, and Democratic Republic of the Congo; for tropical cyclone Idai in Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Malawi; tropical cyclone Kenneth in Mozambique and Comoros; hurricane Dorian in the Bahamas and earthquake and typhoon Kammuri in the Philippines. Between €500,000 and €3.5 million were allocated to these disasters. Overall, the response times have been swift. Depending on the type of disaster, the aim is to allocate funds within 24-48 hours of the onset of the emergency.
- The **Small-scale Tool** was used on 11 occasions in 2019: floods in Pakistan, Laos and Djibouti, tsunami in Indonesia, returnees in Mozambique, tornado in Cuba, malnutrition in Nigeria and Madagascar, forced displacement in Niger, and for earthquakes in Pakistan and Albania.
- The **Epidemics Tool** was mobilised 3 times in 2019: twice for measles outbreaks in Madagascar and Democratic Republic of the Congo, and once for Ebola preparedness in Burundi.
- The **DREF** was used 42 times in a wide range of countries in 2019. This enabled ECHO to support national Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in their rapid response to emergencies related mainly to floods, tropical cyclones, drought, civil unrest, and dengue outbreaks.

![2020 budget: €18 million](image)