

EC assists Mozambique refugees via NGOs

The EC is giving ECU12m to the Mozambicans displaced by war, who now number 2.5m people. The aid is unusual in that the chief recipient is not the government but 11 non-governmental organisations (NGOs) who have largely drawn up the projects themselves and are committed to training Mozambicans.

The funds will provide immediate health care, help displaced families get re-started in farming, and train Mozambicans to run their relief system more efficiently.

In motivating the grant, the EC's financing proposal paints a shocking picture of conditions in the country, particularly the northern half.

"A common experience is for the army to overrun an area previously held by rebels, and to find large numbers of people whose destitution is hard to describe," says the proposal. "Starvation, complete nudity and sickness are regularly encountered."

Brussels claims the Maputo Government is making "considerable efforts" to handle the problems, but its lack of trained personnel is all too apparent. The Department for the Prevention and Combat of National Calamities (DPCCN), for instance, is effective at national level but weak at provincial level, says the EC report. "This is a serious problem because a rapid and appropriate response to emergency situations depends on the lower and middle-level management."

Accordingly, the grant earmarks ECU1.75m to the NGOs CARE and the UN Disaster Relief Organisation for the upgrading of DPCCN's services.

The NGOs Eduardo Mondlane Stitching (EMS) and Oxfam Belgique will share ECU2.8m to continue their work in rural water supplies. EMS lays on tube wells and shallow-dug wells in Zambezia province.

In the health sector, the EC is giving a total of ECU4.71m to the separate French, Dutch and Belgian *Medicins Sans Frontières*.

Another ECU600,000 goes towards *Marins Sans Frontières* (sailors without borders) so they can continue to steam up and down the coast from Zambezia to Cabo Delgado off-loading food, medicines, fuel and seed.