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Annex to the ECHO Annual Report 2003

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	Executive summary	3
2.	General Policy Aspects	4
3.	Overview of ECHO's Humanitarian Operations	5
4.	Horizontal issues	7
4.1.	Contractual relations with partners – FPA	7
4.2.	Relations with major humanitarian partners and non – EU donors	7
4.3.	Relations with other Community Institutions	8
4.4.	Strategic planning, policy management tools and information systems	8
4.5.	Addressing cross-cutting issues in line with ECHO aid strategy 2003: LRRD, children and disaster preparedness	10
4.6.	Thematic Funding	11
4.7.	Training and Studies	11
4.8.	Communication and Information	12
4.9.	Budgetary and Human Resources, Audit and Evaluation	13
5.	Outlook and Perspectives	15
6.	Country by Country Overview of ECHO's Humanitarian Operations	15
6.1.	Horn of Africa and Eastern Africa	15
6.2.	Southern Africa	20
6.3.	Central Africa/Great Lakes	24
6.4.	West Africa	29
6.5.	Caribbean/Pacific/Indian Ocean	35
6.6.	Balkans	39
6.7.	Newly Independents States (NIS) and Mongolia	40
6.8.	Southern Mediterranean and Middle East	46
6.9.	Asia	49
6.10.	Central & Latin America	62
7.	Other Information	67

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As the Community's Humanitarian Aid Office, ECHO provides assistance on a non-discriminatory basis to populations of third countries that are affected by disasters both man made and natural and to those affected by conflicts. ECHO upholds to provide this assistance solely determined on the basis of needs and not be subject to political considerations. ECHO also aims to assist affected populations to return to self-sufficiency. To this end ECHO is actively involved in implementing the linkage between relief, rehabilitation and development (LRRD). The Office also works at promoting disaster preparedness.

In 2003, ECHO continued to focus on areas of greatest humanitarian needs as identified in its global needs assessment: in Africa - Horn, Great Lakes, West Africa and Southern Africa – as well as in certain parts of Asia, notably Iraq and Afghanistan. In addition, the humanitarian situation in the Middle East continued to deteriorate dramatically. ECHO has continued to pay specific attention to forgotten crises and forgotten needs, such as in Uganda. ECHO remained committed to promoting cross-cutting issues such as LRRD, disaster preparedness and children. As a result of the onset of sudden and unforeseen crises as well as the worsening of already existing ones the initial budget of the Office had to be reinforced from an initial € 441.7 million to € 600.7 million. ECHO had to adapt its work programme quickly to the new situation provoked by man-made or natural disasters. By way of example, ECHO had to increase its response following the outbreak of war against Iraq and of hostilities in Liberia, the outbreak of the Ebola virus in Congo Brazzaville and the emergence of urgent nutritional needs in North Korea. ECHO also responded quickly to natural disasters such as the earthquakes that struck Algeria in May with some 4 000 people killed and south-eastern Iran (Bam) in December with more than 40 000 people killed, a further 30 000 injured and 45 000 made homeless.

With regard to the Commission's policy to link relief, rehabilitation and development aid, (LRRD), ECHO, besides pursuing an active LRRD strategy on a project level, was active in the initiation of and participation to a Commission Interservice Group, which put forward practical steps for eight countries and two regions (Angola, Sierra Leone, Ethiopia, Sudan, Burundi, Cambodia, Afghanistan Tajikistan, West Africa and Central America). This with a view to ensuring an effective transition from emergency aid to the longer term co-operation cycle.

ECHO also played an active role in promoting the humanitarian principles of impartiality, neutrality and independence, both within the context of the Convention and the international debate about the use of military assets to secure the delivery of humanitarian aid. ECHO's overall objective in these debates was to ensure that an independent "humanitarian space" in crisis situations be maintained and that the dignity of populations in humanitarian disasters could be preserved.

By the end of 2003, ECHO's relationships with its different groups of partners became fully governed by new legal frameworks that are based on the concept of "quality partnership" and that focus on the definition of clear objectives and indicators to measure and assess the results of operations financed by the Office.

The annex to this report provides additional information on ECHO's activities 2003, including a detailed county-by-country overview of ECHO supported humanitarian operations.

2. GENERAL POLICY ASPECTS

ECHO continued its needs based response to humanitarian emergencies in 2003, following the global evolution of needs of people that have become the victims of natural and/or man-made disasters. This is reflected in the regional distribution of the Office's funding patterns. The populations in ACP countries were the biggest recipients of aid (€ 225 million or 38 % of ECHO's budget), closely followed by Asia (€ 224. 2 million or 37 % of ECHO's budget). Important funding was also provided to support the Palestinian population in the Occupied Palestinian Territories given the dramatic deterioration of the humanitarian conditions in the absence of a political settlement to the conflict. As foreseen, the support to humanitarian operations in Europe (€7. 7 million) was limited, reflecting the very last phase of operations, in the Balkans after 12 years of assistance to the region. As for the Newly Independent States, in Chechnya, a major forgotten crisis, ECHO had to take into account that after three and a half years into the conflict, the humanitarian situation of the Chechen population had not improved, and the basic needs of an exhausted population continued to be barely covered. ECHO's assistance therefore remained high (€26 million).

As in the two previous years, ECHO's programming was guided by the global needs assessment, a cross-country assessment comparing the situation across some 130 developing countries on the basis of 9 humanitarian indicators (human development, human poverty, natural disaster risk, conflicts, refugees, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), malnutrition, mortality and other donors' contributions)¹. ECHO presented this methodology to EU Member States, to other donors like the U.S. and to partners, all of which commended the approach and broadly shared ECHO's assessment of high need areas. Applying this methodology to the 2003 results on budget allocation, it appears that 64 % (or € 347.6 million) of ECHO's budget for humanitarian aid decisions² was spent on areas of highest needs, as compared with 49. 3% (or € 249.2 million) in 2002.

ECHO's annual aid strategy in 2003 underlined ECHO's continued focus on forgotten crises, that is crises where there is no/little interest from political/public opinion and few other donors are present or where other donors are reluctant to get involved because of the high risks involved. ECHO's analysis and methodology to identify forgotten crises is based on the use of quantitative (lack of media coverage, low donor support combined with high needs) as well as qualitative elements (field assessment by ECHO experts and desk officers). For 2003 planning purposes, the following most forgotten crises were identified in August 2002: Western Sahara, Democratic Republic of Congo, Myanmar/Burma, Angola, Burundi, Northern Korea, Philippines, Northern Caucasus (Chechnya), Thailand, Uganda and Yemen.

End 2003, the total support allocated to the most forgotten crises as identified above amounted to €119 million representing 20 % of ECHO's 2003 annual budget. This represents

¹ The results of the global needs assessment provide an ordinal ranking of 130 countries in terms of their relative humanitarian needs, i.e. it gives information on a national level that country X has relatively more humanitarian needs or is relatively more disaster prone than country Y.1 According to the ECHO classification, the 25% of countries ranking on top of the list are considered those with highest needs, the 50% in the middle were considered "medium" need countries and the remaining 25% "low" need countries. The Global Needs Assessment consequently allows verifications, from a donor's point of view, how much of its funding was directed to areas of highest humanitarian needs.

² Under this methodology 8% of ECHO's total budget in 2003 (€ 600.3 million) is allocated to other activities/priorities which support/complement core humanitarian activities (DPP, Thematic Funding, Technical Assistance (experts & Imprest Accounts, Support Expenditure (audits, evaluation, information & communication)

a further improvement with regard to 2002, where the financial support for the most forgotten crises 2002 (Tanzania, Uganda, Yemen, Angola, Northern Caucasus (Chechnya), Western Sahara) amounted to € 85 million (16 % of ECHO's 2002 annual budget (€ 537.8 million).

ECHO was a key player supporting the adoption of the **“Principles and Good Practices of Humanitarian Donorship”** in Stockholm on 16-17 June 2003. These principles confirm that humanitarian funding should be allocated in proportion to needs and on the basis of need assessment, thereby reflecting the cornerstones of ECHO's programming principles. The Good Donorship Principles also affirm the primary position of civilian organisations in implementing humanitarian action and call on donors to support the 1994 Guidelines on the Use of Military and Civil Defence Assets in Disaster Relief as well as the 2003 Guidelines on the Use of Military and Civil Defence Assets to Support United Nations Humanitarian activities in Complex Emergencies (MCDA guidelines). In 2003 ECHO, together with the UN Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), organised the launch of the 2003 guidelines. Defending and advocating the need to respect the “humanitarian space” will be a continued priority.

The draft Constitutional Treaty prepared by the Convention in 2003 had provided for a specific provision dealing with humanitarian aid. This provision became part of the European Council's agreement on the Constitutional Treaty of 18 June 2004, stipulating in its Article III-223 that humanitarian aid operations shall be concluded in compliance with the principles of international law and with the principles of impartiality, neutrality and non-discrimination. Caution and vigilance will have to be maintained in order to preserve the principles governing humanitarian aid and the humanitarian space in any future debate on external policy and on the common defence and security policy of the Union.

ECHO gave support to and participated in the United Nations Consolidated Appeals (CAPs) for humanitarian crises, recognising that a multilateral coordinated response to the global humanitarian challenge is essential. After having chaired the Donor Support Group (i.e. the annual meeting of the principal Donors of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)) in June 2003, ECHO hosted the launch of the UN CAP for 2004 in Brussels in November 2003 focusing on forgotten crises. It will stay an active donor aiming at a close co-ordination with other major donors and at supporting responsibly the UN CAPs and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement Appeals – as highlighted by the Good Donorship Principles. At the same time, ECHO will maintain the approach of a "large base" partnership and a broad dialogue with the humanitarian NGOs on crucial humanitarian issues.

3. OVERVIEW OF ECHO'S HUMANITARIAN OPERATIONS

The global humanitarian situation in 2003 remained bleak. Civilian populations continued to be the prime target and victim of violent conflicts, with Asia and Africa being the continents most afflicted. The number of IDPs world-wide remained at 25 million in 2003³. Although the number of refugees dropped in absolute terms after the return of 2 million civilians to Afghanistan, bringing the total number down to 10.4 million, this did not mean a reduction in humanitarian needs, as returnees and not just IDPs and refugees required humanitarian assistance.

³ http://www.idpproject.org/global_overview.htm

With respect to natural disasters, the World Disasters Report 2003 of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)⁴ concluded that, globally, the number of natural disasters has significantly increased during the last decade, with famine being the single greatest cause of death. Although the number of deaths reported globally due to natural disasters has decreased, the number of people affected has risen, thus causing greater humanitarian needs.

ECHO needs based response to humanitarian crises in 2003 was channelled through 100 funding decisions totalling an amount of € 600.3 million: € 586.2 million was financed through the Commission's budget and € 14.1 million was drawn from EDF funds. This is in comparison to the € 600.7 million that was available (implementation rate of the commitment appropriations 99.9%). The following table gives an overview of the geographical distribution of decisions for humanitarian aid adopted in 2003 (amounts in 000s of Euro):

Unit/Region	Amounts	% (rounded)
Echo-1: Africa, Caribbean, Pacific	225,285	38 %
Horn of Africa	50,700	
Great Lakes	88,000	
West Africa	33,185	
Caribbean, Pacific, Indian Ocean	1,400	
Southern Africa	52,000	
Echo-2: Eastern Europe, New Independent States, Mediterranean, Palestinian Territories	94,003	16 %
NIS (Chechnya, Caucasus, Tajikistan, ...)	39,200	
Western Balkans	7,660	
Palestinian Territories	38,000	
Mediterranean countries	9,143	
Echo-3: Asia, Iraq, Latin America	224,199	37 %
Asia	116,949	
Middle East/North Africa	97,139	
Latin America	10,111	
Dipecho- Disaster Preparedness	12,000	2 %
Thematic funding	23,196	4 %

⁴ <http://www.ifrc.org/publicat/wdr2003/> : IFRC World Disasters Report 2003 Homepage

Technical Assistance (experts & Imprest Accounts)	16,917	2 %
Support Expenditure (audits, evaluation, information & communication, ..)	4,749	1 %
TOTAL 2003	600,349	100 %

4. HORIZONTAL ISSUES

4.1. Contractual relations with partners – FPA

By the end of 2003, ECHO's relationships with its different groups of partners became fully governed by new legal frameworks fully complying with the Financial Regulation and focusing on the definition of clear objectives and indicators to measure and assess the results of operations financed by the Office. The EC/UN Financial and Administrative Agreement (FAFA) covering, inter alia, contractual relations between ECHO and its partner Agencies of the United Nations entered into force on 29 April 2003. The new Framework Partnership Agreements (FPA) with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and international organisations (ICRC, IFRC) were finalised in 2003 and entered into force on 1 January 2004. The new legal instruments were presented, inter alia, during ECHO Partner's Annual Conference on 6-7 November 2003. The conference was the occasion for 135 NGOs to sign the new agreement, including 4 NGOs from accession countries. The agreements with ICRC and IFRC and with 16 National Societies of the Red Cross were signed in December 2003 in Brussels. As of 31 December 177 partners had signed or were in the process of signing the FPA.

4.2. Relations with major humanitarian partners and non – EU donors

As part of its planning process, ECHO discussed strategic priorities with major partners in the framework of Strategic Programming Dialogues (SPDs), held for the fourth consecutive year. 7 SPDs were held from November to December 2003 (04/11/2003 – IFRC; WHO – 17/11/2003; NGOs - 24/11/2003; 26/11/2003 – ICRC; 27/28/11/2003 – WFP; 01/12/2003 – UNHCR; 03/12/2003 – UNICEF). In order to further improve transparency and efficiency, all SPDs were preceded by bilateral meetings between these partners and the relevant geographical units. This two-stage approach clarified issues with a specific geographical focus at a preparatory stage, while the SPDs themselves focused on more strategic issues such as quality of humanitarian assistance, methodologies for needs assessment, coordination and information sharing, security of humanitarian aid workers and protection of civilians.

As American and EU Humanitarian aid together account for the greater part of the world's humanitarian assistance, well-functioning contacts and good co-ordination between ECHO and the relevant US government bodies are of particular importance. The US/ECHO dialogue also deals with horizontal issues as for example, LRRD, relations with the UN humanitarian agencies, the family of Red Cross and NGOs, and seeks to develop common approaches in humanitarian matters.

A series of regular exchanges of information (telephone and/or video-conferences) between ECHO's Director and her US counterparts has been established since the beginning of 2003 to co-ordinate humanitarian policies/responses and raise mutual concerns on humanitarian developments on current crisis situations like Chechnya, Liberia, Ethiopia, Iraq, Afghanistan

and Palestinian Territories. Several video-conferences were organised between ECHO and the Bureau for Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM) (on 28 February, on 11 June and on 20 August). Furthermore, a strategic dialogue with the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and Office for Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) took place on the 18 March 2003 to discuss respective strategies and priorities for 2003.

4.3. Relations with other Community Institutions

The European Parliament positively assessed ECHO's progress towards effective aid delivery, simplification of procedures and sound financial management in the period 2000 – 2001 in the report by Mrs Carlotti, which was adopted in the plenary session on 14 January 2003 (A5 - 0433/2002). Following the commitment to regularly attending parliamentary meetings, ECHO's Director participated in 6 meetings of the Development Committee and in one meeting of the Foreign Affairs Committee. These meetings allowed an exchange of views on humanitarian interventions in specific countries (Iraq, Afghanistan, Latin America, Western Sahara), as well as a presentation of ECHO's 2004 strategy in November 2003. Other meetings were attended by ECHO's representatives with the Budget Committee and the Development Committee.

In addition, ECHO contributed to the preparation of replies to 50 Parliamentary questions, 13 of which as lead service, and to the briefing files for the Commissioner for hearings (Iraq, Afghanistan) and oral replies (12) in the Plenary and in the ACP/EU JPA.

The Humanitarian Aid Committee (HAC) (set up under Article 17 of Regulation 1257/96 concerning humanitarian aid) provided favourable opinions on 42 draft humanitarian financial decisions and discussed around 55 strategy and/or policy issues such as ECHO Aid Strategy, ECHO's Information Strategy, disaster preparedness and prevention, needs assessments, ECHO co-operation with partners, and including ECHO missions, evaluations as well as statistical data. In 2003, various initiatives were also organised to inform and integrate the acceding countries into the work of the HAC and humanitarian aid activities in general, including visits to the capitals and general information meetings.

In addition to the formal HAC meetings, the Committee also met on an informal basis in the capital of the holder of the EU presidency. In these informal meetings senior representatives from the humanitarian authorities in Member States and ECHO discuss strategy, policy or thematic issues. Two such meetings, also involving external invitees from the UN and other major partners, were held in May and October 2003 in Athens and Rome where the topics discussed were "Entry-Exit strategies for Humanitarian Assistance", "The European Convention: the future of European Humanitarian Assistance and of International Humanitarian Law", "Humanitarian responses to food crises", and "Joint efforts on Evaluations".

4.4. Strategic planning, policy management tools and information systems

In 2003 ECHO implemented the Commission wide Strategic Planning and Programming cycle ("SPP cycle") for the second year, further integrating Activity Based Management principles (ABM principles) with its existing planning procedures. ECHO lays down its strategic programming principles in its Annual Aid Strategy. This document is the result inter alia of an intensive consultation process, involving other Commission services, Member States, the European Parliament and – as already mentioned under point 4. 2 - major partners (ICRC, IFRC, UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, WHO, NGOs). ECHO's strategic priorities are then

translated into operational objectives/indicators in the ECHO Annual Management Plan. ECHO continued to implement the Annual Management Plan requirement not only at service level but also at unit level, i.e. each and every ECHO unit had to prepare its own Unit Management Plan and make an assessment of 2003 results, in line with the priorities set in the ECHO Annual Management Plan 2004.

ECHO introduced an annual mid-term review (June 2003) of its Annual Aid Strategy/Annual Management Plan, consolidating and complementing existing practices, to have a systematic feedback on progress towards achievements of its objectives. The mid-term results were analysed against set objectives and presented to ECHO staff during the annual staff seminar on 25 June 2003 and to Member States during the meeting of the HAC on 10 July 2003.

In 2003 ECHO prepared new reporting guidelines for its field offices, following the logic and format of the Commission's performance-based management principles, i.e. definition of objectives and indicators laid down in an Annual Work Programme and monitoring on global progress via a mid-term progress report.

For the third consecutive year the Global Needs Assessment and the Forgotten Crises Assessment was used to guide the planning process.⁵ For the purpose of planning its humanitarian operations in 2004, ECHO's Global Needs Assessment was further refined in 2003, replacing the indicator "general under-nourishment of population" with "children under weight for age", taking better account of the needs of children.

However, full methodologies enabling the assessment of the impact of child-related activities could not be developed as foreseen. The main reason for the delay lies in the shortage of human resources and on the conceptual challenges related to impact assessment in the field of humanitarian aid. The development of systems for impact assessment requires more than one year before becoming operational and providing useful information. ECHO will continue its work on this issue in 2004. Nevertheless, ECHO developed interim methodologies for reporting on child and DPP related issues as mentioned under point 4.5 of this report.

The implementation of the 2003 annual programme of the "Humanitarian Office Local Information System" (HOLIS) project led to the following results: the adaptation of the Information Technology (IT) environment to the new Decisions' procedures and the new legal framework mentioned earlier. This allows NGO's to submit their applications for becoming an ECHO partner via an internet application (APPEL). The IT application to manage information about Member States' financial donations (14 Points application) was upgraded to automatically integrate information on ECHO's Decisions (avoiding double encoding), to transfer the information to UN-OCHA and to be ready for EU enlargement. In line with the HOLIS work programme, the work for the development of the "Fichop"⁶ application has continued.

⁵ Detailed information on the methodologies is available on ECHO's website: <http://www.ifrc.org/publicat/wdr2003/>

⁶ The *FichOp* (Fiche Opérationnelle) is ECHO's operational tool for following up humanitarian aid projects.

4.5. Addressing cross-cutting issues in line with ECHO aid strategy 2003: LRRD, children and disaster preparedness

According to the European Commission, linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development ('LRRD') should become a priority for external relations and development co-operation.⁷ Successful implementation of the LRRD approach is not easy to achieve as it is not only influenced by the willingness of other donors to engage in the process but also because the overall situation in a country may be more or less conducive to a transition from humanitarian relief to long-term development cooperation.

In spite of those constraints significant progress has been made in 2003. ECHO's phase-out from the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYRoM), Serbia, Armenia, Kenya, and Mexico was completed as foreseen. Partial phase-outs or sectoral handovers have been achieved in Afghanistan (health sector), Cambodia (de-mining sector), Colombia (IDPs), DR Congo (health sector), India (education), Malawi (nutrition), Sierra Leone (health), Sudan (water and sanitation), and Tanzania (food aid). Set-backs such as in Eritrea were compensated by improvements in other places that were not foreseen in early 2003 such as in Malawi or Kashmir.

Apart from those tangible results within ECHO relief operations, which often led to significant shifts, such as in Tanzania, where a €10 million food aid package was taken over by other Commission funding instruments, numerous small-scale improvements have been made. These include, for example joint assessment missions with other Commission Services; the launch of a dialogue on LRRD in Iraq; the awareness raising effects of the 5 full-day meetings on LRRD and disaster preparedness and the LRRD workshop organized by ECHO in June 2003, involving more than 70 Commission officials and external participants from the UN, the Red Cross family and humanitarian NGOs.

Furthermore, in 2004, ECHO will build on the results of the work of the LRRD/DPP Inter-Service Group established in the Commission in 2003, which suggested practical steps for eight countries and two regions (Angola, Sierra Leone, Ethiopia, Sudan, Burundi, Cambodia, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, West Africa and Central America) with a view to ensuring an effective transition from emergency aid to the longer term cooperation cycle.

As regards ECHO's activities in relation to children and Disaster Preparedness and Prevention (DPP), an interim methodology to report on results achieved in 2003 was developed. The interim methodology basically consists of analysing financial decisions and contracts in 2003 for defined child specific and DPP-related activities. Based on this analysis it was possible to determine;

- with regard to children, that in 2003 out of a total of 100 funding decisions, 55 included support to child-related activities and that based on these 55 funding decisions 102 contracts focused on/included child related activities (e.g. projects supporting therapeutic feeding, vaccination, primary education, re-integration of child soldiers) for a total amount of €85.7 million. In addition, several horizontal activities related to children were supported during the year like the funding of research on the effects of displacement and recruitment on children in

⁷ Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament: Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development – An Assessment (COM(2001) 153 final of 23.4.2001).

armed conflict. The project is being implemented by UNICEF in cooperation with a global network of experts specialised in this issue.

- with regard to DPP, that in 2003 out of a total of 100 funding decisions, 24 included support to DPP related activities and that based on these 24 funding decisions 63 contracts focused on/included DPP related activities (e.g. projects supporting epidemics surveillance systems, small scale early warning systems and capacity building/training of local communities to better cope with future natural disasters) for a total amount of € 24.1 million. In addition, an assessment of ECHO's general strategy towards disaster reduction was conducted by a team of evaluators. This led to significant improvements in the overall orientation, priority setting, benchmarking and allocation of funding within DIPECHO and related activities.

4.6. Thematic Funding

Given the increased need to promote quality humanitarian aid in a changing environment, ECHO started to pilot a thematic funding approach. Four thematic funding decisions supporting the special mandates of specific partners were taken in 2003. The conditions for allocating thematic contributions were that they achieve a value-added for meeting humanitarian needs in the field and strengthen the response capacity of the humanitarian community, including staff security. Following a first decision in 2002, the Commission took a second decision (€ 11 million) to support UNHCR's core mandate, refugee protection, to fund its protection, security and registration operations, including the development of a software tool for the standardised registration of refugees. The thematic approach was also used to support the special mandates of ICRC (€ 10 million) and UNICEF (€ 0.996 million) and OCHA (€ 1.2 million). The thematic support for ICRC aims to ensure, in accordance with the Geneva Conventions and the Additional Protocols, protection of victims (resident and displaced civilians, people deprived of their freedom and people separated from their relatives) of armed conflict and other situations of violence. In the case of UNICEF, thematic support allocated in 2003 focuses on the improvement of the methodology and tools for data collection analysis of the impact of armed conflict on children caused by displacement and recruitment ('child soldiers'). Finally, ECHO supported the efforts of OCHA to improve the co-ordination between international humanitarian actors, and thus the quality of information available to them.

4.7. Training and Studies

ECHO commissioned a study about the effects of man-made crises on refugee movement and displacement. Conflict databases and simulations will be used to identify different types of crisis situations that trigger mass movements of populations both in terms of displacement and returnees. The results of the study should facilitate early warning and the design of exit strategies. Furthermore, ECHO continued to support the SPHERE project aiming to develop a set of universal minimum standards in core areas of humanitarian assistance. This support was *inter alia* used to enable additional field testing of the standards developed so far.

ECHO remained active in supporting the Network on Humanitarian Assistance (NOHA), which offers a one-year multi-disciplinary post-graduate diploma through seven participating universities. This programme allows students to follow a curriculum that provides a comprehensive overview of the humanitarian aid environment. The studies are complemented by an internship either in a humanitarian organisation or in ECHO.

The change of ECHO's legal framework was accompanied by providing in-depth training to allow for a smooth transition process. A complete training programme was launched, covering ECHO headquarters and field staff as well as NGO representatives. Under the grant facility for training and studies, Oxfam-UK, Caritas-D and Solint-I organised seminars and training sessions complemented with the publication of CD-Roms and other learning materials. Intensive training activities for the new FPA will continue in 2004.

4.8. Communication and Information

Having implemented the provisions of its Communication Strategy 2000-2003, ECHO updated and developed its Communication Strategy 2004-2005. This contains a series of adaptations and new proposals based on the objective of communicating the values, principles and achievements of EU humanitarian aid. The strategy will target information multipliers (e.g. opinion leaders in the EU and in newly joined countries, young people, the media) and should enable the application of a rigorous cost-benefit approach. In this context, the new approach involves more emphasis on audiovisual productions and photographic images highlighting ECHO supported activities in specific crisis zones, more targeting of the media and increasing the amount of information available on ECHO's website.

ECHO used the internet and audio-visual media to maximise the impact of its humanitarian message. Information posted on the website, consistently reflecting strategic objectives, included 45 press releases on humanitarian financing decisions and 14 eye-witness accounts from the field (four on Iraq, two on the Palestinian Territories and one each concerning Ecuador, Chechnya, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Malawi, Angola, Cambodia, Tajikistan and Sierra Leone). Five 'streamed' videos were also placed on the website. These were ECHO's general presentation video, documentary pieces on ECHO Flight and on ECHO's work in the Palestinian Territories, and two thirty second spots featuring water and food/health aspects.

In support of ECHO's objective to intervene in areas of greatest humanitarian need, 12 special web sections ("In the field") were developed focusing primarily on high-needs areas where significant funding has been deployed (Angola, Burundi, Liberia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, the Palestinian Territories, the Northern Caucasus (Chechnya crisis), Zimbabwe, Sudan, Tajikistan/Central Asia, Uganda and the Western Balkans).

Media-related activities were organised in Athens, Brussels, Baghdad, Bangkok and Phnom Penh. In Athens, a press conference was organised to highlight an awareness-raising project carried out in Greek schools. In Brussels, media-related activities included a joint press conference with the United Nations to draw attention to the launch of the Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP), a joint press conference with the United Nations to publicise the launch of guidelines on the use of military assets in humanitarian crises ("MCDA guidelines"), a press lunch with the Director in connection with the Iraq crisis, a media briefing with ECHO experts working in four different crisis zones, organised in conjunction with DG Press, occasional participation by operational staff in the DG Press daily press briefings, notably in the context of Iraq, and a series of one-to-one interviews set up with various European media outlets (TV, radio and press) involving ECHO staff. In Baghdad, media activities included the staging of a press conference given by Commissioner Nielson during his visit in April 2003. In Phnom Penh and Bangkok, press briefings and field visits were organised in the context of a seminar and the formal opening of the new ECHO office in Bangkok.

ECHO published four thematic leaflets (on the Balkans, the Palestinian Territories, Tajikistan and the Western Saharan refugees), an update of the brochure “ECHO at a Glance” (also targeting the general public) and two brochures featuring the ECHO-funded actions of NGO partners from Presidency countries (Greece and Italy). It produced four series of video stockshots/documentaries featuring specific crisis zones (Afghanistan, the Balkans, Iraq and the Palestinian Territories) and a radio spot broadcast in the Middle East in French and Arabic. All of these products highlighted, explicitly or implicitly, the Office’s strategic objectives (“save and preserve life”, “provide the necessary assistance and relief” etc.) in order to facilitate a better understanding of its mandate.

Innovative information activities highlighting ECHO’s role and objectives included a school education campaign in France and three German Länder undertaken in collaboration with UNHCR. This involved the preparation of seven ‘witness accounts’ videos highlighting different types of humanitarian need among young people in crisis zones of Africa, as well as the collaboration between UNHCR and ECHO in addressing these needs.

Large advertising billboards highlighting the European Commission’s solidarity with vulnerable people in third countries through its work in the humanitarian and development fields were displayed at Brussels and Rome airports. This project was undertaken in conjunction with DG Development. Informal feedback from the Brussels operation suggests that the billboards were widely noticed and it was decided to extend the operation to other European airports during 2004. ECHO’s seven-minute information video was broadcast in a continuous loop for one week on the large advertising screen at Roma Termini railway station, during the Italian presidency.

Major preparatory work was undertaken in connection with the Youth Solidarity Day, featuring the objectives and the concrete implementation of European humanitarian aid, planned for January 2004. The direct target group for this action was 540 secondary school students from 30 schools representing the 15 Member States invited to participate in the event together with 60 teachers. The event, organised in conjunction with the European Parliament, took place on 20 January 2004.

4.9. Budgetary and Human Resources, Audit and Evaluation

A sustained effort on risk management and the assessment of internal controls has led to a greater appreciation of the risks inherent in funding and managing humanitarian aid. In September 2003, the service conducted a readiness assessment on implementation by the end of 2003 of the baseline requirements of the Commission’s internal control standards. The overall conclusion, confirmed by the update carried out in early 2004, was that ECHO is in compliance with the baseline requirements of these internal control standards.

In order to comply with the new Financial Regulation, ECHO has revised its financial circuits (embedding the “4 eyes principle”) and its contractual tools with partners (FPA). Despite the high level of risk that is inherent to humanitarian aid operations, this has contributed to reducing risks to a level acceptable from the point of view of regularity, legality and sound financial management.

ECHO continued to establish monthly reports on budgetary execution. These include variance analysis with the initial planning for each country/region/action in order to allow a swift follow up. This close monitoring has contributed to high rates of budgetary execution, a reduction in payment delays and in commitments remaining to be settled. The implementation

rate of the commitment appropriations amounted to almost 100%, whilst the rate of implementation of payment appropriations was 92%, which is a significant achievement given the fact that part of the budget had to be used for emergency decisions at the end of the year and the extraordinary size of the budget for the Iraq crisis.

ECHO-funded activities implemented by external parties (partners and contractors) are, as part of the control activity, subject to financial audit. 2003 was the first full year of implementation of ECHO's external audit strategy with a big increase in the number of partners and projects audited and with good geographic coverage being achieved. ECHO's audit strategy is based on a 2-track approach: audits are performed both at the ECHO partners' headquarters for finalised projects and in the field for ongoing projects.

In respect of the Headquarter audits, ECHO uses an external firm of auditors to scrutinise ECHO projects over a two-year cycle involving an examination of partners' systems and the use of ECHO funds. In 2003, 96 headquarter audits were completed with another 44 ongoing. Audit recommendations were an important tool feeding information back for improvements to partners' reporting systems. Following the 2003 audits, an amount of € 2.3 million of funds were provisionally identified as being recoverable. In 2003, 16 field audits were carried out by ECHO officials on projects actually under way. Furthermore, 6 ECHO office audits were completed.

ECHO contributed to the promotion and implementation of modern human resources policies in line with Commission reform. ECHO's priorities as laid down in its Strategic Training Framework for 2003 were twofold: to establish the change process by putting in place the structures to guide the reform process and secondly to promote a result-based and performance culture in order to improve quality and delivery.

With regard to the reform process, training activities covered a wide range of issues including financial questions, particularly in the light of the introduction of the new Financial Regulation; decision-making procedures; a mid-term review seminar for all staff focussed on the discussions in the European Convention and the place of humanitarian aid in the political and institutional debate; and a presentation by DG ADMIN of the new career structure.

The second objective relating to the promotion of a result-based and performance culture was translated into a varied selection of training activities provided in-house, by ECHO partners and by specialised trainers. They ranged from introduction courses to humanitarian aid for newcomers, presentations by ECHO partners (UNHCR, Red Cross etc.) to specialised training on ECHO tools such as the introduction on 1 January 2004 of the new Framework Partnership Agreement.

ECHO adopted a new orientation to fit its evaluation function even more closely into its strategic planning and policy development cycle. As part of this reorientation, ECHO took part in a joint evaluation effort on IDP issues in collaboration with certain Member States (including, Ireland, Denmark, The Netherlands and Sweden) and other humanitarian actors i.e., USAID, OCHA, WFP. ECHO's policy towards disaster preparedness was the subject of an in-depth evaluation that provided models and tools for future use by ECHO and its partners. Evaluators recommended, in particular, the integration of disaster reduction into the LRRD process. ECHO started a review into standards and practices covering the security of humanitarian personnel as well as advocacy work designed to protect the "humanitarian space" in crisis zones. In 2004 the results of this evaluation will be used to provide specific documentation on humanitarian security issues for use by ECHO and its partners.

ECHO's evaluation activity in 2003 also continued to cover geographical operations and the performance of major implementing partners. ECHO carried out evaluations of its operations in Serbia, Sudan, Angola and Afghanistan. The evaluators found that the actions financed by ECHO were in line with its mandate. ECHO also undertook an evaluation of its co-operation with UNICEF, one of its key United Nations partners. An important general recommendation was that ECHO and UNICEF should deepen their cooperative relationship with regards to their common interest of helping young children affected by humanitarian crises.

5. OUTLOOK AND PERSPECTIVES

This report of the Humanitarian aid Office is published during a year of institutional transition at European level (accession of 10 new Member States, renewal of the Commission and of the European Parliament). This happens in a political context, at European and worldwide level, marked by large debate on issues linked to global governance and security which may have an impact for the Commission Humanitarian Aid Office and the global humanitarian community as a whole.

ECHO will remain faithful to its policy of strictly following the fundamental principles and values of humanitarian assistance, namely neutrality, impartiality and independence. It is convinced that strict adherence to these principles is more important than ever given today's trends, both in an institutional context where certain political forces tend to regard humanitarian aid as an instrument of foreign policy or crisis management, and in the increasingly dangerous reality of the field where humanitarian organisations themselves become targets of warring factions. Respect of these fundamental principles is a key requirement for the effective delivery of aid, for maintaining access to the populations in need, and for safeguarding the lives and security of humanitarian personnel as the experience of recent crises in Afghanistan, the Middle East and Iraq shows.

For ECHO, the best way to preserve the "humanitarian space" is to maintain a high level of engagement in the Good Donorship Principles, (i.e. to provide assistance on the basis of needs) to remain committed to high quality assistance and to maintain a transparent dialogue with other key players, both bilaterally and in multilateral humanitarian fora.

6. COUNTRY BY COUNTRY OVERVIEW OF ECHO'S HUMANITARIAN OPERATIONS

6.1. Horn of Africa and Eastern Africa⁸

Eritrea

Humanitarian needs:

On top of chronic problems of receding ground water levels, food supply and malnutrition Eritrea was affected by a major drought in 2003. The effect of this on food production and

⁸ The financial data in the table reflect the implementation of 2003 financial decisions (i.e. contracts/payments made on 2002 financial decisions are not covered). Source: EHOSTAT/SINCOM. The fact that amounts are not contracted before the end-2003 can be due to a combination of the following factors: decision taken at year end, delays due to a volatile security situation, an overall duration of decisions of more than 12 months (where some contracts are deliberately issued at a later stage) or partners asking for less funds than expected at the time of the decision

water availability resulted in pockets of acute humanitarian need with malnutrition, water borne disease and even population displacements.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

In response ECHO allocated 1.3 million € which provided clean water for over 215,000 people, and over 26,000 livestock. In addition, and as part of a wider nutritional surveillance project, nutritional assistance was provided for over 14,000 beneficiaries, mostly children. These beneficiaries were located in Anseba, Debub and north and south Red Sea zones.

LRRD:

LRRD is mainly needed at national level where analysis and response to issues of receding ground water levels, and food security and nutrition are monitored. No real progress was made in 2003, due to the difficult governance environment.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
1,300,000	1,300,000	708,500

Ethiopia

Humanitarian needs:

Against a background of chronic food supply problems and malnutrition, the predominant humanitarian need in 2003 was the impact of a major new drought. This led to acute needs, especially for the pastoralists who bore the brunt of the drought and for whom the massive food aid response was less suitable. As pastoralists rely on their livestock for their main sources of nutrition, through milk, humanitarian needs extended to ensuring a core of healthy livestock. When the rains finally came, a new threat arose as the drought weakened population was affected by a malaria epidemic.

In addition, ongoing ethnic conflicts exacerbated the suffering caused by drought, and were in turn exacerbated by the drought which reduced the available resources over which different groups were fighting.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

At the outset of the drought towards the end of 2002, ECHO allocated 4 million € which was implemented throughout 2003 to provide emergency water supplies to more than 81,000 people and more than 41,000 livestock, and emergency assistance to more than 1,000,000 livestock which benefits approximately 200,000 pastoralists. In addition, over 27,000 people received life-saving nutritional assistance, and 190,000 people received health assistance such as vaccinations against malnutrition related diseases. In summary, more than 500,000 drought victims in the Afar, Amhara, Somali and Oromiya regions of Ethiopia have been helped through ECHO programmes in 2003.

In response to the needs arising from ethnic conflicts, ECHO provided 2 Million € to ICRC towards the end of 2003. In addition to ensuring Geneva Convention protection assistance to 10,000 detainees, this also provided health assistance to over 6,500 displaced and conflict affected pastoralists, and will continue to assist more beneficiaries in 2004.

LRRD:

Ethiopia was considered as a priority case by the LRRD/DPP Inter-Service group. However, no LRRD has been implemented in the field. Close discussions with DG AIDCO concerning the follow-up to the emergency drought response of 2003 succeeded in including follow-on funding to ECHO interventions as criteria for project selection of DG AIDCO NGO co-financing.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
2,000,000	2,000,000	1,000,000

Somalia**Humanitarian needs:**

Somalia continued to suffer from the effects of 12 years of ongoing civil war, anarchy and warlordism. This was compounded by extreme weather conditions such as the drought on the Sool plateau at the end of 2003. This creates a general level of chronic severe need requiring a humanitarian response, together with a high vulnerability to acute humanitarian needs as coping mechanisms are eroded by further fighting, displacement, drought or flood. The main areas of humanitarian need continue to be for health services, water and sanitation and food security support.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

Despite continued problems of access largely due to insecurity, ECHO has been able to encourage and support a growing number of quality partners to address the extensive humanitarian needs of the vulnerable populations. Consequently funding almost doubled in 2003 to €9 million. Although focused on the populous central and southern area, this included a rapid response to a major drought crisis in the north east. Key sectors were health, water and sanitation and livestock (due to the high proportion of pastoralists).

This funding provided health and nutrition assistance to over 500,000 beneficiaries. This included 230,000 out-patients; 200,000 vaccinations; 18,000 in-patients; 6,000 therapeutic and supplementary feeding cases; and 1,300 cholera cases.

In addition, 70,000 beneficiaries were provided with clean water and improved sanitation facilities, while 500,000 beneficiaries received emergency food security support. This includes more than 650,000 head of livestock vaccinated and/or treated for parasites, and the doubling of the harvests for 8,000 people in riverine communities.

LRRD:

Close coordination continued in 2003, including the sharing of all ECHO proposals with the EC Somalia Unit. At programme level this cooperation has resulted in commitments to LRRD both in ECHO Decisions and the DG DEV 5th Rehabilitation Plan. Results at project level are now awaited during 2004.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
9,000,000	8,998,147	4,245,000

Sudan

Humanitarian needs:

Intense diplomatic efforts have been carried out by the international community in support of the peace process. Although significant agreements have been reached in 2003, there are still a number of outstanding issues on the negotiating table before a comprehensive peace agreement can be achieved.

Whilst the peace process justifies a certain degree of optimism, a parallel conflict in the Greater Darfur Region started in February 2003 and developed into a fully fledged complex emergency directly affecting the lives of approximately 1,000,000 people. Accordingly, the €20 million initially programmed for 2003 was increased with an additional €2 million emergency decision in order to assist the population of the Greater Darfur Region.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

ECHO support strategy aimed at stabilising the condition of people and communities with severely strained coping mechanisms and, whenever possible, contributing to a gradual process of recovery through the enhancement of self-reliance. The main sectors supported were health and nutrition, water and environmental sanitation, emergency preparedness and response, household food security and operational support and special mandates. ECHO continued covering the whole territory with a neutral approach and according to needs in strict respect of internationally recognised humanitarian principles. ECHO funded operations have benefited an estimated 4, 700,000 people.

LRRD:

ECHO continued its commitment to humanitarian access advocacy and its efforts to liaise with other Commission services and donors in order to perform adequate complementary interventions. Despite suspension of formal cooperation with Sudan in the framework of the Cotonou Agreement since 1990, a number of other European Commission financial instruments are active. Therefore, certain degree of complementarity has been achieved in a number of sectors such as food security and water and sanitation. Sudan was considered a priority case for LRRD by the LRRD/DPP Inter-Service group in the context of potential resumption of cooperation conditional to the signature of a comprehensive peace agreement. Furthermore, a Sudan Task Force including all RELEX services was created in 2003.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
22,000,000	21,390,100	14,521,760

Uganda

Humanitarian needs:

The humanitarian situation in Northern Uganda, notably in Acholiland (Gulu, Kitgum, and Pader districts), which is already difficult due to a 17 year conflict, became even worse in 2003 with other regions, the Teso and Lango regions (Lira, Apac, Kaberamaido, Katakwi and Soroti districts) falling foul of LRA attacks. ECHO's support ongoing since 2002 to the hospitals and health sector is crucial without which district hospitals would be facing near collapse. The main reason for the humanitarian crisis is the high level of insecurity, which has brought economic activities in the affected areas to a near stand-still, and forced (end 2003 figures) an estimated 1,217,000 people to leave their homes and to live in camps protected by the Ugandan army (an estimated nearly 330,000 more IDPs than 2002, mainly due to the additional displacements in Teso and Lango regions from July-December 2003).

In 2003, detailed statistics on the current health situation were not always available. ECHO took the initiative to encourage more partners to provide statistics on the nutritional situation of the populations where access permitted. Qualitative information did however suggest a sharp deterioration of the health situation over the past year due to further displacement and dwindling resources of the vulnerable groups concerned.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

In view of the rapidly deteriorating humanitarian crisis which led to a direct appeal from the European Parliament for ECHO to step up its humanitarian assistance to Uganda in 2003, ECHO did so, quadrupling its assistance (to € 8 million, including 2 million from the B envelope) to the traditional and newly affected areas. ECHO allocated approximately 50% per district on the health sector (support to the districts' referral hospitals) and the rest was shared between non-food items, water and sanitation, food security and protection initiatives (mine awareness and child soldier rehabilitation),

Notwithstanding the high volatility of the context in which partners are operating, ECHO's programme in Uganda is reaching the affected populations in accordance with the figures mentioned in partners' targets. In 2003, ECHO covered approximately by sector the following number of beneficiaries: Health (883,000), Water and Sanitation (1,100,000), NFIs (730,000), Food Security (425,000). Former Child Soldier Rehabilitation ran over into 2003 from 2002 and covering approximately 1,400 beneficiaries. As the contracting period only began in 2003, with a large proportion of the contracts running into 2004, full assessment of ECHO's newly increased programme in Uganda in 2003 can only be undertaken in 2004.

LRRD:

ECHO did not make concrete plans to implement LRRD in Uganda, mainly because of the fact that the humanitarian needs have increased dramatically in 2003. Some sectors, such as the health sector could however qualify given the chronic nature of the humanitarian needs of the population. Given that ECHO only considerably stepped up funding in 2003, it has been agreed in the CSP (signed in 200) to examine where complimentary action ECHO/DEV/AIDCO might occur. This should be laid down in the MTR 2004.

ECHO invested in coordination (through UNOCHA) with the aim of obtaining greater awareness of donor activity through information sharing. Furthermore, ECHO was in regular

contact with the EC Delegation in Kampala, and a member of the Delegation has joined all ECHO field missions in the past year, including the Head of Delegation. Both parties are well aware of each side's approach, which was developed and adjusted complementarily.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
8,000,000	7,615,000	4,716,500

6.2. Southern Africa

A new United Nations regional humanitarian appeal was launched during 2003, reflecting the severity of food shortages in several countries of Southern Africa. However, it has become increasingly clear that the region is particularly affected by the economic meltdown and political unrest in Zimbabwe. Furthermore, the scope of the HIV/AIDS pandemic causes very difficult humanitarian challenges and is undermining long-term development efforts. Lessons learned in 2003 indicate that ECHO operations are less and less in response to short-term seasonal food shortages, but increasingly to the humanitarian consequences of persistent and deep poverty, the HIV/AIDS pandemic and general food insecurity. The food insecurity, as it persists in Lesotho, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe has increasingly been less about food availability, but increasingly about the inability of poor people to afford the food that is available.

Angola

Humanitarian needs:

Since the ceasefire in April 2002, more than 3,800,000 war-affected people have resettled or returned to their areas of origin, up to 70% of them without any form of assistance from the local authorities or humanitarian organisations, and to areas where the minimum conditions for resettlement are not in place. The early part of 2003 saw a general stabilisation of the humanitarian, particularly nutritional, situation in all of the areas where humanitarian agencies had uninterrupted access. This led to an assessment in July 2003 that the acute phase of the emergency had come to an end, though pockets of critical needs are still suspected among approximately 100,000 people trapped in areas where access has been hampered by mine infestation, broken bridges and poor road conditions.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

The objective for Angola in early 2003 was to support the peace process by stabilising the humanitarian situation in order to allow an orderly demobilisation and return process to take place. The stabilisation of the humanitarian situation achieved by mid-year allowed ECHO to modify its objectives, and allocate further funding in order to take account of the changing situation, and to contribute to the establishment of minimum conditions for the resettlement of war-affected populations.

In 2003, the Commission adopted four humanitarian aid decisions making available total funding of € 22 million ; the Global Plan itself (February, € 8 million,) ; an ad hoc multi-country decision to also allow for funding of repatriation operations from the neighbouring host countries (May, € 5 million,) ; Angola's allocation from the € 25 million Southern Africa decision (August, € 8.1 million, 100% contracted) ; and an ad hoc decision also targeting minimum conditions for resettlement (December, € 900.000,). In line with the flexible

strategy developed by ECHO and its partners over 2003, the funds from the four decisions focused on primary health and nutrition (27%), repatriation logistics (22%), emergency survival and agricultural inputs (20%), access (logistics and humanitarian demining) (5%), HIV/AIDS awareness activities (4%) and protection (3%). ECHO has sought to finance partners in the most isolated areas of the country to provide as far as possible a range of minimum services in any given area.

In all, a total of almost 2.500.000 beneficiaries, mainly women and children, were reached by interventions funded by ECHO. The efforts of the humanitarian community as a whole, though, continued to be hampered by extremely poor air, road and bridge infrastructure, and land-mine infestation, with mine explosions still causing many deaths and injuries.

LRRD:

At the same time, particular attention continued to be paid to the LRRD process, in order to prepare a smooth as possible transition from emergency to longer-term development funding in this post-conflict situation. Considerable progress has been made in this area in 2003.

On the Commission side, the Country Strategy Paper for the 9th EDF, where LRRD is a focal cross-cutting issue, was signed by the Commission and the Government in January 2003, and Angola was selected as one of the pilot countries to be discussed in the inter-service LRRD working group. Inter-service meetings in Brussels have been mirrored in Luanda, where the LRRD Task Force meets regularly and has achieved a very good level of cooperation and information-sharing, as well as the hand-over during the year of several ECHO interventions to EDF transitional funding. Furthermore, a € 71 million in 9th EDF funds was committed in November 2003 to programmes to bolster humanitarian interventions and provide more durable solutions (€ 26 million for humanitarian access - demining and small road and bridge repair(B-envelope), and € 45 million contribution to WB/Social Support fund for capacity building and rehabilitation of small health, water/sanitation and education infrastructure). On the political level, Angola has been placed on the list of priority countries for election observation. Finally, at the end of 2003, a joint inter-service LRRD mission to Angola was being planned for early 2004.

Zimbabwe

Humanitarian needs:

The humanitarian situation is essentially caused by inadequate policies and conduct of the Government of Zimbabwe. Drought and a collapse of the agricultural sector have caused failed harvests during three successive years since 2001. In the Southern African food security context, Zimbabwe's food shortages are dominant. The combination of a political crisis, a grim macro-economic picture, spiralling inflation, a massive food deficit, 34% HIV-prevalence rate and disturbing signs of internal displacement make for a complex crisis that has become a protracted crisis.

An absence of a credible response strategy from the Government and lack of transparency concerning humanitarian needs and responses aggravate the overall situation.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

ECHO strategy focused on the reduction of malnutrition levels, the improvement of food security for rural communities and communal farmers, the improvement of water, sanitation and health conditions in rural communities and the reduction of HIV/AIDS related mortality.. ECHO's interventions in 2003 have directly benefited over 700,000 children through supplementary feeding, therapeutic feeding, school feeding and direct support to orphans and children-headed households. Close to 1,500,000 persons have been aided with agricultural inputs. In addition to a € 13 million funding decision € 12 million from the Southern Africa regional decision were allocated to Zimbabwe, to address the growing humanitarian and food crisis in the country.

LRRD:

The support to the communal agricultural sector has been important to resume normal development of this sector, so vital to so many rural households. The interventions in the water and sanitation sectors have been similarly important to enable rural communities to pursue social and economic development. However, lessons learned in 2003 indicate that it is increasingly important that emergency agricultural interventions, water and sanitation interventions and therapeutic feeding be re-integrated into agricultural, rural and health development plans and are linked to the institutional arrangements for these sectors.

Malawi

Humanitarian needs:

The humanitarian needs in Malawi in 2003 were in the sectors of food security and health/malnutrition. Although the Global Acute Malnutrition rate was contained, and it stabilised at below 5%, there was still high chronic malnutrition for Under-5s of 50-65% and HIV/AIDS prevalence of 20-25%.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

ECHO's main objective was to continue the support it had provided since 2002 in the sectors of health, food security and nutrition. This was achieved via the projects begun in 2002 under the Malawi country decision (€ 1.5 million) and also by projects funded under Southern Africa Regional Decisions (€ 30 million and € 25 million). An amount of 3.9 million euro was allocated to Malawi under these regional decisions. During the first half of 2003 ECHO supported cholera preparedness and water/sanitation interventions in all regions of Malawi, via MSF-France, Oxfam-UK and UNICEF. Improved hygiene and water provision resulted from this, and cholera incidence was low in 2003. In the field of nutrition and food security, ECHO continued to fund AAH-UK to support the national network of Nutrition Rehabilitation Units (NRUs), to establish a national Nutrition Monitoring System and to reinforce the Food Security Surveillance System. Achievements include capacity-building for 45 NRUs (Malawi has 92 in total) in the provision of treatment for severe acute malnutrition, and assistance with the creation of National Guidelines for the management of severe and moderate malnutrition. In the second half of 2003 ECHO supported agricultural rehabilitation for vulnerable households, practical research into the nutritional needs of HIV-infected children, and "Community Therapeutic Care" (CTC) using locally produced "Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Food" (the latter project under Concern-Worldwide). A major achievement of CTC has been the provision of treatment for malnourished children whose families are unable

to use NRUs, because of distance or because of the requirement for a parent to stay during treatment.

LRRD:

LRRD was planned during 2003 through discussion with the DG DEV and DG AIDCO about the inclusion of a Nutritional Support component in Malawi's next Multi-Annual Food Security Programme (2004-6). LRRD was also discussed with the Ministry of Health and Population, with which ECHO has had close co-operation, working towards the management of severe malnutrition in Malawi on a sustainable basis. It is also hoped that some of the current research on HIV/AIDS and nutrition will be funded by the Poverty-Diseases Budget Line.

Namibia

Within the overall objective for Southern Africa to meet emergency needs, a programme was financed to avert hunger and recover food security (including relief seeds) for targeted communities in the Caprivi Strip subsequent to flooding (€200,032) was financed. This programme followed up on an emergency decision (June, € 100,000) providing essential relief items and essential medicines to alleviate the impact of flooding on 12,000 vulnerable families in the region.

Zambia

Humanitarian needs:

After extensive food shortages due to drought in 2002, which required the international community to provide food aid on a large scale, Zambia saw a good harvest in the 2003. As a result of this food shortages are no longer a nation-wide problem in the country. Some deficit areas have remained, namely in the south. Vulnerable populations in areas still suffering from food shortage will receive food aid until the next harvest.

The 2002 peace accord ending the civil war in Angola has paved the way for the start, in June 2003, of the UNHCR-organised assisted repatriation of some 18,000 Angolan refugees hosted in Zambia. In addition, many thousands more refugees repatriated spontaneously, some with a minimum of assistance and others with no assistance at all. Logistical challenges, and in particular the fact that minimum conditions for return do yet exist in many of the resettlement areas delays the repatriation process.

Remaining localized food shortages and a still sizable refugee population are dwarfed by the crisis caused by the omni present HIV/AIDS pandemic. With Botswana and Zimbabwe, Zambia is among the countries with the highest infection rates in the world.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

Thanks to a good harvest the drought of 2002 loosened its grip on the country, allowing for most of the food distribution to be discontinued. However, in some areas, in particular in the South, food shortage and the effects of the drought persisted, prompting ECHO to continue to provide multisectoral support (€1.6 million) which helped to provide food aid to 17,000 beneficiaries in Zambia's Southern Province, many of them HIV/AIDS affected, and to assist them in rebuilding their agricultural subsistence.

With the peace agreement in Angola being implemented ECHO's main focus was assistance to returning Angolan refugees, as well as the provision of care and maintenance to those who

have not yet been able to repatriate. Support to the repatriation operation at a total of €2.2 million was channelled through UNHCR, IOM and MSF. The funds were crucial to prepare the repatriation of 40,000 Angolan refugees and to enable actual repatriation of some 18,000 of them.

LRRD:

The lack of a defined agricultural policy, so far, has made it difficult for longer-term donors to develop a coherent policy addressing the development deficits of the rural population. This risks having a negative impact on the continuation of the agricultural recovery initiatives promoted by ECHO. As for the refugee caseloads in Zambia, in particular for those from Angola, ECHO has continued to liaise with the Delegation on how other Commission instruments can be used to support refugee related initiatives.

Decisions (Angola)	Contracts	Payments
8,900,000	19,056,749	11,937,300

Decisions (Angola/Zambia)	Contracts	Payments
5,000,000	4,996,504	3,221,544

Decisions (Namibia)	Contracts	Payments
100,000	95,000	76,000

Decisions (Zimbabwe)	Contracts	Payments
13,000,000	12,542,402	8,923,122

Decisions (Regional)	Contracts	Payments
25,000,000	24,491,456	16,696,712

6.3. Central Africa/Great Lakes

Burundi

Humanitarian needs:

The formation of a new transitional government on 24 November 2003, including three ministerial positions for former rebel Forces for the Defence of Democracy (CNDD-FDD) and seeing their leader, Pierre Nkurunziza, appointed as Minister for Good Governance, marked a major step forward in a long running effort to end Burundi's ten year civil war.

However, periodic outbursts of violence initiated mainly by the FNL rebel faction continued to destabilise the country. Despite the political progress made, the general situation in the country did not improve and displacements of population as well as the destruction of social and economic infrastructures continued to be the direct consequences of this conflict on the civilian population.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

In 2003, ECHO’s objective in Burundi was to address the basic humanitarian needs of the population at risk (displaced people, destitute people, orphans, women in charge of families, returnees). This objective was successfully achieved through co-operation with 20 partners. ECHO response to emergency needs mainly targeted primary health care sectors, nutrition and food security, safe water and sanitation as well as rehabilitation. This was done by supplying essential drugs and medical services in areas where access to care was extremely weak or non-existent. Nutritional rehabilitation programmes in times of food crisis and in affected areas were also funded. Finally, operations supplied safe water and basic sanitation facilities to displaced people all over the country. ECHO also responded to sudden crises such as temporary displacements in volatile areas (especially Bujumbura Rurale) and gave immediate reaction to epidemics. An estimated 2 million people have benefited from ECHO funded operations.

LRRD:

Burundi was identified as a pilot case by the LRRD/DPP Inter-Service group in 2003. However, in the field the LRRD approach could not properly be pursued due to staff shortages in Commission’s Delegation (only HoD present, no support staff).

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
15,000,000	15,232,281	10,753,825

Central African Republic

Humanitarian needs:

The northern and north-western parts of the country (home to around one million people) were badly affected by political crisis and conflict. Social and administrative services had collapsed, essential infrastructure was destroyed or looted, and healthcare and other key personnel had fled. Armed groups continued to prey on the civilian population, which was obliged to go into hiding to survive. Protection and access to basic healthcare were the overriding humanitarian priorities.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

The overall objective for Central African Republic in 2003 was to assist vulnerable people directly affected by the recent armed conflict. Funding was provided for basic healthcare to the population from the 5 “red zone” Prefectures of Ouham, Ouham Pendé, Nana Grébizi, Kemo and Ombella M'poko, comprising an estimated 1 million people.

In 2003 the Commission adopted one humanitarian aid financing decision for CAR, for a total of € 1,000,000, using the B-envelope of the 9th EDF. In terms of results, this intervention

succeeded in increasing healthcare utilisation rates from around 0.1 new contact per person per year to between 0.6 and 1.2 in the targeted areas.

LRRD:

The ECHO programme was designed in close collaboration with the EC delegation and preliminary discussions were held with bilateral development donors with a view to preparing the ground for continued assistance after the crisis.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
1,000,000	1,000,000	500,000

Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

Humanitarian needs:

The DRC crisis is a chronic, complex emergency arising from cumulative mismanagement and abuse compounded by seven years of conflict. An estimated 4 million people are now displaced. The deterioration of social (particularly health) services has led to the re-emergence of diseases in endemic/epidemic form and unprecedented mortality rates from common diseases, while the systematic practice of rape and sexual slavery in the conflict areas has seen a rapid - although as yet only anecdotally documented - advance of HIV/AIDS. Reduced access to food in conflict-affected areas has created widespread food insecurity and pockets of acute malnutrition. DRC is thought to have the highest mortality rate in the world (OCHA: Goma CAP workshop, July 2003), with average infant mortality rates for the whole of Eastern Congo (i.e. including stable areas) at 3/10,000/day, i.e. 50% above the emergency threshold (IRC, April 2003).

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

Overall objective for DRC in 2003 was to contain mortality and morbidity rates among the targeted population groups within emergency thresholds. In line with the strategy developed by ECHO and its partners since 2000, specific objectives concerned activities in the fields of (1) surveillance and emergency response (9% of total funding); (2) healthcare (40%); (3) food and nutrition (33%) (4) resettlement (11%); (5) protection and coordination (6%) (6) technical assistance (ECHO field offices, 1%). The main geographical focus of these operations was (1) red zones (emergency/conflict areas - approximately 64% of funds); (2) blue zones (newly accessible former frontline areas - 23%).

In 2003 the Commission adopted three humanitarian aid financing decisions for DRC, for a total of € 44 million: (i) the Global Plan itself (January, € 35 million); (ii) an ad hoc decision using the B-envelope of the 9th EDF (August, € 4 million); (iii) and a further decision in October to launch resettlement activities specifically in Ituri (€ 5 million). The second decision (9th EDF B envelope) was used to boost the funds allocated to the Global Plan's third objective (food and nutrition), to enable ECHO to make a significant contribution to new WFP EMOP. The programmes funded under the third decision, for Ituri, will be implemented mainly in 2004.

In terms of results, the preliminary indications (prior to the submission of final reports) are that ECHO and its partners were largely successful in achieving their main targets. Thus, in healthcare, ECHO provided assistance to 4.49 million direct beneficiaries (against a target of 4.5). In the food and nutrition sector, ECHO provided assistance to some 22,600 severely malnourished children in therapeutic feeding centres (target: 22,600), 204,034 moderately malnourished children (target: 110,800), and 223,643 beneficiaries of emergency food rations, seeds and tools (target: 115,000).

LRRD:

No phase out in 2003, but continuing emphasis on co-ordination and LRRD as new donors come in.

ECHO collaborated closely with DG DEV and AIDCO in the finalisation of the 9th EDF Country Strategy Paper (EUR 205 million). This programme was signed in Kinshasa in September 2003, during a joint ECHO-DEV-AIDCO-Delegation mission that also visited Bunia, Goma and Bukavu. The purpose of these consultations, which continue on a regular basis in the field and at headquarter level, is to ensure a clear division of labour and complementarity as regards zones and sectors of intervention, and to prepare for the handover of ECHO's more mature programmes.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
44,000,000 ⁹	40,640,823	24,700,275

Congo Brazaville

Humanitarian needs:

In the Cuvette region, the first half of the year saw an outbreak of Ebola haemorrhagic fever in a remote area home to around 10,000 people. Furthermore, in the Pool region, large numbers of people were forced by the conflict between government forces and Pasteur Ntumi's "Ninjas" to flee from their homes. Some went into hiding in the forests or regrouped in villages outside the immediate danger zone, but most sought refuge in the capital, Brazzaville. Assistance to these people focused on core humanitarian activities, i.e. shelter, water and sanitation, food, healthcare and protection. Following the conclusion of a peace agreement in March, when agencies gradually regained access to the population that had remained inside the conflict zone, it became apparent that the total lack of basic healthcare was an urgent humanitarian priority. Meanwhile, the displaced slowly began to return, creating further needs with regard to the rehabilitation of homes and social infrastructure and the relaunch of agricultural production.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

The Commission approved two funding decisions for a total of € 4 million. The objectives were to contain the Eblola epidemic in the Cuvette region (€ 0.4 million) and to save and preserve the lives of those directly affected by the conflict in the Pool region (€ 3.6 million).

⁹ Of which 5,000,000 (Ituri decision of October 2003) will primarily be implemented in 2004

The Ebola outbreak was rapidly contained by ECHO's partner, WHO. The interval between the deployment of the international team and the end of the outbreak was only 6 weeks, compared to 12 weeks reported during the previous outbreaks in Gabon and Congo in 1996, 2001 and 2002. Between 25 December 2002 and 22 April 2003, a total of 143 cases of Hemorrhagic Fever, 13 (9%) of which were laboratory confirmed, were reported in the Congo with a case-fatality rate of 89%.

As regards the victims of the Pool conflict, 10,000 displaced families (approximately 50,000 people) living in sites in Brazzaville, la Bouenza and Lekoumou, were assisted by ECHO partners working in the fields of health, water and sanitation, shelter, and food security. Inputs for relaunching agricultural production were also provided to a further 6,500 families (32,500 people) returning to their homes. This operation - together with emergency rehabilitation work in the former conflict zone -continued into in the first half of 2004. .

LRRD:

ECHO’s intervention was put together in close collaboration with the EC delegation in Brazzaville, with a view to handing the ECHO operation in the Pool region over to the national health programme funded under the 9th EDF in the course of 2004.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
4,000,000	3,748,084	1,697,042

Tanzania

Humanitarian needs:

Tanzania continues to host the largest refugee population on the African continent. The refugees are almost entirely dependent on humanitarian aid for survival. At the beginning of 2003 there were 515,000 refugees from Burundi, DRC and Rwanda living in 13 camps in Western Tanzania under UNHCR protection. This refugee population decreased by 40,000 during 2003, partly due to repatriation of some Burundians and most Rwandans, and partly due to a tougher government response to asylum-seekers, including some cases of “refoulement”. Despite continued attempts to enforce peace agreements, most refugees were unable to return home. However, Tanzanian law precludes self-reliance and integration, so humanitarian needs include food, water, shelter, protection and health care.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

ECHO’s main objective was to continue the support it had provided for several years to this refugee “Care and maintenance” operation. It had become a protracted crisis, and ECHO’s objectives included active monitoring of the humanitarian situation, which no longer ranked as a top priority for many donors. The objectives of ECHO’s Tanzania Global Plan 2003 were met, continuing ECHO’s support for this operation. An amount of 24 million euro was allocated to the refugee programme for 2003, via IFRC, UNHCR, UNICEF and WFP. Allocations to all partners were fully committed. Programmes were supported in the sectors of food aid, logistics, water, sanitation, health, nutrition, shelter and protection. Over 500,000 refugees benefited from this intervention, and ECHO was UNHCR’s single largest donor to the Tanzania refugee programme in 2003. The objective of ongoing monitoring was also

achieved. Close attention was paid to the repatriation of Burundian refugees, in order to uphold the humanitarian principles of safety, dignity and freewill during the exercise. The focus of health support was to prevent (or reduce) the main causes of child mortality: malaria, pneumonia and neonatal problems. Special assistance was given to the victims of domestic and sexual violence, thus upholding the protection of vulnerable groups. The refugee operation in Tanzania is an ongoing humanitarian aid programme with continued ECHO support.

LRRD:

This was partially addressed in 2003 by EDF expenditure in three areas: the Special Programme for Refugee-Affected Areas (SPRAA, 2 million euro, 2001-7), Article 73 Cotonou support for the longer-term camp sectors of education, environment, health and water/sanitation (2 million euro, 2002-4) and the transfer of food aid to the EC Food Security Budget Line, administered by DG AIDCO, during the last quarter of 2003. However, the withdrawal of ECHO from the refugee programme is unlikely, unless large-scale repatriation occurs.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
24,000,000	23,800,000	18,470,000

6.4. West Africa

Burkina Faso/Niger

Humanitarian needs:

Burkina Faso and Niger are located right in the Sahelian ‘Meningitis Belt’. The two countries have experienced recurrent outbreaks in 2001-2003. Normally, the Meningitis epidemic season starts in the months of January and February. The largest outbreaks are reported in March and April. The epidemic season ends between May and June.

In 2002 a new strain of Meningitis (W135) was identified. Yet, the vaccine used in these countries was not effective against this new W135 strain. Consequently, the mortality rate reported during the initial stages of the outbreak in 2003 was very high: 480 deaths out of 3,107 reported cases (i.e. 15%). Local authorities and international partners agreed to put in place an operation aimed at providing epidemiological surveillance, laboratory tests, deployment of resources and vaccines as well as social mobilisation and education.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

The objective of the interventions funded by ECHO was to reduce the mortality, morbidity and transmission of this infectious disease by supporting the health districts affected by the 2003 epidemic.

Trivalent vaccines (A/C/W135) were procured and distributed in the identified health districts, enabling the partners and the local authorities to start a vaccination programme. This programme helped to control the transmission of the disease and the morbidity rate. At the same time, a curative programme was initiated to treat confirmed cases. The early identification and treatment of cases resulted in a reduction of the mortality rate in the

affected districts. Finally, the epidemiological surveillance helped identify the extension of the epidemic and its eventual control.

The total number of beneficiaries of the 2003 emergency intervention in response to the outbreak of meningitis was 1.3 million in Burkina Faso and 600,000 in Niger.

LRRD:

No specific LRRD measures undertaken due to the nature and scope of the response.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
945,000	945,000	727,406

Chad

Humanitarian needs:

In April 2003, fights broke out between the Government of Sudan and the rebel Sudanese Liberation Movement (SLM) in the western Sudanese Region of Darfur. This situation was compounded by the activities of Government-backed Arab militia, known as *Janjaweed*, for whom raiding is a way of life.

As a result of insecurity in Darfur, an estimated 65,000 refugees crossed the border into neighbouring Chad. These refugees settled closed to the border, making them still vulnerable to the attacks conducted by the horse-raiding Arab militia.

Some of the refugees managed to flee with some belongings and cattle. Others arrived with barely anything. The reaction of the local community to this refugee crisis has been very positive. Resident communities hosted the refugees in their villages, they shared their scarce resources and provided some labour. It is essential to provide assistance to the refugees and the host communities before their resources are depleted.

The Chadian regions of Ouaddaï and Biltine, where this new refugee caseload has arrived, are very arid and remote. Weather conditions are extreme, with a very hot dry season and a long rainy season. Basic infrastructure is in poor condition, to the extent that a large part of the region remains isolated for several months after the onset of the rainy season.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

The main humanitarian objective was to provide an integrated emergency assistance to the Sudanese refugee population in Eastern Chad. The priority sectors identified to improve the living condition of the refugee households were primary health care services, water and sanitation, shelter material and protection activities.

The implementation of the relief operation has experienced significant delays. This has been mainly due to the lack of water to establish refugee camps and major logistical constraints hampering the transportation of goods and the relocation of refugees. ECHO funding has contributed to assisting an estimated 50,000 people living scattered along the border and 7,000 refugees relocated in refugee camps.

LRRD

Due to delay in the implementation of the response, LRRD was not relevant in 2003.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
2,000,000	2,000,000	1,150,000

Côte d'Ivoire

Humanitarian needs:

The conclusion of the Linas-Marcoussis peace agreement in January 2003 as well as the formal declaration on the end of war and the establishment of a security zone along the frontline in May 2003 helped to stabilise the country. However, the humanitarian situation remained very fragile. The absence of a functioning government authority in the North and the in the West hampered any efforts to restore basic social services and left large parts of the population without access to health care services. Most of the civil personnel fleeing the fighting did not return for fear of continued violence and insecurity. Furthermore, the division of the country, violence, displacement and problems of access to land contributed to an increase in levels of malnutrition. Insecurity prevailed in the western regions which were most affected by the crisis in Liberia. Refugees and third country nationals were particularly vulnerable to harassment and intimidation motivated by persistent ethnic tensions.

The number of displaced persons is difficult to estimate as many of them live with relatives or resident communities. In October 2003, OCHA estimated the number of displaced persons at 550,000 (including third country nationals) and the number of refugees at 70,000 (most of them Liberian nationals living in the western part of Côte d'Ivoire along the border with Liberia).

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

In line with the interventions starting at the end of 2002, ECHO's objective in 2003 was to continue to provide humanitarian assistance to vulnerable populations in northern and western Côte d'Ivoire, the areas most affected by the conflict. A decision worth € 5.74 million (from the B-envelope) was adopted to this end. ECHO assistance at the beginning of the year primarily covered the North, spreading activities to the West as of May 2003 when this area became accessible for humanitarian aid operations.

In 2003, 56% of the ECHO funds available for Côte d'Ivoire were used to support primary and secondary health facilities. As approximately two thirds of the health personnel fled the conflict areas and were not redeployed, vulnerable populations depended on medical care provided by humanitarian organisations. ECHO further supported food and nutrition projects (22%), mainly targeting children <5. ECHO interventions also targeted shelter and protection activities (17%) in response to the prevailing insecurity in western Côte d'Ivoire as well as rehabilitation of water and sanitation facilities (5%). A total of approximately 1.7 million beneficiaries were reached with ECHO-funded interventions in 2003.

LRRD:

ECHO assistance in Côte d'Ivoire only started at the end of 2002 following the outbreak of the armed conflict. Therefore, due to the emergency context and volatility of the situation, no specific LRRD type of activities was foreseen in 2003. However, in 2003 ECHO financed a pilot project through UNICEF for the revitalisation of health centres in three districts in the northern part of the country (€750,000). The continuation of this project, expanding activities to all areas in the North, is being ensured by the 1st post-crisis programme (9th EDF B-envelop), managed by the EC Delegation in Abidjan.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
5,740,000	5,740,000	2,964,900

Mali

Humanitarian needs:

An epidemic of Cholera was declared along the river Niger, between Koulikoro and Mopti, in August 2003. This outbreak reached its peak on the third week of October, with 218 new cases reported and 20 deaths in just one week. The most affected population were the traditional fishing Bozos communities that live along the banks of the river Niger.

It is estimated that between 25% and 50% of cholera patients die if they do not receive treatment. Instead, if appropriate treatment is provided, this rate can be reduced to 2% or lower.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

The objective of the intervention was to limit the mortality and morbidity rates due to the cholera epidemic. In order to achieve this objective, several cholera unit centres were set up in the most badly hit villages. In these centres, an estimated 4,000 patients benefited from rehydration and treatment. The community was also mobilised to conduct sensitisation campaigns on issues related to hygiene education and sanitation, sources of drinking water were chlorinated and garbage disposal systems were improved. Overall, around 500,000 people have benefited from the sensitisation campaigns as well as the treatment of sources of drinking water.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
500,000	484,5400	284,570

Coastal West Africa: (Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea)

Liberia

Humanitarian needs:

The humanitarian situation in Liberia remains critical. It is estimated that more than 200.000 people remain displaced in and mainly around the capital. In the countryside the scope of the humanitarian crises is vast, years of fighting have totally devastated some regions. Proper

assessments have not yet been carried out and the real scope of the crisis has not yet been fully identified.

Large parts of the population have no access to basic services such as health care, clean water, sanitation and education. Governmental structures are almost non-existent. Lack of food is a major concern. Acute malnutrition and mortality rates are significant both amongst IDP's and the local population. According to UNHCR about 300,000 Liberians have sought asylum in surrounding countries.

In 1998, ECHO reduced its contribution to Liberia but the rapid deterioration of the humanitarian situation since the end of 2002 justifies ECHO's present full engagement in the Liberian crisis.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

Very few projects were initiated during the first quarter of 2003 due to the volatility of the situation. At the beginning of June, the latent civil war situation and the fighting in Monrovia were at the origin of a large scale humanitarian crisis. Emergency interventions up to € 3.5 million were supported initially with contributions from the Global Plan for Coastal West Africa. Following the deployment of peacekeepers and the signing of a peace agreement by mid-summer an emergency decision of € 4 million was adopted at the beginning of September to respond to the most basic needs. Following the improvements in access and overall security, the amount of the emergency decision was increased to a total of € 8 million in November 2003. In total € 4,425,000 were committed from the Global Plan 2003 on top of the € 8 million made available through an emergency decision. Although some of ECHO's partners were operating in an uncontrolled civil war environment, none of them suffered from serious security incidents. ECHO partner's assistance was not interrupted even during the worst fighting in Monrovia. Throughout the crisis projects were implemented in displaced camps located in rural areas. The estimated 200, 000 displaced persons were specially targeted by the assistance which consisted mainly of health, water & sanitation, nutrition and protection. An ECHO Office was opened in Monrovia and a TA was permanently based in Liberia from October 2003.

LRRD:

The humanitarian situation in Liberia in 2003 still required emergency humanitarian interventions. The LRRD process will be initiated in a later stage, probably during the year 2005.

Sierra Leone

Humanitarian needs:

Despite the consolidation of peace and a major improvement of the security situation throughout the country, Sierra Leone continues to rank at the bottom end of UNDP's Human Development Index. Major humanitarian needs were identified in and around the eight refugee camps where 100,000 Liberian sought refuge. Humanitarian assistance was also delivered in areas of resettlement, which saw the arrival of more than 220,000 people returning from the camps in Guinea and Liberia.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

ECHO's main objective in 2003 was to continue the support that it had provided in previous years in four key sectors: health and nutrition, water and sanitation, basic shelter and protection. Support to the health sector was conducted at both primary and referral level. In addition to efforts to prevent infant mortality and mother and child care, special attention was made to establish preventive medicine (vaccination campaign, good practices for infant feeding, home visitors and community sensitisation). Water and sanitation activities complemented efforts made in the health and nutrition sectors. Morbidity reports indicate that the major health nutritional problems reported by the health clinics are water-borne diseases (diarrhoea, malaria, eye infection, skin infection...). Water and sanitation interventions included a strong hygiene education component in order to sensitise the population about basic hygiene practices. Shelter and non-food items were distributed to accommodate refugees in camps and to enable returnees to settle in their villages of origin. Special attention was paid to the protection and security of vulnerable populations. This assistance targeted those Districts identified as vulnerable, due to the presence of refugee population or returnees. Targeted Districts were Kono, Kailahun, Kenema, Bombali and Koinadugu.

In 2003, ECHO contributed € 9 million for humanitarian aid operations mainly targeting Liberian refugees, Sierra Leonean returnees and hosting communities. This contribution helped to improve the living conditions of around 1 million people, including 100,000 Liberian refugees and more than 200,000 returnees.

LRRD:

After more than two years of LRRD in Sierra Leone, the LRRD process has reached its final stage and it is about to be completed. The EC has implemented the final phase out strategy of relief assistance and hand over exercise to rehabilitation programmes during 2003. ECHO will stop funding humanitarian programmes in Sierra Leone by mid-2004. Some interventions will be handed over to rehabilitation programmes funded by AIDCO. The EDF €25 million three-year LRRD decision was adopted in September 2003. This decision will take over most of ECHO funded activities. A new financial decision of €3.5 million in support of the health sector will be prepared by AIDCO in the first half of 2004. ECHO will only support three programmes which will end by mid-2004. These programmes will help to conclude ECHO's phase out from Kenema's District Hospital and a network of more than forty primary health care units in Kenema District. ECHO's total financial contribution to Sierra Leone in 2004 is reduced to €0.5 million. Sierra Leone was also identified as a pilot case for LRRD by the LRRD/DPP Inter-Service group.

The LRRD process has been possible due to the relative stability enjoyed in the country, the commitment shown by the EC Delegation and the availability of required and dedicated human resources.

Guinea

Humanitarian needs:

Major humanitarian needs identified in 2003 turned around the Liberian refugee camps located in the prefecture of Nzérékoré. ECHO continued with the delivery of basic services, such as health, food, drinking water and sanitation in and around the refugee camps.

Relief assistance to the refugee camps in the prefecture of Kissidougou continued to reduce in accordance to the reduction in the refugee population (due to the repatriation of Sierra Leonean refugees) and the level of basic services provided in the camps.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

ECHO’s principle objective was to support the repatriation of refugees to Sierra Leone. The centre of interest moved clearly from assistance to refugees from Sierra Leone towards assistance to Liberian refugees located in the prefecture of Nzérékoré, in the Forestière region, south east of the country. In 2003, € 2.5 million of the Regional Global Plan were committed to Guinea. Over 80,000 Liberian and Sierra Leonean refugees benefited from ECHO funded interventions, which provided an integrated assistance in and around seven refugee camps. In 2003, ECHO also responded to emergencies in a number of other countries in the West Africa region. Financial assistance worth € 2 million was allocated to support Sudanese refugees in Eastern Chad. A total of € 1.49 million was made available to respond to epidemic outbreaks in Mali, Niger, Guinea and Burkina Faso.

LRRD:

ECHO has phased out its assistance to the refugee camps in Kissidougou (with the exception of one project, which it is in its final phase). Assistance in 2004 will focus on refugee camps in the prefecture of Nzérékoré. ECHO and the EC Delegation in Conakry are in discussions about the further application of the LRRD approach in Guinea.

Decisions (Sierra Leone/ Liberia)	Contracts	Payments
8,000,000	7,561,491	3,410,246

Decisions (Coastal West Africa)	Contracts	Payments
16,000,000	16,263,761	10,435,823

6.5. Caribbean/Pacific/Indian Ocean

Dominican Republic

Humanitarian needs:

In November 2003 heavy rains began which resulted in extensive flooding of vast areas in the northern part of the Dominican Republic. Some 65,000 people were affected of whom 12,000 were displaced. Also, on some 200,000 hectares of agricultural land the harvest was destroyed adding further hardship to a population who had already been suffering from an ongoing decline of the country’s economy.

The immediate humanitarian consequences caused by the flooding were a lack of safe water and appropriate sanitation as well as an increase in the transmissible diseases such as malaria and dengue fever.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

Through a funding decision of €700,000 ECHO supported the efforts of partners (IFRC, OXFAM, PAHO) who had responded quickly to the crisis by implementing water and sanitation as well as health programmes. More than 40,000 flood affected beneficiaries in the northern provinces of the Dominican Republic received food and hygiene parcels, kitchen sets, access to water and sanitation and health care.

LRRD

No specific LRRD measures undertaken due to the nature and scope of the response.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
900,000	700,000	560,000

Fiji

Humanitarian needs:

On 14 January 2003, tropical cyclone Ami hit Fiji, destroyed homes and flooded parts of the South Pacific archipelago with winds of up to 185km/h (115mph). The main affected areas were the northeast coast of Vanua Levu, the second largest island in Fiji, Taveuni, Rabi and other surrounding smaller islands known as the Lau Group. In the areas of Lau, Lomaiviti and the whole of Vanua Levu villages and settlements in the path of the cyclone were badly affected, with major damage to houses, crops and infrastructure including schools, telecommunications and electricity supply. Heavy rainfall led to landslides and intensive flooding, and combined with storm surges to give rise to dangerous flash floods. The confirmed death toll was 15 with a total of nearly 133,000 people affected.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

ECHO granted €420,000 for humanitarian aid with the objective of providing 24,000 of the affected population with essential non-food items, restoring and improving access to clean drinking water in rural areas and repairing some of the less damaged schools whilst leaving repair of more substantial damage for funding by rehabilitation donors.

LRRD:

The capacity of the Fiji Red Cross to deal with a future disaster was enhanced through the replenishment of pre-positioned stocks, and through training of a core assessment team and training of branches.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
420,000	420,000	336,000

Haiti

Humanitarian needs:

Heavy rains which had started to pour down on parts of Haiti at the end of August 2003, led to the complete destruction of some 200 houses in the city of St. Marc and damaged more than 1,000 homes. Water levels of more than one metre swept away and destroyed the belongings of a great number of people. Against the background of an already very fragile socio-economic environment in Haiti the floods had created a precarious situation for more than 1,800 families.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

To meet the basic needs of the identified beneficiaries ECHO allocated € 80,000 through a primary emergency decision allowing for the distribution by the French Red Cross of hygiene kits, kitchen sets and mattresses. A total of 10,800 persons benefited directly from this aid.

LRRD:

Given the localized extent of the disaster and the overall political crisis in Haiti no LRRD arrangements were considered.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
80,000	80,000	64,000

Dipecho Caribbean:

Humanitarian needs:

The Caribbean region is vulnerable to a wide variety of natural disasters, ranging from unpredictable events such as volcanic eruptions and earthquakes, to cyclical phenomena, notably the annual hurricane season between June and November. The small island states of the eastern Caribbean are particularly at risk because of their location, directly on the inbound path of Atlantic hurricanes, because of the limited response capacity of each island alone, and due to their narrowly-based economies.

In recent years, the Caribbean has been hit by devastating natural disasters which have impacted on a region rendered vulnerable by demographic pressures and, in some instances, entrenched poverty. Throughout the region, rapid population growth has outpaced economic expansion, generating an influx of migrants to urban areas, as well as deforestation and pollution of air, water, and soil.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

In 2003 ECHO's third DIPECHO Action Plan for the Caribbean was completed whilst at the same time a fourth Action Plan was initiated.

With funding going back to a decision in 2001 ECHO's partners completed their DIPECHO projects covered by the third Action Plan. The majority of them, implemented through NGOs and the Red Cross, were directed towards improving disaster awareness and disaster response

at a local and community level. Populations in the Dominican Republic, Cuba, Jamaica, Haiti, St. Kitts and Nevis as well as Grenada, benefited from these programmes. However, ECHO also funded regional organizations such as PAHO, CDERA and the University of the West Indies for training and dissemination of information related to disaster preparedness, thereby creating a positive indirect benefit for populations in all the countries of the region.

Based on a call for proposals for a fourth DIPECHO Action Plan for the region, projects were selected in 2003 with the geographic concentration put on Haiti and Cuba. Funding of €2.5 million was allocated for this Action Plan aimed at supporting activities to improve vulnerable populations’ preparedness for disaster, to mitigate against effects of disaster and protect against disaster whereby emphasis has been put on disaster preparedness. Contracts have been signed with NGOs, IFRC, UNDP for actions which will contribute to the reduction of the number of victims and material damage which could have a long-term effect on the development of these populations.

LRRD:

DG DEV has agreed to take over the funding of CDERA making it possible to ensure continuation beyond 2003 of the initiatives started by ECHO. Synergy between Commission short-term and long-term action is being implemented through the funding by AIDCO of the installation of new weather radar stations in the region. In 2003 ECHO started funding activities aimed at making the information gained by the weather radar available at a community level.

Decisions (Caribbean)	Contracts	Payments
2,500,000	2,460,095	1,206,586

ECHO-Flight

ECHO Flight continued to provide humanitarian air transport capacity in the Horn of Africa and neighbouring regions (currently Somalia, Kenya, DRC), and to further streamlined relevant modes of operation and management. More specifically, the Operational Management Guide and Electronic Booking and Tracking System (BTS) have been finalized and the ECHO Flight Website was further developed. To further enhance ECHO Flight’s visibility an ECHO Flight Flyer was published and a video featuring ECHO Flight in action was released. Finally, with a view to identifying an operator for the continuation of ECHO Flight beyond the current contract an open international tender was conducted. Funded with an amount of M€8.4 in 2003, ECHO Flight carried almost 17,000 passengers, 339 tonnes of humanitarian cargo and more than 5,000 mail parcels to five destinations in Kenya, 18 in Somalia and nine in DRC.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
8,400,000	8,400,000	5,642,720

6.6. Balkans

FYROM

Humanitarian needs:

From the humanitarian perspective, the remaining needs for food, firewood and repatriation assistance in FYROM during 2003 were related to the aftermath of the 1999 conflict and concerned refugees in Kosovo, IDPs, returnees and other vulnerable residents of the conflict areas.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

The €3m decision for FYROM adopted in January 2002 provided humanitarian assistance to IDPs and refugees until the end of 2002 when ECHO was due to phase out from the country. However, the expected drop in the number of beneficiaries did not fully materialise (due partly to security issues and partly to delays in reconstruction of houses) and consequently two ongoing projects were extended into 2003. The projects targeted the remaining IDPs and refugees (8,456 and 2,762 respectively in January 2003) and provided repatriation assistance, food and firewood to the end of June 2003. ECHO officially closed its office in the country in April 2003.

LRRD:

The LRRD process in FYROM is less straightforward than in other countries since the majority of instruments focus on institutional reforms preparing the country for the Stabilisation and Association Process rather than on grass roots development. ECHO had pursued LRRD in the water and social sectors in 2002 with some success. During 2003 the remaining caseload of 3,154 refugees and 2,606 refugees was taken over by the government and UNHCR.

Serbia

Humanitarian needs:

In 2003, humanitarian aid was being generally phased out and substituted by development programmes. However, continuing poverty meant that there remained a need amongst refugees and IDPs (337,000 and 205,000 respectively in April 2003) for food, heating and repatriation assistance and self sufficiency projects for those refugees and IDPS who decided to settle in Serbia.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

ECHO continued to pursue its gradual phase-out during 2003 with considerably reduced funding of €7.6 M. In February 2003, €6.6 M was allocated for humanitarian assistance to vulnerable refugees and IDPs. Under this decision three lead agencies received funding from ECHO: WFP (€1M) to continue food assistance to 60,000 refugees; UNHCR (€3M) to support voluntary return for around 4,500 refugees and 1,000 IDPs and self sufficiency for 3,500 refugee families opting for local settlement; and ICRC (€2.3M) to provide basic food assistance for 50,000 refugees and self sufficiency for 940 IDP families. All three projects were successfully completed in December 2003.

In July 2003, the Serbian Commissariat for Refugees wrote to ECHO drawing attention to the need to provide heating for collective centres in the coming winter. ECHO had provided fuel each winter since 2000 and there were no other donors able to step in. A final decision for €1M was adopted in August 2003. This has provided heating for 6,092 refugees and 6,110 IDPs in collective centres during the winter of 2003-2004.

Almost half of the operations (22) funded under the 2002 Global Plan were also ongoing in the first months of 2003. In addition to providing essential humanitarian aid and promoting durable solutions as above, these operations also included the distribution of hygiene parcels to refugees, IDPs and vulnerable local population and consolidated and finalised ECHO programmes in the health and psycho social sectors.

ECHO closed its office in Serbia in December 2003. The final project (heating of collective centres) is to be completed in March 2004.

LRRD:

In all sectors, efforts were made to support the LRRD process by ensuring coordination with the national authorities, other donors and the European Agency for Reconstruction as well as the Commission’s programmes on return to Bosnia and Croatia. An LRRD workshop on how to address the needs of the most vulnerable after the discontinuation of humanitarian aid was organised by RELEX/ ECHO in Belgrade in September 2003. Serbian authorities showed a willingness to extend the social welfare system to IDPs but there was also a call for transitional support measures possibly under the CARDS programme. In response, the CARDS Action Programme 2004 for Serbia has allocated €9 million for support to the return of and reintegration process of refugees and IDPs in Serbia.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
7,660,000	7,660,000	5,476,328

6.7. Newly Independent States (NIS) and Mongolia

Northern Caucasus (Chechnya, Russia)

Humanitarian needs:

The continued and somewhat forgotten humanitarian crisis in the Northern Caucasus has been one of the operational priorities of ECHO in 2003, with a total funding of € 26 M allocated to the victims of the conflict in Chechnya in two tranches (€ 16.5 M in June and 9.5 M in December). Hopes for an improvement of the political situation have been shattered by the way the referendum and, most of all, presidential elections were organised. As a result, with no perspective of peace in sight, the violence further increased in the last months of 2003, with regular fighting between federal/Chechen forces and rebels. As to the civilian population, it continued to be the victim of the worst violations of human rights (tortures, rapes, disappearances), which occur with the same frequency as last year.

As a result of the continuation of the conflict, the humanitarian situation in Chechnya has not improved and needs remained vast (food, non-food, water and sanitation, free access to health and medicine, education, psycho-social assistance), with a limited coverage by the international community due to a continued restricted access to the republic.

In Ingushetia, where 70,000 people remained displaced, 2003 has seen a clear deterioration in the protection of IDPs and Ingushetia has ceased to be a safe haven for them, with increased pressures to return and the closure of two camps. At least 15,000 persons have returned to Chechnya from Ingushetia.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

In order to answer these needs, ECHO has continued to support all sectors of assistance (food, medical, water-sanitation, protection, shelter, education and psychosocial, mine-awareness and non-food) and remained the main donor in the region. In 2003 ECHO financed operations through 17 different implementing partners; 36 operations were completed and 34 new agreements were launched.

Some 90,000 IDPs and vulnerable people were provided with medical care in Chechnya, Dagestan and Ingushetia. The main sector of intervention remained food distribution: basic food aid was provided to some 480,000 IDPs and vulnerable population in Chechnya, Ingushetia and Dagestan. Specific food was distributed to 1,000 6-24 month-old children in Ingushetia; daily hot meals to 45,000 primary school children in Chechnya.

Rehabilitation of approximately 200 rooms was carried out and approximately 200 box tents/rooms were erected to shelter people living in spontaneous settlements in Ingushetia.

Essential relief items were distributed to 35,000 IDP families in Ingushetia, Chechnya and Dagestan (hygiene and bedding items, fire wood) and to 19,000 IDP children in Ingushetia and Chechnya (children's clothing). Up to 4,000 young IDPs in Ingushetia and Chechnya benefited from psycho-social support, improvement of skills and vocational activities.

Water and sanitation conditions were enhanced in Ingushetia (20,000 IDPs) and access to potable water was ensured for the resident population of Grozny (70,000) with a special focus on schools and health facilities. In Ingushetia and Chechnya 110,000 people (particularly children) benefited from mine-awareness training.

ECHO intervened in the educational sector financing the distribution of more than 9,000 school-texts and contributing to the functioning of Child Friendly Spaces and primary schools reaching approximately 2,600 children in Chechnya and Ingushetia.

In addition, IDPs, returnees and residents throughout the Northern Caucasus were provided with ECHO-funded protection activities, especially legal counselling.

However, working conditions for humanitarian staff remained unacceptable, with a very opaque access permit system to Chechnya, regular restrictions on entrance for international staff and a very high level of insecurity. Partners continued to work through a remote control system, with a clear limitation of the presence of their expatriate staff in Chechnya. In addition, because of security, a number of districts in Chechnya were not covered, or very little, by humanitarian aid. This is the case for the mountainous South, where only food aid is distributed but no other programmes, not even medical, are running.

ECHO has continued, to address the issue of access and security with Russian authorities, but no progress has been recorded in spite of the official request of the authorities to see ECHO funding more projects in Chechnya proper.

In Ingushetia, ECHO has experienced many difficulties in the shelter area, where it had committed significant funding. Authorities have in effect prevented the international community from building enough alternative shelter for IDPs who do not want to return to Chechnya and who are either evicted from camps or settlements, or are living in sub-standard conditions. The 180 rooms funded by ECHO and built by MSF with a very good standard have remained empty in 2003 because of the refusal of Ingush authorities to let IDPs move in. ECHO's partners have managed to install some box tents here and there and to rehabilitate rooms, but at a very slow pace which does not allow all the needs to be met.

All year round, ECHO and the EC have continued to advocate for the protection of IDPs and the principle of voluntary return. However, the mobilisation of the international community was not able to prevent the closure of yet another two camps (Bella in autumn and Alina in winter). Nonetheless, there has at least been some relative success in allowing part of the IDPs to be moved to another camp instead of being sent back to Chechnya against their will. The official stance of the authorities with regard to the right to a voluntary return is contradicted in Ingushetia by the ban on building alternative shelter for IDPs and the many pressures the latter are subject to.

In spite of the needs in Dagestan, international aid has been scarce there. ECHO has alerted its partners of the needs there and one of them at least has started programmes in the republic. However, the security situation forced ICRC to suspend operations in summer and has also constrained the presence of the international community. Nevertheless, ICRC was able to resume activities in October, and the UN, on a recommendation by ECHO, has undertaken a first security/assessment mission there.

ECHO has tried all year to open an office in Ingushetia but did not receive the authorisation to do so from Russian authorities, in spite of repeated EC/EU requests. It has however, maintained a regular presence of its staff in Ingushetia but has been very much constrained in its monitoring in Chechnya by the limited number of missions organised there by UNSECOORD and the ban on ICRC to transport non-ICRC staff to Chechnya as of last June.

LRRD:

Two decisions for a total of 26 M€ were adopted to continue to support the most vulnerable populations. Projects are being implemented. There was no possibility of starting any LRRD in the current circumstances.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
26,000,000	23,484,522	14,075,468

Southern Caucasus (Georgia)

Humanitarian needs:

In Georgia, particularly in the West (Samegrelo and Abkhazia), a region badly affected by the unresolved conflict in Abkhazia, there are groups of extremely vulnerable people (usually the elderly, especially women) who can not manage to cater even for their basic food needs. 2003 has seen no improvement in their situation.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

After having re-started its operations in Georgia, with a funding decision adopted in December 2002 (€ 1.3 M), ECHO consolidated its presence there with a further decision adopted in September 2003 (€ 2.2 M). ECHO has continued to concentrate its funding on Western Georgia, including Abkhazia, and on the food security sector, providing some 20,000 people in Abkhazia and some 40,000 people in Samegrelo with basic food. In 2003, ECHO introduced a new element of food-for-work, in support to WFP's three-year Protracted Relief and Recovery Operations (PRRO) in Georgia.

ECHO's last food-security programmes in Armenia, which had been implemented as a follow-up to the two droughts of 2000 and 2001, have been successfully completed at the end of the year and ECHO has decided to terminate its humanitarian assistance there, as the purely humanitarian crisis is over. Remaining needs, notably in the agricultural sector, have to be targeted by development instruments.

No funding has been allocated to Azerbaijan but ECHO has continued to follow the situation there.

LRRD:

ECHO supported the targeted vulnerable population through two operations from the 2002 decision, which came to an end in November 2003. A new decision was adopted in August 2003 in order to continue, and increase, the support to the most vulnerable population. Three operations (food security) are being implemented. There has been no LRRD so far (there is a lack of development donors in Abkhazia) but ECHO is liaising closely with Relex and other donors (US, Switzerland) to encourage them to envisage a follow-up to ECHO's activities, especially in Samegrelo.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
2,200,000	2,200,000	1,100,000

Mongolia

Humanitarian needs:

Mongolia suffered a series of consecutive winter disasters ("dzuds") which resulted in urgent food and non-food needs for the most vulnerable herders who lost their cattle and therefore their main source of income.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

In order to help the most vulnerable herders or ex-herders cope with the consequences of another winter disaster and better prepare for the next winter, ECHO allocated €1M for Mongolia. This allowed for the distribution of flour and clothes for the most vulnerable herders, through the IFRC and the Mongolian Red Cross. It also enabled the support of a project for those who have migrated to the suburbs of Ulaan Baatar - soup kitchens and kitchen gardens - through ACF). The IFRC project was well implemented and the ACF one is ongoing until spring 2004, with good results so far.

LRRD:

In 2003 ECHO liaised with DG RELEX in order to ensure a coherent Commission approach in Mongolia. However, results will be achieved only in the medium term. DG RELEX's budget for Mongolia is limited, focusing on supporting the poverty-reduction support credit of the World Bank and on targeting rural communities in the coming years and thus opening the possibilities for a hand-over of ECHO projects. Most of the important donors are focusing on poverty-reduction and some will specifically target the poorest inhabitants of the slums in Ulaanbaatar. As to disaster preparedness, the Government of Mongolia has started to take measures in order to support herders, but actions are still limited.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
1,000,000	1,000,000	800,000

Tajikistan

Humanitarian needs:

2003 saw some progress in the humanitarian situation, although the continued effects of the 1999-2001 drought, combined with low levels of access to food still make over one-quarter of the population dependent on food assistance. Infant malnutrition remains alarmingly high, with continuing unacceptable levels of global acute malnutrition (over 35% of the population) and levels of children at risk of developing acute malnutrition. The current situation is too precarious to allow an optimistic view on the near future. Over half the population still lack access to clean drinking water, while the government remain unable to provide sufficient basic medical supplies to cope with a high incidence of diseases.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

The 2003 Global Plan allocation retained the € 10 million level of 2002. This 12-month Decision was adopted on 1st of April 2003. The programme had three specific objectives. The first was to help meet immediate basic food needs, wherever possible while simultaneously enhancing the food security of the most vulnerable households. The second aim was to reduce morbidity and mortality by enhancing access to primary health care, ensuring an effective response to outbreaks of infectious diseases and promoting community health awareness. Finally, access to drinking water was to be increased while simultaneously promoting the safe use of water in order to reduce the incidence of water-borne diseases. All regions of the country were covered, but with an emphasis on Khatlon province in the Southwest, the region worst affected by the drought.

Some 80,000 people received food aid (including 20,000 malnourished children), while 20,000 rural households benefited from short-term food security projects. Access to clean drinking water was improved for 250,000 people, while the whole population benefited from improved access to primary health care. 17 grant agreements were signed with 15 partners. No major problems have been encountered and all 17 operations have either reached or are nearing completion.

LRRD:

2003 saw other Commission funding instruments recommence activities in Tajikistan after several years' absence. These activities will focus on food security and poverty alleviation. ECHO strengthened contacts with other Commission services and other donors to promote the LRRD process. In particular, a seminar of LRRD issues was carried out in Dushanbe in October 2003. Furthermore, Tajikistan was identified as a priority case by the LRRD/DPP Inter- Service group.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
10,000,000	9,768,000	6,534,000

DIPECHO (Central Asia)

Humanitarian needs:

Natural disasters combined with poor response capacities represent high risks and heavy burdens on the populations and government of Central Asia (Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan). Among these countries Tajikistan is by far the poorest and most vulnerable with a combination of small scale and large scale disasters (avalanches, mud slides, floods, earthquakes) affecting several thousands of people every year. To a lesser extent the southern regions of Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan also suffer from regular natural hazards and from low levels of coping mechanisms.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

In April 2003, ECHO launched its first regional Disaster Preparedness Action Plan for Central Asia. Ten projects were funded under DIPECHO in Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, for a total of € 3 million. Vulnerable populations have benefited from awareness raising and preparedness projects such as creating local disaster management plans and early warning systems, training and equipping rapid response, search, medical and rescue teams, improving radio communications and strengthening coordination mechanisms. Small scale mitigation activities such as barriers against mudslides, avalanches, floods and rockfalls complement these activities. The operations were implemented in a smooth and co-ordinated manner, and a second Action Plan for the region is being prepared for 2004.

LRRD

Disaster preparedness is a relatively new concept in Central Asia and ECHO in 2003 worked to increase awareness within RELEX and AIDCO in an effort to include natural disaster risk management issues in the next Regional Strategy Paper for the region.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
3,000,000	3,000,000	1,745,198

6.8. Southern Mediterranean and Middle East

Algeria (Western Sahara)

Humanitarian needs:

155,000 Sahrawi refugees live – some of them since 1975 – in the desert in South West Algeria. They are victims of a forgotten crisis and of donor fatigue. Their own resources are very limited and they almost entirely depend on international aid to survive, particularly in that environment. In 2003, ECHO had to contribute to the \$ 30,000,000 two years programme of WFP providing basic food, not sufficiently covered by other donors. The UNHCR provided non food items but their budget, between \$ 3 and 4 million, is far from covering all needs in that sector. It includes transport, water, medicines, tea and small size operations. Major traditional bilateral donors are Spain, Italy and Belgium with an average annual amount of € 3,000,000. Therefore, in 2003 as for previous years, the greatest needs of Sahrawi refugees, such as basic and complementary food products, health care, shelter and clothes, are still not fully covered.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

Three main objectives have been defined in the framework of the 2002 Global Plan covering 2003 in favour of the Sahrawi refugees: To ensure refugees food security through the replenishment of the 3 months buffer stock, as well as the diversification of the refugees food basket through support for herding activities, for meat supplies, and a poultry project for eggs supplies; to ensure improvement in the hygiene conditions of women and in the overall health of the population through the distribution of hygiene kits, the supply of medicines to the camp's central pharmacy, including a buffer stock, and specific training for central pharmacy staff and; to ensure an adequate supply of non-food items through the distribution of blankets and clothes for children, as well as through the supply of material for 3,514 tents.

These objectives have been met in 2003, although some changes have been made in the food basket. As ECHO products have been repeatedly found on markets in Algeria and in Mauritania, the tuna which has the highest added value has been replaced by other products with lower risks of diversion such as fresh vegetables and fruit bought on the local market. The overall volume of aid was higher than initially foreseen as almost all the partners cut back on their purchases.

The adoption of a new Global Plan for the Sahrawi refugees was cancelled, as a result of the diversions observed in the region and of an audit managed by ECHO Auditors pointing out some weaknesses in the monitoring process implemented by partners. In partnership with the WFP, a specific decision has been adopted in December 2003 to ensure a regular supply of basic food items to be distributed during the first half of 2004. Furthermore, this decision also includes the supply of medicine and tents.

LRRD:

In 2003 there were no opportunities for LRRD. First of all, the situation in the camps did not allow for rehabilitation and development activities, and secondly, there was not enough donor interest for intervention and linkage.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
7,142,500	6,956,715	4,701,500

Palestinian Territories, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria

Humanitarian needs:

With the Middle East Peace Process at a stalemate, the humanitarian crisis that has affected the occupied Palestinian territories (oPt) since the outbreak of the second Intifada in September 2000 continued to deteriorate in 2003. As noted by the United Nations, the oPt have now entered into a phase of de-development. About two million people, representing 60% of the population, still live with less than € 1.5 per day (as compared to 23% before the second Intifada), whereas half of the people of working-age continue to be unemployed. Approximately 40% of the population were estimated to have reduced both quantity and quality of food intake, with widespread chronic malnutrition and anaemia especially among children below the age of five. The daily level of water consumption in the West Bank, where more than 200,000 people depend on water brought in by tankers, was half the amount recommended by the World Health Organisation. The closure system imposed by Israel consisted of a series of some 600 checkpoints and roadblocks preventing half the Palestinian population accessing their usual health services and causing disruption in school life. Israel accelerated the construction of a so-called security barrier, departing from the 1949 armistice line and twisting inside the occupied West Bank, as well as in East Jerusalem, cutting off some 210,000 Palestinians, economically and socially, from neighbourhoods to which they were formerly connected. These include 80,000 Palestinians surrounded in enclaves and 20,000 wedged between the barrier and the Green Line for which they have no permit to cross. As in previous years, vulnerable Palestinians in Jordan, Syria and, particularly, Lebanon, were also indirectly affected.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

ECHO responded with the adoption of five decisions totalling € 38 million, which represented a 52% increase in the amount originally foreseen. Operations were funded in all key sectors, namely: health, psychosocial and nutrition; water and sanitation; food; protection; short-term employment generation. To prevent malnutrition, programmes were financed for more than 600,000 people, whereas some 1.5 million people benefited from operations in the health sector. Temporary jobs were provided to 10,000 workers, indirectly benefiting some 50,000 people. More than 250 health professionals were given training and equipment to assist pregnant women living in areas affected by restrictions of movement.

Due to measures imposed by Israel, the delivery of humanitarian assistance was also increasingly difficult and costly. According to an assessment made by ECHO, such measures could increase the overall cost of humanitarian interventions by up to 20%.

Outside the occupied Palestinian territories ECHO funded operations in water and sanitation, as well as in the health and psychosocial sectors, for Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, who continued to remain excluded from public support and most of the job market. Employment opportunities were also facilitated. In Jordan, Lebanon and Syria ECHO ensured the provision of life-saving medicines at 71 health-centres run by the United Nations Relief and Works

Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), serving more than 1.5 million Palestinian refugees.

LRRD:

The overall political context characterised, inter alia, by a further weakening of the Palestinian administrative structures, makes LRRD a distant perspective. However, full co-ordination was ensured with more development oriented instruments managed by other services of the Commission, particularly in the food and health sector.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
38,000,000	32,322,467	21,025,219

Yemen

Humanitarian needs:

ECHO continued to address forgotten needs, notably in the health and water sectors, in Yemen throughout 2003. Large parts of the infrastructure have been damaged by the effects of past wars and natural disasters. Malnutrition is widespread while malaria affects 1.5 million people, killing around 15,000 people every year. 30 % of the population has no access to safe drinking water.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

The main objective of ECHO supported operations was the improvement of the living conditions of vulnerable populations, especially the sanitary aspects, through the construction or rehabilitation of 16 health centres, 2 rural hospitals and 4 water-adduction networks. Training of staff and equipment to these centres has also been provided. Finally, women and children received particular attention, through improved training and access to maternal healthcare and health centres at district level. More than 27,000 people benefited from this assistance. The aid focussed on remote rural regions that receive less support from other donors.

LRRD:

Close consultations were held with DG AIDCO and DG RELEX for common implementation of a LRRD strategy. Discussions with DG RELEX resulted in the inclusion of LRRD in their PIN and in their commitment to incorporate LRRD in the CSP for Yemen. ECHO informed DG AIDCO about its projects with a view to a possible hand-over.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
2,000,000	906,000	259,000

6.9. Asia

Afghanistan (Pakistan/Iran)

Humanitarian needs:

In 2003 the primary humanitarian challenge in Afghanistan was to give assistance for primary resettlement and reintegration to the over 3 million refugees and IDPs who had returned home since the fall of the Taliban at the end of 2001. Although the humanitarian situation in the North of the country generally improved during 2003, with decreased levels of displacement, better humanitarian access and a good harvest in many parts, pockets of food insecurity still remained. In the South and Southwest recovery from the drought was still very fragile and there remained a serious need of water for drinking and irrigation. Humanitarian problems in this region were compounded by serious access difficulties due to the worsening security situation. There were still 180,000 IDPs at the end of the year, largely Kuchi nomads who have lost all their livestock and poor farmers who have lost their land.

Pressure on urban centres continued, especially in Kabul, which has absorbed 40% of the returnees. Urban infrastructure was unable to cope with the scale of the return, the problem being exacerbated by significant problems in relation to land tenure. Substantial breaches of International Humanitarian Law continued and protection problems persisted, particularly in relation to ethnic persecution and detention conditions for prisoners (in both Coalition and government jails).

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

ECHO funded €55 million of humanitarian aid in Afghanistan through three decisions, including support for Afghan refugees in neighbouring Pakistan and Iran. Next to Iraq, this was the second biggest field of intervention in 2003. ECHO strategy had four principal components: first and foremost, to maintain the sustainability of the return process, supporting those who had returned to their home areas. Secondly, particular attention was given to the South of the country, where the effects of the drought were still being felt, so that further displacement could be avoided. Thirdly, protection and maintenance activities were funded for refugees in Pakistan and Iran, with the former also being extended to vulnerable groups (such as detainees and ethnic minorities) in Afghanistan. Fourthly, ECHO funded a number of support activities - in particular support for humanitarian flight services and the establishment of NGO security offices in Afghanistan and Pakistan - in order to enable partners to carry out their work effectively. Since food supply became more abundant in 2003, the main need in most places was for income to buy the food. Therefore, there was a particular focus on projects which generated income for the beneficiaries, with much of the work done in these projects being in the areas of water and sanitation.

In 2003 there were an estimated 7.7 million beneficiaries for ECHO projects in the Afghanistan region. Almost 2 million person-days of work have been provided and, through this and other interventions, ECHO projects have constructed over 50,000 shelters, over 40,000 latrines and 1,300 wells. 350 km of irrigation canals and traditional *karez*s have been rehabilitated, together with over 1,000 km of roads. 14,300 tonnes of food has been distributed, together with 20,000 packages of non-food items and 6,700 tonnes of seeds, and 50,000 head of livestock have been vaccinated. Almost 30,000 people have received

vocational training, 3,000 hygiene kits have been distributed and over 220,000 people have received hygiene and health training. 13,000 tonnes of coal was mined through ECHO-funded projects and this benefited 300,000 people.

LRRD:

There is close coordination on LRRD matters between ECHO and DG RELEX/AIDCO at both HQ and field level, with a view to ensuring the mutual compatibility of the respective programmes and a handover wherever possible. Already ECHO has phased out from mine clearance activities, and there will also be a progressive withdrawal from the health sector – this latter has not been able to proceed as rapidly as anticipated because of the slowness with which development funding for health projects has come on stream. ECHO’s participation in the Consultative Group process, where all major donors are present, is of great importance in helping to identify handover possibilities.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
55,839,000	55,238,000	35,563,500

Burma/Myanmar

Humanitarian needs:

Since independence in 1948 there has been almost continual internal conflict in Burma. This, together with economic mismanagement, has pushed Burma down to No. 127 out of 173 in the UNDP human development indicator list. In the health sector the position is even more dramatic: WHO ranks it 190th out of the 191 countries assessed. The natal mortality rate is 230 per 100,000 births, infant mortality is 78 per 100,000 and the mortality rate for children under five is 110 per 1,000. Between 500,000 and 1 million people are estimated to be HIV-positive. Children between 12 and 18 years old are forcibly recruited by the army and it is estimated that 25-45% of the 500,000 conscripts are children. Human trafficking and drug trafficking are widespread, with ethnic minority groups being particularly vulnerable.

Because of the political situation, the EU has adopted a common position to authorise only humanitarian aid to Burma. Other countries are also reluctant to become involved, so the official annual aid figure for the country is under €1/person.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

ECHO’s intervention in Burma was based on three axes: health, water and sanitation and protection. In the health sector the main component was a malaria control programme, since malaria is the largest single cause of death among children under 5. In water and sanitation the aim was to improve access to potable water, so as to reduce the level of water-borne diseases such as diarrhoea and chronic malnutrition. In the protection field ECHO supported the mandate of the ICRC in Burma.

ECHO gave priority to the most vulnerable people, particularly those living in remote border areas such as Northern Rakhine State between Burma and Bangladesh, Chin state on the

border with India, and the Wa region on the Chinese border. For example, in North Rakhine 60% of the population has no land or stable employment and 64% of the children between 6 months and 5 years old are stunted in their growth, 32% of these severely. In Burma ECHO took two funding decisions in 2003, for a total of €5.32 million. Through these 220,000 people have been given help in the area of health care, 70,000 have obtained improved water and sanitation facilities, 14,000 have received nutritional support and 50,000 detainees and their families have benefited from the protection activities.

LRRD:

Given the common position of the EU against development aid, LRRD does not apply in Burma.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
5,320,000	3,315,000	2,458,000

Cambodia

Humanitarian needs:

The health and nutritional status of Cambodia’s women and children is among the poorest in the region. Infant mortality is 95 per 1,000 live births and the under-5 mortality rate is 124 per 1,000 live births. Stunting (low height for age) as well as underweight (low weight for age) affects 45% of the children under 5 years of age. Although the situation has improved somewhat in recent years, Cambodia still has some of the lowest rates of access to safe water and sanitation in the region. In rural areas and during the dry season only 31% of households had access to safe water sources, compared to 67% in urban areas, while access to sanitation was estimated at 14% in rural areas, compared to 49% in urban areas.

The various conflicts over the past 30 years have made Cambodia one of the countries most heavily contaminated by land mines and Unexploded Ordonances (UXOs). Recent data from a Canadian Government survey shows 3,000 sq km of suspected mine-contaminated land, more than 9,000 areas contaminated by UXOs and 6,422 villages contaminated by land mines and/or UXOs. Cambodia has more than 800 civilian casualties per year through mine and UXO accidents, one of the highest rates in the world.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

In the area of health 25,793 children from 0-11 months old benefited from immunization activities; 115,252 children aged 6-59 months received a dose of vitamin A capsule each round; 102,785 children aged 12-59 months received a dose of mebendazole tablet each round, to reduce the level of worms; 21,423 impregnated bed nets were distributed; and 18 main trainings to improve technical skills were undertaken for PHD, hospital and healthcare staff

460,837 m² of land were cleared and 129,383 m² of land were mapped or properly marked. 6,940 mines and UXOs were destroyed. Through Mine Awareness Education activity 4,138

households were visited and 5,264 interviews conducted. Mine/UXOs accidents were down by 45% as compared with the previous year.¹⁰

1,033 community wells and/or ponds and 1,833 family latrines were constructed. 13,481 fast-growing vegetable seed packages, 7,422 agricultural kits and 14,604 watering cans and jars were distributed. Through training and education activities, 5,649 families were trained in home gardening and more than 20,000 people benefited from health/hygiene education and training.

LRRD

ECHO started a review process at year end with a view to handing over projects to longer term intervention instruments managed by DG AIDCO, particularly in the North-western provinces.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
4,000,000	3,499,008	1,804,206

China/Tibet

Humanitarian needs:

In this vast country ECHO focused on specific natural disasters in remote areas where the Chinese humanitarian agencies are not active.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

€4.5 million was allocated to deal with the effects of national disasters. Foremost were the floods and landslides in June, which destroyed more than 3 million housing units. Rice and wheat was distributed to 100,000 people reliant on subsistence farming, together with the provision of quilts, clothing and mosquito nets and the construction of hygienic toilets, water tanks and two primary schools.

LRRD:

Not applicable to short-term natural disaster interventions such as these.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
4,000,000	3,999,915	2,694,932

¹⁰ Information source: CMVIS report

East Timor

Humanitarian needs:

In 2003 East Timor suffered from a severe food shortage as a consequence of two consecutive years of drought. Household stocks of seeds were depleted in the worst affected areas and seed that would usually have been kept for the following planting season was used for household food consumption. 110,000 people required emergency food and seed distribution in order to prevent hunger and a further deterioration in their nutritional situation.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

Responding to the Government's appeal for international assistance, ECHO adopted an emergency Decision in October 2003 to enable affected families to meet their most immediate food security needs after the drought of 2003. By the end of the year food aid rations had been distributed to 110,000 beneficiaries; 105 tonnes of maize seed and 400 tonnes of fertilizer had been distributed to households affected by the drought; 36 tonnes of rice seed had been procured, for distribution in January/February 2004; and beneficiaries had received training in the use of fertilisers.

LRRD:

The East Timor Country Strategy Paper 2002-2006 has selected rural development as one of the sectors of concentration for the Community's aid. Therefore, the European Commission antenna in Dili was involved in the discussions with ECHO partners and its advice on the food security situation was required. However, there will be little possibility of linking ECHO's assistance with Commission rehabilitation or development aid, as negotiations on the NIP 2004-2006 were almost complete at the time when ECHO adopted its emergency Decision. The European Commission antenna in Dili will be kept fully informed of the progress and final outcome of ECHO funded projects, so that future activities can take ECHO's experience into account.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
2,000,000	1,812,627	1,340,602

India

Humanitarian needs:

Despite positive political developments in Jammu and Kashmir, levels of violence have remained significant and the effects of the conflict on the local population have received much less coverage. Between 3 and 15 people have died every day in incidents related to the armed conflict. The deep psychological effects of this violence cannot be easily mitigated and women and children are the most vulnerable. Also, the conflict has directly increased the incidence of school drop-outs and child labour. Finally the fighting along the Line of Control has left more than 10,000 people from the border villages of Jammu district homeless and jobless, creating a feeling of total insecurity. They have been living in tents in camps for the past three years.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

Support to the Tamil refugees living in Tamil Nadu is dealt with under Sri Lanka. Apart from this, 100,000 people affected by the conflict in Kashmir received psychosocial support and protection. Non-formal education continued to be provided to children. In 2003 ECHO was also able to improve the sanitation facilities of 2,500 families living in four camps along the Line of Control in Jammu.

LRRD:

DG AIDCO has decided to continue and expand ECHO support in education and at the end of 2003 approved a project to be implemented by an ECHO partner.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
2,650,000	2,530,000	1,265,000

Indonesia

Humanitarian needs:

In Provinces where humanitarian needs are a consequence of the ethnic and religious conflicts that erupted in 1999 (Sulawesi, Maluku, West Kalimantan) the humanitarian situation improved in 2003. Many of the IDPs who had fled the fighting have either returned or resettled. However, a significant caseload of 586,789 IDPs is still in need of a durable solution. The main risk faced by this population is being forced by the Government – which has declared the IDP crisis to be finished as of 31 December 2003 - to accept a solution to their situation (return, resettlement) that is not durable and which could create future problems between host and returned/resettled communities. Durable solutions are also needed for the remaining caseload of 25,000-35,000 former East Timorese refugees living in West Timor.

Conversely, in Provinces where humanitarian needs are a consequence of separatist strife (Aceh, Papua) the situation worsened during 2003. In Aceh, the implementation of martial law, coupled with military operations against rebels, resulted in internal displacement and disruption of basic services (health, education). Humanitarian workers were refused access to the province. In Papua the situation was calmer but there is a substantial risk that mounting tensions between independence movements and the Government will lead to a situation similar to Aceh in 2004.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

There were two main humanitarian objectives to be achieved during 2003. Firstly, support for highly vulnerable IDP and vulnerable local populations in West Timor, West Kalimantan and Papua. Some 130,000 IDPs benefited from actions providing water supply, food aid, food security, primary health care and education. Secondly, the provision of better protection for IDPs and for the reintegration of demilitarised combatants. This objective was only partially achieved due to the collapse of the peace process in Aceh, which prevented demilitarisation. However, some 55,000 IDPs and local people benefited from activities aimed at the reintegration of IDPs in North Sumatra and from the assessment and monitoring of humanitarian needs in IDP camps in Aceh.

LRRD

A dialogue was initiated with the Delegation in Jakarta in order to coordinate a phasing out from the provinces where significant funds have been allocated by the uprooted peoples' budget line. As a result, in future ECHO will concentrate its efforts in provinces where conflicts are still ongoing (Aceh, Papua) or where tensions within local communities remain high (Central Sulawesi), while provinces where the humanitarian situation has improved will be covered by the uprooted peoples' budget line (North Maluku, Maluku, North Sulawesi, West Timor).

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
3,500,000	2,464,000	1,233,500

Iraq

Humanitarian needs:

Even before the US-led military intervention the humanitarian situation in Iraq was very serious; since then it appears to have worsened significantly. The limited information which was available in 2003 indicates that adverse security conditions were preventing 50% of the Iraqi population from gaining access to medical care; measles, whooping cough, mumps and diphtheria were on the increase; 8% of children under 5 who were surveyed were found to be suffering from acute malnutrition (a doubling in one year), and 72% had diarrhoea. Surveys have also shown water-borne diseases such as cholera, dysentery and typhoid to have increased by 150% since the previous year, and UNICEF estimated that 5 million people were at risk through not having access to safe water and sanitation. Since the end of the Oil for Food programme in November 2003 there have been serious difficulties in the handover of the food basket distribution system to Iraqi ministries, who lack the necessary resources or capacity.

Recent estimates indicate 235,000 new IDPs in Iraq in 2003, half of them Marsh Arabs in the South. There may be as many as 800,000 IDPs in total, though accurate figures are not available. No clear plans have been put forward for dealing with them.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

The primary objective of ECHO interventions in Iraq in 2003 was to react as quickly as possible to the post-war humanitarian situation. To this end, one primary emergency decision and three emergency decisions were taken within three months of the end of hostilities, covering immediate water and sanitation, health, food distribution and protection activities, together with support for humanitarian air services. Particular attention was given to the rehabilitation of hospitals and primary health care centres which had been affected by bomb damage and subsequent looting. The fourth of these decisions specifically covered mine action activities: collection and dissemination of information on the location of UXOs, mine risk education and awareness raising and landmine safety training for humanitarian aid workers.

In the second half of the year two further decisions were taken, bringing ECHO’s total investment in Iraq to €100 million, thus making it by far the largest single country of intervention. These decisions continued and expanded the work which had already begun and also targeted specific groups of vulnerable people, such as IDPs, and the rehabilitation of schools.

Most of these projects are ongoing or are in the process of being brought to a conclusion. The extremely difficult security situation has made it almost impossible to conduct regular monitoring, so at this stage it is too early to put forward concrete results.

LRRD

Since development programmes have not generally come on stream in Iraq, due to the adverse security situation, it was premature to activate LRRD in 2003. However, initial discussions with DG RELEX have already begun, and their Interim Country Assistance Plan includes certain sectors where ECHO has traditionally intervened. Progress in this area will be critically dependent on security and political developments in the country.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
97,139,000	70,561,594	47,973,979

Laos

Humanitarian needs:

The resettlement of ethnic minorities and of people living in mountain regions has had major humanitarian consequences for already vulnerable rural populations in Laos. Natural disasters and imposed agricultural reform have added to widespread food insecurity. The situation is compounded by the continuing danger from unexploded ordnance (UXO).

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

Support to the resettlement process was the major focus of ECHO’s assistance in 2003. The aim was to improve ethnic minorities’ access to sustainable livelihoods so that they did not have to be resettled. This was to be achieved through improved access to water and sanitation; provision of basic health and primary medical care; improved logistic facilities through construction of access roads; and research on sustainable livelihood development, to find an alternative solution to further resettlement within the framework of development planning. 117 village health volunteers (serving 91 villages) received basic medical training, and 5,000 people (including 53 families of an especially vulnerable minority group) obtained improved access to roads, drinking water and sanitation. Also, 37,000 people benefited from mine awareness campaigns.

In addition, UXOs remain a significant obstacle to the development of rural areas and the pressure from new land on lowland areas due to migration from elsewhere exceeds the slow rate at which UXOs can be cleared from these lowland areas; Awareness raising campaigns have been strengthened in affected areas where the people have decided to resume agricultural activities despite the obvious security threats.

LRRD:

Not applicable since ECHO operations focus on specific ethnic minorities which are not covered by development programs.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
1,700,000	1,497,339	748,670

Nepal/Bhutan**Humanitarian needs:**

Nepal is one of the world's poorest countries and is the theatre of two forgotten humanitarian crises. The violent conflict initiated by Maoist rebels has cost the lives of 9,000 people since 1996 and has intensified since the breakdown of the ceasefire on 27 August 2003. According to human rights activists, widespread human rights violations, including extrajudicial executions, deliberate and unlawful killings, disappearances, torture and death in custody, arbitrary arrest and detention, continue to be perpetrated by both the Maoist insurgents and the security forces. The Maoist attacks on communications infrastructures and the limited freedom of movement as a result of the conflict have isolated populations in the most affected areas and have disrupted trade and agricultural activities. Existing health posts are not functioning properly and are plagued by various problems such as a lack of trained personnel, especially related to hygiene, a lack of medicine, and an absence of waste equipment and management.

A second forgotten crisis has trapped 100,000 Bhutanese refugees, including 21,000 children, who fled from their country between 1990 and 1992. Since then they have been stuck in seven camps in the South-east of Nepal and are totally dependent on external aid.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

In 2003 the population living in the conflict-affected areas benefited from protection activities, with particular emphasis on the re-establishment and maintenance of contacts between dispersed family members and on the promotion of international humanitarian law. Additionally, primary health care was provided to 380,000 people in one district of the Far Western region.

During the first semester of 2003 5,652 tonnes of rice, pulses, vegetable oil, sugar and salt were distributed to the Bhutanese refugees, representing about a third of their annual requirements. ECHO support also helped to implement a supplementary food ration programme to 2,965 vulnerable refugees, i.e. malnourished children under five, expectant and nursing women, TB patients and elderly sick people, as well as a school-based supplementary feeding programme to 40,573 schoolchildren in the camps.

LRRD:

The conflict situation is clearly an emergency one and ECHO began to increase its support in 2002, a trend which should continue into 2004. The contribution to the Bhutanese refugees' food needs is complemented by DG AIDCO support to UNHCR management activities in the camps.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
4,000,000	2,850,000	1,850,000

North Korea

Humanitarian needs:

With the economy in ruins, North Koreans are experiencing serious food and power shortages and many lack access to clean water and even the most basic of services. Equipment in the health service is old and dysfunctional, basic supplies such as antibiotics are not available, and the hygiene conditions in existing facilities are inadequate. Only 14% of North Korea's territory is suitable for agriculture and FAO/WFP estimates a cereals deficit of 944,000 tonnes for 2003/2004. The food security situation appears to have improved slightly, but accurate, up-to-date statistics at national level are still not available. However, a WFP/UNICEF household food security report in 2002 found 21% of children to be underweight, with 42% suffering from chronic malnutrition and 9% from acute malnutrition. Urban areas are particularly badly affected, as a consequence of the economic reforms which have been enacted. Long term donors are in short supply, due largely to the political tensions which have arisen since the alleged production of nuclear weapons in autumn 2002.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

ECHO's focus is on addressing basic needs not covered by other donors, particularly in the water and sanitation and health sectors. Strategic objectives for 2003 were: in the water-sanitation sector, to continue to rehabilitate water systems, moving into new areas in the North-east and continuing to carry out water tests; to increase activities in the sanitation field; and to seek accurate statistics on the incidence of water-borne diseases. In the health sector ECHO aimed to continue to provide basic drugs and consumables, to rehabilitate emergency health facilities and to undertake basic rehabilitation of health facilities. Also, efforts were made to increase the number of European NGOs operating in DPRK, particularly in the health sector.

In 2003 ECHO funded €17 million of projects in North Korea, over three decisions. The health decision covered the rehabilitation of a prosthesis factory, blood transfusion services, health care centres and nursery kitchens, the provision of equipment and medical supplies for the primary health and maternal care sectors, de-worming of children, vitamin A donation and hygiene improvements for intravenous fluids. At least 6,500,000 people benefited from the projects in this decision, with drugs being distributed to 1,760 health centres.

The water and sanitation decision enabled 300,000 people to benefit from the rehabilitation, construction and protection of wells, water supply systems and sanitation facilities (toilets, kitchens, wash rooms, etc.), the distribution of water containers and chlorine tablets, the supply of laboratory equipment and chemicals for water analysis, collections of water quality data and sanitation statistics and health awareness and hygiene education activities. At the end of the year €5 million was allocated to WFP and UNICEF to enable acutely malnourished children to be treated in all of the provinces of the country and to reduce malnutrition among

pregnant and lactating women by providing oil, pulses and CSB. A total of 300,000 people will be reached through this activity.

LRRD:

Due to the political situation, major development projects are not present in North Korea, so this is not applicable.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
17,000,000	16,692,930	12,686,000

Philippines

Humanitarian needs:

Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago in the South Philippines have been increasingly at the forefront of the ‘war on terror’. Security has deteriorated, as evidenced by the increasing frequency of incidents targeting civilians, this has led to a significant number of IDP’s in evacuation centres or host families.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

ECHO gave support to displaced people in the most needy areas and support to resettling populations, where food insecurity, lack of access to potable water, basic health care and sanitation, not to mention guarantees of a secure environment, are absent. Beneficiaries were conflict-affected families who had been displaced in periods of heightened fighting in Maguindanao and Cotabato provinces. These are categorised as returned IDPs, resettled IDPs and IDPs in evacuation camps and amount to almost 7,700 persons.

LRRD:

No concrete perspectives for phase-out existed in 2003.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
1,000,000	972,598	437,500

Sri Lanka

Humanitarian needs:

The ceasefire of 22 February 2002 allowed the northern and eastern districts of the country to experience the longest period of freedom from fighting since 1983. Many IDPs have taken advantage of this new situation to return to their home areas. Of an estimated 740,000 IDPs before the ceasefire, 345,000 returned to their areas of origin between January 2002 and December 2003, 76,000 of them in 2003. Many of the spontaneous returnees had been living in camps for years and their houses and village infrastructure have been badly damaged or

destroyed by the conflict. They lack shelter and basic household items which would enable them to resettle properly. Entire areas have been mined.

Also more than 60,000 Tamil refugees are located in 100 camps in Tamil Nadu, India and UNHCR has no access to these camps.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

In 2003, ECHO assistance focused on both refugees and IDPs as well as some 50,000 people who have returned home, concentrating on nutrition and healthcare. 220,000 IDPs returning in the north and north-eastern districts received 1,600 non-food relief items, 13,465 agricultural kits with tools and seeds. 560 kits for fishermen were distributed. 612 drinking wells and 60 agro wells were rehabilitated as well as 1,564 latrines. 2,450 shelters were erected. 13 small irrigation ponds and tanks were rehabilitated. A funding decision to continue humanitarian mine clearance and mine awareness was approved in December.

In Tamil Nadu 125 health workers were trained so that they could conduct basic preventive health education in the camps. First aid medication was also provided. In order to meet the basic food basket requirement, supplementary food rations were distributed to 850 pregnant women, 1,200 lactating mothers, 2,000 undernourished women, 2,000 undernourished, chronically ill infirm refugees, 6,900 children under 5, and for severely undernourished children. The database to monitor the refugees’ plans, requirements and preparedness for return, was maintained and updated.

LRRD:

In November 2003 AIDCO launched a call for proposals for the implementation of mine clearance operations in Sri Lanka. It is expected that the selected projects, building upon ECHO’s experience in this sector, will start before the end of 2004, thus ensuring a good continuation of ECHO supported projects.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
8,100,000	8,000,000	4,536,500

Thailand

Humanitarian needs:

In the last eight years, the number of refugees along the Thai/Burmese border has increased from 92,000 to 152,000. During this time the military regime in Burma has strengthened its control and has continued its drive to crush the resistance ethnic groups (Karen, Karenni and Mon). For the past three years the flow of new refugees arriving in the remaining nine camps at the border has continued at a rate of 600-800 per month. The future of these refugees remains uncertain and their dependence on external aid is almost total. The camps are still vulnerable to incursions by the Burmese army, though no incidents have been reported since 1998. Restrictions on the refugees and their quality of life in the camps have worsened rather than improved.

This is a highly complex situation, with a continuing low intensity conflict, continuing slow refugee flow, continuing environmental degradation in Burma, continuing dependence of refugees on foreign aid (more than 40 donors are involved), and a continuing marginalisation of minorities both in Burma and on the Thai/Burmese border. The majority of refugees have now been resident in the camps for over 10 years.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

ECHO’s intervention in Thailand in 2003 was focused on humanitarian assistance for Burmese refugees living in the camps in Thailand. The actions are dedicated to improving the health and nutritional status of the refugees in five camps and two resettlement villages where approximately 120 000 people live.

LRRD:

Given the circumstances, LRRD does not apply in the camps in Thailand

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
6,240,000	5,340,000	3,720,000

Regional SARS: China, North Korea, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam)

Humanitarian needs:

On 12 March 2003 WHO issued a global alert on SARS. Although the onset of the epidemic mainly affected China and its commercial partners (Hong Kong, Singapore), the disease also spread to Vietnam and other countries to which international passengers frequently travel. Many of the countries in South East Asia, and especially those covered by ECHO’s decision in relation to SARS, depend to a large extent on external aid to maintain and strengthen their health systems. Also, medical staff were often unwilling to treat SARS cases, due mainly to ignorance of possible treatment and protective measures. Given the magnitude of the impact of the disease, these countries in South East Asia were unable to cope and called for external assistance.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

The overall objective of the action was to control the spread of SARS in these countries, and in particular, to reduce morbidity and mortality among the populations of Vietnam (Hanoi) and China (especially Hebei and Inner Mongolia provinces) and other exposed areas; also, to reduce the risk of the disease spreading among the populations of potentially high risk zones in Laos, Cambodia, China and North Korea. Training in specific protocols, setting up of isolation wards, upgrading of intervention and monitoring facilities was essential in order to contain the disease and identify potential carriers.

Through this decision assistance was given to the Bach Mai public hospital in Hanoi and to selected referral hospitals in China, thus strengthening their capacity to respond to the epidemic. In Laos, Cambodia, China and DPRK first line intervention teams were reinforced,

the capacity to identify potential SARS patients enhanced and possibilities for treatment by trained staff were strengthened

LRRD:

Not applicable to a sudden, relatively short-term crisis such as SARS.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
1,600,000	1,426,689	1,036,351

6.10. Central & Latin America

Central America (Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua)

Humanitarian needs:

During 2001 and 2002 the whole of Central America was badly hit by an unprecedented drought. In some regions storms and exceptional rains had also caused floods. In certain places up to 90% of the harvest had been destroyed in two consecutive years. An economic crisis in the coffee sector, together with problems of access to water and growing levels of social economic discrimination, combined with these events to produce increasing levels of global acute malnutrition, in particular among the indigenous and remote populations in Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador and Nicaragua. Fortunately, in 2003 the effects of a moderate El Niño dissipated during the first part of the year without causing any damage and rainfall levels were considered normal.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

In the context of the climatic irregularities, continuation of the monitoring and rapid reaction mechanisms in the most vulnerable communities was sought during 2003, to prevent and address malnutrition among the most vulnerable (in particular children under 5, pregnant women and nursing mothers) in co-ordination with the local health authorities. More than 50,000 people in 24 departments in Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and El Salvador benefited from help in nutrition and accompanying measures in food security, basic health, water and sanitation.

LRRD:

A link with food security initiatives has been put in place to allow for a phasing out by early 2004. The results of ECHO’s surveys have been made comparable and are being compiled to be used as baselines for the evaluation of future crises. ECHO has financed one final project going into 2004 which will allow for reinforcement of local health authorities’ capacities to maintain an early warning and response system for nutritional crises. The new €12 M regional program for food security approved by DG AIDCO should include the same malnutrition indicators as the ones used by ECHO and should allow for early warning in the case of any new crises. Within this program a food security fund will be put in place to finance food security preventative measures wherever the food security and nutritional indicators show a critical situation.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
520,000	520,000	260,000

Argentina

Humanitarian needs:

Argentina is not normally within the scope of ECHO's emergency interventions. However, in April 2003, the Santa Fe province experienced the worst flooding in Argentina for 100 years. More than 500 people were registered as having "disappeared", 25,000 people lost their homes and more than 150,000 people had to be evacuated. Moreover, faced with the critical economic and social crisis in 2002, the levels of malnutrition in the northeast and northwest provinces of Argentina were brought into the spotlight.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

In response to the appeal for foreign assistance by the Argentinean government, ECHO approved €890,000 for the most vulnerable people affected by the floods in Santa Fe. The objectives were the construction of temporary housing, the development of a hygiene promotion programme and the distribution of personal kits, accompanied by a nutritional survey. More than 23,000 people benefited from these interventions. Faced with deteriorating economic and nutritional conditions, ECHO approved a further €495,000 for an extensive nutritional survey and a humanitarian programme (food and medical aid) benefiting 12,000 Argentineans in the northeast and northwest provinces. This emergency operation was extended until early 2004.

LRRD:

The nutritional surveys carried out in 9 northern provinces of Argentina and in the province of Santa Fe serve as a baseline for other interventions in the development and humanitarian sectors, not only those financed by the Commission. In fact, the nutritional survey in Santa Fe has already paved the way for further nutritional initiatives funded by a UN Agency. In addition, the surveys have set a benchmark for the evaluation of new crises in the country. Moreover, the construction of temporary housing, apart from creating new urban initiatives, will need to be followed up by additional development projects such as water and sanitation, education and medical facilities. These new opportunities should be explored by other services of the Commission.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
1,385,000	1,385,000	902,500

Colombia (includes Ecuador)

Humanitarian needs:

For several decades Colombia has suffered from a long-term internal conflict involving government, paramilitary and guerrilla groups. As a result, about 3,000,000 people have been displaced from their home areas since 1985, with 160,000 new IDPs in 2003. Displacement

decreased in 2003, for the first time for many years, due to a decrease in the number of cases of mass displacement (more than 50 people at a time). President Uribe claims that this is the fruit of the much tougher security policies which he has introduced. Nonetheless, IDP figures, and their needs, remain very high. Most IDPs settle in shanty towns, building precarious shelters made of plastic, wood and cardboard. The illegal status of these IDP settlements is an important impediment to the provision of basic services such as water supply or sanitation. IDPs tend to be displaced from a rural environment where their basic nutrition was assured, to villages or towns where they have no immediate access to land. This brings about a rapid deterioration in their food security situation and a consequent collapse of their household economy.

In 2003 an increasing number of communities found themselves isolated as a result of being besieged or blockaded by the armed groups in pursuance of their war strategy. Controls on movements of people and on supplies directly restrict access to health and education services and affect normal farming and commercial activities.

During the past two years the number of Colombian refugees in Ecuador and Venezuela has continued to increase. Most recent estimates from UNHCR indicate 17,957 in Ecuador and 1,077 in Venezuela.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

ECHO strategy in 2003 had three principal aims. First of all, to provide immediate emergency relief for displaced populations for the three months after their displacement. Secondly, to improve the living conditions of displaced populations in rural areas for a period of up to one year after displacement, through nutritional complements, housing improvements, access to safe water, improvement of sanitary conditions, psychosocial assistance, small-scale self-reliance projects and training. Thirdly, to enhance the protection role of UNHCR for Colombian refugees in Ecuador.

A mid-term review of 2003/2004 actions shows the following results to have been achieved by 31 December 2003. 110,000 recent IDPs received emergency assistance immediately after displacement, including a food ration equivalent to 2,100 Kcal per person per day. Around 47,500 IDPs and other vulnerable groups had their living conditions improved, through one or more of the following components: nutritional supplement (6,900 beneficiaries), access to primary health care (17,000), access to safe drinking water (10,000), access to safe excrement disposal systems (4,100), improved shelter (4,575) psychosocial assistance (25,170), increased family incomes as a result of self-reliance projects (9,330). Also, with ECHO's support, OCHA has issued monthly reports on the humanitarian situation in Colombia that have been published at www.reliefweb.org, and reports and maps on the situation in each department are now available on request.

LRRD:

Regular ongoing discussions are held with DG AIDCO with regard to the use of the uprooted peoples' budget line in Colombia. Three operations previously funded by ECHO are now supported by financing instruments managed by DG AIDCO: UNHCR, Solidaridad and

Movimondo. The most recent call for proposals, launched by AIDCO in September 2003, expressly mentions that priority will be given to the continuation of ECHO actions.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
8,206,000	7,914,969	4,178,284

DIPECHO

DIPECHO (Southeast Asia, South Asia, the Andean Community, Central America and Cuba)

Humanitarian needs:

The DIPECHO Programme is implemented in Southeast Asia, South Asia, the Andean Community, Central America and Cuba. These regions have been chosen on the basis of three principal criteria. Firstly, they are prone to natural disasters; in Asia these are mainly floods, storms, droughts and forest fires, whereas Latin America is affected by floods, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, storms, hurricanes and droughts and Cuba by floods, hurricanes and earthquakes. The second criterion is the inherent vulnerability of the population. Thirdly, consideration is given to the lack of local resources and capacities for coping with disasters. In all of these regions initiatives in disaster preparedness and prevention have been and are still being taken at both national and regional level, but they all tend to suffer from a lack of resources, and coordination between national governments is still very much in the process of development.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

The global objective is to reduce the impact of future disasters and hence the need for humanitarian aid in the case of a disaster. DPP projects are mostly implemented in the countries where ECHO is also delivering humanitarian aid. DIPECHO Action Plans are implemented at three levels: at local level, there is an enhancement of the capacities of local communities at risk and of local authorities, through training, awareness-raising, setting up of early warning systems and risk mapping. At national level activities strengthen the capacity of national services in charge of disaster management and help in the production and dissemination of maps. At regional level cooperation and coordination of disaster preparedness activities is encouraged, in particular through exchanges and dissemination of knowledge and experience.

The 2nd DIPECHO Action Plan for the **Andean region** - 13 projects for €3.44 million – came to an end in mid-2003. Through this, over 23,000 people in key positions (community leaders, local authority officers, etc.) received training; 108 community and other civil defence groups were equipped and trained, 212 community and municipal action plans were developed, 59 risk maps drawn up and 4 early warning systems established. The 3rd Action Plan, for €4 million, is being launched at the end of 2003.

In **Cuba** three new projects worth €0.5 million started in July 2003, as part of the 4th Action Plan for the Caribbean. These projects should mainly provide better early warning systems of extreme hydro-meteorological events in 14 municipalities in 6 provinces of the country.

The 3rd Action Plan in **Central America** started in the first quarter of 2003, supporting projects worth €3.18 million. The 12 projects will mainly strengthen local coping capacity in 53 municipalities in 5 countries in the region. The specificity of this programme is that, taking into account the recommendations of the regional and national authorities in disaster management, all of the projects have a component for the support or development of early warning systems.

In **South-East Asia** the 3rd DIPECHO Action Plan also began in the second quarter of 2003, investing €3.18 million in 12 projects in Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Indonesia and the Philippines. Through this over 150,000 people (living in 500 rural villages in 50 districts) have directly benefited. More than 10,000 children have been directly involved in activities in schools in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, 5,000 of them from upland ethnic minority groups. 200 local NGOs and 1,000 decision makers (national and local disaster management offices) have been trained for Disaster Management, mapping, early warning, emergency rescue, pre-positioning and evacuation.

In **South Asia** the 2nd Action Plan started at the end of 2003, totalling €2.5 million. This covers the whole range of disasters and is situated mostly at community level; it focuses on training, new alternatives and dissemination, and has a particular emphasis on involving women and children and on finding solutions to fill in the gap between the authorities and the communities at the village level (planning and action).

LRRD:

Disaster preparedness and prevention is one of the main topics for the new call for proposals under Budget line B7-6000, through which European NGOs are co-financed. In addition, ECHO is strengthening its relationship with DGs RELEX, DEV and AIDCO to ensure that their programmes take disaster preparedness and prevention more into account. This is a long-term process, but progress is being made and regional DPP programmes for Latin America, Central America, the Andean Community and India are now being planned. These have been included in the regional strategy for 2002-2006 but have not yet been launched. Central America and the Andean Community were identified as key regions by the LRRD/DPP Inter-Service group to implement the linkage process for DPP measures.

Dipecho (Andean Community)

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
4,000,000	3,116,5750	186,031

Dipecho (South Asia)

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
2,500,000	2,311,988	110,000

7. OTHER INFORMATION

Annexes 1, 2 and 3: ECHO's budget in 2003 amounted to 600.705 million of which € 600,349 million were committed, showing an implementation rate of 99.9 %. Budget line B7-210 with € 569.499 million remained the main source of financing, followed by the EDF with a total of € 14.105 million (Lome VI(Art. 164 and Art. 254) and Cotonou (Art. 72 and Art. 73), and Budget line B7-219 with € 12 million for disaster preparedness measures. In 2003 the number of finalised contracts amounted to 591 for the financial year 2003 (i.e. finalised contracts linked to financial decisions taken on 2003 budget) and to 911 for the signature year 2003 (i.e. finalised contacts linked to financial decisions taken on 2003 or earlier budgets) (Annex 3).

Annexe 4: Information on the distribution of humanitarian aid on a country-by-country/ sub-regional level. Aid for Iraq is included under the region Middle East/North Africa in this table.

Annexes 5 and 6: Annex 5 gives the distribution of finalised contracts for the financial year 2003 per type of partner with Annex 6 providing more detail on the nationality of partners for the category Non-Governmental Organisations and on the agencies under the category United Nations. NGO's remain the most important group of contract partners for ECHO (56 %), followed by United Nations Organisations (30 %) and International Organisations (10 %). Funding for UN agencies increased during the last 3 years from 27 % in 2001 to 30 %, as did the funding for International Organisations from 8% in 2001 to 10 % in 2003 whereas the share of funding for NGOs declined from 63 % in 2001 to 56 % in 2003.

Annexes 7 and 8: Résumé of control and checks applied to ensure the proper implementation of ECHO-funded operations and List of acronyms used in the text

Annex 1

Financial decisions for EC Humanitarian aid by source of Finance

Source of finance/ budget line	European Development Fund - Lome IV Art 164 And Art 254	European Development Fund Cotonu Art 72&73	B-210 A Aid, including emergency food aid, to help the populations of developing countries and other countries hit by disasters or serious crises - Expenditure on administrative management	B-210 Aid, including emergency food aid, to help the populations of the developing countries and other third countries hit by disasters or serious crises (1)	B7-219 Operational support, Disaster preparedness	Total ECHO budget sources
1995				637.500.000	5.000.000	694.100.000
1996	46.456.000			651.170.000	6.300.000	669.850.000
1997	3.487.000			430.820.000	7.000.000	445.240.000
1998	7.420.000			472.191.000	8.022.000	517.600.000
1999	37.387.000			719.450.000	7.400.000	810.282.000
2000	83.082.000		3.360.000	481.600.000	7.500.000	495.310.000
2001	2.850.000		4.800.000	210.200.000	8.000.000	543.750.000
2002	20.750.000		4.100.000	509.745.000	8.000.000	539.320.000
2003	17.475.000		5.090.000	569.499.000	12.011.000	600.705.000
	1.365.000	12.740.000				

(1) Including budget lines B7-210, B7-211, B7-214, B7-216 and B7-217. As of 2000 these budget lines have been merged to a single budget line B7-210

Annex 2

ECHO budgets 1993-2003 (€)

Financial decisions for EC Humanitarian aid 1995-2003 (€)	
1993	606.590.000
1994	762.970.000
1995	688.955.000
1996	656.655.500
1997	441.611.954
1998	517.657.060
1999	812.911.000
2000	491.715.000
2001	543.703.460
2002	537.790.000
2003	600.349.000

Annex 3

ECHO Contracts 1998-2003

(as of 19.3.2004 - finalised contracts)

	Financial year	Signature year*
1998	1238	1416
1999	1291	1290
2000	751	993
2001	807	1031
2002	887	883
2003	591	911

The category “Financial Year” covers contracts based on Financial Decisions taken in 2003, adopted on the 2003 budget, and finalised (i.e. signed by ECHO and partner) during the period from 01.01.2003 to 19.03.2004.

The category “Signature Year” covers *all* finalised contracts (i.e. contracts signed by ECHO and partner) during the period from 01.01.2003 to 19.03.2004. Contracts shown under this category may be based on Financial Decisions adopted on earlier budgets.

Annex 4

Financial decisions for Humanitarian aid by region in 2003

Country/sub-region	Decisions in €
AFRICA, CARIBBEAN, PACIFIC	
Angola	13.900.000
Burkina Faso	472.500
Burundi	15.000.000
Caribbean/Pacific/Indian ocean	1.400.000
Central African Republic	1.000.000
Chad	2.000.000
Coastal West Africa	16.000.000
Congo	4.000.000
Congo (Democratic Republic)	44.000.000
Côte d'Ivoire	5.740.000
Eritrea	1.300.000
Ethiopia	2.000.000
Liberia, Sierra Leone	8.000.000
Mali	500.000
Namibia	100.000
Niger	472.500
Somalia	9.000.000
Southern Africa	25.000.000
Sudan	22.000.000
Tanzania	24.000.000
Uganda	8.000.000
Zimbabwe	13.000.000
ECHO flights	8.400.000
	225.285.000
EASTERN EUROPE/NIS	
Georgia	2.200.000
Mongolia	1.000.000
Northern Caucasus (Chechnya crisis)	26.000.000
Tajikistan	10.000.000
Western Balkans	7.660.000
	46.860.000
Middle East/North Africa	
Iraq	97.139.000
Middle East (Palestine)	38.000.000
Algeria/Western Saharan refugees	7.142.500
Yemen	2.000.000
	144.281.500

Total ECHO funding 2003	600.349.000
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Country/sub-region	Decisions in €
ASIA	
Afghanistan	54.000.000
Cambodia	4.000.000
China/Tibet	4.000.000
East Timor	2.000.000
India	2.650.000
Indonesia	3.500.000
Iran	839.000
Laos	1.700.000
Myanmar/Burma	5.320.000
Nepal	4.000.000
North Korea	17.000.000
Pakistan	1.000.000
Philippines	1.000.000
Sri Lanka	8.100.000
Thailand	6.240.000
Sars/Regional	1.600.000
	116.949.000
Latin America	
Argentina	1.385.000
Colombia	8.000.000
Ecuador	206.000
El Salvador	130.000
Guatemala	130.000
Honduras	130.000
Nicaragua	130.000
	10.111.000
DIPECHO	
Andean Community	4.000.000
Central Asia	3.000.000
South Asia	2.500.000
Caribbean	2.500.000
	12.000.000
Thematic funding	
UNHCR	11.000.000
UNICEF	996.000
ICRC	10.000.000
OCHA/IRIN	1.200.000
	23.196.000
OTHER FUNDING	
ECHO field experts	12.037.000
ECHO offices	4.880.000
Support expenditure	4.749.000
	21.666.000

Annex 5:

Distribution of Contracts by Partner category

Distribution of ECHO Funding by Groups of Partners 2001 - 2003			
(by contracts financial year)			
	2001	2002	2003
EC NGOs	63%	60%	56%
United Nations	27%	28%	30%
Int'l Organisations	8%	8%	10%
EC Org./Gov.Org/Others	2%	4%	4%

Annex 6

ECHO Contracts by Category and Nationality of Partners 2003

(by contracts financial year - as of 19.3.2004)

PARTNER CATEGORY AND NATIONALITY	EURO	% of total decision amounts
EC		
Subtotal	22.872.624	4,17%
GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS		
Subtotal	0	0,00%
INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS (including ICRC, IFRC and IOM)		
Subtotal	55.599.085	10,15%
NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS		
Austria	4.959.839	0,91%
Belgium	15.709.875	2,87%
Denmark	22.915.318	4,18%
Finland	2.135.000	0,39%
France	75.834.835	13,84%
Germany	29.536.774	5,39%
Greece	1.185.000	0,22%
Ireland	7.075.473	1,29%
Italy	38.375.217	7,00%
Luxembourg	343.540	0,06%
Netherlands	19.750.047	3,60%
Portugal	239.000	0,04%
Spain	13.640.862	2,49%
Sweden	400.000	0,07%
United Kingdom	66.229.231	12,09%
Norway	4.566.809	0,83%
Switzerland	3.210.000	0,59%
USA	315.000	0,06%
Subtotal	306.421.820	55,92%
UNITED NATIONS		
UNHCR	43.296.103	7,90%
WFP	42.927.532	7,83%
UNICEF	34.245.289	6,25%
UNRWA	13.298.284	2,43%
WHO	8.593.091	1,57%
UNDP	7.547.170	1,38%
FAO	6.679.627	1,22%
UNOCHA	5.390.870	0,98%
UNFPA	775.000	0,14%
PAHO	356.000	0,06%
Subtotal	163.108.966	29,76%
TOTAL	548.002.495	100%

Annex 7:

The proper implementation of ECHO-funded operations is ensured through several layers of checks and controls, including:

- **Strict selection mechanisms for partners** under the new Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA) defining the requirements for financial credentials and expertise of implementing partners,
- Day-to-day control of progress of projects. Each contract is monitored by the desk and field expert via a **project appraisal worksheet** (“fichop”).
- ECHO-funded activities implemented by external parties (partners and contractors) are subject to **financial audits**. Since 2002, ECHO has significantly increased the number of audits. In 2003, 96 audits at the headquarters of partner NGOs were completed with another 44 ongoing, as well as 16 field audits, the latter reporting on projects actually under way.
- **Project monitoring** through a network of 60 ECHO **field experts** (technical assistants) worldwide
- Obligation for partners to produce **intermediate and final reports** and to justify their expenses
- Regular **field visits** of geographical desks, auditors and ECHO Management
- **Evaluations**. ECHO undertakes approximately ten evaluations each year on average, focusing on major country operations (i.e. operations funded for a total of about € 50 million and which have not been evaluated in the past three years), partners and thematic issues. In 2003, evaluations on operations were launched for the following countries or regions: South Asia (DIPECHO); Serbia; Sudan (1999-2002 actions); Angola (2002-2003 actions); Afghanistan crisis; Thailand: nutrition/ food aid for Burmese refugees; Zimbabwe (2002-2003 actions); Thematic issues: drought response; disaster reduction; internally displaced persons; security and advocacy; Partners: WFP, UNICEF (evaluations focusing on strategic partnership and co-operation), ACF-F (evaluation focusing on capacity).

Annex 8: List of acronyms

CAPS	United Nations Consolidated Appeals for Humanitarian Crises
DIPECHO	ECHO's disaster preparedness and prevention programme
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
ECHO	Humanitarian Aid Office
EU	European Union
FAFA	The EC/UN Financial and Administrative Agreement
FPA	Framework Partnership Agreement (between ECHO and its operational partners)
FICHOP	Fiche operationelle (ECHO's project appraisal sheet)
HOLIS	Humanitarian Office Local Information System
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDP	Internally displaced persons
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
LRRD	Linking relief, rehabilitation and development
MCDA	Military and Civil Defence Assets
NOHA	Network on Humanitarian Assistance
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
SARS	Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome
SPD	Strategic Planning Dialogue
SPP	Strategic Planning and Programming
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNOCHA	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UNRWA	UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
UXO	Unexploded Ordnance
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organisation