

# Humanitarian crises **Out of the spotlight**



ECHO Annual Review 2000

Mother and child at a feeding centre  
in Kebri Dehar, Ethiopia, one of more than  
60 countries where ECHO funded operations  
during the year 2000.

Photo by Paul Nelson



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# MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSIONER

**H**umanitarian crises are generally placed in one of two categories. First there are the natural disasters, usually associated with climatic or seismic events, which often strike suddenly and catastrophically. Then there are the so-called "man-made" crises which are usually a result of conflict within a country or region. In some unfortunate places, such as the Horn of Africa and Afghanistan recently, natural and man-made tragedies occur simultaneously.

While the causes of humanitarian crises may vary, the factor which links them together is the widespread human suffering that they engender. The international community has an obligation to help the victims and, within the European Union, the Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO) spearheads the Commission's efforts in this area.

During 2000, ECHO continued to work through its operational partners to deliver relief in crisis zones across the world. In the previous year, significant extra resources had to be mobilised to cope with the huge refugee crisis in the Balkans. The year 2000 was mercifully not characterised by an event of similar magnitude, but there were

still many humanitarian tragedies where prompt and effective action was required.

Areas particularly affected by natural disasters included Mozambique and South East Asia which experienced devastating floods, and the Horn of Africa, which once again was struck by drought. ECHO made a substantial contribution to relief efforts in each of these crisis zones as well as in other locations hit by extreme weather and earthquakes.

Many parts of the world also continued to be plagued by violent conflict. Theatres of particular concern included the Northern Caucasus, Colombia, Israel and the Palestinian territories, and Afghanistan. Several local conflicts in Africa spilled over, creating a crisis belt which spanned the continent from Sudan in the north-east to Angola in the south-west. In the Balkans, significant humanitarian problems persisted in the aftermath of the fighting in Kosovo. In all of these places, ECHO was active in supporting the urgent needs of the most vulnerable populations.

Overall, European taxpayers' funds managed by ECHO enabled relief to be delivered to at least 18 million people during 2000.

In the course of the year, I visited the Russian Federation (Chechnya), Bangladesh, Tanzania, Rwanda, the Horn of Africa and the Balkans. These trips enabled me to witness, at first hand, some of the tragic consequences of natural and man-made crises. I also took the opportunity to visit ECHO-funded projects and to speak to local political and civic leaders, humanitarian actors and, above all, the victims themselves.

I was struck by the resilience of people whose lives have been turned upside down by the tide of events, but who still strive to build a better future for their families and communities. I also want to pay tribute to the dedication of all those who work in often extreme conditions to deliver

the vital assistance. Ultimately, supplying aid as efficiently as possible to the people who need it most is what ECHO is all about, and this is the objective that underpins all of our work also at the policy level. We want to maximise the effectiveness of the Commission's humanitarian operations, which means identifying where improvements can be made and then following up with concrete action. In last year's Annual Review, I mentioned that ECHO had been subject to a major, independent evaluation, the conclusions of which have since been widely publicised. Following on from this, and in the context of the Commission's wider reform process, ECHO was restructured last year and measures have been taken to streamline its working methods and boost its effectiveness.

## "A year of solid progress for ECHO... but major challenges remain"

There was also progress on managing the so-called "grey zone" between humanitarian and development activities with continuing work on proposals to link emergency relief and long-term development policy more effectively. This is important since the impact of both types of assistance is enhanced where the transition is smooth. The principles are already being applied in practice in the Balkans and Central America, where the progressive phasing out of humanitarian aid is now more closely coordinated with the phasing-in of longer term development actions.

ECHO relies on a close working relationship with its operational partners to ensure that the funding is put to the best possible use. In this connection, I have stressed the importance of closer coordination with the United Nations agencies whose programmes account for almost 20% of ECHO's funds. A Commission communication containing proposals to improve our working arrangements has recently been adopted. Almost two-thirds of the funding managed by ECHO is currently directed through non-governmental organisations, and I am strongly committed to maintaining and developing the sound partnership that we have built up with the NGO community over many years.

While 2000 was a year of solid progress for ECHO, there was no breakthrough in resolving a number of challenges that confront all humanitarian donors. Problems such as the increasing risks faced by humanitarian personnel and the denial of access to victims are a real cause for concern.

Even more worrying is the growing list of persistent man-made crises and the more extreme weather events the world is experiencing which may be due, at least in part, to human activity. Humanitarian aid, in this context, can only treat the symptoms. The root causes must be addressed through other means: conflict prevention, environmental protection and sustainable development.

**Poul Nielson**

*European Commissioner for  
Development and Humanitarian Aid  
May 2001*



# MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

## 1999

saw outbreaks of ethnic and political conflict, notably in Kosovo, East Timor and Chechnya, and in 2000, on the threshold of the new millennium, the humanitarian situation remains critical in many respects. The proliferation of armed conflict and the bitterness of the fighting is hitting civilian populations hard, particularly the most vulnerable groups - women and children, the old and the disabled.

One alarming consequence of this situation is the sheer number of refugees and displaced persons; currently an estimated 25 million people are displaced within their own country<sup>1</sup> and over 12 million civilians have been forced to seek refuge elsewhere.<sup>2</sup>

In an emergency, ECHO's task is to offer a response, in the name of European solidarity, to the immediate humanitarian needs that conflict or natural disaster bring in their wake. Its budget for such relief work in 2000 totalled € 492 million.

In 1999, ECHO's operations were assessed under Article 20 of the humanitarian aid Regulation<sup>3</sup> by a team of independent experts. While the findings of the evaluation were broadly satisfactory the report drew attention to a number of areas where improvements were needed.

## "Responding better to the needs of the victims of conflict and natural disaster"

In the light of the report, the Commission decided to draw up fresh guidelines for humanitarian aid which broadly mesh with the reforms being introduced in the Commission as a whole. I began to introduce the changes in early 2000, setting up an integrated system for managing ECHO's activities. We have concentrated on feeding the results of this process into our operational decision-making. Simultaneously, we have been refocusing on our core activity - which is emergency humanitarian relief - leaving more development-oriented work to other agencies.

Work in 2000 on defining the nexus between emergency aid, rehabilitation and development culminated in the adoption of a communication to the Council and the Parliament<sup>4</sup> aimed at ensuring that the departments responsible for development aid take over operations in due course, allowing ECHO to implement a timely exit strategy.

Considerable progress was also made in the context of the Commission's administrative and financial reform process. The different budget appropriations covering humanitarian aid (except for the EDF) have been consolidated under a single heading, allowing ECHO greater flexibility in the way it manages its money.

ECHO has refocused its information strategy, switching the emphasis from "visibility" to "communication". The new strategy was elaborated and introduced in close consultation with our partners. It targets the general public, EU decision-makers and beneficiaries of the projects that we fund. Our

website is also being upgraded to meet the higher standards of today's users.

We have continued to develop ties with our partners; we have a new framework for cooperation with the UN agencies, and are continuing our work with Red Cross organisations and NGOs.

To summarise, ECHO was created in 1992 to provide a rapid and effective response to humanitarian emergencies. We can now look back on eight years of hard work and solid achievement thanks to the resources that have been deployed in the field. Though the needs and obstacles we



face are still enormous, I am confident that our new approach to humanitarian operations will improve our capacity to bring relief to victims of conflict and natural disaster, giving practical expression to the European Union's solidarity with people in their hour of need.

**Costanza Adinolfi**

*Director of ECHO*

*May 2001*

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1 *The Brookings Institution Project on Internal Displacement, 'Occasional Paper', September 2000.*

2 UNHCR, 1999 general statistics.

3 Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/97 of 20 June 1996.

4 COM(2001)0153

## 2000

### January

#### Angola – refugees cross to neighbouring countries

The Angolan government offensive in 1999 that led to the recapture of several UNITA strongholds prompted new refugee movements over the country's borders. 12,000 Angolans sought refuge in northern Namibia and more than 25,000 fled to Zambia.

### February

#### Mozambique – floods

Cyclone Eline struck Southern Africa with devastating effect, bringing winds of up to 260 km an hour and the region's heaviest rains for half a century. Mozambique was worst hit. An estimated million people were affected as swollen rivers burst their banks.

#### Kosovo – attack on bus leads to clashes

There was a renewal of violence against minorities in Kosovo. A UNHCR bus funded by ECHO, on a routine run between Banja and Mitrovica, was hit by a rocket-propelled grenade. Two Serb passengers were killed and another three wounded. The bus was clearly marked and escorted by armoured KFOR vehicles. This led to a series of serious confrontations between Kosovo Albanians and Serbs as well as clashes between KFOR and Albanians in Mitrovica. The UNHCR shuttle service (funded by ECHO), which provided freedom of movement to those living in isolated communities across Kosovo, was suspended for three weeks.

### March

#### Sudan – NGOs expelled

A definitive peace solution remained a distant prospect as Sudan entered its 18th year of civil war. The Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) sought to oblige humanitarian NGOs working in southern parts of the country under its control to sign a 'Memorandum of Understanding'. 11 agencies, including several ECHO partners, were expelled after refusing to sign on the grounds that this would curb their freedom to engage in relief work and would interfere with the distribution of humanitarian assistance.

### April

#### Burundi – peace talks

Nelson Mandela arrived in Bujumbura to mediate in Burundi's long-running civil war. The former President of South Africa took on this role following the death in 1998 of the previous mediator, ex-President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania.

### May

#### Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran – drought

All of Afghanistan, and Iranian and Pakistani Baluchistan, were seriously affected by drought. By May, many local water sources had dried up. The loss of vegetation for grazing resulted in massive livestock losses in a number of areas, leading to significant population displacement.

#### Eritrea and Ethiopia – fighting resumes

Fierce fighting resumed in the war between Eritrea and Ethiopia, leading to new population movements in a region where many people are already displaced. The conflict hampered efforts to provide relief to populations suffering the effects of drought and food shortages.

#### Sierra Leone – peace agreement collapses

The Lomé Peace Accord collapsed when the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) mounted a series of attacks on UN peacekeeping forces (UNAMSIL). Several UN soldiers were killed and several hundred were abducted. These events were speedily followed by renewed fighting between the RUF and government troops. Large numbers of people fled to government-held areas, adding to the huge numbers already displaced by previous military engagements in the country's long-running civil war.

#### Indonesia – earthquake

An earthquake followed by a tsunami (tidal wave) struck Central Sulawesi province on 4 May. The islands of Banggai and Peleng were worst affected. The toll of dead and injured reached almost 300 while an estimated 10,500 families were made homeless.

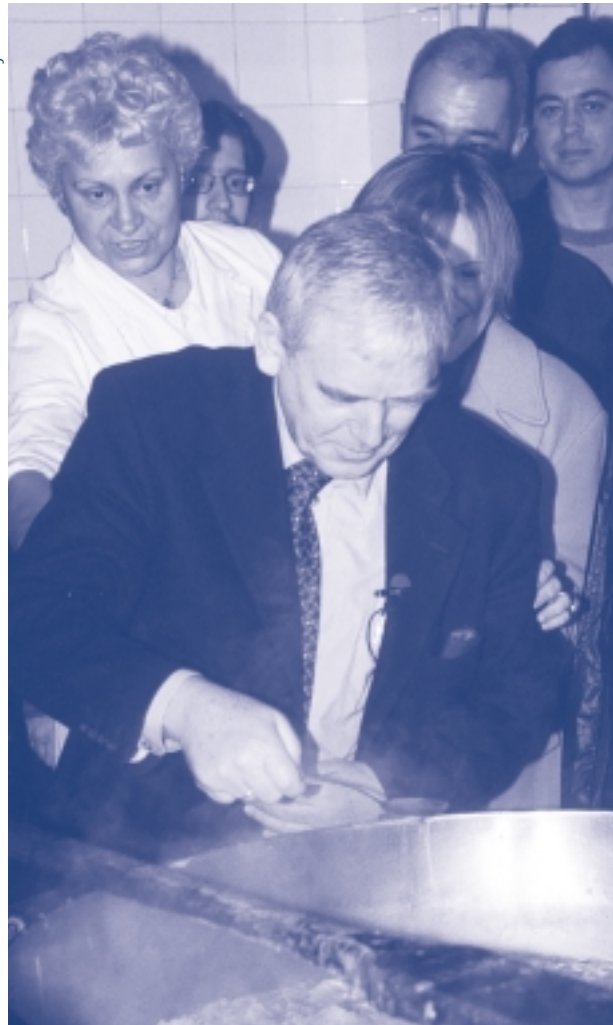
#### Croatia – ECHO offices closed

The ECHO offices were closed as the last 1999 humanitarian projects were completed. Other longer-term Commission assistance programmes have now taken over. ECHO's overall humanitarian contribution in support of refugee return to Croatia between 1992-2000 was some € 300 million.

- **Commissioner Nielson visiting an ECHO-funded soup kitchen in Serbia in December.**

*The establishment of a new, democratic government in the former Yugoslavia led to an immediate improvement in relations with the EU.*

Photo by ECHO



# KEY EVENTS

Photo by ECHO

## June

### Eritrea and Ethiopia – peace accord

Eritrea and Ethiopia accepted an international peace plan to end their two-year border conflict. This involved the establishment of a 25-km buffer zone inside Eritrea and along the disputed border, to be policed by a UN peacekeeping force.

### Guatemala – floods

Heavy rains lead to the deaths of at least 25 people and left more than 2,600 homeless.

## July

### Southern Caucasus – drought

An exceptionally dry winter, and continuing lack of rainfall through the spring and early summer, led to serious crop losses and the degradation of winter pasture lands in the Southern Caucasus. Georgia was particularly badly affected, suffering its worst drought since 1964.

## August

### Afghanistan – conflict continues

Taliban forces launched an offensive in northern Afghanistan, adding to the humanitarian crisis that the country already faces. The latest bout of fighting also threatened to destabilise the situation in neighbouring Tajikistan which has its own humanitarian problems and is ill-equipped to deal with an influx of refugees.

### North Korea (DPRK) – typhoon

On 31 August, Typhoon Prapiroon struck North Korea killing 49 people. More than 29,000 homes were destroyed and a further 96,000 were damaged by floodwaters. Estimated cereal losses were more than 357,000 tonnes.

### Tajikistan – drought

Tajikistan was hit by drought, leading to a deterioration in food security, particularly in Khujand province in the north and Khatlon province in the south. The effects of the drought were more severe because of continuing infrastructure problems in the country, which is still to recovery fully from years of civil war.

## September

### West Timor – aid workers killed

460 foreign aid workers were evacuated from West Timor following the murder of three of their colleagues by members of an armed militia. All ECHO-financed operations in West Timor were suspended as a result. The focus of the humanitarian agencies' work was on helping people displaced from East Timor as a result of the fighting which erupted in September 1999.

### Guinea – conflict spills over the border

Previously a haven of relative stability and the main place of refuge for Sierra Leoneans and Liberians, Guinea became the target of cross-border attacks and internal violence. Though mainly directed at refugees, the fighting also led to internal displacement among the resident population.

### Bangladesh – floods

Heavy rain inundated areas of south west Bangladesh which are traditionally flood-free. With no experience of dealing with this kind of crisis, the victims were largely unprepared. Some three million people were affected. Tens of thousands of homes collapsed while farmland, water sources and roads were destroyed.

### Caribbean – storms

Hurricane Keith and Tropical Storm Joyce struck a number of Caribbean countries, causing severe flooding and widespread damage. Some 44,000 people were affected.

- ECHO-funded water tank at an IDP camp in a government-controlled enclave in Sierra Leone. •  
*Renewed fighting in April led to further population displacements.*



Photo by ECHO



- Aircraft involved in delivering food supplies to Sudan at Lokichoggio airport in Kenya. •
- In March, a number of humanitarian agencies were expelled from Sudan after refusing to sign a memorandum of understanding with the SPLA.*

#### **Palestinian Territories – uprising leads to border closures**

Violence erupted in the Middle East as Palestinian protestors confronted Israeli forces. Israel's response included the closure of its borders with the territories controlled by the Palestinian Authority. This led to a developing humanitarian crisis as large numbers of people who used to commute to Israel for work lost their livelihoods.

#### **India – floods and drought**

Eastern India was struck by the latest in a series of floods which affected eleven provinces in successive waves over the summer. Worst hit were the states of Assam, Bihar, West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh. In the west of the country, Rajasthan and Gujarat continued to suffer a serious drought.

## **October**

#### **Uganda – ebola outbreak**

Uganda suffered a serious outbreak of ebola, a highly contagious virus which kills a high percentage of its victims and has no known cure. By the end of the month, the country's health ministry had reported almost 200 cases of the disease.

#### **Serbia – new political situation**

The political situation in the Western Balkans dramatically changed with the overthrow of the Milosevic regime on 5 October and the installation of a democratic government in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (followed three months later by a sweeping victory for the Democratic Alliance in the Serbian elections). The impact on Serbia's relations with the EU was immediate. Economic sanctions were lifted, the Commission launched an urgent aid package and long term commitments of financial assistance were made. More than 700,000 refugees and IDPs in Serbia, as well as the most impoverished groups in the general population, continued to receive essential humanitarian assistance funded by ECHO. At the same time, the political changes in both Belgrade and elsewhere in the region raised hopes for a durable solution to the refugee problem.

## **November**

#### **Venezuela – floods.**

A state of emergency was declared in nine flood-stricken states of northern Venezuela after torrential rains left more than two thousand people homeless.

#### **Colombia – peace talks break down**

Peace talks between the Government of Colombia and the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC), the country's main guerilla group, foundered, heightening fears of an escalation in the country's long-running civil conflict. Efforts to achieve a negotiated settlement involving FARC and other armed movements operating in the country had been stepped up in 2000.

#### **Congo (DRC) – refugees flee fighting**

More than 20,000 refugees fled to Zambia from the Democratic Republic of Congo following the fall of the town of Pweto to rebel forces.

## **December**

#### **Guinea and Liberia – yellow fever**

Liberia and Guinea suffered a serious outbreak of yellow fever. In Guinea, some 500 cases were recorded including almost 200 deaths.

#### **Western Sahara – autonomy proposal**

Morocco, for the first time, rejected the long-delayed UN plan for a referendum in Western Sahara, offering instead, significant autonomy for the Sahrawi people. This was rejected by Algeria and the Polisario Front, although the UN said it would examine the proposal.

#### **Mongolia – winter crisis in rural areas**

After an extremely harsh winter in 1999-2000 followed by a drought during the summer, Mongolia was again affected by what is known locally as the "dzud" (winter crisis). There were serious losses in the livestock sector, which is the backbone of the rural economy, undermining the food security of the herding community. Some 300,000 herders in 20 provinces were affected.

#### **Bosnia-Herzegovina – ECHO offices closed**

ECHO's offices in Bosnia-Herzegovina were closed at the end of December. Projects begun in 1999 to support the return of refugees to the country were completed and other, longer-term Commission assistance programmes in this area have now taken over. ECHO's overall contribution to Bosnia-Herzegovina between 1992 and amounted to more than € 1 billion.

## Victims of TV diplomacy

by Renaud Girard

*It is a sad fact that many humanitarian tragedies attract little public attention outside the immediate crisis zone. Without the oxygen of publicity, those working to bring relief to the affected areas can face an uphill struggle. In this article, Renaud Girard, senior reporter on the French Newspaper, "Le Figaro", offers a frank analysis of the problem. The world's rich countries have a moral obligation to aid the victims of humanitarian crises he argues, pointing out that their own interests will be served in the process.*

In the 1970s, when Brezhnev's Soviet Union was at the pinnacle of its power, the belief in the West was that the regional battles multiplying in Africa, Asia and Latin America were just an extension of the Cold War and the face-off between the world's two main blocs. Then, in 1989, the Communist bloc collapsed, ending forty years of superpower rivalry. Everyone assumed that the number of local wars would dwindle. Nothing could have been further from the truth. It seems that the end of the balance of terror and of the division of the world into two camps unleashed tensions that had hitherto been simmering just beneath the surface. In the last ten years, civil wars and ethnic conflicts have broken out in increasing numbers, and the result is that regional conflict still rages unresolved in more than 30 places.

It would be wrong to say that the international community (shorthand for the major Western powers) completely ignores these crises. UNHCR (the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees) tries to provide material help for the tens of thousands of people who become refugees every time even a small military confrontation erupts but, at the diplomatic level, the situation is different. In most cases, the West's foreign ministries take a "hands-off" attitude, especially if no great economic or strategic interests are at stake. Experts are appointed to "keep an eye on things", but once events have been going on for a while, governments lose interest. These are the world's forgotten wars.

But how do they end up forgotten? Western societies have become democracies of opinion. Exercising their sovereign power through the ballot box, the people

appoint their leaders, who acquire what is often a very imprecise mandate based on a very imprecise platform. Once they are in power, the main preoccupation of these leaders is to live up to the expectations of public opinion. They follow the opinion polls, and prefer to be guided by events than by in-depth, long-term action, because the latter pays few electoral dividends and is difficult to explain in a two-minute TV news slot. Governments' foreign policy is shaped in reaction to, not anticipation of, events - which are done to death by the media. This is what we might call TV diplomacy.

We could offer two examples. The first is Kosovo, where the problems go back to 1981. The Western powers ignored the issue at Dayton in 1995, and only took an interest in March 1998, when TV reports of massacres appeared, and then later in the summer, when burnt-out villages and Albanian families wandering the roads appeared on our screens.

## "International politics is being dumbed down by the tyranny of the TV picture"

The second is Rwanda, where the eruption of ethnic violence in the wake of the mysterious attack on President Habyarimana's aircraft on 6 April 1994 prompted immediate French military intervention to evacuate European expatriates from Kigali. Then the West lost interest. It was not until a shocked public saw the first pictures revealing the scale of the genocide under way that the French government decided to intervene again. Operation Turquoise, a military/humanitarian mission in mid-June, was limited to the south-western corner of the country. It was too late for the victims. Half a million Tutsis had already been murdered. This was not the key aspect however. The important thing was that TV news reports featured French military doctors at the bedsides of Rwandan patients, and that the French government had shown that it cared, and had finally "done something".

Why do we feel so uncomfortable talking about Western military intervention for humanitarian reasons in Kurdistan, Somalia, Rwanda, Congo, Kosovo or Sierra Leone, which characterised the 1990s? These missions were not, after all, seeking to defend some

Photo by Elisabeth Rousset, ECHO





sordid commercial interest, but to save people in distress who were caught up in civil war.

The discomfort comes from the reasons for beginning and ending those missions. They were not triggered by reflection, but by emotion. The story is always the same. An old political or ethnic dispute degenerates into fighting. Civil war spreads, drags on and becomes entrenched. The inhabitants leave or are driven from their homes. The disaster worsens. The TV cameras arrive, and families sitting eating dinner in front of the evening news are shocked by the invariably horrible scenes they see. Western governments then unite, because "something has to be done", and the UN Security Council sends men in with a late and minimal mandate. International politics is being dumbed down by this tyranny of the TV picture.

In the world of TV diplomacy, one picture will rapidly give way to the next, and policy will change accordingly. We see the body of a GI being dragged around Mogadishu by a Somali mob, and the President

of the USA does an about-turn on diplomatic policy in the Horn of Africa, becoming militantly non-interventionist.

The West's troops - and journalists - withdrew from Somalia, and its war became a forgotten one. Western TV channels, particularly in the USA, like to see things as black and white. They prefer wars where the "Goodies" are fighting the "Baddies", because it is so much easier to explain. In Somalia, the nice Americans are trying to catch the wicked Aideed, warlord of the south of Mogadishu. In Kosovo, the wicked Serbs are chasing the nice Albanians, and so on.

Sometimes, the black and white view doesn't work. General Aideed goes from being a wanted criminal one minute to a valid interlocutor of the US State Department the next. The nice freedom fighters of the UCK (the Kosovo Liberation Army) turn into terrorists when they attack Macedonia's territorial integrity, which is backed by the US. The best way to deal with these contradictions is simply not to talk about the war which gave rise to them - a war that is terribly difficult to understand because it isn't black and white. In other words, to make it a forgotten war. Who talks about Somalia any more? Nobody. We still talk about Macedonia (it's right in the middle of Europe), but much, much less than we did during the NATO air campaign against Yugoslavia. And when it comes to the terrible ethnic cleansing unleashed against the Serbs, gypsies and other non-Albanian minorities in Kosovo, once KFOR arrived, scarcely a word was heard from the big US networks.

Afghanistan's forgotten war only hit the headlines again because of a sensational event - the blowing-up of the Buddhas of Bamiyan. Since UNESCO failed in its bid to get the Taliban to backtrack, those in high places have stopped being interested in a country destroyed by 25 years of fighting.

Despite the fact that the West's big powers and media empires say so little about the Third World's wars, the Third World's population still needs food, shelter, health care and education. NGOs cannot manage on their own, because with the best will in the world they are subject to the pitiless laws of the media circus. They can get much more in donations from the public for troublespots which are on TV all the time than for those which have been forgotten. This means that the supply of humanitarian aid is often completely out of line with needs on the ground. In Sarajevo and Pristina, places whose situations became media events, there were over 300 NGOs at the end of the war - they were falling over each other. Contrast this with the plight of Somali and Afghan families, who are

• Participants in a humanitarian "food for work" programme in Afghanistan. •

*Afghanistan's forgotten war only hit the headlines again because of a sensational event - the blowing-up of the Buddhas of Bamiyan*



# FEATURE - OUT OF THE SPOTLIGHT



getting much less from NGOs now than Bosnian and Albanian families.

But it is still the duty of the rich countries, and the US and EU chief among them, to help all victims, whether they are in the media spotlight or not.

In fact, it's not just a matter of moral duty, it's a matter of self-interest. If the EU wants to avoid having tens of thousands of refugees from these forgotten wars knocking on its door as asylum seekers, it is in its interests to help them on the spot. The cost per head of emergency and development aid is always much lower than, and cannot remotely be compared with, the legal and social costs of an asylum seeker.

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Humanitarian aid must be determined by the needs of people in crisis-hit areas, not by the closeness of the links a particular Third World country has with its old colonial master. Decolonisation happened forty years ago, and the problems developing countries have two generations on are no longer post-colonial in nature. The instinct of former colonists to turn to their former colonies is understandable, but it is much less justified than it was before and it is counter-productive. The

only solution for the EU Member States is to act together, multilaterally, in giving development aid.

The question arises of how to attract and retain the attention of public and private-sector donors alike if a particular crisis has been forgotten, for lack of coverage by the major Western media. However, the advantage of our "global village" is that channels of information other than the mass media also get a look-in. The Web is a very effective way of providing a target audience with regular and dedicated information on a given issue. Its low cost allows development aid institutions and non-governmental organisations on the ground to give all their donors instant updates.

Third World crises are only forgotten by world leaders who genuinely want to forget them, and by people who have made "forgetting" a tool of their short-sighted policies.

R.G.

# Tajikistan Living on the edge

by Janny Bosscher

"I simply wasn't able to", said Rukhia when asked why she had not brought her daughter to the hospital earlier. Seriously dehydrated and malnourished, the child of about six months needed immediate medical attention.

When we spoke to Rukhia, there were a lot of children present, grouped protectively around her. "My husband died during the civil war," she told us, "and since then, my mother and I have looked after the family together."

It was obvious that she did not have the money for her daughter's medical care, but there are other reasons why the child did not get immediate medical treatment. In a post-conflict situation, people have a tendency to lie low and avoid asking others for favours. "This kind of behaviour can lead to trouble", explained Rukhia, "especially if you are from a family headed only by women."

Rukhia's daughter got her treatment this time, though it took some time to convince her mother to accept help because, as she put it, "I did not believe that people actually wanted to assist." But what will happen if the child falls sick again?

## "Surveys showed high rates of chronic malnutrition"

When drought hit Tajikistan in 2000, a worst case scenario came true. Many Tajiks were already struggling to survive in a country that had been torn apart by brutal civil war following the collapse of the Soviet Union. In rural areas, the daily diet for many was nothing more than a few slices of bread and cups of tea. Surveys showed high rates of chronic malnutrition, and in the poorest areas, there were cases of acute malnutrition, together with marasmus and kwashiorkor, diseases previously unknown to Tajikistan. In this kind of situation, people have very few coping mechanisms left when further disaster strikes.

Then the rains failed. Families already barely surviving on the limited produce from their farms and gardens now had no crops at all to harvest. People were forced to move away from the most severely-hit areas. Suddenly, many young children, like Rukhia's daughter, were at risk.

The effects of the drought were unevenly spread. Overall, the south was hardest hit though several northern districts were also badly affected. Upstream villages usually managed to get more water than those downstream, and some families were able to cope better than others. But across the country, many of the more vulnerable, such as infants and newly born children were affected.

Prior to the drought, it had proved difficult to target the most vulnerable for assistance given that underlying poverty was almost universal. ECHO had already been engaged in lengthy discussions with its partners in Tajikistan about targeting mechanisms, and improvements had been introduced using a community-based approach.

Photo by Steve Dupont/Contrasto



• People were forced to move away from drought stricken areas and suddenly, many young children were at risk. •

Even today, targeting is not so easy given that most rural people are chronically poor, and village communities have responded to this by weaving their own social safety nets. The worst-off are helped by the community, thus levelling the burden. It is not surprising in these circumstances to discover that families have distributed some of the humanitarian aid they have received to people who previously helped them out. There have even been reports from some villages that, following a targeted food distribution, the people have brought the food to the village square and redistributed it equally. It is therefore important to involve the villages themselves in the targeting and selection of beneficiaries.

Food security is a key aspect in maintaining the stability of a country in a post-conflict situation. Although Tajikistan's civil war ended officially in 1997, the peace process was long and difficult and the threat of renewed conflict persisted for at least two years. It was really only in 2000 that the tensions began to subside and, in some areas, the situation remains unstable.

The economy has gone into a downward spiral, bringing crushing poverty to the general population and prompting the migration of many skilled workers. Education levels have also slumped. There are no obvious solutions to the crisis in a country which lacks natural resources and is so isolated geographically. Developments in the wider region could also draw the country back into conflict.

Sadly, the humanitarian situation in Tajikistan gets little attention from the international media. It is an obvious example of a "forgotten crisis". ECHO, however, has maintained consistent support since 1993 and has committed more than € 100 million to the country over the past eight years, concentrating on meeting the most urgent needs.

For the longer term, it will take a highly coordinated and generous international effort to keep Tajikistan on the path to peace, stability and development and to provide a future for Rukhia's daughter.

J.B.

*The author is a former ECHO  
Field Officer in Tajikistan*

## Eritrea Displaced by conflict

by Christophe Ayad

When fierce fighting erupted again, in spring 2000, on the frontline between Eritrea and Ethiopia, tens of thousands of civilians were forced to take to the roads ahead of the advancing Ethiopian troops. Almost 100,000 people fled to neighbouring Sudan. Inside Eritrea, several dozen camps were hastily built, of which Mayhabar is the largest. 40,000 people initially took refuge there and, three months after the fighting had ended, some 30,000 remained, living in appalling conditions.

The camp is located at the entrance to the village in a small valley about 30 kilometres from the capital, Asmara. There is a shortage of tents, each of which accommodates at least two families. In the technical school, which was requisitioned, up to eight families are crammed into classrooms measuring three metres by four.

Sixty-five year old Melachu Tesfamikhail lives in a metal container in the camp which is 'home' to no

Photo by Hermann Spitz, ECHO

• Mayhabar Camp which hosted 40,000 displaced people when the fighting resumed. •



fewer than ten people including three infants. "I sleep in a flour sack," she explains. "There isn't even enough space to put down a mattress. During the day, the heat is so unbearable that it's impossible to remain inside. At night, we all get in each other's way and it is difficult to sleep, particularly with the children there. My only possessions are my green dress and the plastic sandals I had on when I was forced to leave home."

This elderly lady with tattoos on her face fled from Senafe, in southern Eritrea, shortly after the launch of the Ethiopian offensive in May 2000: "When the shells began landing on our homes, we abandoned everything and walked to Adi Qeyi. I travelled on from there with my pregnant daughter by bus, with nothing but the clothes I was wearing. I am all alone here. My husband took refuge in the mountains when the attack began and I have heard nothing from him since. My daughter made it to the home of her parents in law in Dekamhere with her five children. My son, meanwhile, is still at the front." Despite the ceasefire on 18 June, the two armies had not yet withdrawn from the combat zone.

Most of the camp's inhabitants come from the region where the central front is located. They have been grouped together by their village of origin to preserve some semblance of normality. "This makes it easier to hand out the food," explains the head of the camp. "We supply the village chiefs with the monthly rations

and they then organise the distribution. We have even managed to resume the children's schooling", he reveals, "although the teachers have to do their work under the shade of a tree, without textbooks or jotters".

The Eritrean authorities, caught off-guard by the huge displacement of civilians, were obliged to call on the help of international humanitarian agencies and NGOs whom they do not fully trust. In fact, three years previously, most NGOs were summarily ejected from Asmara in the name of national independence and self-sufficiency. Now, the Eritreans sometimes find it difficult to understand that the aid cannot simply flow in from one day to the next, in the quantities required.

## "There isn't even enough space to put down a mattress"

Melachu Tesfamikhail is fearful of what lies in store for her. "What is going to happen", she asks. "We cannot return home but here, we are hanging on by a thread. All it needs is for the aid to stop coming and we will die of starvation." There is no doubt that it would take very little for these highly vulnerable people to slip below the threshold of malnutrition. There has already been a disturbing increase in the number of cases of dysentery which is particularly dangerous for young children.

Another worry is the future of the camp itself. No one knows if it will be moved, following a statement by the education minister in which he expressed a wish to repossess the technical school for the beginning of the new term in October. Autumn sees the arrival of the rains, followed by cold weather, especially at night in this mountainous region. "Most of the people in the camp want to return home as soon as possible", says Melachu, "but I know that it is going to take some time. I cannot go back to my home in Senafe because the town is still occupied by Ethiopian troops. We have also been told that everything is in ruins. The soldiers have taken everything, even the doors and windows."

Eritrea is one of the poorest countries in the world and the war has set its development back many years. Everything in the frontier zones needs to be rebuilt: schools, roads, dispensaries, water pumps and electricity systems. On top of this, most of the displaced people in Mayhabar are farmers and, because of the fighting, they have not been able to plant their crops. This means that, next year, they face the prospect of famine.

C.A.

*The author is a journalist with "Libération"*



## Colombia Civilians as a weapon of war

by Ana M. Guirao

Ruth is one of many Colombians who has been forced to leave her native country. She now lives in Spain. The tragic story of her flight from home began when, together with her younger daughter, she was on a visit to her elder daughter and son-in-law. "During our stay," she told us, "guerrillas of the National Liberation Army (ELN) arrived at the house looking for new recruits. They said that they needed men to fight and women to cook. We refused to go with them and they eventually left to go back to their mountain base." She went on to explain how the paramilitaries had turned up at the house a few days later. These government "soldiers" accused the family of collaborating with the guerrillas. "We denied this. We did tell them the ELN had tried to recruit us but that we had refused." Sadly this was not enough to save the family from the brutality that would follow.

Ruth's son-in-law was severely beaten and her younger daughter, barely 16, was raped by the leader of the group. Ruth herself was used as "entertainment" for the rest of the militia. She was raped and tortured by 15 men, and fainted. "After the paramilitaries had left, my daughter wrapped me up in a blanket, believing I was dead."

Fortunately, though deeply traumatised, Ruth survived the ordeal and she later recovered consciousness. Despite their injuries, the family decided to leave immediately, fearing that the men might come back. They took temporary refuge in a hotel; where they made contact with someone who could provide them with "papers"

enabling them to leave the country. They paid \$10,000 for the documents. Ruth arrived in Spain with the clothes she was standing in and psychologically in pieces.

When we spoke to her, she urged us to "tell it all... so that people know why we have to leave our countries."

For years, Colombia has been in the grip of violent internal warfare and the various armed groups involved deliberately target civilians. This is a clear violation of international humanitarian law.

### "People have disappeared without trace and whole communities have been terrorised"

Their strategy is to undermine their opponents by forcing people out of their homes. Many atrocities have been committed including murder and mutilation. People have disappeared without trace and whole communities have been terrorised. Against this backdrop, the mere threat of violence is often now enough to send people fleeing.

As a result 3.3 million Colombians, almost 8% of the population, now live outside the country, mainly in the USA, Venezuela and Ecuador. Over the last four years, more than a million have left. Another 1.5 million have been internally displaced. So far, the war has claimed 250,000 lives.

A.M.G.

*The author works for Caritas Spain*

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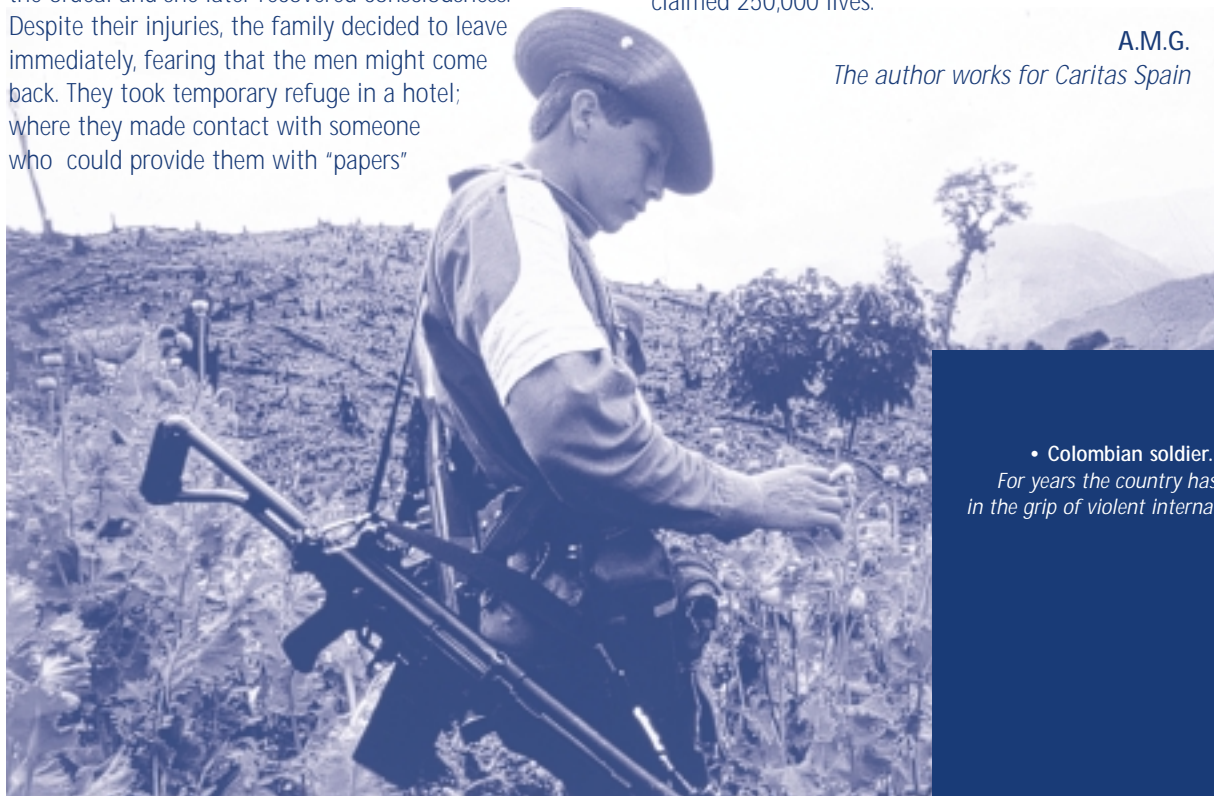


Photo by V. Macon/Contrasto

• Colombian soldier. •  
*For years the country has been in the grip of violent internal warfare.*

## Sierra Leone

# On a difficult road to peace

Between 16 and 22 December 2000, Mohamed Jalloh ceased to be a refugee and became instead, an internally displaced person (IDP). For it was some time during this period that the former diamond miner from Kenema in Sierra Leone crossed the border back into his own country after spending more than three years in a refugee camp in Guinea.

Mohamed was probably not even aware of his changed status in the eyes of the international community and if he was, it can hardly have been uppermost in his mind during the gruelling walk through the bush with his heavily pregnant wife and other family members. He is more likely to have been thinking of the three children he had left behind with his mother, aged ten, seven and five.

The civil war in Sierra Leone forced the Jalloh family to flee from Kenema in 1997, and they ended up in a camp near Kissidougou in Guinea. It may not have been a "normal" existence but at least there was relative stability and Mohamed became an English teacher at the camp.

Sadly, his return to Sierra Leone at the end of 2000 was not part of a planned repatriation but because the war had spilled over into Guinea. Attacks by the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in December created a new wave of displacement and the Jallohs found themselves on the move again. They tried to head for the Guinean capital, Conakry, but were turned back on the road by army units. The prospects looked bleak. Conakry spelt safety but the way was barred. The only other option was a frightening journey back into the war zone and possible death. The family then took an agonising decision. Mohamed's elderly mother would try again for Conakry taking her grandchildren with her, on the assumption that the Guinean troops barring the route might relent when faced with obviously vulnerable civilians. The other family members would take their chances in the border region.

After six days of walking, Mohamed and his wife and father reached the relative safety of Kabala, a government-controlled enclave in North Eastern Sierra Leone. We met them in March in the interim care centre established just outside the town to accommodate returnees forced back across the border by the fighting in Guinea. Two weeks earlier, Mrs Jalloh had given birth in the camp but for three months, the family had received no news about the fate of Mohamed's mother and the three elder children. The hope is that they made it to Conakry and perhaps were then repatriated by ship to Freetown.

**"The tragedy of the Jallohs' story is that it is so commonplace"**

The tragedy of the Jallohs' story is that it is so commonplace. After many years of war, hundreds of thousands of Sierra Leoneans have similar stories to tell. Although those who have been displaced from their homes – no less than a third of the entire population – are among the most vulnerable, suffering can be found everywhere. All the social indicators are depressing but the one which perhaps best reflects the scale of the tragedy is life expectancy. In Sierra Leone, the average person can expect to live just 32 years.

Throughout the crisis, ECHO has been working alongside other humanitarian agencies to help meet the humanitarian needs of the people of Sierra Leone. They have been able to offer a lifeline to many, but the key to ending the misery is to establish a sustainable peace. This must include genuine reconciliation between the warring parties – no easy

### *Help for IDPs in Colombia*

Since July 1997, Caritas Spain has been running an emergency humanitarian programme in Colombia using its own resources and ECHO funding. The programme includes assistance to the residents of two overcrowded displacement centres in Turbo and Pavarando, with the provision of food, medicines, mosquito nets and bedding. This action has helped prevent displaced people from moving

to the outskirts of Colombia's larger cities where they are more likely to face long-term poverty and risk losing their links with home.

With the help of ECHO, Caritas has also helped to meet the humanitarian needs of war victims in other parts of the country providing, among other things, food security, basic health care, health training and housing.

# PEOPLE

task given the brutal acts which have been committed over the past decade.

At the time of writing, RUF forces and Guinean troops were still fighting in border areas but despite this, there were some signs of progress. UN peacekeepers were gradually deploying further inland, while the presence of British military personnel, involved in training the Sierra Leone Army, was helping to bolster confidence in the Freetown peninsula, where almost half the country's population are now concentrated. The elected government, ousted in a military coup in 1997 and then restored with ECOWAS support, was

planning for country-wide elections. Meanwhile, the RUF, which came within a whisker of seizing Freetown just a year earlier, was making noises about abandoning its armed struggle.

Despite these encouraging developments, it would take a brave person to predict a speedy return to normality in Sierra Leone. There have been several false dawns before and the people are acutely aware of the potential pitfalls on the road to peace.

Like most of his compatriots, Mohamed Jalloh is weary of war. "All that I want now", he told us quietly, "is to reunite my family and return home."



• Mohamed Jalloh with his wife and baby daughter. •

Photo by ECHO



## Afghanistan

Photo by Elisabeth Rousset, ECHO



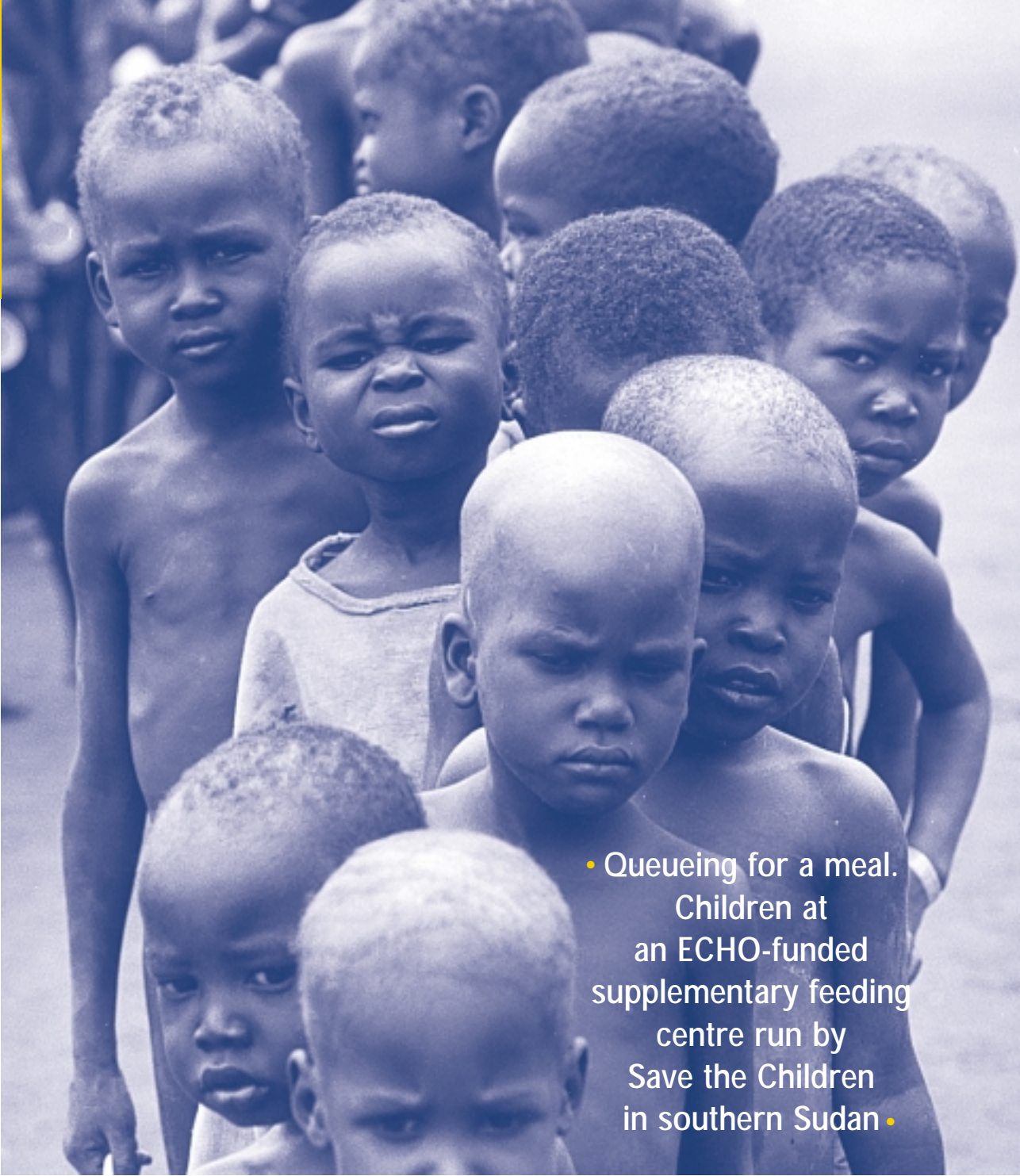
AFGHANISTAN

Afghanistan is struggling to cope with its worst drought in three decades after winter rains failed for the second successive year. This latest natural disaster has added to the misery of a population which has suffered more than 20 years of war. It is estimated that more than half a million Afghans have been displaced from their homes as a result of the latest crisis and that a million people are facing famine. The Afghan refugee population, living mainly in camps in neighbouring countries, is the second largest in the world (after the Palestinians).

Meanwhile, the fighting continues between the Kabul-based Taliban government and the Northern Alliance, contributing to a worsening of humanitarian conditions.

- **November 2000.**  
**Displaced Afghans, with nowhere to shelter on a barren plain in Herat •**

ECHO provided almost € 19 million in humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan during 2000, with support for victims of both the drought and the conflict. Projects included emergency assistance (shelter and medico-nutritional) to IDPs as well as food security activities in the countryside to halt the flow of people towards the towns.



• Queueing for a meal. Children at an ECHO-funded supplementary feeding centre run by Save the Children in southern Sudan •

Sudan, with almost 30 million inhabitants, is one of the poorest countries in Africa. Since 1983, the civil war which has raged between government and rebel forces has led to the deaths of more than one and a half million people and to massive population displacements. Up to now, diplomatic efforts have failed to break the deadlock.

The main victims of the “forgotten crisis” in this country, ravaged by conflict, floods and drought, are the displaced people who are confronted by famine, disease and chronic poverty.

ECHO, working through its partners in the field, is seeking to reduce mortality rates among the vulnerable sections of the population, through primary health care, therapeutic feeding and food security programmes. It is also financing sanitation, essential non-food supplies and logistical operations in both the north and the south of the country.

- Scene from Grozny. Conditions for the resident population have deteriorated as the war drags on •

## Chechnya

By the end of 2000, with no sign of a political settlement to the Chechnya conflict, displaced Chechens in neighbouring republics (including approximately 170,000 in Ingushetia and 20,000 in Dagestan) prepared to spend a second winter living in camps and temporary settlements, or with host families.

Much of Chechnya itself lies in ruins, including most of Grozny, the capital. Homes, factories, schools and hospitals have been destroyed while agricultural production has fallen sharply. Anti-personnel mines, planted indiscriminately, pose a serious threat to the civilian population.

In addition to the Chechens who have fled to neighbouring republics, some 170,000 are internally displaced, struggling to survive in extreme circumstances.

Meanwhile, conditions for the resident population have also deteriorated due to the insufficient implementation of government aid and reconstruction programmes.

ECHO's ongoing commitment to the victims of the conflict was reflected in € 23 million-worth of humanitarian aid during 2000. Inside Chechnya, ECHO's NGO partners continued to face serious difficulties in their efforts to deliver humanitarian relief. One major cause was the highly volatile security situation, but the situation was exacerbated by a lack of access to the UN-sponsored radio communication system and problems with the permits that are needed to operate in the republic. As a result, expatriate aid workers had limited access and many operations could only be monitored by "remote control".

## Mozambique

The heaviest rains in half a century brought widespread destruction to Southern Africa in February 2000. Mozambique was worst hit. Swollen rivers burst their banks affecting an estimated million people, many of whom were forced to flee their homes.

The disaster was a serious setback to a country viewed by many as a beacon of hope for Africa. After a long civil war, the people of Mozambique had set a course for peace, the dividends of which were beginning to flow in the shape of increased investment and significant economic development.

Prompt and coordinated action by humanitarian agencies, including ECHO, helped to limit the scale of the crisis. ECHO provided health care, supported the resettlement of flood victims in safer areas and assisted farmers to resume crop and livestock production.

Although a blow in both human and economic terms, there was optimism that the flooding would not harm Mozambique's long-term progress. People are more acutely aware, however, of the devastating threat posed by extreme weather, especially in developing countries with limited coping mechanisms. This may have been a 'natural' disaster but the evidence is growing that human activity is at least partially responsible for unprecedented climatic events in different parts of the world.

• Distribution  
of Red Cross relief supplies  
in Mozambique •

MOZAMBIQUE



Photo by Unkel-Saba/Contrasto

# North Korea

Photo by Javier Menendez Bonilla, ECHO

NORTH KOREA

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In the late 1990s, structural economic deficiencies, combined with a series of natural catastrophes, brought famine to the Democratic People's Republic of North Korea (DPRK) resulting in the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people. By 2000, the worst effects of the famine had been alleviated by international food aid but the country still faces serious humanitarian problems. In August, the north-east coast was struck by a devastating typhoon resulting in further misery for many people already living in precarious conditions.

During the year, ECHO funded humanitarian actions worth € 7.3 million in North Korea. An important component of its assistance was the provision of 36,000 sets of winter clothing (padded jackets and trousers, gloves and shoes) for kindergarten children.

• Children at a kindergarten who have received ECHO-funded help in the form of winter clothing •

## Bosnia and Herzegovina

### Humanitarian operations concluded



Photo by DAZ

- Convoy delivering vital international aid to Zenica at the height of the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina. ECHO's operations in this country were wound up in 2000 •

December 2000 marked the final closure of the ECHO operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Since the beginning of the conflict in 1992, ECHO, in accordance with its mandate of saving lives, was at the forefront of efforts to assist the endangered population of the country, disbursing more than € 1 billion.

Initially working with the main international aid agencies, notably UNHCR, WHO, WFP and ICRC, to provide basic food supplies to people at risk, ECHO's effort expanded over time into a wide-range of additional support programmes. These included supplementary food for mothers and infants, specific food aid for extremely vulnerable groups, health care and vital medicines, materials to meet winter needs, and heating fuel for a number of institutions. In addition, ECHO widened its operational reach and capacity, forming partnerships with many NGOs to complement the activities of the major agencies.

In 1995, ECHO established its own presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina to give added impetus to the actions being undertaken countrywide. With the signature of the Dayton Peace Accords in December of that year, ECHO was uniquely placed to assist the return of displaced persons and refugees. A significant rehabilitation component

was incorporated into the ECHO budget to facilitate the return and reintegration of the most vulnerable into their places of origin, particularly in the rural areas. More than 150 local health and social care facilities were rehabilitated while repairs to infrastructure included more than 250 electrification and 200 local water supply projects. At the same time, the repair and rehabilitation of over 8,500 war-damaged dwellings was also funded by ECHO. This integrated approach allowed over 30,000 people to go home and to rebuild their shattered lives after years in displacement.

At the peak of its activities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, ECHO maintained five field offices throughout the country to facilitate monitoring of programmes and coordination with a large number of implementing partners. The withdrawal of ECHO from Bosnia and Herzegovina has been carefully staged to ensure that alternative mechanisms have been identified to maintain support for the beneficiaries most at risk. The ECHO actions have created a broad foundation, which other sectoral and integrated return programmes funded by the European Commission continue to build upon, in the framework of the OBNOVA and CARDS Regulations.

## Policy aspects

### A more coherent division of labour

2000 was a transition year for ECHO during which the political agenda set by Commissioner Poul Nielson led to new orientations in three important policy areas:

- the so-called "gap" between relief, rehabilitation and development (LRRD);
- relations with the United Nations; and,
- administrative reform.

As regards the institutional and policy aspects, priority was given to elaborating a more coherent division of labour between Community instruments in the area of external relations, mainly with respect to the "grey zone" between relief, rehabilitation and development operations, but also in relation to conflict prevention and crisis management. ECHO's role has been clarified in a way that focuses more clearly on its core mandate, that is to say providing immediate life-saving relief in emergencies, and maintaining its operational independence in non-military crisis management, thereby ensuring ECHO's vital impartiality in humanitarian crises. Work began on communications on the "grey zone", and on building a more effective partnership with the United Nations in development cooperation and humanitarian affairs.

As part of the reform effort, ECHO took concrete steps to implement the recommendations of the evaluation of its work conducted in 1999 and following which, the Commission had published a Communication entitled *"Assessment and future of Community humanitarian activities"*<sup>1</sup>.

Changes were made to ECHO's organisational structure in June. The key objective was to boost operational capacity, which entailed strengthening the support function of ECHO's administrative, conceptual, financial, audit and evaluation components. These have been related more closely and logically to the procedural and policy aspects of ECHO's interventions in various parts of the world. The new structure accommodates the need for quick and efficient reaction, and presents easy and clear access for ECHO's external partners. ECHO also initiated a review of its internal procedures to facilitate and accelerate the decision-making process, while maintaining adequate controls. Measures adopted by the Commission in November on the simplification of procedures opened the possibility for ECHO to introduce fast-track decision-making, enabling it to fund relief operations in the immediate aftermath of a "sudden-onset" disaster.

With respect to the performance-based operational strategy, ECHO strengthened its partnership with other humanitarian organisations and improved its method of strategic programming. In close dialogue with partners, for example, the technical documents of the Framework Partnership Agreement were simplified and clarified, and more flexibility was introduced. To introduce more transparency and predictability into the planning process, ECHO held a broad dialogue with Member States, the European Parliament and the main humanitarian organisations, including the United Nations, about its operational and thematic priorities for the coming year.

1. Published on 26 October 1999.

## Partnership

### Partner network grows

The new Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA), which entered into force on 1 January 1999, continues to be the privileged instrument governing relations between ECHO and its partners. Its duration, initially foreseen until December 2000, was extended to December 2001.

During 2000, the FPA underwent a revision process aimed at adapting the implementing procedures to the commitments given by the Commission in its Communication of 26 October 1999.

New elements were introduced to improve the quality of the aid provided and the evaluation of the humanitarian projects financed by ECHO. Concepts like the logical framework, and supporting material such as a glossary and a set of standard implementing documents, were incorporated into the FPA.

In 2000, the partner network grew in size. Since the adoption of the new FPA, in 1999, ECHO has received hundreds of applications to sign the agreement. Of course, not all of these led to a new partnership: the signature of an FPA is, in fact, the final stage of a selection process geared to evaluate the operational capacity and financial viability of each candidate, as well as its overall compliance with the provisions of the Humanitarian Aid Regulation. However, the high level of demand was a clear sign of the interest in ECHO funding shown by a wide variety of field-operators. The diversity of its implementing partners is one of ECHO's main assets. More than 180 non-governmental organisations, from the very small to the largest, world-renowned NGOs, have now joined the network. The geographical coverage is also significant. ECHO works with organisations based in all EU Member States, with a reasonable representation from all the countries concerned. Outside the Union, ECHO also currently has partners in Norway, Switzerland and the USA.

## Finances

### African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries get bigger share

In 2000, ECHO's response to humanitarian crises was made through 121 funding decisions for a total amount of € 491.7 million. Of this amount, € 488.9 million was financed from the Community's budget and € 2.85 million was drawn from the European Development Fund for ACP countries. Comparing the figures with those of previous years, it should be borne in mind that the level of humanitarian funding in 1999 was higher largely due to the exceptional needs arising from the Kosovo crisis. These needs were funded, in part, through the use of € 346 million from the emergency aid reserve, (budget line B7-910). In 2000, 993 contracts were signed for a total budgetary amount of € 545 million for humanitarian projects in more than 60 countries. It should be noted that the figure for contracts in 2000 includes 242 contracts for the

implementation of decisions taken in 1999.

The decisions in 2000, by region, were as follows (amounts in € thousands):

Africa, Caribbean, Pacific	170,178
Eastern Europe, New Independent States	147,630
Asia, Latin America, Middle East, North Africa	157,627
Other expenditure	16,280

The geographical distribution of funds reflects the dramatic improvement of the situation in the Western Balkans in 2000, bringing ECHO's funding to the region down from € 447 million in 1999 to € 98.7 million in 2000.

The share of funds allocated to the ACP region increased to 35% in 2000, primarily as a consequence of the serious situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo and West Africa, and the ongoing droughts in Eastern Africa.

Allocations to other regions remained more or less stable, with 16% going to Asia, 10% to North Africa/Middle East and the CIS/NIS respectively, and 6% to Latin America.

Many of ECHO interventions funded projects specifically designed to meet the needs of the most vulnerable population groups. For example, 47 projects with a total budget of € 16.7 million, were targeted specifically at meeting the needs of disaster-affected children.

European Union NGOs continued to be ECHO's main partner group (65% of funding), followed by the United Nations (19%) and other international organisations (10%). A strong emphasis on food aid operations, due to the droughts in many regions, meant that the World Food Programme was ECHO's largest individual partner with € 43 million in contract budgets.

Through its partners, ECHO provided relief to approximately 18 million people in 2000.

## Audit function boosted

ECHO's external audit function has been used to carry out audits and controls at the headquarters of the partners that have received the majority of ECHO's funds. The audits have been carried out openly and transparently with the involvement of the partners involved at each stage of the process. They have facilitated exchanges of information in both directions. Most of ECHO's audit reports have been completed with agreement on their contents between ECHO and the partner concerned.

Whilst the vast majority of ECHO's partners have been found to have met at least a minimum standard of financial control and accounting, a need for certain improvements was noted. In particular, many partners could improve the quality of financial information available for internal decision-making. The level of financial control and accounting between headquarters and field offices could also be improved.

In September 2000 the external audit function was re-organised as a part of the restructuring of ECHO. This function has been separated from the other tasks managed by ECHO's Finances and Audit Unit and it has been strengthened with extra staff. It will now also regularly use auditors from the private sector in order to expand further ECHO's audit capacity.

## Information and communication Changed emphasis

During 2000, ECHO adopted a new Information and Communication strategy designed to reach various audiences with a clear message about its work in providing humanitarian relief and of the need for European Union solidarity with the victims of natural or man-made disasters in other parts of the world.

The new approach involves a change in emphasis. While seeking to maintain and enhance ECHO's visibility as a key humanitarian actor, the strategy focuses more strongly on the broader concepts of "information" and "communication". This includes a clear definition of target audiences, with more structured objectives based on the use of both conventional and innovative communication tools.

A key aspect of the approach involves establishing a closer working relationship in the information sector between ECHO headquarters and the field (ECHO experts and offices, Commission Delegations). In this context, guidelines were drawn up and discussed with ECHO field experts and information assistants at special seminars. These define the responsibilities of the various actors, facilitating effective and immediate communication in humanitarian crises. Recognising the growing importance of the Internet as an information tool, ECHO improved the design and technical characteristics of its website.

ECHO funded a range of publications, seminars and conferences for a total of almost € 412,000. Publications included the Annual Review, the quarterly newsletter "ECHO News" and a leaflet on ECHO's activities in East Timor.

## Evaluation Developing a broader approach

The evaluation service continued to develop an approach aimed at ensuring that evaluations of ECHO-funded operations cover, as far as possible, both ex-post and ex-ante elements. This is designed to improve the quality of interventions, but also to integrate, in a pro-active way, the relevant aspects of the LRRD process (linking relief, rehabilitation and development).





Notable among the studies undertaken during the year were those dealing with ECHO's response to the Kosovo crisis, and with the operation of ECHO Flight.

The evaluation covering the Kosovo interventions highlighted the fact that ECHO's response capacity had been seriously tested by the allocation of large amounts of funding over a short period. It also underlined the difficulties of planning operations in a rapidly changing context. Despite the constraints, the report concluded that ECHO's overall response to the crisis, and its management of operations, had been broadly positive.

The impending expiry of the contract to provide an air transport service for aid workers in the Horn of Africa (ECHO Flight) was an opportunity to conduct an ex-ante evaluation on whether priority should be given to maintaining this service. With only minor modifications, it was recommended that it should continue. The necessary public tender documents, based on the evaluation results, were published towards the end of the year so that the new contract could enter into force with the conclusion of the existing one in May 2001.

Evaluation, like ECHO's 'front-line' activities, can be negatively affected by unforeseen events in the field. This was the case in Burundi where it was necessary to postpone an evaluation after the contract had been tendered. Such problems are bound to occur from time to time given the difficult circumstances prevailing in many of the places where humanitarian operations are needed. ECHO, however, remains strongly committed to the evaluation of its operations in such places, in order to maximise the quality of the aid that it supplies.

## Prevention and preparedness Action plans for South-East Asia and Central America

Following the evaluation of the Disaster Preparedness and Prevention programme (DIPECHO) Action Plans for South-East Asia and Central America, ECHO prepared a second Action Plan for each of these regions. The Plans provide for the following kinds of action:

- Operations to boost local capabilities: improving disaster response and forging closer relations between communities, local institutions and civil protection bodies to achieve this goal. These operations include education, training and risk mapping.
- Early-warning system networks: the aim of these is to detect disasters and rapidly transmit a warning, and to facilitate the organisation of rescue work.
- Pilot projects with a demonstration value: this entails the use of new technology in disaster prevention in a manner that is suited to the cultural and socio-economic environment of the vulnerable populations in question.

The Second Action Plan for South East Asia, consisting of 14 projects to be implemented by NGOs and international organisations, was adopted in July for an amount of € 4 million. 13 of the projects are being implemented at national and local level and one at regional level. The regional project aims to encourage cooperation and coordination of disaster preparedness activities throughout the region in particular through exchanges and dissemination of knowledge and experience.

The Second Action Plan for Central America was approved by the Commission in October for an amount of € 3.5 million. The funds will enable NGOs to carry out 10 projects over a twelve-month period, the main aim being to reduce the vulnerability of people in Central America to natural disasters. The operations focus on two main aspects: strengthening regional and national institutions in their capacity to respond to natural disasters; and promoting information exchange and coordination between communities, civil protection organisations and municipal bodies.

## Training and studies New grants awarded

At regular intervals, ECHO launches a grant facility for training, studies and networks in the humanitarian field. In 2000, 51 applications were received and ECHO made a total of € 1.8 million available. Projects selected include training courses on financial management and food security in emergencies, and studies on human rights and child soldiers. The network on humanitarian assistance (NOHA), launched in 1994, is a one-year multi-disciplinary post-graduate diploma in the humanitarian field. The curriculum provides a comprehensive overview of the humanitarian aid environment and is complemented by an internship either in a humanitarian organisation or in ECHO. Around 20 students attend the course in each of the eight participating European universities. In 2000, ECHO's contributed € 231,300 to the coordination costs of the network.



- Unloading food supplies at a camp for Sierra Leonean refugees in Guinea. •

## Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran

Funding - € 21.517 million

All of Afghanistan, and Iranian and Pakistani Baluchistan, were seriously affected by drought. The last drought of this magnitude dates back to 1971. The situation led to significant population displacements, with extra resources needed to stabilise communities and tide them over until the next harvest. ECHO drew up a € 9.5 million aid package. The bulk of this assistance (€ 6.9 million) was allocated to war-torn Afghanistan. There, ECHO supported drought victims through "Food for Work" operations, linking emergency activities with rehabilitation. Beneficiaries received food for participating in work to restore irrigation canals and deepen wells, thus improving the provision of much-needed water. Afghanistan also received more than € 12 million to cover needs created by the ongoing conflict.

## Algeria

Funding - € 0.3 million

ECHO activity in Algeria, where terrorist activities in the past have resulted in many deaths and injuries, concentrated on the social integration of traumatised children and adolescents through professional training, and on strengthening psychosocial support. ECHO is now phasing out its operations in this country.

## Angola

Funding - € 15.768 million

Hopes for peace were dashed by the resumption of the conflict in 1998. The government offensive in late 1999 that led to the recapture of several strategic UNITA strongholds did not result in significantly improved access to people in need, or in better living conditions for millions of Angolans. Some 60% of areas hosting IDPs were still without any humanitarian presence. It was estimated that up to € 3.7 million people affected by the war had urgent basic needs. Dangerous conditions continued to make it difficult for humanitarian organisations to operate, the greatest constraint being the lack of access to groups needing assistance. ECHO allocated almost € 16 million to fund a range of projects covering healthcare, nutrition, water and sanitation, emergency relief and air transport.

## Bangladesh

Funding - € 1.5 million

Following heavy rainfall in the Indian state of West Bengal, and water flows from the upper catchment areas of India, floodwaters entered Bangladesh in September through Meherpur district. More than 100 people died in the floods and three million people were affected. The latter were in two categories: those remaining in the flooded areas and those who sought refuge in shelters. ECHO's intervention, totalling € 1.5 million, concentrated mainly on increasing the availability of safe drinking water and adequate sanitation, and on providing basic health assistance to reduce the risk of epidemics.

## Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine

Funding - € 2.8 million

ECHO continued to reduce its involvement in these three eastern European countries since they face structural problems rather than a general humanitarian crisis. Humanitarian needs persisted, however, among vulnerable sections of society and aid amounting to € 2.8 million was therefore targeted at groups such as the elderly and disabled, large families and children in institutions.

## Belize

Funding - € 0.85 million

ECHO assisted with food supplies and support to help meet basic needs, following the passage of Hurricane Keith. Funding was also provided for the rehabilitation of a blood transfusion centre.

## Brazil

Funding - € 0.85 million

In July and early August, the Brazilian state of Pernambuco was struck by torrential rains. This resulted in serious flooding, forcing more than 100,000 people to leave their homes. ECHO responded with a package of assistance worth € 0.85 million, providing kits for water treatment and personal hygiene, and construction material for people whose homes had been damaged or destroyed.

## Burundi

Funding - € 13.78 million

In Burundi, ECHO is applying an "enhanced" humanitarian aid that addresses humanitarian needs in preparation for the transition towards structural aid. ECHO supported the most vulnerable sections of the population, notably IDPs living in "regroupment" sites but also unaccompanied children, heads of household, women and the elderly. 22 humanitarian operations were financed through 17 partners for a total of € 13.78 million. The sectors that benefited were health, food aid, nutrition, water and sanitation, non-food items and agriculture.

## Cambodia and Vietnam

Funding - € 10.4 million

Although Cambodia remains one of the poorest countries in South-East Asia, in a number of provinces, progress in areas such as health care, water and sanitation has been sufficient to allow a shift from emergency aid to a longer term development approach. In areas where immediate needs have lessened, ECHO's focus was on phasing out. Assistance was directed towards reintegrating refugees in Cambodian society, demining operations (especially in places where returnees have been resettled), water/sanitation improvements, health care and small-scale emergency rehabilitation. ECHO's contribution, through the 2000 Global Plan, was € 8.5 million while almost € 1.1 million was provided in emergency aid following the September floods. In Vietnam, emergency aid of € 800,000 was granted in response to the flooding which affected the country in September.

## Central America

(DIPECHO - see also specific country texts)

Funding - € 3.5 million

Funds from the Disaster Preparedness and Prevention programme (DIPECHO) were used to strengthen the capacity of regional and national institutions to respond to natural disasters, and to promote information exchange and coordination between communities, civil protection bodies and municipal authorities. In October, the Commission approved the second DIPECHO Action Plan, amounting to € 3.5 million, covering the period December 2000-December 2001. Since 1998, a total of € 5.6 million has been allocated for disaster-preparedness and prevention in the region.

## Chad and Niger

Funding - € 1.2 million

ECHO helped to fund meningitis vaccination campaigns in Chad and Niger with funding of € 0.6 million for each country.

## China

### Funding - € 1.3 million

ECHO provided assistance totalling € 1.3 million to Tibet and to Qinghai province which were hit by a range of extreme weather conditions. In Tibet, serious floods led to the destruction of roads, bridges, canals and homes. In Qinghai, huge snowfalls resulted in the loss of most of the livestock in Yushu prefecture while drought and parasite infestation devastated crop production in the east of the province. Aid provided to the affected districts included food supplies, transport, medicines, health equipment, water treatment and agricultural inputs.

## Colombia

### Funding - € 6.5 million

Forced displacement is frequently a tactic used in Colombia's complex conflict involving guerrilla fighters, paramilitary groups, drug traffickers and the armed forces. Thousands of people have been driven from their homes and land. Some communities, including indigenous groups, have been targeted and forced out of their home areas, having declared their 'neutrality'. In all, it is estimated that the country has 308,000 IDPs. ECHO assisted victims of the crisis with food aid, basic health care, psychosocial support and rehabilitation packages amounting to € 6.5 million.

## Comoros

### Funding - € 2.175 million

Boosting health provision was the main focus of ECHO action in Comoros. Much of Anjouan's health infrastructure was destroyed following the island's attempted secession in 1997 and an OAU embargo imposed in March 2000 led to a near paralysis of economic activity with resulting food and medicine shortages. The embargo was lifted later in the year but the health situation in Anjouan remained precarious. The situation was exacerbated by a cholera epidemic during 2000. In the neighbouring island of Moheli, the healthcare system came under pressure following an influx of displaced people from Anjouan. ECHO funding was directed mainly towards dealing with the cholera outbreak, providing medicines and equipment for hospitals and tackling malnutrition.

## Congo (Democratic Republic)

### Funding - € 20 million

There was no sign of an end to the complex crisis in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), which continued to be characterised by intense violence and widespread human suffering. Already chronic humanitarian problems were aggravated by the continued fighting in different areas. Displaced people were often forced to seek refuge in communities that could barely sustain themselves. The number of IDPs increased to an estimated one million. ECHO focused its assistance, through a € 20 million global plan, on health, water, food, non-food items and sanitation. Serious difficulties were encountered in gaining access to victims in a number of areas.

## Congo (Republic)

### Funding - € 3 million

In the Republic of Congo, which is in a post-conflict situation, ECHO's assistance was targeted at supporting the return of displaced people to their place of origin and at refugees from the DRC living in the north of the country. Humanitarian aid was directed at meeting the basic needs of vulnerable people through medical-nutritional assistance, primary health care, water supplies and sanitation, logistical support and the distribution of essential items.

## Cuba

### Funding - € 2 million

Work is under way on a strategy to phase out humanitarian aid actions in Cuba, in preparation for development-oriented activities by the appropriate agencies. In the meantime, to prevent the abrupt interruption of assistance to vulnerable groups such as elderly people, pregnant women and the handicapped, ECHO funded basic needs projects covering food supplies, health and sanitary assistance, for an amount of € 2 million.

## ECHO Flight

### Funding - € 8.8 million

Using Nairobi as the hub of the operation, the ECHO Flight service, established in 1994, continued to provide air transport for partners working in Sudan and Somalia. Access difficulties in Sudan during the year enabled a donation in kind to be given to the World Food Programme who made use of an ECHO Flight aircraft in their operations in Ethiopia.

## Ecuador

### Funding - € 1.865 million

Ecuador, already in the throes of an economic and political crisis, was struck by a series of natural disasters during 2000. In addition to widespread flooding, and a volcanic eruption, there was a big increase in the incidence of serious diseases such as malaria and dengue fever.

Through its partners, ECHO supplied wide-ranging assistance to the victims of these diverse events providing, among other things, food aid, medical supplies, medicines and vaccines, equipment for residential centres, agricultural inputs and support for rebuilding homes.

## El Salvador

### Funding - € 1.085 million

A decision was taken to provide emergency humanitarian aid of € 1.085 million for El Salvador following a big increase in the incidence of dengue fever. The funds were used for integrated vector control operations, health education, detection of cases of the disease and monitoring of the epidemic.

## Eritrea

### Funding - € 8 million

May 2000 saw the culmination of the two-year border war when Ethiopian forces went deep into Eritrean territory causing another wave of displacement. IDP numbers increased dramatically to approximately 300,000, two thirds of whom were accommodated in camps. Despite the peace agreement, many of these IDPs are unable to return to their place of origin in the near future because mines have been laid in their home areas. For the 60,000 or more deportees from Ethiopia, there is no prospect of going home. Eritrea, which faces a structural food deficit even in a good year, also had poor harvests as a result of lower than average and erratic rainfall, and a lack of manpower due to the war. Local sources reported that some 300,000 people were affected by food shortages.

ECHO supplied food aid, non-food items, shelter, healthcare, nutritional support and water/sanitation to the value of € 8 million in 2000.

## Ethiopia

### Funding - € 14.495 million

Three years of cumulative rain failures, combined with major structural deficiencies and inadequate local capacity, saw southern Ethiopia fall into the grip of acute water and food shortages.

The situation was exacerbated by the resumption of full-scale war with neighbouring Eritrea in May 2000. This led to the squandering of extremely scarce resources and hampered relief efforts in favour of the drought-affected population. The conflict also highlighted the continuing plight of some 300,000 war-affected people in the north of the country. ECHO allocated almost € 14.5 million for Ethiopia during the year. Some € 9 million was mobilised to help victims of the drought, the funds being channelled through partners for multi-sectoral relief operations. The remaining € 5.5 million was earmarked in response to the conflict.

## Honduras

**Funding - € 1.5 million**

There was a continuing need for specific humanitarian activities in Honduras in the aftermath of Hurricane Mitch which battered the country in October 1998. Access to safe drinking water and the disposal of waste water, with the attendant threat of water-borne diseases, remained problematic, particularly in rural areas. ECHO helped tackle these remaining urgent needs with a further aid package of € 1.5 million to finance nine projects. Integrated schemes, linking water and sanitation activities with aspects such as primary health care, epidemiological surveillance and vector control, were identified as the most effective way of providing safe health conditions overall.

## India

**Funding - € 5.83 million**

Severe weather disturbances had a devastating effect on several states, leading to major population displacements, extensive crop losses and growing food shortages. Rajasthan and Gujarat suffered a third consecutive year of drought. In the East, heavy rains and flash floods hit eleven north-eastern states in successive waves with Assam, Bihar, West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh among the worst affected. Flooding caused more than 1,000 deaths and more than 10 million people had to flee their homes. A further 28 million were directly affected by drought conditions. In collaboration with its partners, ECHO allocated more than € 5.8 million to assist the victims of these natural disasters. The actions were designed to boost food security, improve water supplies and sanitation in the flood-affected areas, and reduce malnutrition and the risk of food insecurity among the most marginalised groups affected by the drought.

## Indonesia and East Timor

**Funding - € 18 million**

The situation in several areas of Indonesia (notably Maluku, Aceh, Irian Jaya and West Timor) remained highly volatile due to political, religious or ethnic tensions, and to the social impact of the economic crisis. Following ethnic and religious clashes in the Maluku islands, ECHO provided basic nutritional, medical and sanitary assistance to internally displaced people. In the Puncak Jaya district of Irian Jaya, humanitarian assistance was provided in the medical sector while in Sumatra, support was given to earthquake victims. In West Timor, funds were targeted towards assisting East Timorese refugees. All ECHO-financed operations in West Timor were suspended following the murder of UNHCR staff in September. In East Timor, while much has been achieved in terms of rehabilitation, reconstruction and building the basic institutions of government, there are still significant humanitarian needs in a number of sectors, particularly health, water and sanitation. For the shelter sector, ECHO allocated € 3 million to UNHCR for the continuation of emergency repairs to destroyed dwellings. In the health sector, NGOs were financed to act as primary health care providers at district level. Total adopted decisions in 2000, benefiting East Timor and the refugees in West Timor, amounted to € 14.5 million.

## Iraq

**Funding - € 8.6 million**

The humanitarian condition in Iraq continued to assume alarming proportions exacerbated by the drought affecting the region. The impact of UN Resolution 986, the 'Oil for Food' Resolution, somewhat alleviated the plight of the Iraqi people, but conditions remained critical. Infant mortality rates have doubled since the early 1980s. ECHO adopted a Global Plan for Iraq in April 2000 for € 8.6 million. This focused on the rehabilitation of hospitals, primary health care centres and water treatment plants.

## Kenya

**Funding - € 4.44 million**

In 1999-2000, Kenya experienced its worst drought for several decades. Large areas of the country were affected, particularly in the north and east. The situation in the north was aggravated by growing insecurity due to banditry and inter-ethnic clashes. ECHO supported programmes aimed at tackling the effects of the drought, focusing on water rehabilitation, nutrition and livestock protection.

## Laos

**Funding - € 1.14 million**

Financial aid was granted to four projects in the fields of health and water/sanitation, and to assist in resettlement operations.

## Madagascar

**Funding - € 1.61 million**

Hurricanes Eline, Gloria and Huddah destroyed crops and agricultural infrastructures on the east coast of Madagascar and immediate external support was needed to cope with food shortages. Over the longer term, the cyclones had a serious impact on vanilla and coffee exports which are crucial to Madagascar's economy. ECHO provided funding of € 1.61 million to help meet the country's humanitarian needs in the aftermath of the storms.

## Mauritania

**Funding - € 0.365 million**

Nutritional support and sanitation were funded for vulnerable populations in northern Mauritania.

## Mexico

**Funding - € 0.85 million**

Funds were allocated to assist people in the state of Chiapas displaced as a result of internal conflict. The areas targeted included nutritional aid, medical care and water/sanitation facilities.

## Middle East

**Funding - € 23.92 million**

ECHO programmes for the Middle East have been structured in recent years in the form of Global Plans. Under the 2000 Global Plan, approved in June, three priority areas were identified: health, shelter rehabilitation in Palestinian refugee camps and assistance to Bedouin communities affected by drought. In addition, the situation resulting from the rapid withdrawal of the Israeli Army from South Lebanon was specifically addressed. In October, ECHO responded to the outbreak of violence in the Palestinian Territories with funding for projects to support

overburdened health facilities and ensure medical care for the victims of the confrontations. In December, a further decision was taken in response to the UNRWA appeal for the West Bank and Gaza. This involved food aid for refugee families hit by the economic crisis resulting from border closures and the loss of job opportunities, and a project (through an NGO) providing psychosocial support for refugee children in Gaza.

## Mongolia

### Funding - € 1.875 million

ECHO allocated funds in response to severe weather phenomena (snowstorms and drought) affecting Mongolia. These had a serious impact on the livestock sector which is vital to the country's economy. Food security operations were supported to help the most vulnerable families and institutions.

## Mozambique

### Funding - € 9.68 million

Floods struck Mozambique in February in progressively more serious phases. ECHO provided support from the outset. The third and most devastating phase followed the opening of floodgates on a number of rivers.

ECHO's response reflected a high level of cooperation with international and non-governmental organisations, including the UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and with the Mozambique government's National Disaster Management Institute. EU Member States and NGOs participated in this coordination system.

Between February and August, four decisions were taken for 20 emergency relief and resettlement projects. The main objectives were to ensure that flood victims were resettled in safer areas with access to clean water, assistance for re-establishing crop and livestock production, and adequate health protection.

## Myanmar (Burma)

### Funding - € 1 million

ECHO funded humanitarian projects in the health and water/sanitation sectors in Rangoon, and in the states of Arakan and Kachin.

## Nicaragua

### Funding - € 1.84 million

Nicaragua, one of the poorest countries in Central America, continued to suffer the long term effects of Hurricane Mitch which struck in October 1998. In July 2000, the country was also hit by an earthquake. The toll of dead and injured was low in comparison to previous seismic events but many thousands of people were directly affected with almost 2,500 dwellings destroyed or damaged. Infrastructures were also damaged.

ECHO provided € 1.84 million for humanitarian assistance. For the earthquake victims, the emphasis was on providing temporary shelter, food, medicines and basic non-food items. For people still struggling to cope with the aftermath of Hurricane Mitch, the focus was on supplying clean drinking water and on disease control measures.

## North Korea

### Funding - € 8.05 million

The precarious humanitarian situation in North Korea was exacerbated by devastating typhoons and droughts. ECHO continued to provide humanitarian assistance through the four European NGOs present in the country and the Red Cross family. Projects focused on health, water and sanitation. Particular attention was paid to negotiating respect for humanitarian principles in North Korea (direct access to beneficiaries, free monitoring, focus on the most vulnerable groups). The government authorities have now agreed to sign a Letter of Understanding containing an affirmation of those principles for each ECHO funded project.

## Peru

### Funding - € 1.32 million

Unusual weather patterns associated with climate change, as well as an earthquake, created humanitarian problems in Peru.

Extremely low temperatures in the central region led to a rise in infant mortality through pneumonia and respiratory infections. The unexpected growth of vegetation in what is normally an arid region in the north of the country prompted forest fires while unusually heavy rains damaged irrigation systems in Piura. In Ayacucho, buildings in two villages were seriously damaged or destroyed by an earthquake.

The aid package provided by ECHO included urgent preparations to tackle forest fires, food aid, agricultural inputs, emergency medical assistance, rehabilitation and the provision of drinking water.

## Philippines

### Funding - € 2.635 million

The conflict between the Philippines Government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front was unresolved with no progress towards peace negotiations. Over 200,000 people in Mindanao have been internally displaced as a result of the fighting. ECHO provided support for rehabilitation works and local staff training aimed at improving access to water and sanitation, boosting food security and supplying primary health care.

## Russian Federation

### Funding - € 24.4 million

The conflict in Chechnya has led to large population displacements within the Northern Caucasus. Efforts by the international aid community to deliver assistance to the victims have often been hampered by extremely difficult working conditions, notably in Chechnya itself. ECHO contributed more than € 23 million to help cover basic needs among the affected population, making the European Commission the largest donor in the region. This included, inter alia, food aid for 70,000 IDPs and more than 8,000 host families in Ingushetia accommodating people who had fled from the conflict zone.

Elsewhere in the Russian Federation, ECHO continued to scale down its activities, spending € 1.2 million to support highly vulnerable sections of the population such as lone elderly and disabled people, residents of institutions (notably children), migrants, the homeless and victims of tuberculosis and AIDS.

## Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia

### Funding - € 16.137 million

The main crisis theatre in West Africa, covering Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia, remained unstable throughout 2000. Violence resumed in late May leading to the collapse of the Lomé Peace Accord.

In Sierra Leone, this provoked a new wave of displacement from RUF (Revolutionary United Front) to government-held areas. ECHO managed to react flexibly to these events by modifying its operations in the country throughout the year. Projects funded by ECHO targeted both Sierra Leonean refugees in neighbouring countries (approximately 340,000) and IDPs within the country (approximately 400,000). To minimise the risk of tension, part of the assistance was channelled through host communities. ECHO's projects also targeted children affected by war and victims of mutilation. The total allocated to the Sierra Leone crisis was € 12 million. This included addressing the needs of displaced people and refugees in neighbouring Guinea and Liberia.

In September, Guinea, previously a haven of relative stability and the main place of refuge for Sierra Leoneans and Liberians, became the target of cross-border attacks and internal violence. Though mainly directed at refugees, the fighting also affected the resident population. An additional decision of € 0.74 million was launched to help cover the increased needs of the population. In addition, Guinea and Liberia suffered a serious yellow fever outbreak. ECHO provided € 1.7 million to fund the vaccination of a million people, thus helping speedily to control the epidemic. Finally, the region benefited under a broader funding decision designed to support the ICRC's food security activities.

## Somalia

Funding - € 6.518 million

After almost a decade of anarchy and civil strife in central and southern Somalia, the infrastructure has been destroyed and there are widespread basic humanitarian needs, in particular in the health, nutrition and water sectors. In addition to chronic needs due to the absence of a functioning government, acute needs have arisen as a result of upsurges in fighting leading to population displacement, and of seasonal outbreaks of infectious diseases and cholera.

By contrast, northern Somalia has enjoyed relative stability allowing ECHO to withdraw from this part of the country. In the centre and south, given that rehabilitation and development donors are unwilling to invest in such an insecure environment, ECHO has been involved in funding health and nutrition programmes, as well as water rehabilitation, on a somewhat longer term basis.

## South-East Asia

(DIPECHO - see also specific country texts)

Funding - € 4 million

DIPECHO projects were selected in Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia, Indonesia and the Philippines. These included training schemes for Red Cross organisations in Vietnam and Laos and for rescue teams in disaster-prone provinces of the Philippines. The National Disaster Management Organisation and provincial bodies in Laos received support while in Indonesia, a project was funded aimed at boosting the capacity of local NGOs to respond to complex emergencies. In Vietnam, a focus on flooding was reflected in activities to establish early warning systems, and in pilot projects dealing with reforestation, small reservoir and dyke construction and the provision of rescue boats.

ECHO provided € 0.7 million to help fund the Asia Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC) based in Bangkok. The aim is to encourage cooperation and coordination of disaster-preparedness activities throughout the region, in particular through networking, and exchanges of information and experience.

## Southern Caucasus

(Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia)

Funding - € 4.855 million

The phase out of ECHO operations in the Southern Caucasus was completed in 2000 with a final allocation of € 3.855 million. Support went to IDPs and other groups made vulnerable by unresolved internal conflicts notably in Abkhazia and South Ossetia in Georgia, and Nagorny Karabakh in Azerbaijan. However, Armenia and Georgia were both badly affected by drought during the year and ECHO responded with an additional emergency allocation of € 1 million to fund emergency food supplies and winter seeds for subsistence farmers in some of the most affected regions.

## Sri Lanka

Funding - € 1.2 million

The civil war between Tamil separatists and government forces continued in the North and East of Sri Lanka, and in particular, in the Jaffna peninsula. A decisive military outcome appeared unlikely with fighting expected to continue for the foreseeable future. The main humanitarian priority was to provide support for internally displaced people whose numbers increased to approximately 650,000 during the year. ECHO funding was directed towards addressing the basic needs of these people by ensuring food and water supplies and improving sanitary conditions.

## Sudan

Funding - € 11 million

A definitive peace solution remained a distant prospect in Sudan as it entered its eighteenth year of civil war. ECHO continued to provide assistance during 2000. A Global Plan was adopted for the period April-December 2000 for € 11 million.

In March, the SPLM sought to oblige humanitarian agencies to sign a 'Memorandum of Understanding'. The refusal to sign resulted in the eviction of 11 agencies (including several ECHO partners) from SPLM-controlled territory. ECHO felt that the humanitarian organisations' ability to deliver assistance in accordance with internationally recognised humanitarian principles was compromised and accordingly suspended assistance to this area. This enabled resources to be redirected to other needy parts of southern Sudan where a humanitarian disaster threatened to develop.

ECHO remains an active supporter of the UN's *Operation Lifeline Sudan* which, in southern Sudan in particular, provides a degree of security and legality in an otherwise very insecure context. ECHO-funded projects, as in previous years, focused on reducing mortality rates through improved health provision, water and sanitation systems, and food security, with an important focus on displaced people.

## Tajikistan

Funding - € 15 million

A fragile stability was maintained in Tajikistan, where the civil war ended in 1997. Already encountering the difficult socio-economic conditions of the post-conflict phase, the country was further hit by a severe drought which resulted in a serious food deficit. ECHO allocated € 15 million (including € 3 million special drought relief) with a strong emphasis on distributing food, agricultural inputs and medicines and on water and sanitation activities. The European Union is the largest donor in Tajikistan.

## Tanzania

Funding - € 26.85 million

Tanzania still hosts the largest refugee population in Africa. At the end of 2000, there were more than half a million refugees (370,000 Burundian, 110,000 Congolese and the rest mainly Rwandan) living in camps in the Western provinces. ECHO contributed almost € 27 million to the Tanzania refugee programme, mainly through the United Nations (UNHCR, UNICEF and WFP) and the Red Cross. This represented about a third of the total humanitarian aid available to refugees in the country. The overall objective was the multi-sectoral care and maintenance of refugees, with support for food aid, health/nutrition, water/sanitation, protection, shelter, education, transport and logistics.

## Thailand

Funding - € 4.5 million

Support was provided for the humanitarian aid operation for an estimated 120,000 Burmese refugees located in five camps in Thailand close to the frontier. The focus was on ensuring continued coverage of the refugees' most urgent medical, food and sanitary needs.

## Uganda

Funding - € 0.81 million

In 2000, the general humanitarian situation in Uganda was judged to be stable if not improving. However, the continuing humanitarian needs of refugees and IDPs in some northern and western districts of the country, and the insecurity created by rebel activities in these areas, remained a source of concern. ECHO support was mainly targeted at health, water and sanitation

programmes for IDPs in the districts of Gulu, Kitgum and Bundibugyo. ECHO also contributed to efforts to tackle an outbreak of Ebola haemorrhagic fever.

## Venezuela

### Funding - € 6.75 million

Some 200,000 people were made homeless, with a further 400,000 directly affected, by flooding and mudslides at the end of 1999. In early 2000, emergency aid funded by ECHO covered the basic needs of more than 60,000 people living in temporary shelters with essential relief items such as food and blankets. Water and sewerage networks were seriously damaged, increasing the risk of vector-borne diseases. Further aid, directed through 20 different operations, supported epidemic control projects, the restoration of water distribution systems, psychological support and agricultural rehabilitation.

## Western Balkans (Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia)

### Funding - € 98.7 million

In 2000, the overall humanitarian situation in the Western Balkans significantly improved. ECHO's funding for the region reflects this change, decreasing from € 447 million in 1999 to € 98.7 million in 2000. However, € 50 million of the 1999 allocation, which had been put in reserve, was actually used to fund projects in 2000. The first major funding decision of the year (€ 61 million for Kosovo, Serbia and Montenegro) was, thus, only issued in June. The two main challenges for ECHO were to meet the humanitarian needs of the most affected populations throughout 2000, particularly during the harsh winter months, and to support transition to reconstruction and longer-term development. As regards the former, ECHO provided food aid, shelter, winter needs programmes, essential health and social services, water and sanitation. International humanitarian assistance was thus able to meet basic needs, with no reported deaths from exposure, epidemic or hunger.

In Serbia, ECHO, like other humanitarian agencies, was faced with the largest refugee and IDP population in Europe (508,000 refugees from Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia, and 180,000 IDPs from Kosovo). The situation in Montenegro is similar though on a smaller scale (28,000 refugees and 32,000 IDPs). In Serbia, economic decline has led to growing poverty and social deprivation, particularly among the refugee population, who were the main targets of ECHO interventions.

Although the majority of the refugees who fled to Albania and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) during the 1999 crisis returned, the needs of those remaining had to be addressed. As most refugees and IDPs tend to stay in host families rather than collective centres, ECHO ensured that some of its support was directed towards the basic needs of host communities and thus to reduce "host fatigue".

With the exception of Serbia, the situation in the Western Balkans at the end of 2000 could no longer be qualified as an acute emergency. The main priority for ECHO was thus to ensure a smooth transition to reconstruction and longer term development. This was done mainly through the handover of sectors of intervention to the appropriate institutions, by reducing dependence on humanitarian assistance, by encouraging self-reliance activities and by focusing on durable solutions to the refugee situations. An important step forward in this respect was the formal establishment of the European Agency for Reconstruction (EAR) in February 2000. The EAR's tasks include ensuring the transition from emergency to reconstruction and development.

Significant improvements are anticipated as a result of the political changes in Yugoslavia. These should make a major contribution to the process of stabilisation and reconciliation throughout the Western Balkans. While the events in Belgrade fundamentally change the context in which ECHO, and the international community as a whole, operate, the nature and scope of ECHO's support was not immediately affected, although increased coordination with other EC services and donors who are coming in with long-term assistance instruments became necessary. The second major funding decision taken by ECHO in 2000 (€ 31.6 million) addressed the priority needs of refugees, IDPs and other highly vulnerable groups over the winter in Serbia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Albania and FYROM.

In addition to the above, € 2 million was allocated to FYROM in August 2000 and in November a decision was taken to provide € 3.7 million for victims of the floods in Vojvodina.

ECHO's offices in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina were closed respectively in May and December 2000. Projects supporting the return of refugees to Bosnia and Herzegovina, which began in 1999, were finalised while other longer term Commission assistance programmes in support of returnees have taken over.

## Western Sahara

### Funding - € 13.935 million

Serious food shortages developed in the camps in Algeria occupied by refugees from Western Sahara. Average consumption among the 160,000 people involved dropped dangerously below the 2100 calories recommended as the minimum daily intake by the World Health Organisation. ECHO responded with an emergency decision to cover the provision of essential food supplies. This was subsequently followed up by a global plan which, while also focusing on nutritional support, included significant funding for non food items (mainly tents and health care operations). The total allocated for Western Saharan refugees during 2000 was € 13.935 million.

## Yemen

### Funding - € 1.74 million

ECHO continued funding assistance to Yemen, where one in four live below the poverty line and more than 250 people die of disease every day. The humanitarian situation is exacerbated by the presence of refugees from Somalia, Ethiopia and Eritrea as well as returnees from Saudi Arabia living in camps close to the main towns. One important focus for ECHO has been on rehabilitating schools and homes destroyed during the rainy season, notably on the island of Soqatra which was inundated. Access to water, sanitation and primary health care have been ECHO's other main objectives. ECHO allocated € 1.74 million in humanitarian aid for Yemen in 2000.

## Zambia and Namibia

### Funding - € 4.5 million

The Angolan government offensive that led to the recapture of several strategic UNITA strongholds in December 1999 led to an influx of refugees into Namibia and Zambia. ECHO responded with a financing decision to provide care and protection for up to 12,000 Angolans arriving in northern Namibia and more than 25,000 seeking refuge in Zambia.

With funds channelled through the UNHCR, ECHO continued supporting the camp management, shelter, care, maintenance and protection of up to 25,000 Congolese refugees who have arrived in northern Zambia since March 1999.

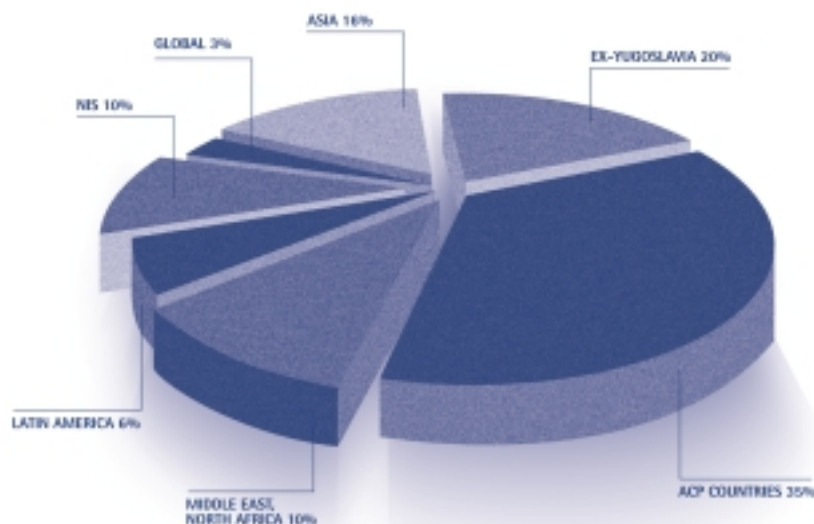
In response to the continued influx and needs of Angolan refugees in western Zambia, and the movement of 25,000 Congolese into northern Zambia, ECHO provided emergency funding for health, water and sanitation, food and shelter assistance.

# FACTS & FIGURES

## Financial decisions for humanitarian aid by region in 2000

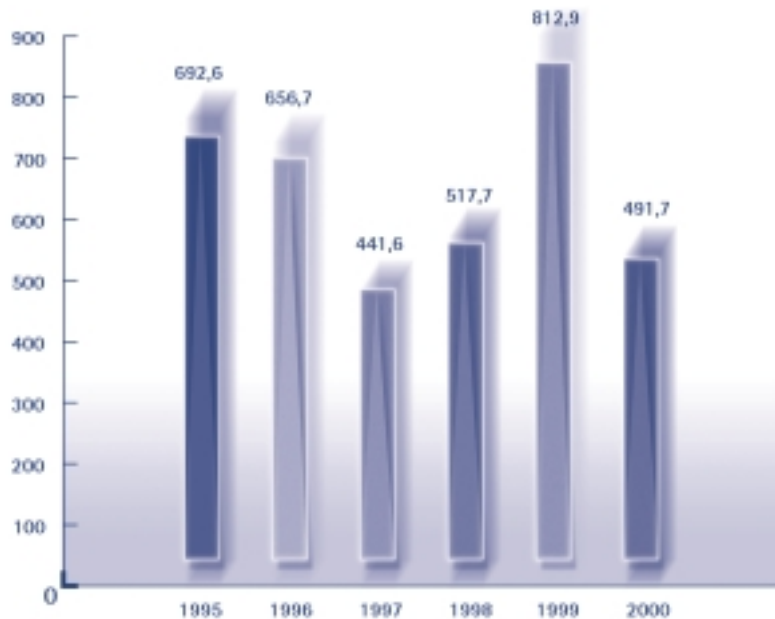
COUNTRY/SUB-REGION	DECISIONS IN € M	COUNTRY/SUB-REGION	DECISIONS IN € M
<b>AFRICA, CARIBBEAN, PACIFIC</b>	<b>170.178</b>	<b>ASIA</b>	<b>77.072</b>
ANGOLA	15.768	AFGHANISTAN/PAKISTAN/IRAN - DROUGHT	9.500
BELIZE	0.850	AFGHANISTAN - General	12.017
BURUNDI	13.780	BANGLADESH	1.500
CHAD/NIGER	1.200	BURMA	1.000
COMORES	2.175	CAMBODIA/VIETNAM	10.400
CONGO (Democratic Republic)	20.000	CHINA (Including Tibet)	1.300
CONGO (Republic)	3.000	INDIA	5.830
ECHO FLIGHT	8.800	INDONESIA	7.500
ETHIOPIA/ERITREA	22.495	LAOS	1.140
KENYA	4.440	NORTH KOREA	8.050
UGANDA	0.810	PHILIPPINES	2.635
MADAGASCAR	1.610	SRI LANKA	1.200
MAURITANIA	0.365	THAILAND	4.500
MOZAMBIQUE	9.680	TIMOR	10.500
OTHER ISLAND COUNTRIES/TERRITORIES	0.200	<b>LATIN AMERICA</b>	<b>24.560</b>
SIERRA LEONE/GUINEA/LIBERIA	16.137	CENTRAL AMERICA (El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua)	4.425
SOMALIA	6.518	COLOMBIA	6.500
SUDAN	11.000	CUBA	2.000
TANZANIA	26.850	MEXICO	0.850
ZAMBIA/NAMIBIA	4.500	SOUTH AMERICA (Peru, Brazil, Ecuador)	4.035
<b>EASTERN EUROPE/NIS</b>	<b>147.630</b>	VENEZUELA	6.750
BELARUS, MOLDOVA, UKRAINE	2.800	<b>DIPECHO</b>	<b>7.500</b>
MONGOLIA	1.875	CENTRAL AMERICA	3.500
RUSSIAN FEDERATION (Northern Caucasus)	23.200	SOUTH EAST ASIA	4.000
(Other)	1.200	<b>OTHER EXPENSES</b>	<b>16.280</b>
SOUTHERN CAUCASUS (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia)	4.855	Grants For Studies	1.800
TAJIKISTAN	15.000	Expenses For Field Experts	12.000
WESTERN BALKANS (Serbia, Montenegro, Kosovo, Albania, FYROM, Bosnia-Herzegovina)	98.700	Audit	0.200
<b>MIDDLE EAST/NORTH AFRICA</b>	<b>48.495</b>	Information	1.680
ALGERIA	0.300	Evaluation	0.600
IRAQ	8.600	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>491.715</b>
MIDDLE EAST	23.920		
WESTERN SAHARA	13.935		
YEMEN	1.740		

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## Financial decisions (in millions of €) for EU humanitarian aid 1995-2000



## Organisations with an ECHO Framework Partnership Agreement

**AUSTRIA:** AUSTRIAN HELP PROGRAM, CARE ÖSTERREICH  
CARITAS AUSTRIA, MALTESER HOSPITAL DIENST,  
HILFSWERK AUSTRIA-AUSTRIAN ASSOCIATION FOR  
DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION,  
ÖSTERREICHISCHES ROTES KREUZ

**BELGIUM:** CARITAS SECOURS INTERNATIONAL, CAUSES  
COMMUNES, CROIX ROUGE DE BELGIQUE, FONDS MEDICAL  
TROPICAL (FOMETRO), HANDICAP INTERNATIONAL, IEDER VOOR  
ALLEEN, MEDECINS SANS FRONTIERES, ARTSEN ZONDER  
GRENZEN, MEMISA BELGIUM, OXFAM-SOLIDARITE, SOLIDARITE  
LIBERALE INTERNATIONALE, VETERINAIRES SANS FRONTIERES-  
BELGIQUE

**DENMARK:** ASF DANSK FOLKEHJÆLP, CARITAS DENMARK,  
DANISH REFUGEE COUNCIL, DANSK FLYGTNINGEHJÆLP, DANSK  
RODE KORS, FOLKEKIRKENS NODHJÆLP-DANCHURCHAID,  
MISSION OST, RED BARNET-DENMARK

**FINLAND:** FINNCHURCHAID, SOUMEN PUNAINEN RISTI  
(FINNISH RED CROSS)

**FRANCE:** ACTION CONTRE LA FAIM, ACTION D'URGENCE  
INTERNATIONALE, AIDE MEDICALE INTERNATIONALE,  
ASSOCIATION POUR L'ACTION HUMANITAIRE, ATLAS LOGISTIQUE,  
CARE-FRANCE, COMITE D'AIDE MEDICALE ET DE PARRAINAGE  
SANS FRONTIERES, CROIX ROUGE FRANCAISE, ENFANTS DU  
MONDE/DROITS DE L'HOMME, ENFANTS REFUGIES DU MONDE,  
EUROPACT, FRANCE LIBERTES FONDATION DANIELLE  
MITTERRAND, HANDICAP INTERNATIONAL/ACTION NORD SUD  
FRANCE, INITIATIVE DEVELOPPEMENT, INTERAIDE, INTERVENIR,  
MEDECINS DU MONDE, MEDECINS SANS FRONTIERES, OEUVRES  
HOSPITALIERES FRANCAISES DE L'ORDRE DE MALTE,

PHARMACIENS SANS FRONTIERES COMITE INTERNATIONAL  
(PSFCI), PREMIERE URGENCE, SECOURS CATHOLIQUE-CARITAS-  
FRANCE, SECOURS POPULAIRE FRANCAIS, SOLIDARITE  
PROTESTANTE, FRANCE ARMENIE, SOLIDARITES, TRIANGLE,  
AVIATION SANS FRONTIERES

**GERMANY:** ACTION MEDEOR, ADRA, ARBEITER-SAMARITER-  
BUND, CARE DEUTSCHLAND, DÄZ, DEUTSCHE  
WELTHUNGERHILFE, DEUTSCHER CARITASVERBAND, DEUTSCHES  
ROTES KREUZ, DIAKONISCHES WERK, HELP, HILFE FÜR KINDER  
IN DER NOT, HUMANITARIAN CARGO CARRIERS, JOHANNITER-  
UNFALLHILFE, LAZARUS HILFSWERK, MALTESER HILFSDIENST,  
MEDICO INTERNATIONAL, WORLD VISION DEUTSCHLAND

**GREECE:** EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE, GREEK COMMITTEE FOR  
INTERNATIONAL DEMOCRATIC SOLIDARITY, HELLENIC INSTITUTE  
OF SOLIDARITY AND COOPERATION, HELLENIC RED CROSS,  
INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL AFFAIRS, KESSA  
DIMITRA-GR, MEDECINS DU MONDE

**INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS:** FEDERATION  
INTERNATIONALE DES SOCIETES DE LA CROIX ROUGE ET DU  
CROISSANT ROUGE (FICR), COMITE INTERNATIONAL DE LA CROIX  
ROUGE (CICR), INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION  
(IOM), ORDRE SOUVERAIN ET MILITAIRE DE ST. JEAN DE  
JERUSALEM, DE RHODES ET DE MALTE

**IRELAND:** CONCERN WORLDWIDE, GOAL, IRISH RED CROSS  
SOCIETY, TROCAIRE

**ITALY:** AMICI DEI BAMBINI, ARCI CULTURA E SVILUPPO (ARCS),  
ASSOCIAZIONE ITALIANA PER LA SOLIDARIETA TRA I POPOLI  
(AISPO), ASSOCIAZIONE PER LA PARTECIPAZIONE ALLO

# FACTS & FIGURES

SVILUPPO (APS), ASSOCIAZIONE VOLONTARI PER IL SERVIZIO INTERNAZIONALE (AVSI), CARITAS ITALIA, CENTRO REGIONALE D'INTERVENTO PER LA COOPERAZIONE, CESVI COOPERAZIONE E SVILUPPO, COMITATO COLLABORAZIONE MEDICA (CCM), COMITATO DI COORDINAMENTO DELLE ORGANIZZAZIONI PER IL SERVIZIO VOLONTARIO (COSV), COMITATO EUROPEO PER LA FORMAZIONE E L'AGRICOLTURA (CEFA), COMITATO INTERNAZIONALE PER LO SVILUPPO DEI POPOLI (CISP), COOPERAZIONE INTERNAZIONALE (COOPI), COOPERAZIONE ITALIANA NORD SUD (CINS), COOPERAZIONE PER LO SVILUPPO DEI PAESI EMERGENTI (COSPE), CROCE ROSSA ITALIANA, CUAMM, EMERGENCY, GRUPPO DE VOLONTARIATO CIVILE (GVC), ISTITUTO DE COOPERAZIONE UNIVERSITARIA (ICU), ISTITUTO SINDACALE PER LA COOPERAZIONE ALLO SVILUPPO (ISCOS), INTERSOS (ASSOCIAZIONE UMANITARIA PER L'EMERGENZIA), LVIA-ASSOCIAZIONE INTERNAZIONALE VOLONTARI LAICI, MOVIMENTO SVILUPPO E PACE, MOVIMONDO, NUOVA FRONTIERA-ALISEI, TERRA NUOVA, TERRE DES HOMMES ITALIA-ONLUS, VISPE-VOLONTARI ITALIANI SOLIDARIETA PAESI EMERGENTI

**LUXEMBOURG:** CARITAS, CROIX ROUGE LUXEMBOURG, MEDECINS SANS FRONTIERES-L

**NETHERLANDS:** CORDAID, DUTCH RELIEF & REHABILITATION AGENCY, HEALTH NET INTERNATIONAL, HET NEDERLANDSE RODE KRUIS, MEDECINS SANS FRONTIERES/ARTSEN ZONDER GRENZEN, NOVIB (NETHERLANDS ORGANIZATION FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION), SAVE THE CHILDREN-NL, INTERCHURCH ORGANIZATION FOR DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION (ICCO), ZOA REFUGEE CARE (NL)

**NORWAY:** NORWEGIAN CHURCH AID, NORWEGIAN PEOPLE'S AID, NORWEGIAN RED CROSS, NORWEGIAN REFUGEE COUNCIL

**PORTUGAL:** ASSISTENCIA MEDICA INTERNATIONAL (AMI), ASSOCIACAO DE BENEFICENCIA LUSO-ALEMA, ASSOCIACAO PARA A COOPERACAO INTERCAMBIO E CULTURA (CIC), CRUZ

VERMELHA PORTUGUESA, OIKOS-COOPERACAO E DESENVOLVIMENTO

**SPAIN:** ASOCIACION PARA LA COOPERACION CON EL SUR LAS SEGOVIAS (ACSUR), ACCION CONTRA EL HAMBRE, ASOCIACION NAVARRA NUEVO FUTURO, CARITAS ESPAÑOLA, COMITE INTERNACIONAL DE RESCATE, CRUZ ROJA ESPAÑOLA, FARMACEUTICOS SIN FRONTERAS, INTERMON, MEDICOS DEL MUNDO-E, MEDICOS SIN FRONTERAS-E, MEDICUS MUNDI ESPAÑA, MOVIMIENTO POR LA PAZ, EL DESARME Y LA LIBERTAD (MPDL), NOUS CAMINS, PAZ Y TERCER MUNDO, SOLIDARIDAD INTERNATIONAL

**SWEDEN:** CHURCH OF SWEDEN AID, DIAKONIA-SWEDEN, ERIKSHALPEN, INTERNATIONAL AID SWEDEN, PMU-IINTERLIFE, MEDECINS DU MONDE, SVENKA RODA KORSET, SWEDISH COMMITTEE FOR AFGHANISTAN, LAKARE I VARLDEN (MDM), QANDIL, CARITAS SVERIGE

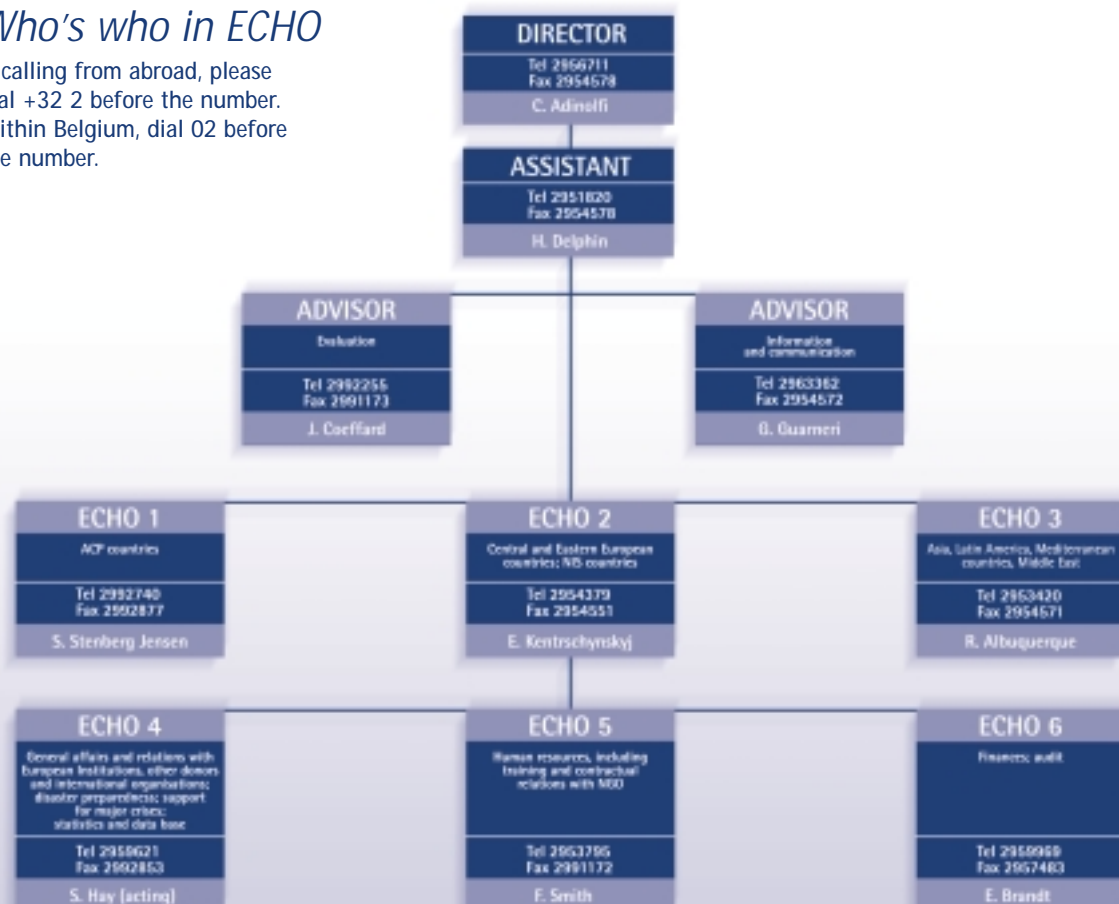
**SWITZERLAND:** CARITAS-SUISSE, CROIX ROUGE SUISSE, MEDECINS SANS FRONTIERES-CH, HEKS (SWISS INTERCHURCHAID), INTERNATIONAL CATHOLIC MIGRATION COMMISSION (ICMC), TERRE DES HOMMES

**UNITED KINGDOM:** ACTIONAID, BRITISH RED CROSS, CARE INTERNATIONAL UK, CATHOLIC AGENCY FOR OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT (CAFOD), CHILDREN'S AID DIRECT, CHRISTIAN AID, CONCERN UNIVERSAL, HELPAGE INTERNATIONAL, MEDAIR UK, MEDICAL AID FOR PALESTINIANS, MEDICAL EMERGENCY RELIEF INTERNATIONAL (MERLIN), MERCY CORPS SCOTLAND, OXFAM UK, PLAN INTERNATIONAL UK, SAVE THE CHILDREN FUND UK, TEARFUND, WORLD VISION UK

**UNITED STATES:** CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES, INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE, INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL CORPS, INTERNATIONAL ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHARITIES, WORLD CONCERN DEVELOPMENT ORGANISATION

## Who's who in ECHO

If calling from abroad, please dial +32 2 before the number. Within Belgium, dial 02 before the number.



## About ECHO

# Backing for humanitarian aid worldwide

**ECHO** is the European Union's Humanitarian Aid Office, a service of the European Commission under the direct responsibility of Commissioner Poul Nielson.

**ECHO** funds relief to victims of both natural disasters and manmade crises outside the EU. Aid is channelled impartially, straight to victims, regardless of race, religion and political beliefs. **ECHO** has more than 170 partners – organisations which have signed a Framework Partnership Contract with the Commission. Its partners are the specialist agencies of the United Nations, the Red Cross family, other international organisations and non-governmental organisations.

**ECHO** is one of the biggest sources of humanitarian aid in the world. In 2000, it provided € 491,7 million in funding (not including aid that the EU's 15 Member States gave separately). **ECHO** support went to projects in more than 50 countries. The funds are spent on goods and services such as food, clothing, shelter, medical provisions, water supplies, sanitation, emergency repairs and mine-clearing. **ECHO** also funds disaster prevention, preparedness and mitigation projects in regions prone to natural catastrophes.

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Fax (+32 2) 295 45 72

e-mail [echo-info@cec.eu.int](mailto:echo-info@cec.eu.int)

Website [http://europa.eu.int/comm/echo/index\\_en.html](http://europa.eu.int/comm/echo/index_en.html)

### Acronyms

<b>ECHO</b>	Humanitarian Aid Office
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>ICRC</b>	International Committee of the Red Cross
<b>IDP</b>	Internally displaced person
<b>NGO</b>	Non-governmental organisation
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund
<b>WFP</b>	World Food Programme



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