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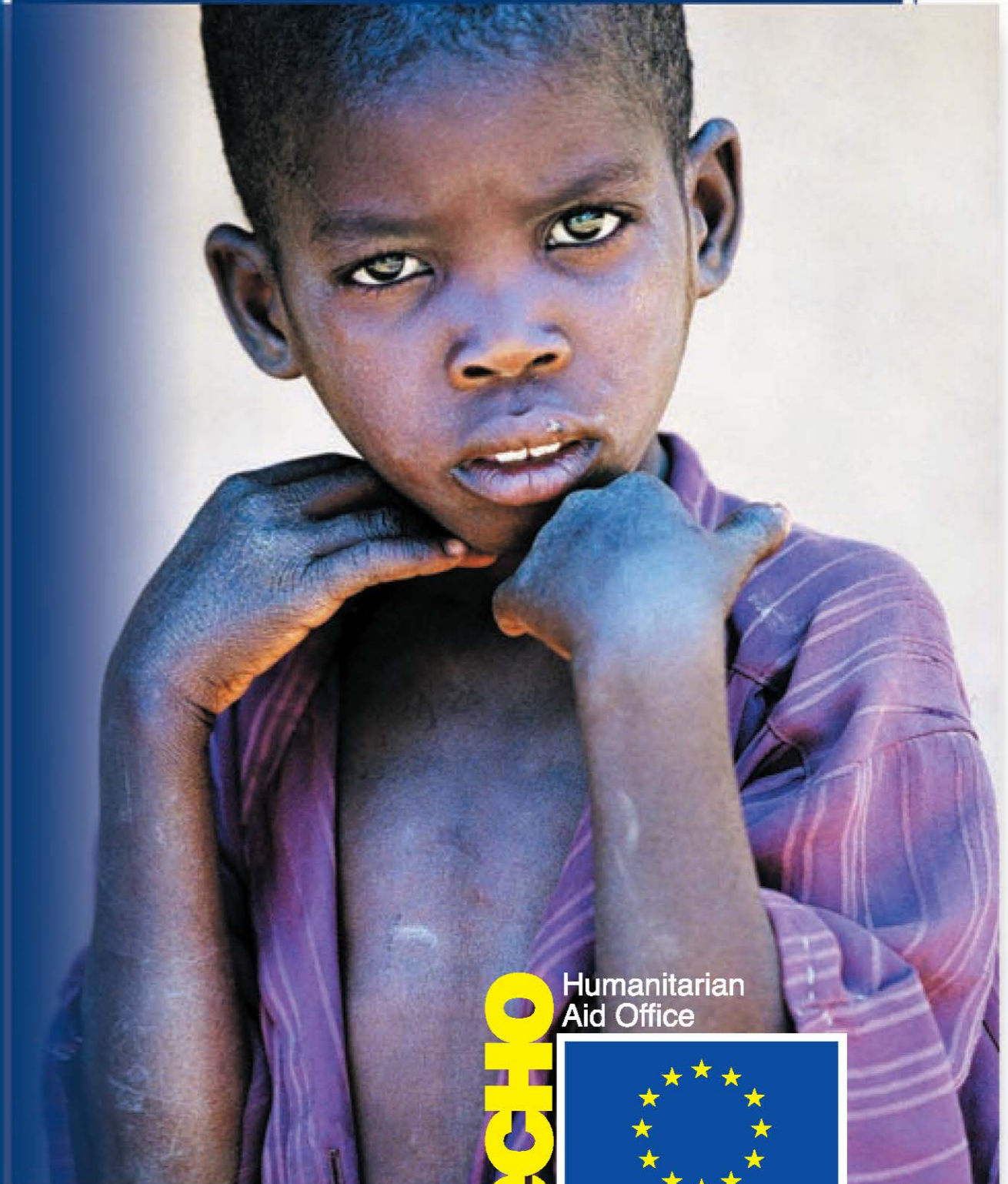
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# RESPONDING TO NEW NEEDS **eCHO 2002**

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# Humanitarian principles must be respected



François Goemans, ECHO

POUL NIELSON VISITS A HOSPITAL IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO. ECHO SUPPLIED HUMANITARIAN AID WORTH MORE THAN €38 MILLION TO THE DRC IN 2002.

The Humanitarian Aid Office of the European Commission (ECHO), which is one of the world's largest donors of relief assistance, continued to play a vital role during 2002 in easing the suffering of millions of vulnerable people living in desperate situations.

Sadly, it was necessary to respond to emerging needs in places not previously affected by humanitarian emergencies. This was the case in Southern Africa where drought, combined with the crippling effects of AIDS and inappropriate food policies, raised the spectre of widespread famine. Malawi, Zimbabwe and Zambia were particularly affected. ECHO, recognising the need to act quickly to prevent an already difficult situation turning into a major catastrophe, mobilised substantial humanitarian assistance as part of a wider Commission effort that included essential food aid. ECHO also boosted its assistance to Ethiopia in response to serious drought-related food shortages and helped victims of the conflict that erupted in Côte d'Ivoire. In Angola, it was not so much new needs as existing ones that came to light following the peace agreement. Again, the Commission reacted speedily when the terrible plight of people living in previously inaccessible parts of the country became known.

Elsewhere, the suffering caused by internal conflict remained depressingly and unacceptably high. In places as diverse as Colombia, Sudan, the Great Lakes region of Africa, the Palestinian Territories and Chechnya, ongoing violence meant continuing misery for many people, which ECHO helped to alleviate. Global figures for the numbers of refugees and internally displaced people illustrate the scale of the problem. In 2002, the world had an estimated 12 million refugees while a further 25 million were displaced inside their own countries. In some places,

entire generations of uprooted people have only experienced war and exile. We have a duty to help them survive but the international community also needs to give more attention to finding durable long-term solutions. On the other hand, there were some positive developments during 2002 which suggest that even apparently intractable crises can be solved. I have already mentioned Angola. In Sri Lanka, the peace process also revealed major post-crisis needs but encouragingly, in a context where it was possible to identify the light at the end of the tunnel. In Afghanistan, where ECHO was still heavily engaged, the fact that so many people returned home was a good sign although a sustained international effort, especially on longer term reconstruction, will be needed for some time before we can say that this crisis is finally over. In the Balkans, the post-crisis consolidation continued, allowing ECHO to make further progress in phasing out its operations, in favour of longer term development instruments put in place by the European Union, as well as by other donors.

In 2002, ECHO again paid close attention to "forgotten crises" with significant funding for people whose plight rarely hits the headlines, including Western Saharan, Burmese and Bhutanese refugees, and conflict victims in Nepal, Somalia and Northern Uganda. As the year drew to a close, and the first disquieting signals started to appear, ECHO prepared for the possibility of a major new crisis in Iraq. As always, the Commission is ready to respond promptly and generously, in accordance with the basic humanitarian principle that those who are suffering should be assisted, irrespective of their ethnic origin, religion or politics.

It is appropriate in this context to stress that humanitarian principles are enshrined in international treaties, and that warring parties are obliged to respect them. Recently, there have been some disturbing developments that undermine the timely and effective delivery of relief. These include the denial of access to crisis victims and a failure to differentiate between combatants and civilians caught up in the fighting. It is bad enough when the rules are not respected by internal factions. It is even more worrying when democratic signatories to the treaties ignore their provisions and jeopardise, in particular, the work of organisations that have been mandated by the international community to pursue globally shared objectives such as the protection of victims.

I am also deeply concerned about the blurring of the distinction between military and humanitarian operations. Soldiers may be ordered to fight one day and deliver aid the next. Occasionally, this approach is justified as the only way of reaching people in distress but it should be used very sparingly. It should certainly not be central to the strategy of nations that are committed both to waging war and delivering humanitarian support in the same crisis. When military and humanitarian operations get mixed up, the impartiality of the latter is compromised, jeopardising the lives of non-combatant aid workers and the people they are trying to help. It is essential to provide the space for the humanitarian agencies to get on with the job – which is already dangerous enough.

**Poul Nielson**

European Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid  
March 2003



# The growing humanitarian challenge

ECHO, the EU's Humanitarian Aid Office, remained one of the world's most important humanitarian players in 2002, intervening in more than 60 countries to help an estimated 40-50 million people in need, with an overall budget of €538 million. Including aid provided by EU Member States separately, this makes the European Union the most generous source of humanitarian aid in the world. Helping the victims of humanitarian crises is not simply a matter of financial solidarity. The quality and efficiency of the aid provided is equally important. Throughout the year, ECHO strived to maintain the highest professional standards in all of its activities as well as those of its operational partners. We maintained a permanent dialogue with the latter as this is one of the fundamental techniques in evaluating and monitoring the implementation of programmes.

The emergence of new needs in many parts of the world is cause for great concern. It is true that in some countries, this was due to positive developments. For example, the historic ceasefire agreements in Angola and Sri Lanka gave humanitarian agencies access to vulnerable people who were previously out of reach. The opening up of areas that used to be inaccessible presents a big challenge to aid workers and donors, especially in a mine-ridden country such as Angola, but for the beneficiaries it is relief long overdue. In other regions already facing crises, such as the Middle East and Northern Caucasus, ECHO responded to growing needs prompted by a deterioration in the humanitarian situation.

The year was also characterised by new crises in places where humanitarian aid had not previously been required. The most significant example was Southern Africa, where ECHO began funding substantial operations.

ECHO continued to pay special attention to 'forgotten crises' overlooked by other donors and the international media such as the plight of the Sahrawi refugees in Algeria and the Burmese refugees in Thailand. As part of our effort to ensure an impartial distribution of aid according to needs, we further refined our methodology for defining and identifying forgotten crises.

Each year, the Humanitarian Aid Office establishes an aid strategy to guide the implementation of its mandate, which is to preserve lives and reduce or prevent the suffering of crisis victims outside the European Union. The overriding priority is to ensure



Yves Horent

COSTANZA ADINOLFI BEING BRIEFED ON A VISIT TO A CAMP FOR INTERNALLY DISPLACED PEOPLE IN BURUNDI.

that vital aid reaches the people that need it most, regardless of their race, religion or political beliefs. This needs-based approach also underpinned ECHO's efforts to assist those who are least able to help themselves in crisis situations. Particular attention was therefore paid to vulnerable groups. More than 11 million children received life-saving aid including vaccinations, nutrition, and therapeutic and supplementary feeding. Other groups benefiting from specific support included women, handicapped people and the elderly.

We are deeply concerned about the increasing perils faced by aid workers and the people they are trying to help. In 2002, ECHO focused on achieving the highest possible security standards for beneficiaries, staff and partners in situations which are often inherently dangerous. This will remain a high priority for us in the future.

Finally, I want to stress the notion of partnership as fundamental to ECHO's achievements. ECHO's working relationship with its operational partners, be it NGOs, United Nations agencies, or organisations in the Red Cross 'family' has been constantly evolving through a strategic dialogue launched in 2001 and continued through regular meetings in 2002. These meetings addressed the wide-ranging challenges confronting humanitarian actors with an emphasis on identifying ways of improving the quality of our assistance.

In a similar vein, we have been working on a fundamental revision of the Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA) which governs our relations with most of our partners. A key objective of the revision is to boost the impact of our aid by focusing less on inputs and more on achieving (and measuring) concrete results. Our drive for quality is enhanced through our partnership with the agencies that deliver the aid on the ground. Strengthened coordination and the exchange of best practice, including information on innovative projects, help us to respond ever more effectively to the plight of the world's most vulnerable populations, in the name of European solidarity.

## 2002

**January****VOLCANIC ERUPTION IN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO**

More than 100,000 people are forced to leave their homes when Mount Nyiragongo, an active volcano, erupts on 17 January near Goma in eastern DRC.

**WAR OVER IN SIERRA LEONE**

45,000 fighters hand in their weapons by the January deadline set under the disarmament process, bringing to an end the long running civil war in Sierra Leone.

**February****CEASE-FIRE IN SRI LANKA**

After 19 years of fighting between Tamil separatists and government forces, a cease-fire is signed. An estimated 100,000 internally displaced people return home.

**FLOODS IN ECUADOR**

More than 7,000 homes are destroyed by flooding which continues into April. Large-scale crop destruction raises the spectre of food shortages.

**DEATH OF JONAS SAVIMBI**

Jonas Savimbi, leader of Angola's UNITA movement, is killed by government troops.

**PEACE TALKS IN COLOMBIA BROKEN OFF**

Peace talks between the government of President Pastrana and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) are broken off following the kidnapping of a prominent Colombian senator.

**March****FLOODS IN INDONESIA**

More than 10,000 houses are submerged by flood waters in eastern and northern suburbs of Jakarta. Torrential rains force people to evacuate their homes for more than a week. Following the floods, 75% of the city's water is contaminated.

**ISRAELI ARMY MOVES INTO WEST BANK**

In response to a series of suicide bomb attacks, Israeli forces re-occupy major towns in the West Bank. Targets include the headquarters of the Palestinian Authority in Ramallah and the refugee camps of Jenin.

**AFGHANISTAN STRUCK BY EARTHQUAKE**

The northern Afghan province of Baghlan is struck by an earthquake measuring between five and six on the Richter scale. An estimated 800 people are killed and up to 20,000 families are made homeless. Around Nahrin, the province's capital, 90% of homes are damaged.

**April****PEACE AGREEMENT IN ANGOLA**

Following the death of Jonas Savimbi in February, and after more than 30 years of war, a ceasefire is signed between government forces and UNITA. The peace settlement allows international agencies access to large areas of the country's interior previously cut off from the outside world. Enormous humanitarian needs are revealed.

FLEEING RESIDENTS OF GOMA CROSSING ONE OF THE LAVA FLOWS THAT STRUCK THEIR TOWN AFTER THE ERUPTION OF MOUNT NYRAGONGO.

François Goemans, ECHO



## 2002

**POWER-SHARING ACCORD IN DRC**

The Kinshasa government signs a power-sharing deal with Ugandan-backed rebels during peace talks in South Africa.

**May****INDEPENDENCE FOR EAST TIMOR**

East Timor gains its independence from Indonesia, ending 33 months of transitional rule by the United Nations. Many of the new country's 250,000 displaced people return home.

**FLOODS IN HAITI**

Flooding caused by torrential rains affects thousands of families and damages crops and water supply systems.

**NEW ISRAELI OPERATIONS IN THE WEST BANK**

Israeli troops re-occupy West Bank towns and refugee camps including Qualqilya, Jenin and Nablus. A curfew is enforced in major population centres.

**NEW GOVERNMENT FOR AFGHANISTAN**

The Loya Jirga elects a transitional administration for Afghanistan under President Hamid Karzai, in the next stage towards normalisation of the country.

**July****RWANDA-DRC PEACE DEAL**

The Presidents of the Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda sign a peace deal under which Rwanda agrees to withdraw troops from the DRC.



ECHO

ISRAEL-BUILT SECURITY FENCE IN THE WEST BANK. CONTINUING VIOLENCE EXACERBATED THE HUMANITARIAN SITUATION IN THE PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES.

**June****EARTHQUAKE HITS IRAN**

237 people are killed, 1,300 injured and 25,000 made homeless after an earthquake measuring 6.3 on the Richter scale strikes north-western Iran.

**FLOODS IN CHINA**

Violent rainstorms devastate central and western parts of China, causing flooding and extensive landslides. Hundreds of thousands of people are left homeless and large areas of crops are destroyed.

**LOCUST PLAGUE HITS MADAGASCAR**

Madagascar is struck by a huge swarm of locusts which destroys thousands of hectares of crops.

**August****UN HUMANITARIAN ENVOY VISITS PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES**

Catherine Bertini, the UN Secretary-General's personal humanitarian envoy, visits the Middle East to report on how to improve the humanitarian situation and living conditions of the Palestinian population.

**September****EAST TIMOR MEMBER OF UN**

Following its independence in May, East Timor becomes the 191st member of the United Nations.



## CUBA HIT BY TWO HURRICANES

Hurricanes Isidore and Lili batter Cuba, causing widespread devastation and leaving thousands homeless.

## MORE FOREIGN TROOPS LEAVE DRC

Uganda and Rwanda withdraw most of their troops from DRC. UN-sponsored talks continue between the Kinshasa government and the two main rebel groups in South Africa.

## REBELLION IN CÔTE D'IVOIRE

A mutiny by sections of the army in Côte d'Ivoire escalates into a full scale rebellion in parts of the country. Rebel forces seize a number of northern cities.

## GROWING FOOD CRISIS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

James Morris, Director of the UN's World Food Programme, warns that Southern Africa faces a mounting food crisis due to a combination of drought, the HIV/AIDS pandemic and politics. The UN's estimate of the numbers of people at risk is raised by 1.6 million to 14.4 million.

## October

### MOSCOW THEATRE HOSTAGE CRISIS

129 hostages die after Russian special forces storm a theatre occupied by Chechen fighters demanding independence.

### NORTH KOREA AND NUCLEAR WEAPONS

The North Korean authorities reportedly admit to US officials that they possess weapons-grade uranium. The news prompts a number of aid donors to halt their humanitarian operations.

## November

### FAMINE WARNING IN ETHIOPIA

Ethiopian President, Meles Zenawi warns that Ethiopia is facing drought and famine on a worse scale than in 1984-85. Fourteen million people are reported to be at risk.

### VOLCANO ERUPTS IN ECUADOR

The Reventador volcano in Ecuador erupts, killing one person and injuring at least 16 others. The surrounding region is covered in a thick layer of ash, polluting water supplies and causing roofs to collapse.

## December

### PEACE ACCORD IN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

The government of President Joseph Kabila signs a peace deal in Pretoria with the DRC's two main rebel groups raising hopes of an end to the four-year long civil war.

### AFGHANS RETURN HOME

The UNHCR reports that 1.8 million Afghan refugees went back to their country during 2002, more than twice as many as predicted at the beginning of the year. 450,000 internally displaced people also returned home.

### CAR-BOMB MASSACRE IN GROZNY

Two suicide car bombers attack the headquarters of Chechnya's pro-Moscow government in Grozny. 83 people are killed in the explosions.

IDP CAMP NEAR KANDAHAR IN SOUTHERN AFGHANISTAN. THE UNHCR REPORTED THAT 1.8 MILLION AFGHAN REFUGEES RETURNED TO THEIR COUNTRY IN 2002.



Yvan Hildebrand, ECHO

# New challenges for European humanitarian aid

by Marie-Arlette Carlotti  
Member of the European Parliament\*

## The 20th century was the humanitarian century

The very first Nobel peace prize went to the Swiss philanthropist Jean Henri Dunant. His shocked reaction to the horrors of war (in his book *A Memory of Solferino*) eventually led to the founding of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

The last Nobel peace prize of the 20th century was awarded to Médecins Sans Frontières. This new form of citizens' revolt against the unacceptable places the rights of victims before the rights of the state and puts testimony on suffering before silence.

Since the days of Henri Dunant, while humanitarian concepts and actions have evolved considerably, the basic tenet has remained the same: an unshakeable commitment to saving lives, alleviating suffering and restoring the dignity of victims of crises. Albert Camus described it as "opérations de protection des corps".

Both in its concepts and on the ground, humanitarian aid must today adapt to an increasingly precarious world and address a number of challenges:

**A legal challenge:** within what framework of principles, laws and mandates should humanitarian action take place?

**A political challenge:** what is the role of the state and politics in tackling crises to come, under way or in the process of being settled?

**An operational challenge:** how do we ensure the safety of humanitarian workers when civilian populations are under threat and access to victims is routinely denied?

**An ethical challenge:** how do we assume this dual responsibility, on the one hand to victims and on the other to the taxpayers who contribute directly or indirectly to humanitarian action?

**An intellectual challenge:** how do we bring crisis prevention and preparedness, rapid reaction, and the link between emergency and development under one roof?

ECHO must be involved in meeting these various challenges. In this connection, it has, over the last few years, adopted and implemented new methods and procedures to make its operations more effective.

**Thanks to ECHO, humanitarian action occupies a key position in the EU's external action. ECHO is the world's main player in this field.**

Through ECHO funding, some 18 million people are helped each year in more than 60 countries through 200 partners (NGOs, ICRC, and UN agencies like the UNHCR and the WFP). The Humanitarian Aid Office spends more than €500 million a year on financing humanitarian projects.

Since ECHO was set up, the European Parliament has given solid political support to EU humanitarian action. Parliament confirmed this support when it adopted my report on 12 December 2002.

The report calls for strengthened EU solidarity for victims of humanitarian crises and frames proposals for operational action. The sole aim of the report's various recommendations, which are by no means exhaustive, is to support ECHO's approach to meeting new needs in a new context.

## New needs, new means?

The nature of crises has changed: they are always complex, often long-lasting and sometimes "forgotten".

Amid the euphoria at the end of the Cold War, the international community seriously underestimated the forces that were to be unleashed once East-West rivalry dissipated. Ideological wars have been replaced by conflicts for control of territory or natural resources (oil, water, etc.). These conflicts endure when they are fuelled by trafficking in diamonds, small arms or drugs which warlords, predatory states or multinationals seek to prolong in pursuit of their own interests.

Everywhere, civilian populations are the main victims of this new world disorder.

Europe's financial resources are no longer able to cope with these challenges. ECHO's budget is not keeping pace with the deteriorating world humanitarian situation. ECHO has seen its funding eroded and has to ask for top-ups to be able to finance its operations at the end of the year. This is unconscionable when you consider that each euro means lives saved or protected!

ECHO's budget needs to be increased by around 20% (from €460 million to €550 million) to meet global humanitarian challenges in the years ahead.

## Clarifying ECHO's responsibilities and its scope for action in the "grey zone" of crisis management

The players in the humanitarian field need a new mandate. We have to work out a legal framework for intervention and create suitable financial instruments.

The distinction between relief and development workers has become blurred. Crises are more complex than they used to be: they are long-drawn-out, conflicts become deadlocked, there is neither war nor peace. There has to be a pooling of experience and know-how. In addition to the traditional types of emergency aid we now have new kinds of intervention designed to underpin strategies for survival and to support civil society. Against that background, ECHO is going back to basics and focusing anew on its essential brief: supplying emergency aid to save lives. It is fulfilling that brief more effectively by fine-tuning its intervention mechanisms, notably its primary emergency procedure (relief dispatched within 72 hours anywhere around the globe).

## Coping with "forgotten" crises

As the term suggests, forgotten crises are no longer in the news, so the international community does little or nothing to meet the needs of those affected. ECHO's methodology now makes specific provision for the concept of "forgotten" crises, putting the emphasis on a counter-cyclical approach which entails redirecting a proportion of its funding specifically to such crises. While the work has already begun on this approach, it will be some time before its impact can be fully measured.

## Continuing to improve the quality of operations

When, on the other hand, a crisis is "covered", the main question is whether the aid is effective. A

flood of unsuitable aid, competition between a growing number of organisations for limited resources and donors' monitoring needs have made quality, efficiency and responsibility key issues in the humanitarian debate.

ECHO should therefore be supported in its attempts to improve its diagnostic capacity and the evaluation of operations carried out under its aegis.

## Emphasising prevention, preparedness and risk reduction

Humanitarian aid has changed in scope but also in nature. Humanitarian workers are no longer the battlefield stretcher-bearers popularised by the Red Cross. They have to do more than simply dress wounds. They must also prevent people getting hurt in the first place, in other words become involved in managing and preventing crises and conflicts. The notion of "resilience" is part and parcel of this approach. This means bolstering capacity to resist and absorb shocks during a crisis by combining emergency aid, support for survival strategies and long-term development strategies. This approach can focus on the resilience of individuals, through a mix of limited food aid and support for agricultural recovery, the resilience of the family or the community or the resilience of programmes, which should be based on strengthened local resources and capacities in order to adapt rapidly. This overall approach should be a priority objective for all the EU's development players. ECHO's disaster-preparedness programmes (DIPECHO) have proved effective in terms of lives saved and in terms of cost. These efforts should be continued and stepped up. I have proposed a significant increase in funding for disaster preparedness by earmarking 5% of ECHO's expenditure for this purpose by 2005 (as against 1.5% in 2001).

DISTRIBUTION OF EMERGENCY AID TO VICTIMS OF HUMANITARIAN CRISIS IN ANGOLA. "A COMMITMENT TO SAVE LIVES, ALLEVIATE SUFFERING AND RESTORE DIGNITY TO THE VICTIMS"



Maria Olsen, ECHO



## Security on the ground and protection of civilian populations

We regularly hear reports of humanitarian workers wounded, killed or taken hostage while participating in relief operations (murder of ICRC workers in Chechnya and Burundi, Médecins du Monde and UNHCR workers in Rwanda, hostage-taking in the Caucasus, etc.). In some countries such as Sudan, humanitarian workers are more at risk than peacekeeping forces! Protection of civilians and security for humanitarian workers is becoming a key concern. In the long run, the most promising solution is to incorporate security issues into the very design of programmes. Greater acceptance of operations and projects is more important than passive protection (“bunkerisation” of aid) or active dissuasion strategies (militarisation of aid). ECHO has already embarked on this path. In the short term, to cope with the most dangerous

international and domestic conflicts. But on the ground, what matters is the political will of states and armed groups to apply those rules. The notion of state sovereignty must evolve, insofar as it relates to the power of life and death (“distribuer la mort ou ... laisser vivre” according to French philosopher Michel Foucault).

Geostrategic interests rarely coincide with victims’ interests. Contrast the din surrounding the intervention in Kosovo with the deafening silence in the face of the Chechnya drama.

In June 2002, an event of great significance went almost unnoticed when the UN Security Council debated a text adopted by the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS). This advocated “the responsibility to protect” and the “right of humanitarian intervention”, phrases which, although euphemistic, signalled the initiation of a high level debate on intervention. The utopian dreams of the millennium are far from being realised. The 21st century is not



Odile Minichetti, ECHO

DISPLACED CHILDREN IN BURMA.  
“THE NATURE OF CRISES HAS CHANGED: THEY ARE ALWAYS COMPLEX, OFTEN ENDURING AND SOMETIMES FORGOTTEN”.

situations, I would encourage ECHO to provide support for practical measures to protect humanitarian personnel more easily such as:

- extending to ECHO partners’ administrative and technical humanitarian personnel the protection provided under Article 37.2 of the Vienna Convention on the protection of refugees.
- granting diplomatic status in certain cases to ECHO experts in the field.

## An evolving legal framework: towards a “responsibility to protect”

On paper, since the adoption in 1977 of the two additional protocols to the Geneva Conventions, international humanitarian law has been an effective instrument for protecting victims of

yet the century of respect for human life and, if we are not careful, it could even become the most bloodthirsty of all time.

For humanitarian players, this is not the time for complacency or withdrawal. The peoples of Europe are increasingly committed to taking up the challenge. This awakening of a European “conscience” makes ECHO an essential tool for mobilising European citizens. Let us make use of it!

\* Member of the European Parliament’s Committee on Development and Cooperation. Rapporteur on ECHO activities.

# ECHO's departure from the Western Balkans

## Mission accomplished

The break up of Yugoslavia in the early 1990s led to a series of interconnected conflicts resulting in enormous human suffering. ECHO's intervention in the region was one of its longest in terms of duration (from 1991 to 2003) and largest in terms of expenditure (almost €2.4 billion). A great many people received vital assistance through ECHO-funded operations. To mention just a few examples, in Kosovo, more than 200 schools with some 160,000 students were rehabilitated. In Albania, improvements to water supply systems benefited almost 400,000 people while 100 medical facilities serving a catchment population of one million were upgraded. Throughout the region, people who had been forced to flee from their homes were assisted, notably in Serbia which hosted up to 700,000 refugees and displaced people. Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro and the former Republic of Macedonia also received substantial humanitarian support. The humanitarian crisis in the Western Balkans has now ended and the situation has progressed beyond the so-called "post-crisis" phase when relief assistance often continues to be required. People can look forward to a more self-sufficient and stable future and ECHO's departure should be seen against this positive backdrop.

There are still problems to be overcome, some of which may be partially due to the conflicts of the 1990s, but the main challenges are now those that confront any country in transition from controlled to free-market economics. The involvement in the Western Balkans of numerous development and international financing institutions illustrates the extent to which the emphasis has moved away from

short-term humanitarian concerns towards longer term actions. The European Commission alone, through the CARDS programme (Community Assistance for Reconstruction, Development and Stabilisation) is providing €4.65 billion between 2000 and 2006.

ECHO's main aim, at the height of the successive crises that struck the Western Balkans during the 1990s, was to help meet the basic needs of three target groups: refugees, internally displaced people (IDPs) and vulnerable local populations. As it progressively scaled down its operations once the fighting had ended (a process that occurred at different times in different countries and provinces) ECHO shifted its focus towards reducing dependency on humanitarian aid - for example through projects promoting self reliance - and handing over operations it had funded to national authorities, other Commission instruments or other donors. The Commission has paid particular attention to linking relief, rehabilitation and development (LRRD) in the Western Balkans having recognised that this enables resources to be used more effectively, maximising the benefits for the target populations. In practical terms, ECHO has coordinated closely with Commission departments responsible for longer term assistance programmes, as well as with other development actors and government agencies in the region, to ensure a smooth and well-coordinated transition from humanitarian to development activities. ECHO concluded its operations in Bosnia and Croatia in 2000, Kosovo in 2001 and Montenegro and Albania in 2002. Phasing out from the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) and Serbia, was scheduled for 2003.

WORKSHOP IN THE KONIK CAMP FOR ROMA PEOPLE, MONTENEGRO. IN THE POST-CRISIS PHASE, ECHO FUNDED PROJECTS TO SUPPORT SELF-RELIANCE.



(InterSOS)

### Summary of ECHO assistance to the Balkans, 1991-2003 (in €m)

	1991-1998	1999-2002	Total
FRY	255.2		255.2
Kosovo		156.4	156.4
Serbia		211.0	211.0
Montenegro		35.3	35.3
FYROM	45.7	53.5	99.2
Albania	34.2	107.1	141.3
Bosnia/Herzegovina	1,026.6	60.1	1,086.7
Croatia	285.8	6.5	292.3
Regional/multicountry	54.7	41.9	96.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,702.2</b>	<b>671.8</b>	<b>2,374.0</b>

# In brief

## Policy aspects

On the external front, there were a number of developments during 2002 in the field of crisis management under the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy that required the involvement of the Humanitarian Aid Office. ECHO accordingly participated in various EU meetings to explain the specificity of the 'humanitarian space' and ensure that all actors were made aware of the neutral, impartial and independent nature of humanitarian assistance. ECHO was also represented on the Review Committee of the Group drawing up the new UN Guidelines for the Use of Military and Civil Defence Assets in UN Humanitarian Operations under the auspices of UN/OCHA. It stressed the undesirability of using military assets in humanitarian operations, except as a last resort. These arguments were also advanced in the context of the discussions on the new Constitutional Treaty for Europe (the 'Convention').

ECHO began preparing contingency plans to deal with the humanitarian consequences of a possible war in Iraq, as is usual in such situations. This involved close co-ordination with major partners, especially UN agencies and the Red Cross movement, as well as with other major donors. 2002 also saw the continuing implementation of internal reforms within ECHO. The Office's programming cycle was further developed in line with activity-based management principles, while operational and policy priorities were drawn up for the coming year following a comprehensive identification and analysis of humanitarian crises throughout the world.

Planning instruments developed in the past were updated and fine-tuned. ECHO's global needs assessment, a statistical analysis offering a ranking of 130 countries in terms of humanitarian needs, was refined to include data on donor contributions. The methodology was improved by introducing information on countries' GNP per capita, to give a more accurate picture of their relative prosperity. This is important for ECHO, given its commitment to ensure that the operations it finances are focused on areas of greatest need.

In addition, ECHO drew up an internal 'entry strategy' paper involving the definition of objective criteria ('damage thresholds') for when it should intervene in the event of a natural disaster. The work started in 2001 on developing a new integrated information system called HOLIS (Humanitarian Office Local Information System)

and 2002 saw the first applications become operational. This new, integrated tool will improve the quality of data on humanitarian funding provided by ECHO and by EU Member States.

Important progress was made in implementing the Commission's strategy of linking relief, rehabilitation and development (LRRD). This issue is now a basic element in the 'country strategy papers' drawn up by the Commission. ECHO also developed a methodology to identify practical situations where attention to LRRD is appropriate, and to measure progress in moving from humanitarian to development aid. Finally, ECHO consolidated its emergency management procedures, enabling it to respond to new crises even more speedily and to mobilise resources within a very short timescale.

## Partnership

In 2002, ECHO deepened its relationships with its major partners through the 'Strategic Programming Dialogues'. This was the third year in which dialogues were held with the main UN agencies (UNHCR, WFP, UNICEF, OCHA and WHO). Similar sessions were organised with the ICRC, IFRC and the NGOs. The aim is to ensure that coherent policies are pursued that benefit all actors and meet the most pressing humanitarian needs. Additionally, ECHO boosted its participation at meetings of the executive bodies of the UN agencies in order to consolidate the relationship further.

During the year, a number of ECHO partners (ICRC, IFRC and UNICEF) delivered presentations to ECHO staff on their core mandates and current initiatives, thus ensuring a deeper understanding between the respective staff of all organisations.

ECHO continued to consult widely with signatory organisations of the Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA) with a view to achieving an in-depth revision of the Agreement in 2003.

The review of the FPA is based on two key elements. The first is to comply fully with the Commission's new financial regulation and implementing rules that entered into force on 1 January 2003. The second, based on the idea of 'quality in humanitarian aid', is a fundamental shift of emphasis away from the control of resources (inputs) towards planning of objectives, indicators and the control of results. Quality in humanitarian aid was a central theme at the ECHO partners annual conference held in Brussels on 14 and 15 October. In working groups and plenary sessions, the conference participants discussed:

- quality management tools in the humanitarian sector and their application by the NGOs;
- human resource management systems applicable to NGOs in the humanitarian sector, and;



- humanitarian information technology (IT) platforms and their possible use as coordination instruments.

The annual conference is an important component of ECHO's ongoing dialogue with its partners.

At the end of 2002, more than 210 humanitarian organisations, including European NGOs and Red Cross organisations, were FPA signatories.

## Finance and audit

ECHO's response to humanitarian crises in 2002 was channelled through 115 funding decisions totalling €537.8 million. The aftermath of the events of 11 September 2001, together with the outbreak of new crises, in particular the food crisis in Southern Africa and the worsening of the situation in the Middle East, required ECHO to reinforce the humanitarian aid budget by calling on the emergency aid reserve for an additional €80 million. 761 contracts for humanitarian aid were signed in 2002. The rate of budget implementation, in terms of commitment appropriations, was 100%.

As part of the overall process of administrative and financial management reform, the new Financial Regulation was adopted in 2002 (coming into force on 1 January 2003). In respect of humanitarian aid, new features include:

- the move towards measuring the impact of humanitarian actions (outputs) vis-à-vis the objectives set, as opposed to the previous input-oriented approach;
- comprehensive rules on the award and management of contracts that take account of the specific operational features of humanitarian and emergency assistance, and;
- moving towards a system of joint management with international organisations.

Within ECHO, this has led to a reorientation of internal control systems to further strengthen the assessment of the risks relating to projects, and to monitor their progress and effectiveness by concentrating on outputs.

ECHO-funded activities implemented by external parties (partners and contractors) are subject to financial audit. Overall, the aim is to have a two-year audit cycle involving an examination of partners' systems and their use of ECHO funds. ECHO's audit processes and methodologies are continuously under review and, in 2002, significant revisions were made to the procedures. From 2002, ECHO Offices were also subject to systematic audit.

Fourteen audits were completed during the year including six field audits, reporting on projects actually under way.

To increase its activity in this area, ECHO contracted a firm of professional auditors to scrutinise ECHO projects, beginning in the

second half of 2002. This led to a significant increase in the number of ongoing audits (50) by the end of the year and the number of finalised audits will therefore increase substantially in 2003 and in future years.

Audit results are important for the successful functioning of the Framework Partnership Agreement which governs ECHO's relations with the majority of its partners responsible for implementing humanitarian projects. They also include useful recommendations on ways of improving the financial and administrative controls employed by the partners in managing ECHO funds. In 2002, ECHO undertook a systematic financial review of its partners in order to identify in advance, weaknesses which have to be addressed in order to maintain the inherent risks of humanitarian operations at an acceptable level.

## Information and communication

In the field of information and communication, ECHO sought to maximise the use of new technologies to promote its humanitarian message. The priorities reflected the demand for information about concrete projects and results, and about the workings of the EU's humanitarian aid system. To achieve this, existing information products were reoriented to include a greater focus on eyewitness accounts and retrospective human-interest stories. A redesigned ECHO website was launched in November. This reflected the priorities for 2002, with more emphasis on first-hand stories, as well as a user-friendly interactive approach and a stronger visual identity. By the end of the year, the number of pages viewed daily exceeded 3,000 and the figures were on an upward trend.

More attention was devoted to mass media outlets, with a view to appealing to a broader public. A new video presentation of ECHO was produced highlighting its support for the victims of crises in all parts of the world.

Funding and material assistance was given for various television programmes on humanitarian aid and forgotten crises. With support from ECHO's awareness-raising grant facility, a television spot highlighting the work of ECHO and an NGO partner was broadcast 97 times on Eurosport, targeting younger audiences. A further TV spot covering ECHO and NGO support for the Western Saharan refugees was shown 86 times on two major Italian channels. Funds were also provided for a 30-minute documentary on the humanitarian situation in Afghanistan, broadcast on Danish national television in December.

Additionally, ECHO was specifically covered in two Euronews features each broadcast 20 times as well as in two documentary programmes aired on France 2 and Arte.

Youth-oriented information activities developed during the year included funding for an extensive

information campaign by an NGO in Spanish schools and universities reaching up to four million young people. A major World Food Programme/ECHO awareness-raising campaign, targeting 8,000 Italian schools, was also successfully concluded. The theme for this action was 'hunger in the world'.

Other projects supported under the grant facility included conferences in Madrid and Copenhagen featuring gender issues and forgotten crises respectively and a high profile event involving the re-creation of emergency feeding centres by an NGO partner in Paris and Marseilles to highlight nutritional issues. This exercise attracted significant media coverage.

Publications in 2002 included the ECHO Annual Review, ECHO News, brochures on ECHO and its NGO partners in Spain and Denmark (the EU Presidency countries) and leaflets on Angola and the Northern Caucasus.

## Evaluation

The main evaluations in the 2002 programme covered ECHO-financed actions in favour of the victims of the 2001 earthquakes in India and El Salvador and operations it funded in Cambodia. Three studies were ongoing at the end of 2002. These concern the World Food Programme (WFP), DIPECHO in South Asia and ECHO's response to serious drought conditions.

As regards the evaluation of WFP activities, a draft evaluation report was available for the ECHO-WFP strategic dialogue in November 2002. The WFP's positive reception of the evaluators, and the use to which their work has been put, are good examples of cooperation between the two partners. The evaluation of the first DIPECHO programme in south Asia also resulted in positive findings. This study will contribute to a further overall evaluation of disaster preparedness activities to be undertaken in 2003.

Three further studies not initially foreseen were undertaken. These concerned human resources, IT platforms and quality issues for NGOs. Their results were presented and discussed at the annual conference with ECHO partners held on 14-15 October 2002 in Brussels.

The planned global evaluations of ECHO's disaster preparedness activities, the operations it finances in Sudan and its response to the needs of specific vulnerable groups in emergency situations have been carried over from 2002 to 2003.

An updated edition of the ECHO Manual for the evaluation of humanitarian aid was also distributed in 2002.

## Disaster prevention and preparedness

As well as responding to disasters of all kinds, ECHO is helping vulnerable communities prepare themselves for natural disasters with its Disaster Preparedness Programme (DIPECHO). ECHO's budget for disaster prevention and preparedness operations was €8 million in 2002.

The programme is focused on the main disaster-prone regions of the developing world: Southeast Asia, South Asia, the Caribbean, Central America and the Andean Community. Examples of specific activities funded through DIPECHO include strengthening local management and institutions, training, awareness-campaigns, information networks, early warning systems, relief mechanisms and hazard mapping.

2002 saw the continuing implementation of the three DIPECHO Action Plans approved in 2001 for the Andean Community (Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela), South Asia (India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan) and the Caribbean region. The €1.8 million Andean Action Plan was boosted with a further €1.64 million in 2002. The overall objective of this decision was to help prepare local communities and institutions, to enhance their capacity to cope with disasters and to finance small-scale disaster mitigation works.

The Commission also approved a €6.36 million decision in December 2002, to help vulnerable communities living in South East Asia and Central America prepare for natural disasters. Projects include the establishment of early warning systems, training courses for local staff and volunteers, and awareness raising. In South East Asia, DIPECHO funds are targeted at Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Philippines, Indonesia and Thailand all of which are prone to cyclones, floods, forest fires and drought. The Central American countries covered by this decision - Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala and Costa Rica - can be affected by drought, hurricanes, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, flooding and landslides.

## Training and studies

Thirty-nine applications were received in 2002 for funding under ECHO's grant facility for training, studies and networks in the humanitarian field. The budget for this action was €1.8 million.

In the training sector, projects selected for support included courses on professional capacity building. Studies on management of the security of international humanitarian activities and guidelines on support for refugees and displaced persons were among the research projects to receive financing.

ECHO also continued to support the Network on Humanitarian Assistance (NOHA), which offers a one-year multi-disciplinary post-graduate diploma through seven participating universities. Students follow a curriculum which offers a comprehensive overview of the humanitarian aid environment. Their studies are complemented by an internship either in a humanitarian organisation or in ECHO.

# Global reach

## Humanitarian funding by country/region

### Afghanistan and Pakistan

**Funding - €72.754 million**

In 2002, Afghanistan had to cope with one of the largest refugee influxes in living memory. Defying all predictions, between 1.5 million and two million people returned from Pakistan and Iran, together with 500,000 who went back to their home areas from elsewhere in the country. They returned to a situation devastated by more than 20 years of war: homes destroyed or uninhabitable, fields uncultivated and an absence of even basic infrastructures. Two-thirds of those returning settled in Kabul or the area between there and the Pakistan border, thus placing enormous strains on these locations. In the south, they faced the added burden of five years of continuous drought, one of the worst in living memory. Meanwhile, substantial numbers of people continued to be displaced either inside Afghanistan or as refugees in neighbouring states, in particular as old scores were settled and ethnic minorities forced out.

ECHO maintained its ongoing humanitarian commitment to the victims of the Afghan crisis providing substantial funding for a wide range of actions. The overall aim has been to maintain the sustainability of the return and thus prevent further displacements and to enable people to stay alive and not have to move from the drought-affected areas. For returnees, support included the construction of shelters, latrines and water supply networks, health interventions, the distribution of seeds, fertilisers and basic non-food supplies such as blankets and fuel, and income-generating schemes. Victims of drought were provided with drinking water, irrigation, primary health care and nutritional support. For IDPs and refugees in

neighbouring countries, measures were taken to provide water/sanitation facilities and healthcare. ECHO also supported projects to boost awareness of the dangers of unexploded mines and bombs.

In December, additional funds were provided to help nearly 700,000 vulnerable people through the winter, when temperatures in Afghanistan can reach  $-20^{\circ}\text{C}$ .

The overall funding of almost €73 million included €2 million allocated to help victims of the earthquake which struck the Baghlan region on 25 March.

### Angola

**Funding - €12 million**

After 30 years of war, the possibility of real peace came to Angola with the signature of a ceasefire between the government and UNITA forces. With the fighting ended, enormous needs were identified among displaced people living in previously inaccessible areas. Angola has an estimated four million IDPs.

Significant humanitarian support is required for the foreseeable future together with rehabilitation and longer term development assistance, to help the most vulnerable sections of the population and consolidate the peace process.

The €12 million channelled through ECHO was part of a €129 million action plan drawn up by the European Commission for a wide range of actions including demining and mine awareness, child protection and family tracing, return and resettlement support and the provision of medicines.

ECHO's assistance was used for nutrition, health projects, co-ordination and logistics, as well as emergency relief. In addition, some €2 million was provided for Angola in a humanitarian aid decision for Southern Africa taken by the Commission in September (see the "Southern Africa" rubric in this Global Reach section). Angola benefited under this

## Reducing the risk of returning home

After nineteen years of conflict, a death toll of 65,000 including many civilians and the displacement of more than 800,000 people, a truce was signed in February between the Sri Lankan government and the Tamil Tigers. The agreement has raised hopes of peace for the uprooted people scattered throughout Sri Lanka,

and already 200,000 have returned to their home areas.

The greatest danger they face is unexploded ordnance (UXOs), and in particular, the thousands of anti-personnel mines laid along the changing battle lines of almost two decades of fighting in the north and north-east of the country.

Following an assessment mission in early 2002, ECHO allocated €770,000 for the demining programmes of two specialist European NGOs: HALO Trust working in the Jaffna peninsula and the Mine Advisory Group (MAG) operating in the Vanni area. The work included minefield surveys and demarcation, training for deminers and the bulk destruction of UXOs. The scale of the problem revealed by the initial findings prompted ECHO to allocate further funding for humanitarian de-mining operations by the two NGOs and to support a third partner working in this area, Norwegian People's Aid. The direct aid for demining was completed by mine awareness activities and psychosocial support to mine victims, implemented through UNICEF. ECHO's overall financing for these operations in 2002 amounted to €3,050,000.

In many post-conflict situations, the large-scale return of displaced people to their homes is accompanied by a big increase in mine accidents. The fact that no such increase was recorded in Sri Lanka shows the positive impact of the mine clearance and awareness-raising work supported by ECHO and other agencies.

A SRI LANKAN WORKING WITH HALO TRUST IN JAFFNA RECEIVES TRAINING ON THE SAFE DISPOSAL OF BURIED ANTI-PERSONNEL MINES.



Antoine Lemasson - ECHO



regional programme through resettlement support and health-related actions.

## Brazil

**Funding - €0.350 million**

Relief assistance was provided to the victims of landslides and floods which struck Brazil in December 2001 and continued during January and February 2002.

## Burkina Faso

**Funding - €0.175 million**

ECHO supported a meningitis treatment programme, following a serious outbreak of the disease in Burkina Faso in 2001.

## Burundi

**Funding - €17.5 million**

Since 1993 Burundi has been in the grip of a civil war involving opposing Tutsi and Hutu armed groups. Despite the peace agreement signed in August 2000 and the inauguration of a transitional government in November 2001, sporadic fighting continues to force many people from their homes, and the situation was further exacerbated in 2001 by severe food shortages. At the beginning of 2002, it was estimated that a million people (15% of the population) relied on humanitarian assistance. ECHO continued its relief programme for vulnerable groups in Burundi including displaced people, women, children and the elderly. Its "global plan" of €17.5 million focused particularly on expanding the provision of primary health care.

## Cambodia

**Funding - €5.5 million**

Although Cambodia has been relatively peaceful for the past decade, some areas of the country have only recently become fully accessible and there are still significant needs, especially in the north. Vulnerable groups include returnees and populations of remote areas lacking access to basic services such as healthcare and clean water. Rural communities still face a serious threat from anti-personnel mines scattered during past fighting.

ECHO supported a range of projects including water supply works, the provision of essential items (tools, seeds, drugs and medical equipment), training for health personnel and other public service workers, small-scale rehabilitation and mine clearance. €700,000 was also allocated to help prevent a threatened epidemic of Dengue haemorrhagic fever.

## China/Tibet

**Funding - €4.45 million**

In June, landslides and floods provoked by torrential rain affected some 80 million people in China. More than 900 deaths were reported, up to three million housing units were destroyed or damaged and four million hectares of farmland were inundated. Untreated effluent contaminated surface and groundwater reserves, leading to a dramatic increase in cases of diarrhoea, fever and skin infection. Funds were allocated for a range of actions including the distribution of rice and wheat to subsistence farmers and their families (up to 100,000 people), the supply of medicines, quilts, clothing and mosquito nets, and the construction of 14,000 hygienic toilets, 500 water tanks and two primary schools.

ECHO also supported the victims of heavy snowfalls in the Ngari prefecture of Tibet. Many nomadic people lost their livestock and thus their only means of subsistence. The aid was used to buy food for 25,000 people, to purchase almost 8,000 sheep and to supply essential drugs.

## Colombia

**Funding - €9.2 million**

ECHO maintained its support for IDPs forced to flee from their homes because of the continuing conflict. Its strategy is to provide emergency relief during and immediately after displacement and to offer post-emergency assistance including shelter, healthcare, sanitation and psycho-social support in the main reception areas. It is estimated that up to 200,000 IDPs were assisted under ECHO's programme for 2002 located mainly in rural areas, including some 125,000 immediately after their displacement.

## Congo (Democratic Republic)

**Funding - €38.1 million**

The long-running crisis in the DRC has caused suffering on an almost unimaginable scale. The number of displaced people has doubled since 1999 and now stands at more than three million, including some 360,000 refugees from neighbouring countries. Many areas face severe food shortages and malnutrition is widespread. The collapse of health and water delivery systems has resulted in the re-emergence of many diseases.

In ECHO's "global plan" for the DRC in 2002 (€32 million), the focus was on health, nutrition and food security. ECHO concentrated on delivering relief to the least accessible areas of the country, where there are enormous unmet needs. Funding was used for medicines and vaccines, medical supplies and training, targeting 2.7 million people. Despite the scale of the humanitarian crisis, there are stable areas in Congo where ECHO is looking to hand over established programmes to other, longer term aid instruments.

On 17 January, Mount Nyiragongo, an active volcano close to Goma in eastern DRC, erupted. In a single day, most of the town's 300,000 inhabitants left on foot as lava flows advanced, destroying everything in their path. ECHO responded rapidly to the crisis, providing air transport to the stricken zone (through ECHO Flight) as well as €5 million for water/sanitation, shelter, food and medicines. ECHO's support covered the immediate needs of 100,000 people.

In a separate decision, €1.1 million was allocated to support Angolan refugees in the provinces of Bas Congo and Bandundu.

## Côte d'Ivoire

**Funding - €1.5 million**

Funding has been provided to assist victims of the internal conflict that broke out in Côte d'Ivoire in September. In areas affected by the fighting, access to food and health services has become increasingly difficult. ECHO supported the running of primary and secondary health facilities and supplied supplementary food rations for the most seriously affected sections of the population.

## Cuba

**Funding - €0.6 million**

In September and October, Hurricanes Isidore and Lili swept through western Cuba, causing floods and

widespread destruction. ECHO financed emergency rehabilitation and the provision of essential relief, including drinking water, for 28,000 victims of the storms.

## Ecuador

**Funding - €1.248 million**

Heavy rains in February, March and April caused widespread flooding in Ecuador, washing away roads and bridges in coastal areas and destroying more than 7,000 homes as well as crops of rice, coffee, maize, bananas and cocoa.

ECHO allocated €800,000 to repair water supply systems and purify polluted water, providing 10,000 families with access to clean drinking water.

In November, the volcano "El Reventador" erupted scattering ash across a large area and causing widespread damage to homes, crops and infrastructures. ECHO provided immediate relief assistance worth €448,000 under its fast-track "primary emergency procedure".

## Eritrea

**Funding - €1.75 million**

ECHO continued supporting humanitarian operations in favour of vulnerable people in the aftermath of Eritrea's border war with Ethiopia. Once the UN-monitored Temporary Security Zone was established along the frontier in May 2001, most of the estimated 300,000 internally displaced Eritreans returned to their villages. However, up to 60,000 people remained in camps, dependent on international assistance for their survival. These included Eritreans unable to return home because of the threat of unexploded mines, and refugees from Ethiopia and Sudan.

ECHO funded essential relief items for both camp residents and returnees, as well as mine-awareness education for people returning home. It also supported the protection programme of the International Committee of the Red Cross, and the UNHCR for the return of Eritrean refugees.

## Ethiopia

**Funding - €7.75 million**

In addition to funding for specific emergencies, such as in response to a major outbreak of meningitis, ECHO financed a "Pastoral Early Warning" programme for the victims of drought and conflict.

In response to the new and very widespread drought at the end of 2002, ECHO provided further assistance, in coordination with the Commission's ongoing and large-scale food aid response. This new funding was focused on tackling life-threatening malnutrition and other drought-related acute illnesses. It included health care, supplementary and therapeutic feeding, livestock support and the provision of safe drinking water and sanitation to prevent the spread of waterborne diseases. Additionally, 30,000 Somali refugees living in five camps in south-east Ethiopia were assisted in their return home. The voluntary repatriation package covered food, transport, and small cash-grants. ECHO also financed the short-term provision of water and sanitation in Somaliland for the returnees.

## Gabon

**Funding - €0.3 million**

In December 2001, Gabon was struck by the deadly Ebola virus for the fourth time in ten years. This latest outbreak was thankfully rapidly contained by the prompt intervention of Médecins Sans Frontières and the World Health Organisation.

## Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and El Salvador

**Funding - €5.028 million**

Over the last three years, Central America has experienced disruption to its usual rainfall pattern, with severe drought in some areas and heavy flooding in others. The unusual weather has reduced crop yields. Coupled with the region's economic problems, this has led to increased food insecurity. In Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua, ECHO funds were used mainly to tackle malnutrition, but also covered food and seed distribution and improvements to drinking water and sanitation systems.

ECHO also provided follow-up assistance during 2002 for training in rebuilding of homes in rural areas of El Salvador following the two powerful earthquakes that brought death and destruction to the country in early 2001. This was in addition to €10 million provided in the immediate aftermath of the earthquakes and reported in last year's ECHO Annual Review.

## A place to forget about the war

More than three years after the beginning of the second Chechen conflict, the population of the republic continues to endure terrible suffering. Artillery bombardments and mines have wrought widespread destruction, while many people have been physically abused or have simply disappeared. No family is untouched by this tragedy and almost everyone has lost relatives or friends. In this atmosphere of daily terror, children are particularly affected, and many suffer from severe psychological trauma.

It is important to protect the children, as much and as early as possible, from the horrors of the war and provide them with a secure environment where they can go every day and experience some kind of normal life. This is why UNICEF, with financial support from ECHO, has opened seven child-friendly spaces in the Chechen capital, Grozny. These provide a safe haven for children of pre-school age, and a relaxed atmosphere where they can benefit from recreational and educational activities.



A SAFE HAVEN FOR CHILDREN LIVING IN A TRAUMATIC ENVIRONMENT.

## Haiti

### Funding - €0.4 million

Urgent aid was provided to victims of floods in Haiti, following torrential rains in May. The funds were used to purchase emergency supplies and medicines, to construct water supply systems and to restore health services.

## India

### Funding - €5 million

Rajasthan, India's second largest state and one of its poorest, suffered a prolonged drought during the spring and summer causing water and food shortages. 80% of crops were lost.

ECHO intervened to provide clean water for more than 100,000 beneficiaries and food supplies for some 350,000 people. Other projects were set up to mitigate the effects of future droughts. A total of more than seven million people benefited directly or indirectly from the programmes funded under this decision.

Assistance was also provided for victims of conflict in Kashmir and communal violence in Gujarat, as well as for Sri Lankan refugees in the camps of Tamil Nadu. The aid included nutritional support, sanitation measures, psychosocial support and education for children affected by the conflicts.

## Indonesia and East Timor

### Funding - €5.475 million

Now that East Timor is independent and stability has been restored, the focus of the European Commission's work in the country is shifting from relief operations towards rehabilitation and development. During 2002, while in the process of concluding its operations in East Timor, ECHO continued to support up to 70,000 East Timorese refugees still living in camps in West Timor (Indonesia). It provided nutritional support, water supplies and health education to camp residents, with a particular emphasis on pregnant and breastfeeding women, and children. The aid package included support for the voluntary return of displaced East Timorese families.

In Indonesia, ECHO assisted victims of natural disasters and civil unrest which have resulted in the displacement of more than 1.3 million people within the country. Many IDPs faced severe hardship including malnourishment and disease. In Jakarta, flooding caused serious sanitation problems in slum areas. ECHO helped to improve the living conditions of highly vulnerable groups through the provision of clean water and sanitation, health items, food and other basic essentials.

## Iran

### Funding - €0.5 million

237 people were killed, 1,300 injured and 25,000 made homeless by an earthquake that struck north-western Iran on 22 June. In response to this disaster, ECHO funded the provision of basic water and sanitation infrastructures in the affected area.

## Iraq

### Funding - €13 million

Since 1980, the humanitarian situation in Iraq has progressively deteriorated as a result of two major conflicts (the Iran-Iraq war and the Gulf war) followed by ten years of strict international sanctions. Basic infrastructures have crumbled with health services particularly affected. The education and water/sanitation

systems are also in a very poor state due to a lack of investment.

ECHO's humanitarian effort in Iraq has been designed to complement the UN's 'Oil for Food' programme allowing the Iraqi government to sell oil in return for food and other basic supplies. ECHO's main emphasis has accordingly been on providing health care, clean water and sanitation in the centre and south of the country where the greatest needs have been identified. In 2002, ECHO was the largest single donor of external assistance to Iraq.

## Kenya

### Funding - €2.5 million

In north and north-east Kenya, poor rains during 2001 prevented a recovery in agricultural production after the devastating drought of 1999-2000. ECHO's assistance was targeted at 70,000 pastoralists with support for health, nutrition, livestock and water/sanitation actions.

## Laos

### Funding - €1.13 million

In Laos, ECHO provided humanitarian aid for vulnerable displaced people and possible victims of resettlement policies. Actions funded included improvements to water and sanitation systems, the construction of an access road, the distribution of hygiene kits and education in mine-awareness. An underlying aim was to boost ethnic minorities' access to a sustainable livelihood as an alternative to resettlement. There was also financing for mine clearance and health training for IDPs.

## Madagascar

### Funding - €1 million

The Commission provided assistance to tackle a major locust infestation which threatened crops in the southern provinces of Madagascar. The funds were used to purchase insecticides and for the spraying of locust breeding grounds using helicopters.

## Mexico

### Funding - €1 million

ECHO support was directed towards vulnerable people in the Chiapas region of Mexico, where the after-effects of the 1994 uprising continued to be felt. A large number of people were still displaced and many of those who had returned home had urgent nutritional and health needs. The funding was used to provide food rations and medical services to around 30,000 people, and to train farmers in sustainable farming methods.

## Middle East

### Funding - €35 million

ECHO continued to provide substantial support to ease the plight of people living in the occupied Palestinian territories, and of the most vulnerable Palestinian refugees and non-refugee populations in Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. After many months of violence, the economic and social situation of the Palestinians worsened significantly. Job losses resulting from closures and movement restrictions contributed to the suffering and big increases were recorded both in the numbers of malnourished children and in the incidence of preventable diseases. Part of the funding from ECHO was used for nutritional support, psychosocial treatment for children and adolescents, training for medical staff and health education.



Other funds went to help meet the needs of vulnerable Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza through the distribution of food, medicines, medical supplies, hygiene kits, cooking fuel and other basic essentials. ECHO also helped to restore clean water supplies and boost professional medical coverage. Specific areas of operation include Jenin, which suffered widespread destruction following incursions by the Israeli army and Ramallah, where the hospital faced a serious shortage of medicines.

## Myanmar (Burma) and Thailand

**Funding - €8.965 million**

ECHO continued to offer vital assistance to Burmese refugees living in the border regions of Thailand. In addition to providing basic food supplies, ECHO funded improvements to health infrastructures, health and hygiene training, immunisation and the provision of drinking water.

Within Myanmar, ECHO was involved in the effort to combat malaria through the supply of medications and improvements to water and sanitation systems.

## Nepal/Bhutan

**Funding - €3.675 million**

The plight of more than 100,000 Bhutanese refugees living in camps in south-east Nepal is one of the world's "forgotten crises". The refugees rely almost entirely on rations channelled through the World Food Programme, as they are not permitted to seek work or cultivate land outside the camps. During the last two years, WFP has experienced increasing difficulties in supplying adequate food to the camps. ECHO therefore allocated €2 million for the purchase of food on the local market.

The remaining funds went to help the people of Nepal affected by the internal conflict between government forces and Maoist rebels. Since November 2001, 5,000 people have been killed in the fighting and the economy has been badly affected. In the far west, the health system is under enormous strain due to the mass displacement of conflict-affected populations. ECHO supported protection activities for harassed and intimidated populations, with an emphasis on re-establishing family contacts and promoting international humanitarian law. Primary health care was also targeted.

## North Korea

**Funding - €21.025 million**

Since the early 1990s, there has been a steady decline in economic and social conditions in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). Supplies of food, water and medicines have diminished drastically leading to a big increase in malnutrition and preventable diseases, especially among children. Droughts and floods since the mid-1990s have exacerbated the situation.

ECHO funding has been used to finance the procurement and distribution of 39,000 tons of cereals targeted mainly at children and mothers of new-born babies. The aid is being channelled through the WFP, which has outlets at community level.

Support was also provided for initiatives to improve basic health and nutrition while around 250,000 people benefited from ECHO-funded improvements to water and sewerage systems.

Floods during the summer caused substantial damage in the west of the country and ECHO responded with €300,000 in emergency aid to meet the immediate needs of some 22,500 people.

## Paraguay

**Funding - €0.92 million**

A two-year long drought in western Paraguay threatened the lives of 200,000 people, including indigenous communities who live on subsistence crops, forestry and hunting.

ECHO supplied food and clean drinking water for 32,000 vulnerable people living in rural areas, as well as basic medicines to treat respiratory infections, tuberculosis and parasitic diseases.

## Peru and Bolivia

**Funding - €1.3 million**

Southern Peru and the department of Potosi in Bolivia were affected by snowstorms and extremely low temperatures in July. ECHO provided emergency assistance to rehabilitate 500 homes, protect 50,000 livestock and train local people on how to respond to natural disasters.

## Vital support for hospitals

After more than a decade of conflict in Somalia, most of the country's health facilities and other social services have crumbled. Yet the ongoing violence generates a steady stream of casualties who need medical assistance. In Mogadishu alone, some 5,000 people suffer gunshot or stab wounds every year. ECHO supports an ICRC programme for three hospitals that carry out emergency war surgery. Other urgent cases such as road accident victims are also treated. Since 1999, about 11,000 people have had surgery or other treatment under this programme - possibly the ICRC's largest caseload of war injuries in the world.

Another hospital (SOS-Kinderdorf) provides maternity and paediatric services, with support from ECHO. This includes an extensive nutritional programme for children and expectant mothers. About 75,000 benefited from these services in 2001-2002.



INFANTS' WARD IN A MOGADISHU HOSPITAL.

## Russian Federation/Northern Caucasus

### Funding - €28 million

The second armed conflict in Chechnya, which began in 1999, has led to the displacement of large numbers of Chechen people in the Northern Caucasus. There are some 140,000 IDPs within Chechnya itself and around 120,000 in Ingushetia and 5,000 in Dagestan. A complete lack of security was the main impediment to return to normal life in the Chechen Republic. IDPs continued to depend on humanitarian assistance. Since there was an upsurge in violence throughout 2002, it was clear that most of the IDPs would not be able to return home under acceptable conditions. Humanitarian agencies operating in the region continued to face access problems, particularly within Chechnya itself, making it impossible to deliver assistance in accordance with basic humanitarian principles. The bulk of ECHO's funding was allocated to cover the primary needs of vulnerable people affected by the conflict within Chechnya or displaced in neighbouring republics. ECHO financed the supply of food, shelter and non-food items (bedding, tents, clothes etc), water and sanitation and medicines, as well as protection, psychosocial support and legal advice. ECHO is the largest donor of humanitarian assistance in support of victims of the conflict in Chechnya.

## Senegal

### Funding - €0.75 million

ECHO supported a mass emergency vaccination campaign against yellow fever, covering 1.6 million people, following a serious outbreak of the disease in September.

## Sierra Leone, Guinea, Liberia

### Funding - €19 million

These three coastal West African countries have experienced conflict of varying intensity over the last twelve years resulting in widespread destruction, huge population displacements and an overall deterioration of basic services.

In 2002, the main focus of instability was Liberia. In Sierra Leone and Guinea, the situation continued to stabilise although the after-effects of Sierra Leone's long civil war continued to be felt. The country still had some 550,000 uprooted people while almost 200,000 Sierra Leoneans and Liberians were registered as refugees in Guinea. Many of the estimated 75,000 people who have returned to Sierra Leone since August 2001 also require humanitarian assistance and further needs have been identified in previously inaccessible areas of Sierra Leone. ECHO funded primary health care as well as measures to tackle malnutrition. Given the large number of displaced people in the region, there was a focus on providing shelter materials and basic non-food items such as blankets and cooking utensils. Another priority sector was water and sanitation, with targeted actions aimed at boosting the availability of clean water, improving sanitation systems and promoting hygiene through education and training at community level.

## Somalia

### Funding - €4.5 million (excluding ECHO Flight)

Somalia continues to face some of the most difficult humanitarian conditions in the world. Basic infrastructures have been destroyed and cycles of drought

and flooding have added to the already huge needs generated by the country's decade-long internal crisis. ECHO funded a range of humanitarian activities including improvements to primary health care, measures to reduce acute malnutrition and the rehabilitation of water and sanitation systems. In the centre and south of the country, there was a particular emphasis on meeting the health and nutritional needs of the most vulnerable sections of the population, through the distribution of emergency seeds and tools, veterinary support and treatment for cholera victims.

## Southern Africa (Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe)

### Funding - €36.5 million

In 2002, large areas of Southern Africa were confronted with a complex and developing humanitarian crisis due to a variety of factors. A combination of drought, bad governance and inappropriate food security policies left up to 13 million people facing serious food shortages. Much of the region's population was already highly vulnerable, due to poor economic conditions in general and the terrible toll exacted by the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

The bulk of ECHO's funding was allocated in a regional decision for €30 million to support food aid operations including nutritional surveillance and logistics, projects in the water, sanitation and medical sectors and agricultural rehabilitation. Most of this funding was directed to Zimbabwe and Zambia.

In Malawi, ECHO supported the national network of nutritional rehabilitation units as well as improvements to the nutritional monitoring and surveillance system. After the previous year's devastating cholera epidemic, it also mounted a cholera preparedness operation throughout the country.

Special attention was paid to Zambia's growing refugee population with assistance for new arrivals and vulnerable groups in the refugee camps as well as local host communities. Actions funded included food aid, health screening, vaccinations, and water/sanitation projects. The decision for €30 million included some €2 million funding for Angola which mainly involves repatriation assistance for refugees (see also the Angola rubric on page 13).

## Southern Caucasus (Armenia and Georgia)

### Funding - € 2.5 million

Humanitarian assistance was provided to finalise support to farmers in Southern Armenia affected by droughts in 2000 and 2001. ECHO's support was used for training and the installation of irrigation systems. Funds also went towards promoting diversification and sustainable farming activities.

In Georgia, the effects of the internal conflict that broke out in 1992 are still being felt in particular in and around the autonomous republic of Abkhazia. This conflict led to the displacement of 250,000 people and caused serious economic disruption. Abkhazia itself suffered enormous damage and tens of thousands of the republic's former inhabitants are still displaced within Georgia, mainly in the west. ECHO funds were used to distribute dry foodstuffs, maintain food canteens and support an

income-generation programme for people living on either side of the border line between Abkhazia and Georgia proper. Projects were targeted particularly at the elderly and destitute.

## Sri Lanka

**Funding - €8.3 million**

After 19 years of fighting, the ceasefire signed in February between the government and Tamil separatists brought new hope for peace. It was also the catalyst for a large-scale movement of IDPs back to their home areas. Almost 200,000 displaced people returned home in 2002. ECHO continued to support an ICRC project to maintain a vital sea transport link with the Jaffna peninsula. The ship was used to deliver medical and other supplies to the area, where 900,000 people were effectively cut off from the rest of the country until the re-opening of the main north-south road.

Following the truce, further funding was allocated to help returnees re-establish themselves in their home areas, where houses and infrastructures had been destroyed or damaged during the war. Sri Lanka has an estimated 600,000 unexploded mines scattered around the former conflict zones, posing a serious threat to returnees and local residents. ECHO therefore also supported mine clearance work and mine-awareness training.

## Sudan

**Funding - €18 million**

As the civil war between the Sudanese government and armed groups controlling much of the south of the country entered its 19th year, the suffering of the population continued. The situation has been aggravated by humanitarian access denials affecting large parts of the country, as well as recurring droughts and floods that impair food security and contribute to the high incidence of serious diseases. An estimated four million people (13% of the population) are internally displaced.

ECHO's 2002 funding was aimed mainly at preventing a further deterioration in the conditions of the most vulnerable sections of the population, with a special focus on IDPs. Priority areas were health/nutrition, benefiting 660,000 people, water/sanitation, benefiting a further 355,000, food security, emergency preparedness and logistical support for humanitarian operations and special mandates.

## Tajikistan

**Funding - €10 million**

Continued humanitarian support was provided to help the victims of the worst drought Tajikistan has experienced for 75 years. The drought further stretched the coping mechanisms of the 6.5 million population, 85% of whom live below the poverty line, in a country recovering from civil war.

A key component of ECHO's programme for the victims of this largely forgotten crisis was the funding of basic food aid for 55,000 people, including 15,000 children suffering from acute malnutrition. It also concentrated on improving access to safe drinking water and primary health care with the aim of reducing the mortality rate caused by epidemics of infectious diseases.

## Tanzania

**Funding - €27 million**

ECHO continued to support the running of the refugee camps in Tanzania, which host around half a million people who have fled from conflict in neighbouring countries. This is the largest refugee caseload in Africa and one of the biggest in the world. Most of the people living in the camps come from Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The funds were spent on a wide range of activities including food aid, logistics, water/sanitation, health, nutrition, shelter and protection.

ECHO is the largest single donor to the UNHCR's refugee programme in Tanzania. It has channelled more than €90 million in humanitarian assistance to the camps since 1999.

## Uganda

**Funding - €2.12 million**

The northern and eastern districts of Uganda have an estimated one million displaced people due to local instability, violence by armed groups and civil war in neighbouring Sudan and DRC. The general insecurity has led to the concentration of thousands of people in compounded areas where basic services are either inadequate or non-existent. The situation has been made worse by recent droughts.

ECHO supported vulnerable people including IDPs and host communities providing primary health care, clean water and sanitation. Funds were also used to help reintegrate child soldiers into society.



TEACHING DISASTER PREPARATION TO LOCAL PEOPLE. VITAL TRAINING WHICH COULD HELP SAVE LIVES.

## Disaster preparation pays dividends

Over the last two decades, Nicaragua has been hit by floods, drought, volcanic eruptions, a tidal wave, an earthquake, and four hurricanes, including "Mitch" - one of the most devastating storms in the history of Central America. As a developing country, it struggles to provide the resources needed to be ready for disasters and to cope with their effects when they occur. A pilot action financed by the DIPECHO programme in the

Chinandega and León regions of Nicaragua shows that disaster prevention can be effective. The motto of the project, run by Italian NGO Movimondo, was 'prevention is better than cure'. It involved supporting the Nicaraguan authorities in implementing an existing law on the prevention, mitigation and management of natural catastrophes. Scientific surveillance of earthquake and volcanic risks was improved, and a system of broadcast warnings to the population was established. Water tanks were built to boost storage capacity in an area prone to drought. Efforts were also made to establish a disaster prevention 'culture' through mass distribution of information packs, the establishment of an information centre on natural risks in the area, teaching in schools, and training courses for adults.

Local people proved ready and able to prepare for disasters effectively once equipped with the necessary skills. "I used to be afraid of earthquakes, but now I know why they happen and what I should do when one occurs", said Mercedes, a pupil at one of the local schools. Another participant, Juan, explained: "For a long time the people of Tololar did not understand these natural phenomena or what we should do to prepare for them. Now we have a local emergency plan, which means we are better prepared to act before and when we are faced with any kind of emergency." In 1998, Tololar was badly damaged in a mudslide following the passage of Hurricane Mitch, and 24 of the town's inhabitants were killed.



## Vietnam

### Funding - €1.195 million

ECHO provided aid for victims of tropical storms, landslides and flooding which struck Vietnam in July. Support included improvements to water and sanitation facilities, and education on personal hygiene and nutrition with the aim of reducing epidemics. Funding was also provided to cover a serious shortfall in stocks of the diphtheria-pertussis-tetanus vaccine.

## Western Sahara

### Funding - €14.34 million

ECHO continued to support the 155,000 Western Saharan refugees living in the Tindouf region of Algeria whose plight attracts little international media coverage. The refugees, in exile for 27 years, live in four large camps in south-western Algeria, and they depend largely on international assistance for their survival.

The main emphasis of ECHO's programme was to diversify the refugees' diet by providing complementary food items such as tuna, grilled maize and powdered milk. In addition, to assist the WFP, which is responsible for basic foodstuffs, ECHO financed the supply of barley, rice, pulses and wheat flour. It also supported local production of eggs and livestock and provided gluten-free wheat flour for children suffering from coeliac disease. As regards "non-food items" ECHO funds most of the medicines supplied to the refugees as well as the purchase of tents, blankets and clothing kits.

## Western Balkans (Serbia, Kosovo, Albania, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia)

### Funding - €43 million

The recovery of the Western Balkans from the 1999 Kosovo crisis continued in 2002. This was reflected in the ongoing process of phasing out humanitarian assistance in favour of longer term development instruments.

The majority of ECHO funds were spent in Serbia where there were still significant humanitarian needs among the large refugee and IDP populations. Operations were also funded in Kosovo, Albania and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM).

ECHO assisted half a million people who were either refugees, IDPs or members of other vulnerable groups, providing food, non-food items, healthcare and housing. In addition it supported repatriation and social integration schemes, facilitated access to healthcare and funded legal and psychological support projects.

In Kosovo, ECHO also helped to finance specific protection actions implemented by UNHCR in favour of minority groups living in enclaves and isolated areas.

## Yemen

### Funding - €1.59 million

Yemen is a mainly rural society many of whose people do not have access to basic services and who are vulnerable to extreme weather conditions. The country is still suffering the after-effects of the civil war which ended in 1994, and there are significant humanitarian needs, particularly in isolated regions.

Since 1998, ECHO's strategy has been to target these isolated areas. In 2002, support was provided to upgrade primary health care institutions and supply medicines, benefiting around 110,000 people. ECHO also funded improved access to clean water for around 24,500 people.

## Other financing decisions

### Disaster preparedness and prevention (DIPECHO)

#### Funding - €8 million

The DIPECHO programme was launched by ECHO in 1997 to help prepare populations in areas at risk from natural catastrophe and to support practical measures to reduce the risk. Funds are allocated for training, capacity-building, awareness-raising and early-warning projects as well as the organisation of relief services. During 2002, the Commission took two decisions amounting to a total of €8 million for projects in South America, Central America and South-East Asia (for details, see page 12).

### ECHO Flight

#### Funding - €8.4 million

From its base in Nairobi, and satellite hubs in Mogadishu and Hargeisa (Somalia), Mandera (Kenya) and Goma (DRC), ECHO Flight continued to provide free air transport capacity to aid agencies operating relief and development programmes in Somalia, north-eastern Kenya, and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Personnel and cargo were flown aboard scheduled services using a fleet of five light aircraft.

Since its launch in May 1994, ECHO Flight has clocked up over 50,000 missions and carried more than 200,000 aid workers and 6,000 tonnes of food and medical supplies to some of the world's most vulnerable populations. The service has also carried out more than 200 emergency medical or security evacuations.

### UNHCR

#### Funding - €11 million

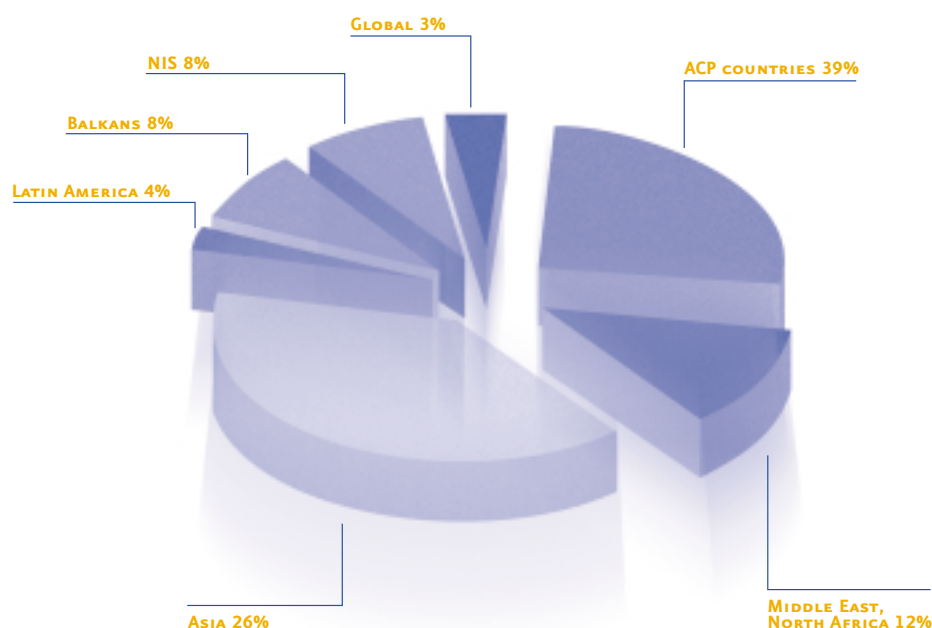
ECHO provided financial support for UNHCR programmes in the fields of protection, registration and staff security in refugee hosting countries, with a focus on Africa.

Over the last ten years, UNHCR has been ECHO's most important partner in the United Nations system. Refugees seeking international protection are increasingly encountering problems, such as closed borders, lengthy asylum applications and being sent back to states where they face persecution and danger. UNHCR is developing a standardised global registration system for refugees.

# Facts & figures

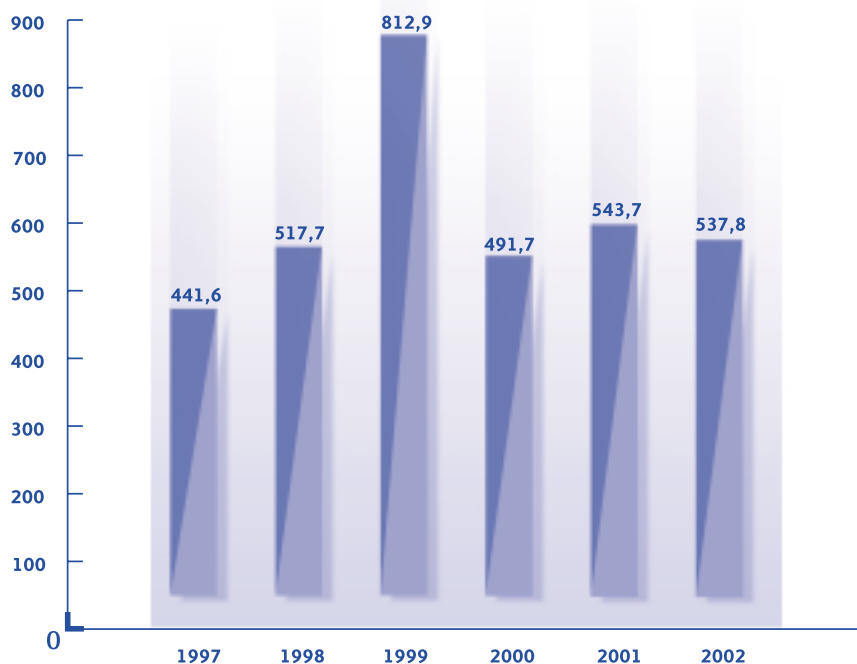
## Financial decisions for humanitarian aid by region in 2002

COUNTRY/SUB-REGION	DECISIONS IN €M	COUNTRY/SUB-REGION	DECISIONS IN €M
<b>AFRICA, CARIBBEAN, PACIFIC</b>	<b>211.250</b>	<b>ASIA</b>	<b>137.969</b>
Angola	12.000	Afghanistan/Pakistan/Iran	73.254
Burkina Faso, Chad	0.175	Cambodia	5.500
Burundi	17.500	China/Tibet	4.450
Caribbean/Pacific	0.605	East Timor	1.935
Congo (Democratic Republic)	38.100	India	5.000
Côte d'Ivoire	1.500	Indonesia	3.540
ECHO Flight	8.400	Laos	1.130
Eritrea	1.750	Myanmar/Burma	3.500
Ethiopia	7.750	Nepal/Bhutan	3.675
Gabon	0.300	North Korea	21.025
Kenya	2.500	Sri Lanka	8.300
Madagascar	1.000	Thailand	5.465
Malawi	1.500	Vietnam	1.195
Senegal	0.750		
Sierra Leone, Guinea, Liberia	19.000	<b>LATIN AMERICA</b>	<b>19.646</b>
Somalia	4.500	Bolivia, Peru	1.300
Southern Africa	30.000	Brazil	0.350
Sudan	18.000	Central America (El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua)	5.028
Tanzania	27.000	Colombia	9.200
Uganda	2.120	Cuba	0.600
UNHCR (Africa)	11.000	Ecuador	1.248
Zambia	3.000	Mexico	1.000
Zimbabwe	2.000	Paraguay	0.920
Other	0.700		
		<b>DIPECHO</b>	<b>8.000</b>
<b>EASTERN EUROPE/NIS</b>	<b>83.500</b>	Andean Community	1.640
Armenia, Georgia	2.500	South East Asia and Central America	6.360
Northern Caucasus (Chechnya crisis)	28.000		
Tajikistan	10.000	<b>OTHER FUNDING</b>	<b>13.595</b>
Western Balkans		ECHO field experts	8.000
(Serbia, Kosovo, Albania, FYROM)	43.000	Grants for training and studies	1.800
		Information	1.350
<b>MIDDLE EAST/NORTH AFRICA</b>	<b>63.930</b>	Evaluation	1.000
Iraq	13.000	Other	1.445
Middle East (Palestine)	35.000		
Western Saharan refugees	14.340	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>537.790</b>
Yemen	1.590		



# Facts & figures

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## 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, SOS-KINDERDORF INTERNATIONAL.

**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:** ADVENTIST DEVELOPMENT AND RELIEF AGENCY (ADRA), ASF DANSK FOLKEHJÆLP, CARITAS DENMARK, DANSKE FLYGTNINGHJÆLP (DANISH REFUGEE COUNCIL), DANSK RODE KORS, FOLKEKIRKENS NODHJÆLP (DANCHURCHAID), MISSION ØST, RED BARNET-DENMARK.

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

**FRANCE:** ACTION CONTRE LA FAIM, ACTION D'URGENCE INTERNATIONALE, AGENCE D'AIDE A LA COOPERATION TECHNIQUE ET AU DEVELOPPEMENT (ACTED), AIDE MEDICALE INTERNATIONALE, ASSOCIATION POUR L'ACTION HUMANITAIRE, ATLAS LOGISTIQUE, AVIATION SANS FRONTIERES (ASF), CARE-FRANCE, COMITE D'AIDE MEDICALE ET DE PARRAINAGE SANS FRONTIERES, CROIX ROUGE FRANCAISE, DIA, 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, MISSION D'AIDE AU DEVELOPPEMENT DES ECONOMIES RURALES (MADERA), OEUVRAS 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, TELECOMS SANS FRONTIERES, TRIANGLE.

**GERMANY:** ACTION MEDEOR, ADRA, ARBEITER-SAMARITER-BUND, CARE DEUTSCHLAND, DÄZ, DEUTSCHE WELTHUNGERHILFE, DEUTSCHER CARITASVERBAND, DEUTSCHES ROTES KREUZ, DIAKONIE DER EVANGELISCHEN KIRCHE, HELP, JOHANNITER-UNFALLHILFE, KINDERBERG INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN HILFSORGANISATION, 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, INTERNATIONAL ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHARITIES, KESSA DIMITRA-GR, MEDECINS DU MONDE.

**INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS:** INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT SOCIETIES (IFRC), INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS (ICRC), 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, REFUGEE TRUST, TROCAIRE, WORLD VISION IRELAND.

**ITALY:** ALISEI, AMICI DEI BAMBINI, ARCI CULTURA E SVILUPPO (ARCS), ASSOCIAZIONE ITALIANA AMICI DI RAOUL FOLLEREAU (AIFO), ASSOCIAZIONE ITALIANA PER LA SOLIDARIETA TRA I POPOLI (AISPO), ASSOCIAZIONE PER LA PARTECIPAZIONE ALLO SVILUPPO (APS), ASSOCIAZIONE PER LA SOLIDARIETA INTERNAZIONALE IN ASIA (ASIA), ASSOCIAZIONE VOLONTARI PER IL SERVIZIO INTERNAZIONALE (AVSI), CARITAS ITALIA, CENTRO REGIONALE D'INTERVENTO PER LA COOPERAZIONE, CESVI COOPERAZIONE E SVILUPPO, CISV, COMITATO COLLABORAZIONE MEDICA (CCM), COMITATO DI COORDINAMENTO DELLE



# Facts & figures

## Organisations with an ECHO Framework Partnership Agreement

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 DI 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, TERRA NUOVA, UN PONTE PER..., TERRE DES HOMMES ITALIA, VISPE-VOLONTARI ITALIANI SOLIDARIETA PAESI EMERGENTI.

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

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

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

**PORTUGAL:** ASSISTENÇA MEDICA INTERNACIONAL (AMI), ASSOCIAÇÃO DE BENEFICENCIA LUSO-ALEMA, ASSOCIAÇÃO PARA A COOPERAÇÃO INTERCAMBIO E CULTURA (CIC), CRUZ VERMELHA PORTUGUESA, MEDICOS DO MUNDO, OIKOS-COOPERAÇÃO E DESENVOLVIMENTO.

**SPAIN:** ASAMBLEA DE COOPERACION POR LA PAZ (ACP), ASOCIACION PARA LA COOPERACION CON EL SUR LAS SEGOVIA (ACSUR), ACCION CONTRA EL HAMBRE, ASOCIACION NAVARRA NUEVO FUTURO, AYUDA EN ACCION, CARITAS ESPAÑOLA,

CENTRO DE COMUNICACION, INVESTIGACION Y DOCUMENTACION EUROPA-AMERICA LATINA (CIDEAL), CODESPA, COMITE INTERNACIONAL DE RESCATE, CRUZ ROJA ESPAÑOLA, ENTRECULTURAS FE Y ALEGRIA, FARMACEUTICOS SIN FRONTERAS, GEOLOGOS DEL MUNDO, 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:** CARITAS SWEDEN, CHURCH OF SWEDEN AID, DIAKONIA-SWEDEN, ERIKSHALPEN, INTERNATIONAL AID SWEDEN, PMU-IINTERLIFE, MEDECINS DU MONDE, SVENSKA RODA KORSET, SWEDISH COMMITTEE FOR AFGHANISTAN, THE QANDIL PROJECT.

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

**UNITED KINGDOM:** ACTIONAID, AGA KHAN FOUNDATION, AGENCY FOR CO-OPERATION AND RESEARCH IN DEVELOPMENT (ACORD), THE AMAR INTERNATIONAL CHARITABLE FOUNDATION, BRITISH RED CROSS, CARE INTERNATIONAL UK, CATHOLIC AGENCY FOR OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT (CAFOD), CHRISTIAN AID, CONCERN UNIVERSAL, CHRISTIAN OUTREACH RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT (CORD), THE EUROPEAN CHILDREN'S TRUST, FOOD FOR THE HUNGRY, THE HALO TRUST, HELPAGE INTERNATIONAL, INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE, ISLAMIC RELIEF WORLDWIDE, MARIE STOPES INTERNATIONAL, MEDAIR UK, MEDICAL AID FOR PALESTINIANS, MEDICAL EMERGENCY RELIEF INTERNATIONAL (MERLIN), MERCY CORPS SCOTLAND, MINES ADVISORY GROUP (MAG), OCKENDEN INTERNATIONAL (OI), OXFAM UK, PLAN INTERNATIONAL UK, PROJECT HOPE, SAVE THE CHILDREN FUND UK, TEARFUND, VETAID UK, WORLD VISION UK.

**UNITED STATES:** CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES, INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE, INTERNATIONAL ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHARITIES.

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ECHO 4 General policy affairs; relations with European institutions, partners and other donors; planning coordination and support; general support for major crises.	Michel ARRION	296 6761	299 2853
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ECHO 6 Finances, Audit	Vijay BHARDWAJ	299 0889	295 7483

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# The Western Saharan refugees

## Labour of love

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No one could accuse **Malluma Bukari**, a hospital midwife in the Dahkla camp, of being in it for the money. Like many of her fellow Sahrawi workers who provide essential services to 155,000 Western Saharans in the camps of south-west Algeria, she is an unpaid volunteer. The refugees from the Western Sahara are victims of one of the world's most forgotten crises. They fled to the barren region around the Algerian town of Tindouf in the mid-1970s, as the fighters of the Polisario independence movement battled with Moroccan and Mauritanian forces for control of Spain's former colony. Despite a decade-long ceasefire between Morocco and the Polisario (Mauritania having abandoned its claim to the southern part of the territory), a permanent UN-brokered solution has proved elusive and the refugees are still unable to return home.

Life is hard for all those displaced in this remote part of the Sahara desert, where temperatures can reach 60° C in summer, but those living in the isolated *wilaya* (administrative district) of Dahkla face particular challenges. The other three main settlements, Layoun, Smara and Auserd, are all relatively close to Rabouni, the Sahrawis' administrative centre which itself is only a short drive from Tindouf. Dahkla, however, is 170 kilometres away and getting there in a four-wheel drive vehicle involves a bumpy five-hour journey across empty and seemingly lifeless desert. The lorries which deliver vital supplies to the 30,000 or so inhabitants take a lot longer.

In Dahkla, the NGO *Terre des Hommes (Italy)*, with financial support from ECHO, recently implemented a project at the local hospital dealing with mother and child health, training for nurses and the provision of essential medical equipment. Malluma Bukari was one of those to be trained in nursing and midwifery, complementing her traditional skills acquired during 25 years of medical work.

She explained to us how Sahrawi women normally preferred to have their babies at home. Conditions in the camp were hardly ideal, however, and one in eight mothers died during



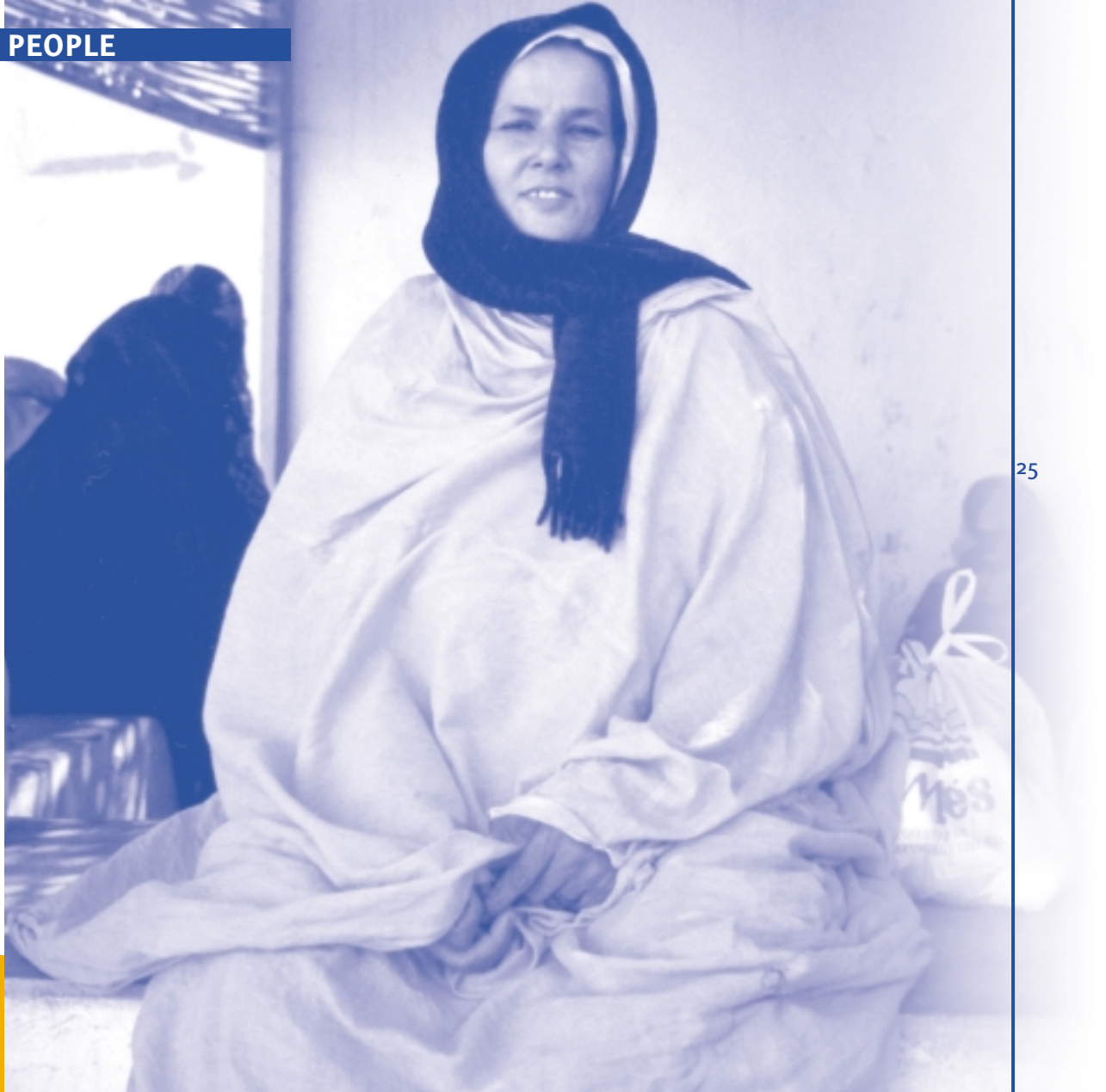
DELIVERY ROOM IN THE DAHKLA HOSPITAL.

childbirth or shortly afterwards. "Nowadays", she said, "the women increasingly recognise the useful role of the hospital, especially if there are complications in pregnancy."

"The project has given us a global understanding of what is involved," she told us, referring to the training that she had received. "We have learned how to monitor the development of the unborn baby, the problems that might arise if it isn't in the right position and the importance of post-natal care. We explain all this to the women in their homes, or at the district clinics." Early indications are that the scheme has had a positive impact. Maternal mortality has fallen to 8% and the hope is that this can be



ECHO-FUNDED TENTS READY FOR DISTRIBUTION TO SAHRAWI REFUGEES, VICTIMS OF ONE OF THE WORLD'S MOST FORGOTTEN CRISES.



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the hospital provides a range of other vital medical services for people of Dahkla. For ECHO, supporting the Sahrawi health system is a key humanitarian objective and this is reflected in the funding it allocates to health-related actions. In addition to specific NGO projects, it finances most of the medicines supplied to the camp residents and distributes family hygiene kits. Maintaining the health of the refugees is also an underlying objective of ECHO’s main activity in support of the refugees – the provision of “complementary” food items such as gofi (grilled maize) and powdered milk. The aim is to add nutritional diversity to the refugees’ diet. The World Food Programme is responsible for coordinating the supply of “basic food items” which include cereals, pulses, oil and sugar. ECHO has helped out here as well with the delivery of basic food products and by funding a food buffer stock to ensure that essential foodstuffs are distributed

regularly to the refugees, even when there are fluctuations in the supply pipeline. ECHO’s long record of support for the Sahrawi refugees is a reflection of European solidarity with the world’s most vulnerable populations. In implementing its mandate to provide aid impartially to those who need it most, ECHO recognises that it must pay particular attention to the victims of such “forgotten” humanitarian crises whose plight so rarely attracts international media attention. Malluma Bukari was clearly grateful for the training she had received, enabling her to become a fully certified nurse. She views her unpaid work in the health sector over the past quarter of a century as a “humanitarian duty” but, understandably, would like at last to have an opportunity to earn some money and improve her situation. In this, she reflects a longing among all of the refugees to return to a normal life after so many years in exile.



# Eruption of El 'Reventador' in Ecuador

## Suddenly, the sky turned black

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**Mercifully, the eruption of 'El Reventador' in**

northern Ecuador on 3 November 2002 resulted in very few direct casualties but it did give rise to serious humanitarian needs in the affected area, causing a great deal of material damage and further impoverishing local people already in a highly vulnerable situation. The thick layer of ash that landed on the surrounding region damaged the homes of some of the country's poorest people and caused many roofs to collapse. ECHO immediately took a primary emergency decision for €448,000 to support aid operations reaching 7,000 families.

Maria Juana Oña (30) has lived in Pambamarquito, in the district of Pichincha, for the last 18 years. "I had just gone out to get the cattle when suddenly the sky turned black. It looked as if there would be a rainstorm but then the thick cloud came right down on top of us," she told Spanish Red Cross workers who went to her village. "My husband told me that it was ash. I tried to cover myself with a plastic sheet but I was soon covered in the stuff. It kept on falling for two days and nights."

Pambamarquito was blanketed with a layer of ash ten centimetres thick. Several thousand people had to be evacuated from their homes and many suffered respiratory and sight problems as a result of the gases and rubble emitted from the volcano. All five of Maria Juana's children fell ill: "They had spots, red eyes and flu-like symptoms. Even two months on we are still sick. We have sore throats because there is still a lot of wind and ash."

Maria Juana obtained ECHO-funded Red Cross kits for her children containing hygiene products and protection materials as well as fresh water – necessary because many drinking water sources had been polluted in the eruption. The most important thing, however, was food. "We were given items such as rice, tuna, pasta and oil, which meant we had something to eat. But we need grass, green bananas and fodder for our animals."

Animals are key assets for the people of the Sierra, especially the women, who spend most of their time cultivating and raising livestock

Armando Alvarez Sanchez, Cruz Roja Ecuatoriana



while the men more often work in construction. Maria Juana lost all her animals during the eruption. "I had three cows, ten goats and 20 guinea pigs. They all died as they had nothing to eat. We didn't know what to do because everything was covered in ash, and we were desperate. I washed the grass before I gave it to them, but they died all the same."

The Red Cross distribution has made life easier for Maria Juana, who expressed her gratitude to Europe for its demonstration of solidarity: "We haven't always had enough to eat, so the aid is really a great help to us. We are happy to know we haven't been forgotten."

THESE VICTIMS OF THE VOLCANIC ERUPTION RECEIVED ECHO-FUNDED EMERGENCY AID.

Armando Alvarez Sanchez, Cruz Roja Ecuatoriana



EL REVENTADOR ERUPTS.

# A water supply project in Tajikistan

## Bringing the stream to the village

**I**n summer time, Nigora used to enjoy playing alongside the other children of Savda, beside the stream which runs about two kilometres from her village in south-west Tajikistan.

The stream comes from a natural spring and until recently was the only way for the 500 villagers of Savda to obtain fresh water. It isn't always easy to negotiate the steep, rocky path that runs from the village to the stream, particularly in winter when it is covered with snow and ice. Sometimes, it took up to half a day to make the round-trip, carrying bulky water containers. So the temptation was to drink from stagnant pools of water, closer at hand. Sadly, Nigora died of hepatitis last year, having drunk dirty water. She was just seven years old.

Recently, things have changed for the better for the inhabitants of this isolated community. Drinking water is now piped from the spring to a large tank in the middle of Savda and the water is then distributed through four hand pumps. Each household has access to enough water to meet its basic needs.

"Life has been very different for us since the water began being piped directly to the village", said Amir, who is the headmaster of school in Savda. "Before, women and children used to walk for hours to fetch the water from the stream. It was tiring and dangerous, and there was a limit to how much they could carry. We never had enough in reserve and people would sometimes draw water from closer but unsafe sources."

So informing the villagers about the risks posed by unsafe water sources is as important as providing clean water. Amir explained: "Since the installation work began, we have been working with volunteers to explain to the people of Savda, including the children, how to use the system and what to do to avoid infection. This year, no-one in the village has fallen ill."

The project was financed by ECHO and implemented by one of its NGO partners, ACTED (Agence pour la coopération technique et le développement). Local people laid the pipes and built the installations under a "food for work" scheme run by the World Food Programme (WFP). The local authorities provided the water tank.

Too many Tajik children like Nigora are victims of water-related diseases, their resistance weakened by extreme poverty and lack of adequate nutrition in a country struggling to recover from drought and civil war. ACTED and other ECHO partners have helped improve access to safe drinking water for hundreds of thousands of people throughout Tajikistan.

VILLAGERS OF SAVLA IN FRONT OF THEIR NEW WATER TANK.



# ECHO support for victims of the crisis in Southern Africa

## Drought and disease: a deadly combination

by Elizabeth Kiarie,  
ECHO's Information Officer in Nairobi

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**Zale lives in the Midlands province** in central Zimbabwe. Her home is situated on the leeward side of a low rocky hill where the soil is poor and rainfall is intermittent and unreliable all year round. She lives on her family's one-acre plot where they have constructed their houses. From her home, she can view the attractive landscape as the sunlight highlights the different colours of rock and grass, set against a backdrop of clear blue sky. It sounds idyllic, but Zale would much prefer a view of dark rain-filled clouds.

This year, Zimbabwe faces what is called a 'green drought'. In other words, the amount of rain that has fallen - approximately 160mm in 4 months - has been just enough to turn the vegetation green but well short of what is needed for food crops to mature. Nor is there enough to replenish the rivers and dams whose levels drop fast when midday temperatures can reach as high as 45°C. And when this "rainy" season comes to an end, the country has another seven or eight months to wait before there is any prospect of more significant rainfall.

Beside Zale's thatched hut is a small garden where she grows some food. But last year, and again this year, the crops failed. There is a biting drought. She is a subsistence farmer who has no other source of income or sustenance. Adjacent to her garden is what used to be a chicken-run now turned into a goat-pen. The chickens had to be moved to a relative's home when Zale fell ill, as she could no longer take care of them. Only a few goats remain in the pen and because of the drought, there is little to feed them.

Zale's illness is serious. She contracted tuberculosis last year and now the disease is taking its toll. She has a constant cough and fever, and has lost a lot of weight. She also has no appetite and is continually weak. She depends on her relatives to help her prepare food for her three children and take care of other domestic chores.

In the last fifteen years, the incidence of TB in Zimbabwe has increased by more than 75% making it the leading cause of hospital stays. 60-

80% of all cases are HIV/AIDS related. Zale's situation, like that of so many others suffering from TB, is exacerbated by the country's food shortage and the grim predictions for the coming harvests. Poverty has increased sharply in recent times leading to declining access to resources.

Meanwhile, the amount of food aid arriving in the country falls well short of what is needed, and there are real concerns that the government will not be able to fill the gap. The vulnerability of Zimbabweans has increased over the last decade and a half.

ECHO provides vital humanitarian support for people like Zale. She is benefiting from an innovative project involving the supply of emergency food relief to reduce the vulnerability of families affected by illnesses such as HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis. Zale receives maize, beans, corn/soya blend and vegetable oil every month. She is also getting health care through a community-based rehabilitation programme run by ECHO's partner, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the local Red Cross chapter. Medicine to treat her illness is available at the local health centre and she receives home-based nursing care visits to monitor her progress.

Overall, this ECHO-funded scheme involves providing essential health care and food for up to 10,000 people infected by AIDS throughout Zimbabwe. Its components include contributing to the food security of HIV-affected households, providing cooked food to orphans and strengthening the Red Cross home-based care programme.

For Zale, the assistance has made a big difference. "I am getting better thanks to the support from ECHO and the Red Cross," she told us. "They help me to attend the health centre and always visit me to see if I am getting better."

Isaya and his son, who is suffering from AIDS, are also being helped by the project. Isaya has already lost one son to AIDS and his extended family includes his two daughters-in-law and all





WAITING FOR THE RAIN TO COME. ISAYA BUILT HIS OWN DAMS AND CHANNELS TO DELIVER WATER TO HIS CROPS.

Paul Koulen, ECHO

of their children. Identified as particularly vulnerable, the family gets care and support, as well as food.

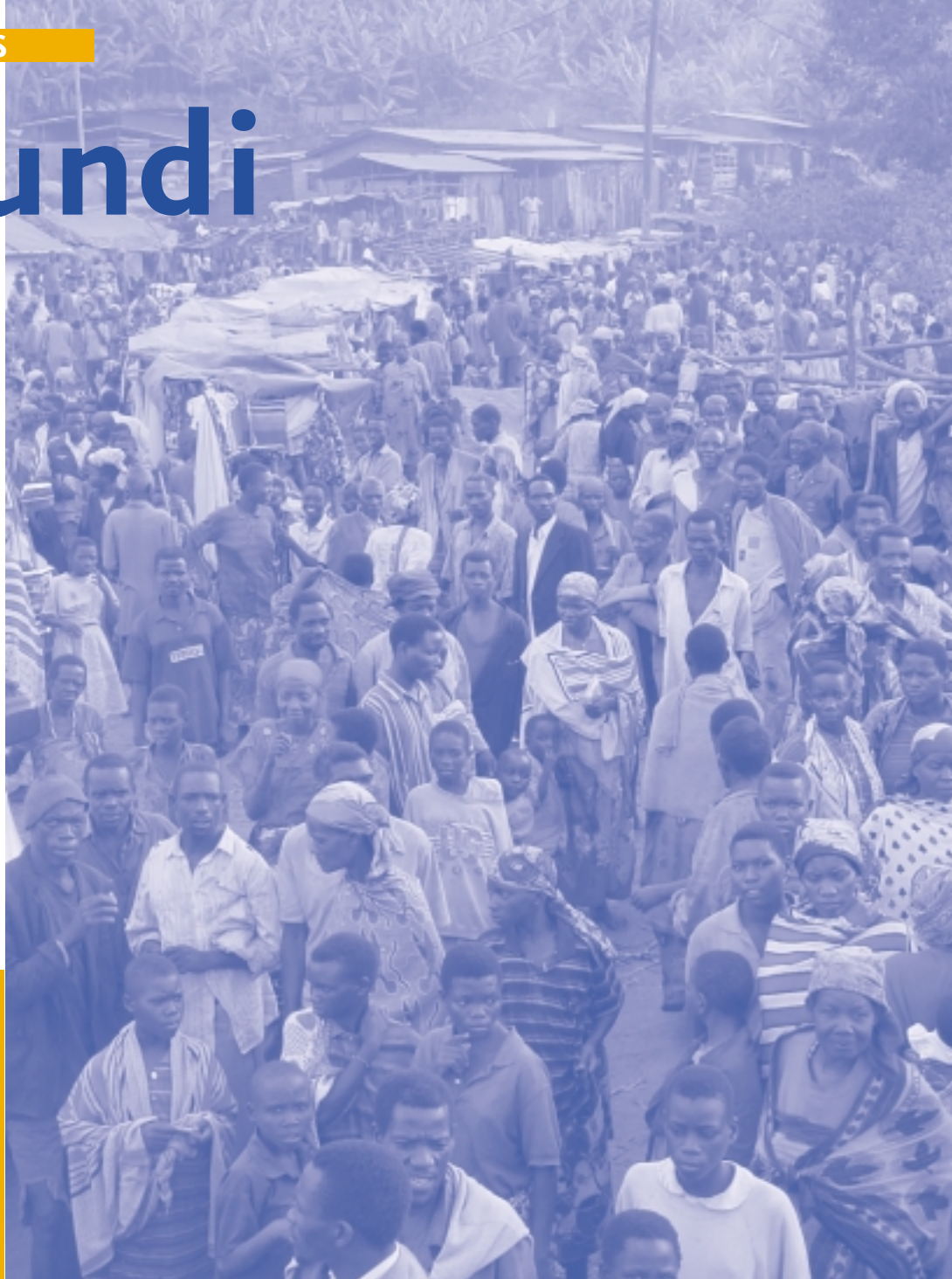
Isaya, who lives in Zvishavane in Masvingo province, is very resourceful. He began to build dams to harvest rainwater 40 years ago. He has made channels from his dams to his garden through trenches hewn out of the rocky surface. These carry water to his banana and mango trees, and his plots of maize and animal fodder. Unfortunately, due to the high temperatures, the water in the dams evaporates quickly and not enough is now reaching his food crops. This means that the

family may have very little to harvest this year. Without food aid from external humanitarian agencies, the future looks grim. In spite of the tragedies Isaya has had to endure, he greets us cheerfully, regaling us with many stories about his life. He is hopeful that the rains will soon come to fill up his water dams and ensure that the surviving members of his family have enough food. It is sobering – but also uplifting – to come across such remarkable resilience in the face of extreme adversity. He deserves not just our admiration, but the chance of a better future.



# Burundi

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Yves Horent, ECHO

SCENE FROM THE RUSHUBI CAMP FOR INTERNALLY DISPLACED PEOPLE. THE EUROPEAN UNION, THROUGH ECHO, IS THE MAIN DONOR OF HUMANITARIAN AID TO THE VICTIMS OF THE CRISIS IN BURUNDI.

The ten-year long civil war between rival Hutu and Tutsi armed groups in Burundi has resulted in an estimated 300,000 deaths. At least half a million people have been displaced from their homes inside Burundi while another half million have taken refuge in Tanzania. There are huge needs within this vulnerable population. In November 2001, the establishment of a transitional government, involving power-sharing between Tutsis and Hutus, briefly raised hopes for a more lasting peace. The violence

continued, however, and a cease-fire signed in December 2002 brought no immediate end to the suffering of the population. ECHO funds relief for the victims of this long-running humanitarian crisis through substantial programmes in Burundi itself (€17.5 million in 2002) and in the camps of eastern Tanzania (€27 million) which host some 450,000 Burundians as well as refugees from other trouble spots in the Great Lakes region.

# Palestinian Territories



Maria Jose Pallares Paredes, ECHO

BULLET-RIDDEN WINDSCREEN OF AN AMBULANCE IN THE GAZA STRIP. THE CONTINUING VIOLENCE HAS TAKEN ITS TOLL IN BOTH HUMAN AND MATERIAL TERMS.

There was no improvement in the humanitarian situation in the Palestinian Territories during 2002. Since the beginning of the 'Intifada' in September 2000, the economy has all but collapsed. Large numbers of Palestinians, who used to commute to work in Israel, lost their jobs following restrictions on movement and border closures imposed by the Israeli authorities. Unemployment rates have doubled to 50% and family incomes have fallen drastically. As a result, almost half of the three million people living in the West Bank and Gaza Strip now rely on food assistance from humanitarian agencies. In Gaza, 85% of the population are living on less than €2 a day. The health system has been badly hit as neither

patients nor hospitals can afford medicines and access to even basic treatment cannot be guaranteed. A quarter of children are anaemic and clean water has become scarce leading to an increased risk of water-borne diseases.

The continuing violence has also taken its toll in both human and material terms. There has been a big increase in psychological problems and stress-related illnesses.

The main focus of ECHO's €35 million in funding for the Middle East was on supporting the most vulnerable victims of the crisis in the Palestinian Territories. Activities financed included the provision of basic supplies and clean water, medical training and psychosocial support.



# Afghanistan

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UNHCR/N. Behring

The prospect of peace and stability in Afghanistan, after more than 20 years of conflict, prompted huge numbers of Afghan refugees to return to their homeland. An estimated two million people made the journey, far more than had been predicted at the beginning of 2002.

Although the outlook for the country improved, the humanitarian problems remained daunting. The legacy of war, serious drought conditions and earthquakes meant that returnees, people

still displaced from their homes and resident populations all required continuing support to meet their basic needs

The enormity of the challenge was recognised by ECHO which channelled more resources to Afghanistan than to any other crisis zone (€73 million). The funds were used for a wide variety of relief activities ranging from shelter construction for returning families and earthquake victims to the provision of food, blankets, healthcare and clean drinking water.

AFTER YEARS OF LIVING IN THE SQUALID CONDITIONS OF THE FORMER SOVIET COMPOUND IN KABUL, INTERNALLY DISPLACED AFGHANS PREPARE TO RETURN TO THEIR LAND ON THE SHOMALI PLAIN.



**NEW NEEDS: THIS ZAMBIAN GIRL, WHO IS BEING LOOKED AFTER BY HER GRANDMOTHER, IS ONE MILLIONS OF PEOPLE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA FACING FOOD SHORTAGES.**

Photo by **Bo Mathisen**, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

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## About **ECHO** humanitarian action worldwide

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

Since 1992, **ECHO** has funded relief to millions of victims of both natural disasters and man-made crises outside the EU. Aid is channelled impartially, straight to victims, regardless of their race, religion and political beliefs.

**ECHO** works with more than 210 operational partners, mainly organisations which have signed a framework partnership agreement with the Commission. Its partners include specialist United Nations agencies, the Red Cross and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

**ECHO** is one of the biggest sources of humanitarian aid in the world, providing almost €538 million in 2002. **ECHO**'s funding, taken together with the aid allocated by EU Member States separately makes the European Union the largest donor of humanitarian aid in the world. Since it was set up, **ECHO** has supported projects in more than 100 countries. The funds are spent on providing goods and services such as food, clothing, shelter, medical provisions, water supply systems, 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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## Acronyms

ACTED	Agence pour la coopération technique et le développement
CARDS	Community Assistance for Reconstruction, Development and Stabilisation
DIPECHO	<b>ECHO</b> 's disaster preparedness and prevention programme
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
<b>ECHO</b>	Humanitarian Aid Office
EU	European Union
FARC	Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia
FPA	Framework Partnership Agreement (between <b>ECHO</b> and its operational partners)
FRY	Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
FYROM	Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
GNP	Gross National Product
HOLIS	Humanitarian Office Local Information System
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IT	Information Technology
IDP	Internally displaced person
LRRD	Linking relief, rehabilitation and development
MAG	Mine Advisory Group
NOHA	Network on Humanitarian Assistance
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNITA	National Union for the Total Independence of Angola
UN/OCHA	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UXO	Unexploded Ordnance
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organisation