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1. COUNTRY-BY-COUNTRY OVERVIEW OF DG ECHO'S HUMANITARIAN OPERATIONS

1.1. Horn of Africa and Eastern Africa

Eritrea

Humanitarian needs:

Eritrea is chronically food insecure, and there is growing concern about what appears to be a sustained chronic reduction in ground water levels. Natural hazards such as drought are compounded by man-made problems, for example the continued conscription for much of the population, and constraints on access to baseline data. The major drought which affected the Horn of Africa in 2002/3 has compounded the already high vulnerability of much of the population. The effect of this on food production and water availability resulted in pockets of acute humanitarian need with malnutrition, water-borne disease and even population displacements, the consequences of which were still being felt during 2004.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

In response DG ECHO allocated €1 million which provided clean water for 150 000 people, and 155 000 head of livestock. In addition, and as part of a wider nutritional surveillance project, nutritional assistance was provided for over 15 400 people, most of them children, in Anseba, Debub, Gash Barka and the north and south Red Sea zones.

LRRD:

The main areas where LRRD is needed are national level analysis and response to the issues of receding ground water levels, and food security and nutrition monitoring. No real progress could be made in 2004, due to the continuing difficult governance environment.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
1 000 000	999 153	667 374

Ethiopia

Humanitarian needs:

In a context of chronic food supply problems and malnutrition, the predominant humanitarian need in 2004 was to respond to the continuing impact of the major drought which commenced in 2003. The acute needs which emerged as a result of the drought, initially alleviated by the arrival of rain, were then aggravated by a malaria epidemic which raged among the drought-weakened population when the rains finally came. As pastoralists rely on their livestock for their main sources of nutrition, through milk, and as food aid is therefore a less suitable response for them, humanitarian needs extended to ensure a herd of healthy livestock.

Ongoing ethnic conflicts in turn exacerbated the situation, which was further compounded by signs towards the end of the year that the drought was even worsening in the Afar region.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

At the beginning of the year, DG ECHO allocated €1 million, which was subsequently reduced to €498 580 with the arrival of rain in one of the affected areas, to provide emergency water supplies to more than 10 000 people and their livestock. As the malaria epidemic took hold, drought conditions continued in certain areas and large-scale population resettlements were undertaken by the Government. DG ECHO allocated a further €6.5 million to provide medical assistance plus essential water and nutrition supplies. Up to one million victims of resettlement, drought and malaria, mainly in the Amhara, Somali, Southern Nations and Oromiya regions of Ethiopia, were helped through DG ECHO programmes in 2003.

In response to the needs arising from ethnic conflicts, in late 2003 DG ECHO provided funding for continued support to the ICRC to ensure that detainees, displaced persons and pastoralists affected by the conflicts received the protection assistance provided for by the Geneva Convention.

LRRD:

Ethiopia was considered a priority case by the LRRD/DPP inter-service group. However, only limited LRRD has been implemented in the field, in the form of including follow-on funding to DG ECHO operations as one of the criteria for the selection of NGO projects co-financed by the EuropeAid Cooperation Office.

Decision	Contracts	Payments
6 998 000	5 804 399	3 735 526

Kenya

DG ECHO took exceptional action in Kenya in 2004 in order to alleviate the effects of a drought in the north of the country. €3.850 million was made available to provide medical, nutrition and water assistance to between 450 000 and 600 000 beneficiaries, mainly pastoralists and their livestock. These operations will continue into 2005.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
3 850 000	3 850 000	650 000

Somalia

Humanitarian needs:

Somalia continued to suffer from the effects of 13 years of ongoing civil war, anarchy and warlordism. This was compounded by extreme weather conditions such as the fourth successive year of drought on the Sool plateau. This created a general level of chronic severe need requiring a humanitarian response, together with high vulnerability to acute humanitarian needs as coping mechanisms were eroded by further fighting, displacement, drought or flood. The main areas of humanitarian need continue to be for health services, water and sanitation and food security support.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

Despite continued problems, largely due to insecurity, DG ECHO has been able to encourage and support a growing number of quality partners to address the extensive humanitarian needs. Funding in 2004 totalled €9.15 million, under two decisions, one granting €8 million, the other €1.15 million. Operations focused on the populous central and southern area, including Mogadishu, and on the key sectors of health, water and sanitation and livestock (given the high proportion of pastoralists).

This funding provided health and nutrition assistance to over 750 000 beneficiaries; while 70 000 were provided with clean water and improved sanitation facilities and 500 000 received emergency food security support. This included more than 650 000 head of livestock vaccinated and/or treated for parasites, and the doubling of the harvests for 8 000 people in bordering communities.

LRRD:

Close coordination continued in 2004, including the sharing of all DG ECHO proposals with the EC Somalia Unit. At programme level this cooperation has resulted in commitments to LRRD both in DG ECHO decisions and in DG Development's 5th Rehabilitation Plan.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
9 150 000	9 150 000	5 955 204

Sudan

Humanitarian needs:

The optimism about resolution of the protracted civil conflict between the North and the South with the potential signature of a comprehensive peace agreement by the end of the year turned into growing concern as the situation became complicated by the conflict in the Greater Darfur Region. As access to Darfur was gradually granted, the worrying humanitarian situation unveiled led the United Nations to declare Darfur as the greatest humanitarian crisis in the world with thousands of deaths, over one million uprooted and two thirds of the population badly affected by the conflict.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

In addition to the €20 million initially programmed for 2004, a further €71 million was granted in order to assist the population of the Greater Darfur Region. Many of the projects will run well into 2005. The main objective in 2004 was to help Sudan to save and protect lives among the most vulnerable and needy populations through integrated emergency assistance. In addition, the support provided by DG ECHO aimed at stabilising the conditions of people and communities with severely strained coping mechanisms and, whenever possible, contributing to a gradual recovery by enhancing self-reliance. The main sectors supported were health and nutrition, water and environmental sanitation, emergency preparedness and response, household food security and operational support and special mandates.

DG ECHO continued to cover the whole territory, taking a neutral approach and according to needs, in strict compliance with internationally recognised humanitarian principles. Operations funded by DG ECHO directly benefited an estimated 2 million Sudanese, while the number of Sudanese indirectly benefiting could be two or three times that figure.

LRRD:

DG ECHO continued to show its commitment to advocacy of humanitarian principles and its efforts to liaise with other Commission departments and donors in order to take appropriate, complementary action. Despite the suspension of formal cooperation with Sudan under the Cotonou Agreement since 1990, a number of other European Commission financial instruments are active. This allowed limited linkage with the budget line for food security and the Humanitarian Plus Programme in a number of sectors, such as food security and water and sanitation.

The recent signature of a comprehensive peace agreement and the related potential progressive resumption of formal cooperation and development assistance could increase the scope for effective LRRD. For Darfur, the key to any continuum/contiguum is to find a solution to the protection and security issue to stop the displacement of populations and allow them to return safely. DG ECHO will provide humanitarian assistance to the Sudanese population in need, affected by the conflict and natural disasters, as long as the humanitarian indicators remain alarming. The hope is that, with peace in the different regions of Sudan and a more stable situation, rehabilitation and sustainable development assistance will gradually be able to take over and build upon the relief work provided for decades.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
91 000 000	72 290 795	42 715 505

1.2. Southern Africa

Angola

Humanitarian needs:

Between the ceasefire in April 2002 and the end of 2004, more than 3 800 000 war-affected people resettled or returned to their areas of origin, up to 70% of them without any form of assistance from the local authorities or humanitarian organisations, and to areas where the minimum conditions required for resettlement are not in place. This issue was the major challenge facing humanitarian partners in 2004, and with the recognition in mid-2004 that the country had passed into the transitional phase, it also became one of the major objectives of medium and longer-term funding.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

The objective for Angola during 2004 was gradually to phase down DG ECHO's operations in order to withdraw from the country in 2005. This involved more limited funding for action to open up and establish minimum conditions for resettlement in the remaining and most isolated pockets of emergency, whilst at the same time assisting and advising partners in securing longer-term funding for their continued intervention.

In 2004 the Commission adopted two humanitarian aid decisions making available total funding of €8.8 million: the Global Plan (March, €8 million) and an ad hoc decision (€800 000) to support emergency food security and nutrition operations to offset the effects of the maize harvest failure in the southern Central Highlands, due to excessive rainfall. The funds were allocated to support primary health and nutrition, emergency agricultural inputs (20%) and access (logistics and humanitarian demining). A further €3 million was made available from Zambia (€2 million) and Namibia (€1 million) to support transport and logistics for the repatriation of 30 000 Angolan refugees from those two countries. In all, almost 1 500 000 people, mainly women and children, benefited from action funded by DG ECHO.

LRRD:

The key issue for the link between relief and post-conflict reconstruction assistance is to provide vulnerable groups in the resettlement areas with the minimum conditions and services to ensure their survival and anchor them in their communities, as a starting point for more durable solutions. The LRRD process entered a very intense phase during 2004, in order to prepare as smoothly as possible for a transition from emergency to longer-term development funding in this post-conflict situation. Considerable progress was made.

Regular inter-service meetings in Brussels were mirrored in Luanda, where the LRRD Task Force met regularly and continued almost daily cooperation and information-sharing, and during the year several DG ECHO operations were handed over to European Development Fund (EDF) transitional funding. Furthermore, several of DG ECHO's partners working in the food security sector received longer-term funding from the budget line for food security, DG ECHO's demining partners all received considerable funding from the EDF (envelope B), and, once contracts have been signed, a further €15 million EDF programme will support vulnerable, war-affected populations in launching small economic activities, while a €20 million contribution is also being made to the World Bank/Social Support Fund for the rehabilitation of small health, water/sanitation and education infrastructure. An inter-service LRRD mission took place in November/December, during which the policy linkage and follow-through was confirmed. Various meetings with NGOs, Member States, Government and United Nations (UN) representatives confirmed DG ECHO's assessment that the time for emergency humanitarian assistance had passed.

Decision	Contracts	Payments
8 800 000	8 499 853	6 026 788

Lesotho & Swaziland

Humanitarian needs:

The current crisis in Lesotho is also attributed to poverty, food insecurity and the HIV/AIDS epidemic, which has built up slowly over the years. Poverty has increased significantly due to the restructuring of the mining sector in South Africa and the reduced demand for unskilled labour. Mine remittances have significantly declined. The continuing decline in household food security stemming from erratic weather patterns and a decrease in arable land has worsened livelihoods. The death of thousands of productive members of society as a result of HIV/AIDS has compounded the impact of poverty on children and youths.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

The total amount granted by the 2004 decision was €2 million (covering the period from June 2004 until May 2005). The objective of the decision was to provide basic assistance to vulnerable populations in Lesotho and Swaziland. An estimated 50 000 individuals benefited from emergency aid funded by DG ECHO. Assistance was targeted on orphans, other vulnerable children and households headed by a single parent and elderly persons.

LRRD:

The nature of the projects funded by DG ECHO is moving gradually from relief to a more suitable rehabilitation mode. DG ECHO will focus on supporting appropriate food security operations that could help to reduce the beneficiaries' extreme vulnerability. All projects supported by DG ECHO will have to include a strong preventive and palliative component to combat HIV/AIDS.

Decision	Contracts	Payments
2 000 000	1 835 908	1 258 727

Malawi

Humanitarian needs:

The humanitarian needs in Malawi in 2004 were in the sectors of food security and health/malnutrition. Although the global acute malnutrition rate was contained (it stabilised at below 5%), chronic malnutrition for under-5s remained high (50-65%) and HIV/AIDS prevalence was still 20-25%.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

DG ECHO's objectives for Malawi in 2004 were to consolidate its previous achievements in the sectors of food security and health/malnutrition and to implement a planned withdrawal by July. These objectives were fully met with the aid of two partners: Action against Hunger and Concern Worldwide. DG ECHO continued to support Nutritional Rehabilitation Units (NRUs) and the expansion of Community Therapeutic Care (CTC) for malnourished children with no access to NRUs. More than 8 000 severely malnourished under-5s received therapeutic feeding in 48 NRUs in all regions of Malawi. Training in health and detection/treatment of acute malnutrition was provided for the staff of 48 NRUs, for 2 400 carers and for 214 surveillance staff in the Ministry of Health and Population and the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Food Security. In the CTC operation DG ECHO supported local production of "ready-to-use therapeutic food" based on peanuts. This decentralised community-based programme provided treatment for over 3 000 children suffering from severe acute malnutrition, over 9 800 moderately malnourished children and over 1 100 moderately malnourished pregnant and breastfeeding women. Extremely vulnerable families (2 500 households) affected by HIV/AIDS were assisted by a food security operation, and advances were made in research into the nutritional care of HIV-infected children, including improvements to a manual on using nutrition to stay healthy, while infected with HIV. The independent monitoring of nutrition and food security in Malawi was stepped up.

LRRD:

DG ECHO achieved its goal of withdrawing from Malawi by July 2004, after an effective programme worth €5.4 million (2002-4) and having prepared an exit strategy. Relief will be linked to development by the following means:

- Malawi's Multi-Annual Food Security Programme 2004-7 (€45 million) includes an allocation of €9.7 million to "Nutritional Support" (component 5).
- Under the National Indicative Programme for the 9th EDF (envelope B), a "Sustainable Nutrition Rehabilitation Project" costing €6.5 million was begun in 2004, building on the achievements of DG ECHO projects initiated during the hunger crisis, thus linking relief, rehabilitation and development.

Namibia

Apart from the €1 million funding in support of the repatriation of Angolan refugees (see above), in 2004 DG ECHO once again provided essential relief items and essential medicines to alleviate the impact of flooding on 12 000 vulnerable families in the Caprivi region.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
1 000 000	1 000 000	800 000

Zambia

In 2004 a €2 million funding decision was adopted to support the repatriation of Angolan refugees (see above).

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
2 000 000	2 000 000	0

Zimbabwe

Humanitarian needs:

Zimbabwe is still facing major concerns due to the prevailing socio-economic crisis and the further declining political situation, including lack of respect for democratic principles and human rights. This situation is aggravated and undermined by an increasingly high HIV prevalence and infection rate, a failed land reform programme, and a dramatic decline in the delivery of basic social services. Life expectancy in Zimbabwe has been reduced by 20 years to 35 years, from 55 in 1970. Whereas the recent drought and the Government's desperately managed "fast-track" land reform programme, which destroyed the commercial farming industry, are important factors influencing the current state of the country, these only serve to highlight the cumulative effects of an already existent protracted, multi-dimensional humanitarian crisis which the UN has identified as a result of a "triple threat" of food insecurity, poor governance and HIV. These factors are dramatically spreading the levels of community impoverishment and vulnerability.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

DG ECHO's strategy focused on reducing the levels of vulnerability of rural households by improving their food security, access to water and sanitation facilities. DG ECHO is also supporting preventive and palliative action to assist households affected by HIV/AIDS, orphans and other vulnerable children.

The 2004 Global Plan for Zimbabwe supported food security (44%), water, sanitation and nutrition (50%), assistance to internally displaced persons (IDPs) and coordination (5%) and technical support (1%). DG ECHO's action in 2004 directly benefited over 235 000 children through direct support to orphans and vulnerable children, 43 000 individuals through targeted distribution of food, 53 000 children in therapeutic or supplementary feeding programmes and 10 000 displaced people. Close to 995 000 persons were aided with agricultural inputs and more than 400 000 benefited from water and sanitation projects.

LRRD:

It is not possible to implement an LRRD strategy in Zimbabwe due to the suspension of the Commission's development aid. Despite this, DG ECHO is closely coordinating and cooperating with other EC budget lines, notably for food aid and food security. During 2005 the emergency agricultural operations supported by DG ECHO will link up with EC-funded food security recovery programmes, which are considered more appropriate because of their approach and timeframe. A total of €6 million was allocated from the EC food security line under the 2004 budget. An additional €9 million will be allocated in 2005 under a two-year "Multiannual Programme".

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
15 000 000	14 195 955	9 529 098.36

1.3. Central Africa/Great Lakes

Burundi

Humanitarian needs:

Burundi continued to face multiple humanitarian needs in 2004, resulting from 10 years of civil war, food insecurity, inadequate health provision and large internally displaced and returning refugee populations. These needs were concentrated in the food, water, sanitation, shelter, protection, health and nutrition sectors.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

DG ECHO's objectives were to respond to emergency and post-emergency needs of vulnerable population groups (especially children) and to continue making progress towards rehabilitation and development. These objectives were met by two funding decisions taken in 2004: a Global Plan of €15 million and a decision granting €3.99 million under Envelope B of the 9th EDF. The main target populations for assistance were displaced persons, refugees and returnees, who generally lived in areas close to the frontiers.

The main sectors supported by the Global Plan decision were food/nutrition (33%), health (28%), water/sanitation (19%) and emergency relief supplies (6%). Improved security and access made it possible to meet and, in some cases, exceed the objectives. This relative improvement also facilitated increased use of development funds, with further increases recommended by the mid-term review of the National Indicative Programme under the 9th EDF. The second decision specifically targeted refugees and returnees, triggered by the massacre or wounding of over 250 Congolese refugees (out of a total of 18 000) at Gatumba camp in August. UNHCR also registered more than 70 000 Burundian repatriations from Tanzania in 2004, to which an unknown number of unregistered returns must be added. Additional strain was placed on already sparse resources. DG ECHO maintained a technical assistance capacity in the field, and monitoring operations included a joint EU-US mission.

LRRD:

Burundi was chosen as a pilot country for LRRD in 2003, and some progress was made in 2004 in the water/sanitation, food security and health sectors. However, a complete hand-over of DG ECHO's programmes was not possible in 2004.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
18 990 000	16 348 300	10 839 017

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Humanitarian needs:

The Congo crisis has been DG ECHO's largest programme in Africa since 2001 and has consistently ranked among the top three in the world. The DRC crisis is a chronic, complex emergency arising from cumulative mismanagement and abuse compounded by seven years of conflict. An estimated 3.5 million people are now displaced. Reduced access to food in conflict-affected areas has created widespread food insecurity and pockets of acute malnutrition.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

By definition in DRC DG ECHO focuses on the most vulnerable, but children under five years of age are specifically targeted by nutrition programmes and the Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology Programme (MCH/EPI). Assistance to women in difficulty will be stepped up with the vertical integration of sexual and reproductive health components, including a special programme to assist victims of sexual violence in conflict areas.

The overall objectives for DRC for 2004 were to contain within emergency thresholds morbidity and mortality attributable to common diseases and malnutrition and to promote stabilisation and resettlement in areas emerging from conflict. Geographically, the focus was on the Greater Kivu and Ituri regions (still in, or just emerging from, conflict) and on the former frontline areas which were beginning to stabilise. Specific objectives concerned activities in the fields of (1) healthcare (54%); (2) nutrition and food security (22%); (3) Special mandates (4%); and (4) technical assistance (2%).

In 2004 the Commission adopted a €40 000 000 Global Plan (GP) for DRC. Thanks to the improved security in most areas and the dedication of partners, the main objectives were

largely met. In terms of results, figures confirm DG ECHO's achievements in providing accessibility to affordable health care: the number of healthcare beneficiaries (5.9 million people, against a target of 4.7) shows that user fees have been set at an appropriate level at which they constitute no economic obstacle to access. The lower than expected number of health zones covered (49 against 53 planned) is, in fact, an indication of a relatively successful LRRD policy which has led to a number of these zones obtaining support from an increasing number of development donors. Other, more sophisticated morbidity and mortality indicators have shown marked progress, with trends returning towards the averages for sub-Saharan Africa, thereby indicating that quality of care and drug supplies have also improved.

Although targets for nutrition were over-estimated, the indicators for acute malnutrition in accessible populations show a distinct downward trend. In the food and nutrition sector, DG ECHO provided assistance to some 16 000 severely malnourished children in therapeutic feeding centres, 53 511 moderately malnourished children and 830 488 beneficiaries of emergency food rations, seeds and tools. Last but not least, 428 km of road were also rehabilitated. In the Good Humanitarian Donorship initiative DRC has been a pilot country, with DG ECHO and OCHA working together to launch a more comprehensive, coherent and useful 2005 Common Humanitarian Appeal (CHAP) for DRC. DG ECHO also maintained a team of four experts in the field, thereby allowing more accurate and timely assessments, improved and more responsive evaluations and, above all, closer coordination between partners.

LRRD:

Thanks to the political and security improvements in DRC an increasing number of development donors have been able to re-engage, including the EU's 9th EDF. In particular, the non-programmed aid provided in envelope B was mobilised to take over resettlement and rehabilitation activities that had been started by DG ECHO in North Kivu and Ituri during the period of instability. DG ECHO also participated in the mid-term review process which allocated additional funds to envelope B for similar LRRD activities. Certain health zones that were being assisted by DG ECHO funds are now being supported by the EU's programmed aid for the health sector or other donors such as the World Bank. This process not only allowed DG ECHO to concentrate its resources on the most unstable areas where emergency conditions persist but also to safeguard the investments and hard-earned gains that had already been made.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
40 000 000	39 283 836	25 881 583

Congo Brazzaville

Humanitarian needs:

Following the conclusion of a peace agreement in March 2003 for the Pool conflict, the displaced slowly began to return. Assistance to these people focused on healthcare and protection and further needs with regard to the rehabilitation of homes and social infrastructure and the relaunch of agricultural production.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

In 2004 the Commission adopted one humanitarian aid decision granting financing totalling €2 000 000 to the Republic of the Congo, from envelope B of the 9th EDF. The objective was to provide assistance to vulnerable populations in the Pool region where a peace accord had finally been signed. Projects supported by DG ECHO were able to re-introduce a basic primary health care system for some 70 000 people and assisted with the reconstruction of 2 551 homes, 15 water supplies and the relaunch of agricultural production through rehabilitation of 64 km of feeder roads and distribution of 1 200 agricultural family kits.

LRRD:

DG ECHO's operations were put together in close collaboration with the EC delegation in Brazzaville, with a view to handing the DG ECHO operation in the Pool region over to the national health programme and micro-project funded under the 9th EDF in the course of 2005.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
2 000 000	1 970 000	666 554

Central African Republic**Humanitarian needs:**

The north-western parts of the country were badly affected by political crisis and conflict. Social and administrative services had collapsed, essential infrastructure was destroyed or looted, and healthcare and other key personnel had fled. Protection and access to basic healthcare were the overriding humanitarian priorities.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

In 2004 the Commission adopted one financing decision for CAR, granting humanitarian aid totalling €470 000, using envelope B of the 9th EDF. The overall objective was to assist vulnerable people directly affected by the political crisis and conflict. Funding was provided for basic healthcare to the estimated population of 400 000 from the two "red zone" Prefectures of Ouham and Ouham Pendé. In terms of results, this operation succeeded in increasing healthcare utilisation rates from around 0.1 new contacts per person per year to between 0.6 and 1.2 in the targeted areas.

LRRD:

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

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
470 000	470 000	376 000

Tanzania

Humanitarian needs:

Tanzania continues to host the largest refugee population on the African continent. The refugees are almost entirely dependent on humanitarian aid for survival. At the beginning of 2004 there were 476 240 refugees from Burundi and DRC (most Rwandese having returned) living in 13 camps in Western Tanzania under UNHCR protection. This refugee population decreased by approximately 75 000 during 2004, partly due to Burundian repatriation and partly due to a tougher government response to asylum-seekers, including some cases of forced return. Despite continued attempts to enforce peace agreements, most refugees were unable to return home. However, Tanzanian law precludes self-reliance and integration, so humanitarian needs include food, water, shelter, protection and health care.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

DG ECHO's main aim was to continue the support it had provided for several years to this refugee "Care and maintenance" operation. It had become a protracted crisis, and DG ECHO's objectives included active monitoring of the humanitarian situation, which no longer ranked as a top priority for many donors. The objectives of DG ECHO's Tanzania Global Plan 2004 were met. An amount of EUR 15 million was allocated to the refugee programme, via UNHCR, UNICEF and Spanish Red Cross. Programmes were supported in the sectors of water, sanitation, logistics, health, nutrition, shelter, protection and education. Over 400,000 refugees benefited from this intervention, and DG ECHO continued to be UNHCR's key donor for the Tanzania refugee programme. Extra support was given to children and vulnerable people, such as elderly, disabled and single-parent families. Attention was paid to gender-related problems, via the Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Programme. Reproductive health services continued to receive support, with programmes for the Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission of HIV running in every camp. DG ECHO maintained a technical assistance capacity in the field, playing the role of active donor, monitoring operations and upholding standards. The general and Under-5 mortality rates remained below 1/1000 per month and vaccination coverage was over 98%. In April 2004 there was a rapid response to a cholera outbreak, avoiding deaths.

LRRD:

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

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
14,900,000	14,800,000	11,840,000

1.4. West Africa

Epidemics and regional response in West Africa:

Humanitarian needs:

Epidemics are acute emergencies that can produce high excess mortality in a short time span. West Africa is one of the regions with the highest prevalence of epidemics in the world, with meningitis, cholera, yellow fever and measles the main killers. Viral hemorrhagic fevers, shigellosis and hepatitis outbreaks also occur and in 2004 West Africa suffered a major polio control failure which led to an explosion in polio cases, which affected 12 countries by the end of 2004 compared with only a few cases in two countries in 2003. Between January and August 2004 the WHO recorded 15 887 cases of epidemic meningitis, 119 cases of yellow fever and 16 865 cases of cholera. It is essential to respond to large-scale outbreaks already causing high mortality rates, but also to smaller ones before they become large, as an early, small, comparatively cheap and fast reaction can often effectively contain and control the epidemic. However, locally raised financial contributions in the early stages of an epidemic are usually too little or too late, with the result that the outbreak can develop into a major disaster.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

The objective of the operations funded by DG ECHO was to reduce the mortality, morbidity and transmission of the epidemic diseases initially by early, qualified and rapid assessment in order to assist in adopting timely decisions for health measures and priority funding. This will be followed by the provision of effective medicines to the people worst affected, prevention of additional cases and control of potential expansion through immunisation, awareness campaigns and water and sanitation measures. Meningitis response was supported in Burkina Faso. Cholera was unusually highly prevalent and widespread, an indicator of generally poor sanitation in West Africa. DG ECHO supported cholera response in several African capitals: N'Djamena, Conakry and Freetown. Other funding for epidemic mitigation included responses to yellow fever in Burkina Faso, to hepatitis E in Chad and to a measles epidemic suspected to be highly lethal in Niger. No external support was required to deal with the cholera outbreaks in Mali, Niger and Senegal. The cholera epidemic in Togo qualified for EU support as part of an ongoing health project, without support from DG ECHO. Cholera trends were followed but no action was specifically funded in Nigeria, Guinea-Bissau, Ghana, Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire. Additional funding was granted to the WHO for rapid assessment of epidemics. Lassa fever was managed with alternative funds in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Nigeria. The polio explosion during 2004 prompted a massive international reaction to which DG ECHO contributed with resources from the Coastal West Africa Global Plan for Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone.

At regional level, DG ECHO's objective was also to strengthen emergency operations and project support, which are not country-based but regional. With the conflict extending beyond national boundaries and emergency response being implemented by humanitarian organisations in the four countries of Coastal West Africa (Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire), it is essential to support regional programmes capitalising on a common strategy and synergies stemming from implementation of the same activities in various countries. In this regard, the WFP's regional air transport service for humanitarian personnel and small cargo received support from DG ECHO. Movements of large numbers of people

across national borders are another reason for implementing regional programmes. In this regard, DG ECHO contributed towards a regional protection programme for children, including assistance to ex-combatant children. Repatriation of uprooted populations to their places of origin was also supported by DG ECHO.

LRRD

During 2004 epidemics remained on a relatively small scale (the expected major meningitis outbreak did not materialise). Consequently, the epidemic decision was enough without requiring further funding from envelope B. DG ECHO is coordinating with, and assisting, longer-term initiatives to reinforce the local response capacity. This led to a West Africa plan to strengthen local epidemic response capacity for which three years of EU funding is expected. Reports were given on the experience gained from epidemic response projects at the West Africa Health Organisation (WAHO/OOAS) meeting to plan for regional epidemic response.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
1 000 000	999 124	605 954
(within Global Plan for Coastal West Africa)	898 000	638 400

Chad

Humanitarian needs:

The civil conflict in the Darfur region, which started in 2003, led to an influx of more than 200 000 refugees to Eastern Chad. The Chadian regions of Ouaddaï and Biltine, where the refugee caseload is now installed in more than 10 camps, are very arid and remote. Weather conditions are extreme, with a very hot dry season and a long rainy season. Basic infrastructure is in such poor condition that a large part of the region remains isolated for several months once the rainy season sets in. Availability of water and food as well as shelter and land to cultivate are very limited both for refugees and for the local populations. Tensions have appeared between the two groups because of this situation.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

In 2004 DG ECHO provided support to various partner organisations to deliver an integrated relief package covering more than 200 000 Sudanese refugees in Eastern Chad. This assistance worth €12 million consisted mainly of basic services - such as health care, nutritional and supplementary feeding and drinking water - construction of sanitation facilities, distribution of shelter and other household items and activities aimed at protecting the refugees. DG ECHO made a significant contribution to reducing the vulnerability of the refugee families and to improving standards of living, safety and protection for the majority of the refugees.

LRRD

The LRRD process is more of a “contiguum” in Eastern Chad. Development programmes targeted on the local population must be implemented in parallel to humanitarian programmes for the benefit of the refugee population. DG ECHO has been working in cooperation with the

EC Delegation and other development agencies to adapt the development strategies in Eastern Chad which is hosting the Sudanese refugee caseload. This region has been very much forgotten in terms of development. As a result, the living conditions of the local population happen to be worse than those of the refugees.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
12 000 000	11 615 890	6 632 833

Côte d'Ivoire

Humanitarian needs:

The humanitarian situation in Côte d'Ivoire remains very fragile. The country continues to be divided between loyalist security forces in the South and the 'forces nouvelles' (coalition of three ex-rebel groups) in the North. Several attempts have been made to solve the crisis, but the parties concerned seem to lack good will. The disarmament process has not yet started. There are still approximately 550 000 displaced people and 75 000 refugees, mainly Liberian, in the country.

Persistent tensions in the North and the West have resulted in a dilapidated health care system and a large proportion of the public services continue to be disrupted by the conflict. The division of the country, violence, population displacements and problems with access to land have contributed to an increase in malnutrition levels as well as to an increased need for assistance with protection of the vulnerable population. The humanitarian situation in Côte d'Ivoire suffered a setback with the resumption of violent conflict in November 2004. Health services further deteriorated and access to public services has become even more limited. The ethnic component of the crisis is becoming increasingly important. Children and women are at risk of being more exposed to involvement with the fighting forces. Moreover, more than 16 000 Ivorians and nationals of other countries fled to neighbouring countries. The security environment for civilians, foreigners and humanitarian staff became quite tense following these events. The political crisis has an impact not only on the humanitarian situation in Côte d'Ivoire, but also on the sub-region.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

DG ECHO's objective in 2004 was to continue to provide humanitarian assistance to vulnerable populations affected by the conflict in Côte d'Ivoire. To this end, funds totalling €5 million were made available for humanitarian aid projects in Côte d'Ivoire within the Global Plan for Coastal West Africa 2004. With these funds DG ECHO was able to finance health care, nutrition, protection and humanitarian coordination projects. Health care facilities funded by DG ECHO in the North and the West gave the most vulnerable population access to basic health care and compensated for the lack of public services. DG ECHO also helped to address the serious increase in malnutrition in the Western part of the country by funding additional activities to address moderate and severe malnutrition and to stimulate agricultural production. Particular attention was paid to the protection of displaced people, in particular nationals of other countries, and to children associated with fighting forces. The target area for action was the Western and Northern part of Côte d'Ivoire in particular. Approximately 1.2 million benefited from the measures funded by DG ECHO in 2004.

LRRD:

Some of the health, water and sanitation as well as food security measures financed by DG ECHO during the initial emergency phase were continued in a broader and more sustainable manner in the context of aid programmes managed by the EC Delegation in Abidjan in 2004 (9th EDF, envelope B).

Decisions (Coastal West Africa 2004)	Contracts	Payments
5 000 000	4 973 842	3 046 567

Guinea**Humanitarian needs:**

In 2004 the humanitarian needs identified in Guinea mainly concerned Liberians and Ivorians in refugee camps located in the prefecture of Nzérékoré in the Forestière region. Delivery of basic services, such as health, food, drinking water and sanitation, had to continue in and around the refugee camps. Relief assistance to the refugee camps in the prefecture of Kissidougou was further reduced and finally ended in line with the reduction in the refugee population (due to the repatriation of Sierra Leonean refugees) and the level of basic services provided in the remaining camps.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

The objective of DG ECHO was to support both the assistance to refugees remaining in camps for whom the main areas of activity were health, water, sanitation and repatriation to Sierra Leone (ended June 2004) and to Liberia. The last of these processes was launched by UNHCR in October 2004 and will be continue over 3 years. In 2004, €2.65 million were committed to Guinea under the Regional Global Plan.

LRRD:

No EC LRRD programmes targeting areas where refugees are present in Guinea have yet been launched. DG ECHO and the EC Delegation in Conakry have drafted an LRRD programme for the Forestière region. This is still under discussion in the EC.

Decisions (Coastal West Africa Global plan including Sierra Leone, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea and Liberia)	Contracts (Guinea)	Payments
18 000 000	2 714 719	1 781 775

Liberia**Humanitarian needs:**

The humanitarian situation in Liberia remains critical. During the last 14 years of civil war, about 340 000 people fled to neighbouring countries while a further 464 000 became

internally displaced. 262 000 have been registered at official camps around Monrovia, while the rest live in unofficial squatter camps or lodge with friends and family. In the countryside the scope of the humanitarian crises is vast, years of fighting having totally devastated some regions. Large parts of the population have no access to basic services such as health care, clean water, sanitation and education. Governmental structures are almost non-existent. Lack of food is a major concern. Acute malnutrition and mortality rates are significant both amongst IDPs and the local population.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

In the summer of 2003 the outbreak of violence unleashed a large-scale humanitarian crisis. Following the deployment of peacekeepers and the signing of a peace agreement, a decision granting €8 million of emergency aid was adopted to address the needs of vulnerable people in accessible areas. These operations were partly implemented during the first half of 2004. On top of these, a total of €8.6 million was allocated from the 2004 Global Plan to address the needs of vulnerable people in areas of great insecurity. This contribution has had a significant impact in the form of providing access to primary health care, nutrition centres and secondary health care with support going to 7 out of the 10 main referral hospitals currently running in the country, water and sanitation facilities, protection and distribution of food to more than half of the IDPs and to thousands amongst the local population.

As the security situation improved people started returning spontaneously to their areas of origin to which humanitarian organisations were gradually gaining access at the same time. From September 2004 an additional €4.3 million from the 9th EDF (envelope B) was made available to meet some of the new humanitarian needs stemming from this changing situation. DG ECHO provided significant assistance to 50 000 returnees - distribution of non-food items (NFI) and general assistance- and helped to restore access to basic services (health and water and sanitation) in some of the major areas completely devastated or abandoned by years of conflict to which the population was returning. DG ECHO has been fully engaged in the Liberian crisis and thanks to its strong network of professional partners has been able to respond to the immediate humanitarian needs and to contribute actively to the stabilisation process. In June 2004 a second technical assistant (TA) was appointed to the DG ECHO Office that was opened in Monrovia in October 2003.

LRRD:

The humanitarian situation in Liberia in 2004 still required emergency humanitarian operations. The LRRD process will be initiated at a later stage, probably during 2006, but is already clearly mentioned in the Country Strategy Paper (CSP) to be adopted in early 2005. However, coordination is taking place with the other EU instruments, particularly with the local community development programmes, in order to develop complementary aspects.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
12 928 157 (*)	12 978 013	8 526 283

* €8 628 157 within GP for Coastal West Africa and €4 300 000 from EDF fund decision

Sierra Leone

Humanitarian needs:

Despite the consolidation of peace and a major improvement in the security situation throughout the country, Sierra Leone continues to rank at the bottom end of UNDP's Human Development Index. However, the problems that face the country now are more of a structural than a humanitarian nature and have to be addressed by longer-term funding instruments. In 2004 some humanitarian programmes had to continue to maintain the link with rehabilitation and development programmes.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

In 2004 the successful implementation of the LRRD programme allowed DG ECHO to complete the phasing-out of its financial assistance by the end of the year. With the objective of synchronisation with the start of rehabilitation operations, DG ECHO maintained some assistance for vulnerable populations until December. It contributed €800 000 to operations targeting Liberian refugees and vulnerable Sierra Leoneans. The main areas of activity were health, water and sanitation. DG ECHO's Sierra Leone office closed in January 2005.

LRRD:

After two years of preparation, most of the activities funded by DG ECHO have been handed over to rehabilitation programmes funded by EUROPEAID. A decision was taken granting €25 million (over three years) for LRRD funded from the EDF. A new financial decision granting €6.5 million in support of the health sector has also been approved and is now being implemented. Sierra Leone has been chosen as a pilot case for LRRD by the LRRD/DPP inter-service group. The LRRD process has been made possible by the relative stability enjoyed in the country, the commitment shown by the EC Delegation and the availability of the required dedicated human resources.

Decisions (Coastal West Africa Global plan including Sierra Leone, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea and Liberia)	Contracts (Sierra Leone)	Payments
18 000 000	805 264	587 385

1.5. Caribbean/Pacific/Indian Ocean

Haiti

Humanitarian needs:

In February 2004 the long lasting socio-political crisis in Haiti was exacerbated by an armed rebellion leading to the departure of President Aristide. The interruption of economic activity in large parts of the country and the quasi-collapse of social services stretched the capacities of the impoverished parts of the population to the limit and beyond. Furthermore, in the course of 2004 two major floods led to heavy loss of life and caused extensive damage, temporary displacement of people and need for humanitarian assistance.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

DG ECHO provided substantial assistance (a total of €12.6 million including flood relief) in support of the populations hardest hit by the complete erosion of basic services and by natural disaster. One particular concern was the health sector, especially the lack of access of a large part of the population to health care. A total of more than 3 million people benefited from programmes funded by DG ECHO.

LRRD:

The livelihoods of a large part of the population in Haiti remain fragile. However, the Haiti crisis cannot be solved by humanitarian aid but requires massive reconstruction efforts, including quick impact programmes in favour of the neediest members of the population. With the EC Delegation now in a position to use substantial funds from the EDF (a total of €95 million from envelope B) DG ECHO is planning to phase out its emergency programme in 2005, but will remain involved in disaster preparedness (DIPECHO).

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
11 197 000	10 949 181	8 213 902

Dipecto Caribbean

Humanitarian needs:

The Caribbean region is vulnerable to a wide variety of natural disasters, ranging from unpredictable events, such as volcanic eruptions and earthquakes, to cyclical phenomena, notably the annual hurricane season between June and November. The small island states of the eastern Caribbean are particularly at risk because of their location, directly on the inbound path of Atlantic hurricanes, because of the limited response capacity of each island alone, and due to their narrowly-based economies. In recent years, the Caribbean has been hit by devastating natural disasters which left their mark on a region rendered vulnerable by demographic pressures and, in some instances, entrenched poverty.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

In 2004 DG ECHO's fourth DIPECHO Action Plan for the Caribbean was completed whilst at the same time a fifth Action Plan was initiated. With funding under a decision dating back to 2003 DG ECHO's partners completed their DIPECHO projects covered by the fourth Action Plan. The majority of them, implemented by NGOs and the Red Cross, were directed towards improving disaster awareness and disaster response at local and community level. Vulnerable populations in the Dominican Republic, Cuba, Jamaica, Haiti, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia as well as St Vincent and the Grenadines benefited from these programmes. In Cuba three new projects costing €500,000 were launched in July 2003, as part of the 4th Action Plan for the Caribbean. These projects are mainly to improve the early warning systems for extreme hydro-meteorological events in 14 municipalities in six provinces. An evaluation of this DIPECHO plan identified new priorities and the new plan will be published in March 2005.

LRRD:

DG ECHO cooperated with DG Development and EUROPEAID on a number of initiatives, for example on complementary funding of weather radar components or DG Development taking over funding of the Caribbean Disaster and Emergency Response Agency (CDERA). Nevertheless, further efforts are necessary to mainstream disaster preparedness more systematically in development programmes.

Caribbean – Natural Disasters response (Other than Haiti)**Humanitarian needs:**

In autumn 2004 a series of hurricanes (Frances, Ivan, Jeanne) swept through the Caribbean region wreaking widespread devastation. Grenada, Jamaica, Haiti, the Dominican Republic and the Bahamas were hit particularly hard. The island of Cuba was also badly hit in August and September 2004 by hurricanes Charley and Ivan. Those two successive hurricanes (Charley - category 5 - and Ivan - category 3) severely affected 3 780 000 persons in three different regions of the island, representing 35% of the total population.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

To cover crucial short-term needs DG ECHO provided emergency funding for Haiti (€4 million), Grenada (€3 million), Jamaica (€1.2 million), the Dominican Republic (€600 000), the Bahamas (€480 000) and Cuba (€1 million). The funds focused on the distribution of food, water and non-food items, the rehabilitation of water systems, access to health care, roof repair and agricultural recovery.

LRRD:

In the countries worst hit by the hurricanes, i.e. Grenada and Haiti, DG ECHO and DEV/AIDCO coordinated the use of funds from envelope B.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
8 280 000	5 422 914	4 249 038

Madagascar**Humanitarian needs:**

The humanitarian needs in Madagascar were for emergency assistance after Cyclone Gafilo shook the island in March 2004.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

DG ECHO's objective was to provide immediate relief for victims of the cyclone and of the floods in its wake. This was achieved by deploying DG ECHO's rapid response expert, who arrived the day after the cyclone. An emergency decision granting €2 million was taken and operations by five NGOs to re-establish access and to provide assistance in the water, sanitation, health, nutrition, food security and shelter sectors were funded.

LRRD:

DG ECHO has no permanent presence in Madagascar and therefore withdrew as soon as the emergency operations finished at the end of September, reverting to a monitoring role. However, some of the operations funded by DG ECHO provided preparedness for future disasters, in the form of both training and equipment.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
2 000 000	1 962 223	1 404 190

ECHO Flight

ECHO Flight continued to provide humanitarian air transport capacity in the Horn of Africa and neighbouring regions (currently Somalia, Kenya, and DRC). In 2004 a new operator was selected by an open international call for tenders and took over the ECHO Flight service as from 1 May. The implementation of a peace agreement in DRC opened up access to areas in need of humanitarian assistance. In response to the increased needs for air transport in DRC, ECHO Flight positioned an extra aircraft in Mbuji Mayi and extended its network inside the country.

ECHO Flight also secured Garissa as a new base for cross-border operations. This has greatly facilitated flights into central and southern Somalia which had been compromised when Mandera became unavailable as an airfield for international departures and arrivals. In 2004 ECHO Flight carried 20 598 passengers, 5 538 tonnes of humanitarian cargo and 5 418 mail parcels to five destinations in Kenya, 18 in Somalia and 32 in DRC.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
9 000 000	529 726	423 779

1.6. Balkans

DG ECHO completed its exit from the Balkans in 2003 and its last operation (provision of heating fuel for IDPs and refugees in Serbia for the winter of 2003-2004) came to an end in spring 2004.

1.7. Eastern Europe, Russian Federation, Southern Caucasus, Central Asia, including Mongolia

Northern Caucasus

Humanitarian needs:

The protracted and forgotten humanitarian crisis in the Northern Caucasus remained one of DG ECHO's operational priorities in 2004, with funding totalling €28.5 million allocated to the victims of the conflict in Chechnya in three tranches (€16.5 million in May, €10 million in October and €2 million in December). Hopes for an improvement in the political situation were shattered by the assassination of pro-Moscow President Akhmad Kadyrov in May as well as the distinct spill over of the conflict into other republics of the Northern Caucasus, notably Ingushetia and North Ossetia, culminating in the tragic hostage-taking at the school in

Beslan. In Chechnya proper, fighting went on and the rebel side stepped up its operations against the federal and Chechen pro-Moscow forces in the second half of the year. A series of attacks were launched in Grozny and other villages over the year. As the conflict continued, no improvements were achieved in the humanitarian situation in Chechnya; in some respects it even deteriorated and needs remained enormous (food, non-food, water and sanitation, free access to health and medicine, education, psycho-social assistance and protection). In Ingushetia, the number of IDPs decreased dramatically during the year, from 66 000 to 35 000 essentially due to the closure of the remaining tented camps and of several spontaneous settlements. Some 20 000 persons are estimated to have returned to Chechnya from Ingushetia.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements:

In order to meet these needs, DG ECHO continued to provide support in all sectors (food, non-food, medical, water/sanitation, protection, shelter, education and psychosocial, mine-awareness and vocational training). It remained the main donor in the region. €26.5 million had originally been earmarked, but DG ECHO allocated a further €2 million at the end of the year in order to prevent a break in the WFP food pipeline, after some commitments by the US were cancelled. In 2004 DG ECHO financed operations implemented by 24 different partners; 40 operations were completed and 42 new agreements were launched, five of them with partners from the new Member States.

IDPs and vulnerable people were provided with medical care in Chechnya, Daghestan and Ingushetia. The main area of activity remained food distribution: basic food aid was provided to 390 000 IDPs and vulnerable members of the population in Chechnya, Ingushetia and Daghestan. Specific food was distributed to 1 500 children between 6 and 24 months old in Ingushetia and Southern Chechnya and daily hot meals to 80 000 primary school children in Chechnya. Approximately 800 rooms were rehabilitated or built in Ingushetia and 7 000 IDPs received aid for maintenance of their room. Essential relief items were distributed to 90 000 IDPs and vulnerable residents in Ingushetia, Chechnya and Dagestan (hygiene and bedding items plus fire wood) and to some 20 000 IDP children in Ingushetia and Chechnya (children's clothing). Up to 9 000 young IDPs in Ingushetia and young residents and IDPs in Chechnya benefited from psycho-social support, aid to improve their skills and vocational activities.

Water and sanitation conditions were enhanced in Ingushetia and access to potable water was ensured for the residents of Grozny (90 000) with special emphasis on schools and health facilities. In Ingushetia and Chechnya 100 000 people (mainly children) received mine-awareness training. In the educational sector DG ECHO financed the distribution of 25 000 school- books and contributed to the operation of Child Friendly Spaces and primary schools attended by approximately 3 000 children in Chechnya and Ingushetia. It also funded the basic rehabilitation of seven schools in Chechnya. In addition, throughout the Northern Caucasus protection activities funded by DG ECHO, notably legal counselling, were provided for IDPs, returnees and residents.

However, working conditions for humanitarian staff remained very difficult, with the same opaque system of access permits to Chechnya, regular entry restrictions for international staff and very high insecurity. Partners continued to work through a remote control system, clearly limiting the presence of their expatriate staff in Chechnya. In addition, for security reasons, a number of districts in Chechnya received no, or very little, humanitarian aid. This is the case in the mountainous south, where only food aid is distributed but no other programmes, not

even medical, are running. However, access to parts of the republic improved, which allowed projects (on school meals and primary health care) to be extended to a number of new districts.

DG ECHO continued, through other departments of the European Commission, to address the issue of access and security with the Russian authorities, but no progress was made in spite of the official request by the authorities to see DG ECHO funding more projects in Chechnya proper. All year round, the EC also continued to advocate the protection of IDPs and respect of the voluntary return principle. However, the mobilisation of the international community was not able to prevent the closure of the remaining camps in Ingushetia. At least this process has been less brutal than before and better coordinated with the international community, which tried to find alternative solutions for the IDPs. However, this has not allowed all IDPs who would have wanted to stay in Ingushetia to do so, and many of them have had to return to Chechnya in search of another solution.

In spite of the needs of some 10 000 IDPs in Daghestan, international aid has been scarce there but 2004 started to see more interest on the part of the international community, thanks largely to DG ECHO's advocacy work. DG ECHO alerted its partners to the needs there, notably in terms of protection and education, and UNHCR and UNICEF consequently decided to play an active role in this republic as well.

As in 2003, DG ECHO failed to receive authorisation to open a sub-office in Ingushetia from the Russian authorities, in spite of repeated EC/EU requests. However, DG ECHO maintained a regular presence of its staff in Ingushetia, in particular thanks to rented private accommodation in Nazran, and was able to visit Chechnya more often thanks to an increase in the number of missions organised by the United Nations Security Coordinator (UNSECOORD), at least until May and then from September on.

LRRD:

Three decisions granting a total of €28.5 M were adopted to continue the support for the most vulnerable populations. Some projects are still being implemented, others have been completed. There have been regular discussions with DG External Relations about the possibility of other support measures (TACIS) in the North Caucasus. Further to discussions at the November 2004 Summit at The Hague, a field assessment mission was planned for early 2005. Several sectors where there could be a fruitful LRRD were considered¹ for implementation under the 2005 TACIS budget (education, health, income-generation). In the past, such measures had not been possible mainly for security reasons, and the new programme should be contingent upon the removal of constraints to aid delivery in addition to security guarantees.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
28 500 000	25 828 740	17 096 992

¹ The Commission took a formal Decision on the related Addendum to the National Indicative Programme, for 20 mio Euros, in May 2005

Southern Caucasus (Georgia)

Humanitarian needs

In Georgia, particularly in the West (Samegrelo and Abkhazia), a region badly affected by the unresolved conflict in Abkhazia, groups of extremely vulnerable people (usually the elderly, especially women) still could not even manage to cater for their basic food needs. 2004 brought no improvement to their situation. The Rose Revolution and the coming to power of a new, reform-minded government has not had time to bear fruit and will not necessarily be able to answer the needs of the most vulnerable groups. In addition to food needs, DG ECHO's missions identified other forgotten shelter and health needs.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements

DG ECHO exceptionally increased its funding in 2004 to €4 million, in order to be able to cover urgent unmet needs. DG ECHO continued to concentrate its funding on Western Georgia, including Abkhazia, and on food security, providing some 20 000 people in Abkhazia and some 40 000 in Samegrelo with basic food and supporting WFP's food-for-work activities. In addition to food security, DG ECHO provided support for the rehabilitation of a number of collective centres for IDPs and of five schools in Tbilissi, as well as to a mother-and-child health programme in Samegrelo. No funding was allocated to Armenia or Azerbaijan but DG ECHO continued to monitor the situation, in particular in consultation with the UNHCR and the WFP.

LRRD

DG ECHO supported the targeted vulnerable population with two operations under the 2002 decision, which came to an end in November 2003. A new decision was adopted in August 2003 in order to continue and increase the support to the most vulnerable. Three food security operations are being implemented. Regarding LRRD, at present there are no development activities in Abkhazia. No donors are supporting rehabilitation or reconstruction projects. DG ECHO is liaising closely with other EC departments and other donors (United States and Switzerland) to encourage them to engage in activities as a potential follow-up to DG ECHO's operations, especially in Samegrelo.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
4 000 000	3 650 000	2 740 000

Mongolia

Humanitarian needs

Mongolia suffered a series of consecutive winter disasters ("dzuds") from 2000 to 2003, which resulted in urgent food and non-food needs for the most vulnerable herders who lost their cattle and therefore their main source of income. After a relatively milder winter in 2003/2004, the main needs identified were no longer direct food aid, except for the very most vulnerable children in the capital, but small-scale agricultural activities instead.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements

In order to help the most vulnerable herders or ex-herders cope with the consequences of past winter disasters and be better prepared for future winters, DG ECHO allocated €1 million for Mongolia. This allowed a start to be made on two agricultural projects placing strong emphasis on disaster preparedness, as well as targeted nutritional support for malnourished children in the outskirts of Ulaan Baatar.

LRRD

DG ECHO is liaising with other EC departments to ensure a coherent European Commission approach in Mongolia. DG External Relations budget for Mongolia is limited, but the priority for the years ahead will be to support the World Bank's poverty-reduction credit scheme and to target rural communities. This should provide a means of supporting more agricultural projects and of linking DG ECHO's relief to agricultural and rural development. Most of the leading donors are currently focusing on poverty-reduction and some will specifically target the poorest slum-dwellers in Ulaanbaatar. However, results will not be achieved until the medium term. As for disaster preparedness, the Government of Mongolia has started some limited measures to support herders.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
1 000 000	800 000	400 000

Tajikistan

Humanitarian needs

2004 marked the first year of a three-year phase-out of DG ECHO's activities in Tajikistan as the humanitarian situation continues to improve and other schemes run by the European Commission and other international donors start to take hold. However, the lasting effects of the 1999-2001 drought, mostly visible in the form of high poverty levels, still prevent proper access to food for over one-quarter of the population. Infant malnutrition remains alarmingly high, with continuing unacceptable levels of chronic malnutrition (over 30% of the under-5 population) and of children at risk of developing acute malnutrition. The current situation remains precarious. Over half the population still lack access to clean drinking water, while the government remains unable to provide sufficient basic medical supplies to cope with the high incidence of diseases. The continuing poor capacity to cope with natural disasters was demonstrated in July 2004, when heavy flooding in the Varzob district caused substantial damage to infrastructure and contaminated water supplies to the country's capital, Dushanbe.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements

2004 saw the conclusion of the 2003 Global Plan for Tajikistan and the launch of an ad hoc decision for 2004 in March. This decision, granting €8 million over 12 months, represents a 25% reduction in funding from 2003, in line with DG ECHO's phase-down strategy. All 17 grant agreements under the 2003 Global Plan were implemented effectively with no significant problems. Some 40 000 people (including 20 000 malnourished children) received food aid, whilst 40 000 rural households benefited from short-term food security projects. Access to clean drinking water was improved for 280 000 people, and the whole population benefited from improved access to primary health care.

The 2004 decision had three specific objectives. The first was to help meet immediate basic food needs, wherever possible while simultaneously enhancing food security for the most vulnerable households. The second aim was to reduce morbidity and mortality by enhancing access to primary health care, ensuring an effective response to outbreaks of infectious diseases and promoting community health awareness. Finally, access to drinking water and sanitation facilities was to be increased while simultaneously promoting safe use of water in order to reduce the incidence of water-borne diseases. Every region of the country was covered, but with the emphasis on Khatlon province in the south-west, the region worst affected by the drought. Under the 2004 ad hoc decision, grant agreements were signed with 14 partners. Following the July flooding, an emergency decision granting €350 000 was put into action to provide emergency assistance in the water, sanitation and health sectors, and to support mechanisms for coordinating disaster response. Four grant agreements were signed to meet these needs. The outbreak of water-borne diseases feared following the flooding was averted.

LRRD

2004 saw other Commission funding instruments take hold in Tajikistan, notably through the Food Security Programme, including funding to NGOs and TACIS track 3 (poverty alleviation). DG ECHO continued to liaise closely with the Tajik government, other donors, NGOs and the United Nations, as well as other European Commission departments, to see how longer-term instruments could best build upon the output from activities funded by DG ECHO. The inter-service group considered the LRRD process in Tajikistan a most successful experience.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
8 350 000	8 095 689	5 934 155

DIPECHO (Central Asia)

Humanitarian needs:

Exposure to natural disasters combined with poor response capacities continue to pose high risks to the populations of Central Asia, most notably in Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. Among these countries, Tajikistan is by far the poorest and most vulnerable with a succession of disasters, some small, others large (avalanches, mudslides, floods, earthquakes), affecting thousands of people every year. This was clearly demonstrated in 2004 following severe flooding in and around Dushanbe, effectively cutting fresh water supplies to the capital and calling for an emergency response from DG ECHO worth €350 000. Albeit to a lesser extent, the southern regions of Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan also suffer from exposure to natural hazards and have poor response mechanisms.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements

In May 2004 DG ECHO launched its second regional Disaster Preparedness Action Plan for Central Asia. Ten DIPECHO projects in Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan received funding totalling €2.5 million. Vulnerable populations benefited from the 2003 and 2004 Action Plans through awareness-raising and preparedness projects such as the creation of local disaster management plans and early warning systems, training and equipping rapid response, search, medical and rescue teams, improving radio communications and

strengthening coordination mechanisms. Small-scale mitigation activities, such as barriers against mudslides, avalanches, floods and rockfalls, complement these activities. Under the 2004 Action Plan, partners continued to implement their operations in a smooth and coordinated manner, having gained considerable experience under the first Action Plan.

LRRD

Disaster preparedness is an important part of DG ECHO's strategy in the Central Asia region, particularly in Tajikistan, as the phase-out of DG ECHO's humanitarian activities continues throughout 2005 and 2006. Disaster preparedness has a significant role to play in supporting the LRRD process in Tajikistan. DG ECHO is continuing to work on raising awareness of natural disaster risk management issues within DG External Relations and EuropeAid. However, more needs to be done to integrate disaster preparedness and prevention into programming and development policies.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
2 500 000	2 469 715	1 534 857

1.8. Mediterranean and Middle East

Algeria – Sahrawi refugees

Humanitarian needs

Sahrawi refugees live in the desert in South West Algeria. Some of them have been there since 1975. The Sahrawi refugees are victims of a forgotten crisis necessitating the constant attention of the international community, and DG ECHO in particular, for their many needs. DG ECHO projects have already started to improve the provision of running water (Smara camp). Basic food items and a varied diet need to be guaranteed on a continuous basis. Hygiene conditions need to be improved. Medicines must be supplied and stocks need to be replenished. It is also important to provide new trucks for the transport and distribution of aid in the camps so that the goods can be delivered in satisfactory conditions. Ways of monitoring operations more closely were explored and a study was conducted on solving the transport problem. In addition to classic humanitarian aid, DG ECHO is encouraging self-support projects.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements

Funding decisions adopted in December 2003 (€ 5.14 million) and July 2004 (€ 8 million) in favour of the Sahrawi refugees will make it possible to provide more than 20 000 tonnes of basic food. The replenishment of security stocks financed by DG ECHO since 2001 will mean that the bottom line of 2 100 kcal per person per month, recommended by the WHO, will be reached. Due to the limited transport capacity DG ECHO could not deliver fresh products that were supposed to be bought at the regional market. Other donors have, however, partly covered these needs. The rehabilitation of the poultry farm, intended to provide eggs and help supply fresh products, was not yet finished at the end of 2004. Over this period, the projects to ensure direct access to drinking water for 39 000 refugees in the Smara camp were still running. Enough medicines were delivered to fulfil the needs identified up till the end of 2005.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
8 000 000	7 820 000	6 190 000

Morocco

The primary emergency aid decision granting €975 000 for the victims of the d'Al Hoceima earthquake in February 2004 responded to the most urgent needs for drinking water, hygiene kits, medical first aid and temporary shelter. Because of the ambitious reconstruction programme put in place by the Moroccan authorities, no second funding decision is deemed necessary.

Occupied Palestinian Territories (West Bank and Gaza Strip), Lebanon, Jordan and Syria

Humanitarian needs

No progress was made on implementing the “road map” in 2004, which was the fourth consecutive year of conflict in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The underlying cause of the deteriorating humanitarian situation remained unchanged: restrictions on access and the freedom of movement. Over 700 checkpoints, road blocks and movement restrictions imposed by Israel remained in place. Israel kept the Gaza Strip completely closed and continued to demolish houses and to build a barrier inside the West Bank which, in July, the International Court of Justice ruled illegal. The humanitarian cost of the occupation was again borne by the international community. Israel's plan for unilateral disengagement from Gaza, scheduled by the end of 2005, dominated the political debate during 2004 until the death of Yassir Arafat in November.

47% of the 3.8 million inhabitants of the Gaza Strip lived on less than €2 per day, 16% in deep poverty (a quarter of the Gaza population). 70% of the population was food insecure or in danger of becoming so. Scarcity of and access to potable water in the West Bank remained a major concern. Demand for blood transfusions soared by 178% and infant mortality has crept up over the last four years. Bacterial contamination of piped water has increased by 39% in some areas. 48% of Palestinian children reported personal experience of conflict-related violence or have witnessed violence against a member of their family, while the number of patients receiving mental health treatment has climbed by 38% since 2000. At the end of the year the UN launched a \$302 million appeal to cover the anticipated humanitarian needs for 2005. As in previous years, vulnerable Palestinians in Jordan, Syria and, particularly, Lebanon were also indirectly affected.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements

DG ECHO made available €37.35 million - including €7.9 million in response to the \$305 million UN appeal for 2004 - for humanitarian operations benefiting Palestinians in the occupied territories as well as in Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. Funds were allocated with the adoption of four funding decisions in March, May, August and December. This increase over the initial indicative allocation of €35 million was required in order to respond to unforeseen needs generated by demolitions of homes in the Gaza Strip. The bulk of the funds (€29.31 million) went to operations in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, while €5.14 million and €0.55 million was spent in Lebanon and Jordan respectively – including measures in favour of some 1 500 refugees from the Iraq war. Some 37 UN, NGO and Red Cross

implementing partners were selected. In the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, some 850 000 people were provided with food and 175 000 with water and sanitation assistance. Some 50 000 individuals were provided with temporary job opportunities, indirectly benefiting around 300 000 people. Means of transport were provided so that health personnel could reach adversely affected communities, medicines were distributed and at least 80 000 people received health and psychosocial support. Protection activities run by the ICRC were funded and support was given for closer NGO coordination. Some 20 000 people whose homes were demolished in the Gaza Strip received emergency relief or temporary accommodation. In Lebanon the Palestinian Red Crescent Society was provided with medicines and medical supplies to cover 50% of its annual requirements. Services to disabled persons, the elderly and children were funded, as well as water and sanitation measures benefiting some 60 000 refugees from Palestine in both official camps and unofficial gatherings. Protection activities, in particular for unidentified refugees, were also supported. More than 4 000 Palestinian refugees in Jordan, Lebanon and Syria benefited from shelter rehabilitation. Assistance was also provided to refugees from Iraq housed in camps in Jordan and in no-man's land between Jordan and Iraq.

LRRD

The overall political context, as well as the lack of a country strategy paper, means that currently LRRD is not an option for the occupied Palestinian territories. However, full coordination was ensured with more development-oriented instruments managed by other European Commission departments, particularly in the food and health sectors. Consistency and complementarity with operations in favour of Palestinian refugees in Jordan, Lebanon and Syria funded under other budget lines were also ensured.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
37 350 000	26 771 349	18 530 645

Yemen

Humanitarian needs

Yemen is one of the poorest countries in the world with large pockets of forgotten humanitarian needs. At a rate of 3.5%, Yemen's population is growing faster than the country can provide for. Food security remains precarious. Malnutrition stands at 33%. Less than 69% of the population have access to potable water. This rate is as low as 32% in rural areas, where less than 25% of the population has access to health services. Child mortality before the age of 5 is nearly 10%. Malaria afflicts 15% of the population and kills 15 000 a year. Pockets of high vulnerability exist, in particular among remote and rural populations, marginalised ethnic communities, women and children. Throughout 2004, an influx of some 150 refugees a day kept on swelling the ranks of the 70 000 refugees already present, mainly from the Horn of Africa. Unofficial figures are much higher.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements

A decision adopted in December 2003 mobilised €2 million to finance humanitarian activities throughout 2004. The main objective of these operations was to improve the living conditions of vulnerable populations, focusing on basic human needs for access to potable water and to primary healthcare. Two complete water supply networks along with 50 wells and 17 health

units, six health centres, three referral hospitals and one maternal and child health (MCH) centre were rehabilitated or constructed. In a country with a fertility rate of 6.2, women and their children received particular attention and education through better and closer access to neonatal care. These measures are reaching out to 148 000 beneficiaries living in remote rural regions that receive less support from other donors. A training component was systematically introduced in all operations to maximise sustainability and capacity-building. DG ECHO only supported operations actively committed to community involvement and ownership.

In December 2004 a new financial decision granting €2.53 million was adopted which again places strong emphasis on water and sanitation. Child protection, as well as activities in support of vulnerable populations such as the Akdham communities and the ongoing influx of refugees, will also be funded. With a view to developing a comprehensive strategy for Yemen, a DG ECHO needs assessment mission in October 2004 concluded that Yemen remains a country with forgotten needs and with pockets of high vulnerability including in particular women, children and ethnic groups who continue to depend on targeted assistance and protection. DG ECHO funding remained necessary, appropriate and timely to address continuing and new humanitarian needs, to focus on the priority sectors of health and water and sanitation, to support refugees, to provide protection (for children), to strengthen rehabilitation, to include disaster preparedness and, finally, to promote LRRD.

LRRD

DG ECHO has been seeking to foster an effective LRRD process in Yemen. To this end, it has identified synergies effectively with key agencies such as UNICEF and UNHCR. Optimal coordination with DG External Relations and EuropeAid instruments, in particular through the European Commission Delegation in Amman and now also in Sana'a, should maximise the impact of the budget commitments. Sectors where LRRD has firm prospects are health, including training and family planning, water management and disaster preparedness.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
2 530 000	1 308 596	0

1.9. Asia

Afghanistan (including Pakistan and Iran)

Humanitarian needs

A number of factors helped to alleviate the high levels of suffering of previous years and to reduce somewhat the level of humanitarian needs in 2004. In particular, the drought that had afflicted much of the country for the previous four years came to an end, thus reducing food insecurity; and increasing levels of longer-term international assistance came on stream, focused on building up the capacity of the government to deliver key public services, including health. Afghanistan is a generally dry country, especially in the south, and water supply and sanitation systems were seriously damaged during the long civil war. Drinking water quality is a serious problem, creating a need to focus on the rehabilitation of damaged water supply structures and the construction of new ones, together with hygiene education. The main constraint on the delivery of humanitarian aid to Afghanistan is lack of access on account of the security situation. The insecurity stems partly from inter-factional fighting (which prevents access) and partly from the specific targeting of humanitarian agencies by

certain groups. Following the killing of a number of expatriate MSF (Médecins sans frontières) staff in Badghis in the summer, partners had to interrupt some of their activities and were forced to administer projects by “remote control” for a while.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements

DG ECHO’s strategy for 2004 was based on maintaining the sustainability of the return of refugees and IDPs, enabling them to reintegrate successfully in their new areas and thus preventing further displacements; aiding victims of the drought in the south of the country; funding protection activities for vulnerable population groups; and supporting the delivery of humanitarian operations through an NGO security office and subsidised humanitarian flights. The priority sectors for DG ECHO were livelihood security, improved water and sanitation, irrigation, shelter and legal protection. The activities funded in these sectors included cash-for-work schemes, the rehabilitation of damaged irrigation and sanitation structures, the construction of shelters, legal protection and some targeting of specific health needs.

DG ECHO funded €35 million of humanitarian aid in Afghanistan through a global plan designed to cover the whole year. An initial allocation was made in February, with about €5 million kept in reserve for later in the year in the hope of being able to operate in the south west of the country, which has received virtually no funding because of the poor security situation. Projects were supported taking into account the following factors: the possibilities for hand-over to DG External Relations and EuropeAid; gender issues, in the heavily male-dominated Afghan society; the safety and security of aid workers; the need to contribute to capacity-building by working with local NGOs; and the opportunity for cooperation with the national government. In relation to this latter point, DG ECHO was fully involved in the government-led Consultative Group process, whilst insisting on the political independence and neutrality of humanitarian aid.

LRRD

Close coordination is maintained on LRRD matters between DG ECHO and DG External Relations and EuropeAid, with a view to ensuring the mutual compatibility of their programmes and a handover wherever possible. DG ECHO has phased out of mine clearance activities and has been progressively withdrawing from the health sector. Participation in the Consultative Group process, where all major donors are present, is of great value in helping to identify handover opportunities.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
35 160 000	34 644 230	21 084 000

Bangladesh

Humanitarian needs

Bangladesh is one of the poorest countries in the world, with 75% of its people dependent on agriculture for their livelihoods. Since it is mostly an alluvial plain with several large rivers, torrential rains between July and September cause flooding each year which affects a large proportion of the population. The 2004 monsoon floods were particularly severe and hit 5 million people directly, with a further 5 million likely to be affected by post-flood problems. With land at a premium in this densely populated country, land disputes led to an outbreak of

inter-ethnic violence in the Chittagong hill tracts, next to the Burmese border, which left over 400 families in nine villages homeless and with no access to basic services, shelter or a livelihood.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements

DG ECHO funded rehabilitation in the Chittagong hill tracts to stabilise the area. An emergency decision covering Bangladesh and the Indian states of Bihar and Assam responded to the July 2004 monsoon floods. A second decision was taken following further floods after the very heavy monsoon rains in September 2004. This was aimed at post-flood recovery and rehabilitation for those worst affected, particularly migrant farmers who rely on seasonal work which disappears when crops are destroyed.

DG ECHO and DG External Relations desk officers in Brussels are coordinating their activities with the aim of ensuring a follow-up when the current series of funding agreements comes to an end.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
5 762 000	5 657 028	3 809 622

Burma/Myanmar

Humanitarian needs

Since 1962 Burma has been ruled by a military dictatorship. Forced village relocations and ongoing armed resistance by ethnic minorities have led to an exodus of 160 000 refugees in recent years, of whom 140 000 are in Thailand and 20 000 in Bangladesh. In the border states and divisions adjoining Thailand there are also an estimated 525 000 IDPs, 75 000 of whom live in relocation sites under the control of the government, with the other 450 000 in hiding or in temporary shelters. Burma's position in the health and water and sanitation sectors is abysmal. The under-five mortality rate is 108 per 1 000 live births and over 35% of the under-fives are underweight. The main causes of premature death are malaria, HIV/AIDS (between 500 000 and 1 million people are estimated to be HIV positive), acute respiratory infections and diarrhoeal diseases (only 66% of rural populations have access to safe water and 57% to safe sanitation). Because of the political situation, in October 2004 the Council further tightened the EU common position and the Regulation renewing sanctions against Burma. Under the revised EU common position non-humanitarian programmes remain suspended, with certain exceptions. Since other countries are reluctant to become involved, the official development assistance per capita is only around €2/person.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements

In 2004 DG ECHO's activities in Burma were based on three main sectors: health (including nutrition), water and sanitation and protection. In the health sector activities continued to focus on malaria control programmes, since malaria is the largest single cause of death among children under five: over 150 000 people were treated for malaria through projects funded by DG ECHO. In the water and sanitation sector the aim was to improve access to drinking water and to reduce the level of water-borne diseases, such as diarrhoea, and chronic malnutrition. This was complemented by targeted nutrition programmes which treated over 2 900 severely

malnourished children and women. DG ECHO also funded activities to protect civilians and prisoners through the work of the ICRC.

DG ECHO gave priority to the highly vulnerable border groups, notably those living in remote rural areas on the borders with Bangladesh, India, China and Thailand, those lacking access to basic social services or those discriminated against by the central authorities on ethnic grounds (Mon and Karen minorities opposed to the military junta) or religious grounds (the Muslim Rakhine in Northern Rakhine State). In 2004 DG ECHO took two funding decisions for Burma/Myanmar granting a total of €8.17 million. These cleared the way to provide health services to over 380 000 people, with another 70 000 obtaining improved water and sanitation facilities and 48 200 detainees benefiting from ICRC protection.

LRRD

Given the current EU common position, LRRD cannot be applied in Burma/Myanmar, but good coordination exists with the budget line for uprooted peoples to complement these activities and avoid duplication.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
8 070 000	4 790 000	1 832 500

Cambodia

Humanitarian needs

Cambodia has the highest rate of infant and child mortality in South East Asia, which has led the WHO to describe the situation as a child survival crisis. Lack of access to safe water is one of the factors contributing to an infant mortality rate of 98 per 1 000 live births and an under-five mortality of 124 per 1 000 live births. The regions where most of the population is indigenous (Mondolkiri and Rotanakiri) and those which were under Khmer control until 1999 (Oddar Meanchey and Pailin) are particularly vulnerable.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements

DG ECHO supported UNICEF's immunisation campaigns that vaccinated 60 000 children. In addition, 300 000 children received adequate doses of vitamin A and were de-wormed with mebendazole. These activities aimed to reduce mortality, morbidity and malnutrition rates and were backed up by awareness sessions on key health practices for pregnant women and nursing mothers. An early diagnosis and treatment system for malaria was put in place, covering the entire population at risk in the Pailin province. Other health projects included support for basic public health services and community health education in Stung Treng, Oddar Meanchey, in Rotanakiri and Mondolkiri.

57 000 people were given improved access to safe water and sanitation in the provinces of Kampong Cham, Oddar Meanchey, Stung Treng, Kampong Thom and Mondolkiri. Projects included the construction and rehabilitation of ponds and wells, the construction of family latrines, the distribution of water storage recipients and filters, and training in hygiene practices. These activities were supplemented by small-scale food security projects in Oddar Meanchey and by mine clearance and mine risk education campaigns in the same province and in Pailin.

LRRD

During 2004 DG ECHO continued its phase-out from Cambodia. At the end of the year DG ECHO finished its support to health projects in Ratanakiri, Mondulakiri, Oddar Meachey and Pailin, where development programmes have now taken over. Anti-mine operations are now limited to the activities accompanying water and sanitation projects in Pailin and Oddar Meanchay. In Oddar Meachey food security projects are now handled by medium term programmes.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
3 500 000	3 500 000	2 403 883

China

Humanitarian needs

Despite economic growth of 9.5% in 2004, large proportions of the population remain vulnerable to natural disasters. Hundreds of millions are affected by floods and other disasters every year which exceed the self-help capacity of the country and which require humanitarian aid. Generally the areas in which DG ECHO's partners work receive no aid from Chinese agencies. Since May 2004 southern China has been repeatedly hit by floods, flash floods and landslides, with 14 million people affected and 95 000 homes destroyed. The provinces of Chongqing, Guanhxi and Hunan have been worst hit.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements

DG ECHO responded with water and sanitation projects implemented through the IFRC and its local counterpart, the Chinese Red Cross. A project targeting 59 000 people was launched in December 2004. Projects launched in 2003 also helped more than 70 000 people in southern China.

LRRD

Apart from close coordination with the Chinese authorities, the EC Delegation and DG External Relations, no particular linking is necessary, as DG ECHO continues to limit its activities to occasional operations for limited periods.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
2 000 000	1 995 565	1 599 652

East Timor

Humanitarian needs

A series of nutritional assessments carried out during 2004 showed a prevalence of acute malnutrition ranging from 12% to 18% in most of the rural areas of Timor-Leste – this is above the emergency thresholds. In addition, an assessment funded by DG ECHO in the west of the country showed that vaccination coverage, including measles vaccination, is well below international standards.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements

DG ECHO focused on addressing nutritional needs through an integrated response, including nutritional care for acutely malnourished children, pregnant women and nursing mothers, and distribution of food, seeds and fertilizers. 110 000 people in the western districts of the country benefited. The plan is to extend the operation to the centre and east of the country in 2005, together with a catch-up vaccination campaign.

LRRD

The short-term humanitarian response to the nutritional crisis in East Timor needs to be followed up by long-term measures to address the underlying causes of acute malnutrition. For this reason, following DG ECHO reports on the nutritional situation, an informal inter-service group was set up to coordinate an integrated European Commission response to the problem. In addition to DG ECHO's nutritional aid, the European Commission will provide funding for medium-term food security projects both from its budget line for food security and from the 2004-2006 NIP, in which rural development is one of the key sectors.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
250 000	758 871	350 000

India

Humanitarian needs

The monsoon began in South Asia in the middle of June and had a catastrophic impact on northern India and Bangladesh. This year's floods arrived a month early and spread well beyond the areas usually affected. Most damage was done in the Indian states in the north and north-east, with 30 million people affected in Assam and Bihar. Any sparse food stocks that the disadvantaged populations might have had before the summer floods were swept away. Very little fodder was available and goats and cattle survived on whatever bits of grass were left, together with wet paddy straw. Because of the widespread damage to villages, people took refuge in makeshift shelters, but in many places there were not enough covered refuges. The water and sanitation system was also seriously hit by the floods. The tsunami of 26 December caused extensive damage in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and in the States of Tamil Nadu, Pondicherry, Andhra Pradesh and Kerala, affecting 2 260 km of coastline plus the whole of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, killing more than 10 750 people and displacing 700 000. India did not call for international assistance and the authorities responded to the emergency phase in a robust and timely manner. Therefore DG ECHO decided not to intervene in the emergency phase, but to complement the authorities' activities in the rehabilitation phase.

Despite some positive political developments in Jammu and Kashmir, levels of violence remained high with much less media coverage of the effects of the conflict on local populations. Every day 3 to 15 people died in incidents related to the conflict. The deep psychological effects of this violence cannot be easily mitigated and women and children are the most vulnerable.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements

Assistance was provided to 100 000 victims of the monsoon in Assam and Bihar in the form of food, supplementary nutritional packages, fodder distribution, repair of tube wells and provision of temporary toilets, mobile health camps and temporary shelters. In a second phase seeds, fishing nets, agricultural tools and small livestock were distributed to help affected families to restart their livelihoods. 6 000 people affected by the conflict in Kashmir received psychosocial support and protection, despite considerable access difficulties for partners, caused mostly by bureaucratic problems. Support for the Tamil refugees in Tamil Nadu is dealt with under Sri Lanka.

LRRD

EuropeAid has decided to continue and expand DG ECHO's support for education. In June 2004 EuropeAid concluded an agreement with one of DG ECHO's partners for this purpose.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
3 000 000	2 619 514	2 022 257

Indonesia

Humanitarian needs

In 2004 the humanitarian situation continued to improve in most provinces of Indonesia, largely because no new ethnic or religious conflict occurred. In spite of the general progress, protracted low-intensity violence prevented displaced people from Central Sulawesi from returning to their areas of origin. In Ambon, in the province of Maluku, renewed clashes between Christians and Muslims in April led to the displacement of more than 10 000 people and put a stop to the ongoing resettlement process. Fortunately, the clashes were quickly brought under control by community leaders and the situation seems to have improved since May, allowing the return and resettlement process to resume.

In the province of Aceh the separatist conflict persisted and the government continued to deny humanitarian organisations access to the affected populations. The situation took a dramatic turn on 26 December when a massive earthquake followed by a tsunami hit the northern and western coasts of the island, leaving more than 200 000 people dead. Faced by a disaster of such unprecedented magnitude, the government reversed its policy and opened the province to international humanitarian aid. A ceasefire was informally agreed between the government and the separatist guerrilla movement, GAM. The humanitarian needs created by the tsunami were enormous and wide-ranging. Survivors lacked access to health care, water and sanitation, food and shelter. In addition, they were deeply traumatised by the personal and family losses which they had suffered and were in need of psychosocial support. According to the UN flash appeal, one million people were affected, of whom 600 000 were left homeless. Other natural disasters on a smaller scale included earthquakes in the province of Papua and on the island of Alor.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements

In 2004 DG ECHO provided food security and primary health care to 50 000 IDPs in provinces still divided by conflict, such as Central Sulawesi and Maluku, and promoted the return of 50 000 IDPs in provinces where reconciliation between locals and returnees was possible, namely in some areas of Central Sulawesi. This will be extended to Central Kalimantan in 2005. In response to the tsunami, DG ECHO adopted a primary emergency decision the very same day to allow the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) to provide immediate relief to the victims. A second emergency decision granting €10 million was adopted on 31 December and will be implemented in 2005. DG ECHO also responded to the earthquake which affected 60 000 people on the island of Alor on 12 November, funding equipment for emergency health care and the restoration of water supply systems. The latter will be carried out mostly in 2005.

LRRD

DG ECHO completed its phase-out from the provinces where the humanitarian situation had improved as a result of increased stability (Maluku and West Timor), and these are now covered by the budget line for aid to uprooted peoples.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
3 500 000	2 629 692	1 170 216

Iran (Bam earthquake)

Humanitarian needs

On 26 December 2003 at 5.27 am (local time) an earthquake measuring 6.6 on the Richter scale struck south-eastern Iran's Kerman Province, killing 41 000 people and leaving 30 000 injured. The epicentre was directly underneath the historical city of Bam. The timing (most people were asleep), poor building standards, location and nature of the earthquake accounted for the high level of casualties and destruction. 45 000 people were made homeless while 85% of private houses and public facilities in Bam and surrounding villages were destroyed. The international response to the earthquake was massive and prompt and, overall, the emergency needs were well covered.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements

On 27 December 2003 a primary emergency decision granting €2.3 million was adopted to provide a first wave of relief assistance to the victims of the earthquake. In mid-February 2004 a €6.2 million funding decision was adopted covering health, water and sanitation as well as psychosocial assistance and support to children. Partners were national societies and NGOs. The decision focused on the priority needs in the medium term to continue covering humanitarian needs through the winter and until the reconstruction process took off.

Apart from the assistance relating to the Bam earthquake, the bulk of DG ECHO's limited humanitarian assistance in Iran addressed the needs (assistance and protection) of Afghan refugees in this country.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
7 661 000	6 197 792	3 380 000

Iraq

Humanitarian needs

2004 was marked by a dramatic deterioration in security conditions in the country, particularly in the Sunni-dominated areas. The transfer of sovereignty in June failed to bring about any improvement in the situation; on the contrary, violence continued to increase throughout 2004. The main victims were Iraqi citizens, but humanitarian workers were not spared, with both national and international NGO staff being the targets of violent attacks, kidnappings and murders.

The violence also considerably hampered the efficient delivery of humanitarian assistance. At the end of 2004 there was practically no expatriate presence left in Iraq and most humanitarian operations were being implemented by remote control. DG ECHO's experts in the field were unable to monitor most of the projects. Effective provision of humanitarian aid in any pockets of need which develop is virtually impossible on account of the high level of insecurity and criminality, the lack of partners on the ground with implementation capacity and the lack of access to beneficiaries.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements

Although no additional funding was approved in 2004, DG ECHO's partners implemented 32 humanitarian operations under the €31.75 million decision of 30 December 2003. Most humanitarian projects involved the rehabilitation of basic social infrastructure, including 100 schools, water supply systems (to provide safe water to over 100 000 people) and waste disposal systems in some parts of Baghdad. In the health sector eight projects supplied medicines, essential drugs, specialised medical supplies and medical equipment, rehabilitated health infrastructure (hospitals, primary health centres and specialised health institutions) and trained medical and paramedical staff.

People displaced as a result of the conflict received humanitarian assistance to improve their living conditions. This included emergency help for the people forced to leave Fallujah in April and November 2004. DG ECHO's partners also cleared over 1 000 000 m² of land from mines and other unexploded ordnance (UXO), thereby reducing the risk of mine accidents and bringing land back into agricultural production. Another substantial component of DG ECHO's aid was geared towards improving its partners' operating conditions, through support for coordination mechanisms and enhancement of their security by means of specialised training and physical strengthening of their facilities. As mentioned above, most of the projects were implemented by remote control. Expatriate staff were based in Amman or Kuwait and projects were implemented by local staff or subcontractors. Some partners, however, were able to remain in northern Iraq. From March 2003 to the end of 2004, 87 humanitarian projects were approved costing a total of €99 887 173. Some of these will not be completed until 2005; others had to be terminated or cancelled because of the security situation; and most of them suffered delays for the same reason.

LRRD

During 2004 considerable efforts were made to ensure effective linking between EC humanitarian and reconstruction assistance. A top priority for EC reconstruction programmes is the need to continue to protect the most vulnerable Iraqis. The EC has approved €233.5 million in reconstruction aid since March 2003, and an additional package of €200 million is envisaged for 2005. In view of this strong EC investment in essential services (water and sanitation, education and health), which have been the focus of DG ECHO's activities in Iraq over the past 10 years, DG ECHO is proposing a zero budget for Iraq in 2005, whilst continuing to monitor the situation so that it will be able to respond if new humanitarian needs are identified.

Laos

Humanitarian needs

The resettlement of ethnic minorities and of people living in mountain regions has had major humanitarian consequences for rural populations in Laos which were already highly vulnerable. Natural disasters, enforced agricultural reforms and poppy cultivation have added to the widespread food insecurity. The situation is compounded by the continuing danger from UXO, which remains a significant obstacle to the development of rural areas. The slow process of clearing UXO cannot keep pace with the pressure for land in the lowland areas.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements

Support for the resettlement process was the major focus of DG ECHO's assistance in 2004, with the aim of improving ethnic minorities' access to sustainable livelihoods so that they did not need to be resettled. This was to be achieved through improved access to water and sanitation, provision of primary health care and improved infrastructure through construction of access roads. Assistance was received by 24 218 ethnic minority villagers, who had already been resettled or were targeted for potential resettlement and by 12 000 beneficiaries on the borders of the special militarised zones. The aid was specifically designed in response to the government criteria for avoiding forced relocation and consisted of improved access to roads, drinking water and sanitation, plus improved educational facilities. Mine awareness campaigns benefited 3 478 villagers in areas where people had decided to resume agricultural activities despite the obvious safety risks. UXO clearance around schools, fruit trees and access roads directly benefited 1 448 children and 767 villagers, with a further 4 800 people benefiting indirectly.

LRRD

This was not yet applicable in 2004 since DG ECHO focused on specific ethnic minorities who were not being covered by the development programmes. However, DG ECHO and other European Commission departments have agreed to enhance cooperation between the different programmes, which should result in operations funded by DG ECHO being handed over to longer-term instruments, particularly food-security-related operations.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
1 500 000	350 938	92 500

Maldives

Humanitarian needs

The Maldives consists of a series of coral atolls rising directly from the sea. In terms of global impact, it was the country hardest hit by the tsunami on 26 December, with 100 000 people or one third of the total population severely affected. The surge of water unleashed by the tsunami brought about a temporary rise in sea levels which flooded 69 out of the 200 islands completely and another 70 extensively. Only 9 islands were not flooded and 12 500 people were displaced. Houses and water systems were destroyed or damaged and health equipment and infrastructure were damaged on many islands. Access to drinking water is a major issue, as water collection tanks were damaged and wells were contaminated with salt water.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements

On 30 December the European Commission approved an emergency decision in favour of the people of Sri Lanka and the Maldives affected by the disaster. This enabled DG ECHO to fund the distribution and installation of 14 small-bore sewage systems and 120 water tanks for damaged schools, as well as the rehabilitation of the cold chain for vaccines, through the provision of cold rooms for each of the 3 regional hospitals and 40 freezers for damaged health centres. Under one of the thematic funding decisions, DG ECHO also funded a flight from Europe to the Maldives carrying educational materials (scales, 'School in a Box' kit, rub hall, recreation kits) and family water kits, under the supervision of UNICEF.

LRRD

This is not applicable, since DG ECHO is only working in the Maldives under these exceptional circumstances.

Nepal/Bhutan

Humanitarian needs

Nepal is among the world's poorest countries and is the scene of two forgotten humanitarian crises. The violent conflict initiated by Maoist rebels in 1996 has now cost 10 000 lives and has intensified since the ceasefire broke down on 27 August 2003. Attacks by Maoist rebels have destroyed water supply systems and communications infrastructure. Combined with restrictions on freedom of movement, these have isolated populations in the worst affected areas and have disrupted trade and agricultural activities. Existing health posts are not functioning properly and are plagued by various problems such as a lack of trained personnel, especially in relation to hygiene, a lack of medicines, and an absence of waste treatment equipment. Most of the community drinking water systems constructed during the 1980s and 1990s are no longer working effectively. The Nepalese authorities have not been able to give support to communities due to budget cuts and the worsening security situation.

A second forgotten crisis has trapped 100 000 refugees, including 21 000 children, who fled from Bhutan between 1990 and 1992. Since then they have been stuck in seven camps in the south-east of Nepal, accepted by neither Nepal nor Bhutan, and are totally dependent on external aid.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements

In 2004 the population living in the areas affected by the conflict benefited from protection activities, with particular emphasis on the re-establishment and maintenance of contacts between dispersed family members and on the promotion of international humanitarian law. Primary health care was provided for 240 000 people in two districts of the Mid Western region. Also, 9 000 adults and 5 000 school children will benefit from the construction of 15 drinking water systems and 500 latrines.

During the second half of 2004, 6 610 tonnes of rice, pulses, vegetable oil, sugar and salt were distributed to the Bhutanese refugees, representing a third of their annual requirements. DG ECHO also supported a supplementary food rations programme for 3 400 vulnerable refugees (malnourished children under five, pregnant women and nursing mothers, tuberculosis (TB) patients and elderly sick people). A school-based supplementary feeding programme was also run for 42 000 schoolchildren in the camps.

LRRD

The conflict situation has deteriorated once again and DG ECHO plans to increase its support in 2005. The contribution to the Bhutanese refugees' food needs is complemented by support from EuropeAid for UNHCR's management activities in the camps.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
4 000 000	3 414 000	2 307 000

North Korea

Humanitarian needs

There are still considerable humanitarian needs in different parts of North Korea. Although the economic reforms of 2002 have brought about some changes, over the past year the average North Korean has found it more difficult to feed his family and to stay healthy. The price of rice is now \$5/kg, which represents 30% of the average monthly wage, double the 2003 equivalent. A nutritional survey was carried out in autumn 2004, but the results were not available by the end of the year. Basic drugs are supplied only through international aid and the needs of particularly vulnerable groups such as the handicapped and the elderly are greatly neglected. The water supply networks in the towns lack energy to operate them, agents to disinfect the water and spare parts to maintain broken pipelines. Child mortality rates are inflated by inadequate nutrition, unsafe water supplies, unsanitary hygiene provision and poor health care. 160 people died and several hundred were injured in the explosion at Ryongchon railway station, vividly illustrating the vulnerability of North Koreans to disasters.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements

In 2004 DG ECHO addressed the needs of more than 2 million children in water and sanitation and health programmes, with other projects targeting the needs of 220 000 people in the water and sanitation sector and 8 million people in the health sector. However, until the end of 2004, humanitarian programmes were greatly hampered by restrictions on access and data gathering and by the secrecy or unavailability of even basic information.

In the aftermath of the Ryongchon disaster DG ECHO responded swiftly with primary emergency funds channelled through the Red Cross, drawing on the Red Cross stocks located just 20km from the scene of the accident. In coordination with the relevant agencies and authorities, DG ECHO took a €1.25 million decision to fund urgently needed rehabilitation of the hospital and several child care institutions.

LRRD

In the absence of development donors, because of the political situation, DG ECHO is the only donor consistently financing the crucial health and water and sanitation sectors. Until this situation changes LRRD is not an issue.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
16 750 000	15 298 604	10 993 610

Philippines

Humanitarian needs

The situation in Mindanao evolved positively in 2004, with the informal ceasefire declared in 2003 holding, thus allowing most of the displaced families to return to their areas of origin. As the returnees lost most of their productive assets when they were displaced, they need external support to restart their livelihoods. The eastern coast of the northern island of Luzón was hit by successive typhoons during the last week of November, with 30 000 houses totally or partially destroyed. More than 100 000 people were in immediate need of food aid, drinking water, temporary shelter and/or household utensils.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements

In Mindanao, DG ECHO provided an initial support package for returnees to restart their livelihoods. 40 000 people benefited from the distribution of seeds, agricultural tools and fishing gear and from the construction and repair of wells and latrines. In addition, DG ECHO supported protection activities to ensure that the parties to the conflict abided by the UN's guiding principles on internal displacement. DG ECHO also reached an agreement with UNICEF to fund an assessment in 2005 on the situation and needs of children caught up in the armed conflict in Mindanao.

A formal peace agreement between the government and the Islamic Moro Liberation Front is expected in 2005. This would clear the way for the release of substantial rehabilitation funds, allowing DG ECHO to phase out. In Luzón, DG ECHO adopted an emergency decision in the week after the typhoons, providing immediate relief to 100 000 victims. The action funded under this decision will continue in 2005, when the focus will shift to small-scale rehabilitation.

LRRD

DG ECHO plans to phase out from Mindanao in 2006. If a peace agreement is reached in 2005, a Mindanao Trust Fund currently being set up by the World Bank will receive substantial funding from international donors, including the European Commission. Discussions are in progress between DG ECHO and the Delegation to ensure that the results of the projects funded by DG ECHO will be taken into account in the trust fund's

rehabilitation strategy. In addition, the Delegation has agreed to give DG ECHO input for drafting future calls for proposals under the budget line for aid to uprooted people, to ensure linking with DG ECHO projects.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
1 650 000	1 649 382	1 040 453

Sri Lanka

Humanitarian needs

The ceasefire of 22 February 2002 has given the northern and eastern districts of the country the longest period of freedom from fighting since 1983. Many IDPs have taken advantage of this new situation to return to their home areas. Of an estimated 740 000 IDPs before the ceasefire, 402 000 had returned by December 2004. Since early 2004 the rate of returns has slowed down somewhat (to 2 000 a month). The remaining caseload of IDPs is estimated at 330 000, including 81 000 who are living in 296 welfare centres. Many of the spontaneous returnees had been living in camps for years and their houses and village infrastructure have been badly damaged or destroyed by the conflict. They lack shelter and basic household items which would enable them to resettle properly. Substantial areas have been mined. 60 000 Tamil refugees are living in 102 camps in Tamil Nadu, India and UNHCR has no access to these camps.

After Indonesia, Sri Lanka was the country hardest hit by the tsunami of 26 December, with 30 959 deaths, 700 000 people displaced and 5 644 missing. 82 952 houses were completely destroyed and 40 841 partially damaged. A stretch of over 800 km of coastline was battered by tidal waves, with the worst affected districts being in the east and the south. In the immediate aftermath of the tsunami, 750 000 people were in need of food and safe water. They also needed temporary shelter, sanitation facilities and non-food items such as clothing and kitchen utensils. Many people were suffering from fractures and lacerations, and there was an increased risk of pulmonary infections linked to the inhalation of water and post-traumatic complications such as gangrene and septicaemia. The severe shock and loss experienced by the population has serious psychological and psychosocial consequences both in the short and long term. Although the secondary threat of water and vector-borne disease was a great concern this did not materialise. A preliminary assessment carried out by the Ministry of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources estimated that, out of a total fishing fleet of 29 694 boats, 19 637 (66%) were damaged or destroyed.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements

In 2004 DG ECHO's assistance to the population affected by the conflict focused on both refugees and returnees, with greater emphasis being placed on improving the shelter, water and sanitation facilities for 20 000 of the IDPs living in desperate conditions in welfare centres. A total of 250 000 returnees in the north and north-eastern districts, together with their host communities, received 90 000 non-food relief items, 8 277 agricultural kits with tools and seeds and 900 kits for fishermen. 258 drinking and agricultural wells and 1 175 latrines were repaired or constructed. 3 520 shelters were erected and 30 small irrigation ponds and tanks were rehabilitated. A decision to continue funding humanitarian mine clearance in government-controlled areas, particularly Jaffna, was approved in December. In Tamil Nadu training continued for 125 health workers so that they could conduct basic

preventive health education in the refugee camps. First aid medication was also provided. In order to meet the basic food basket requirement, supplementary food rations were distributed to 18 350 of the most vulnerable refugees, such as pregnant women, nursing mothers, undernourished women, the chronically ill, children under 5 and severely undernourished children. The database which monitors the refugees' plans, requirements and preparedness for return was maintained and updated.

In response to the tsunami, the Commission committed funds on the very day of the disaster to provide food and essential non-food items to victims in Asia, including Sri Lanka. An additional €10 million was committed for relief operations in Sri Lanka and the Maldives on 31 December, out of which €8.26 million was for Sri Lanka, mainly for food and non-food items, water and sanitation, temporary shelter, health and psychosocial support.

LRRD

In 2004 EuropeAid began to fund mine clearance operations and mine awareness activities in Sri Lanka, following on from the support which DG ECHO has given in this field since 2002. The annual budget under the line for uprooted people has been increased from €4 million to €6.5 million for 2005 and 2006, thus ensuring a satisfactory continuation of projects supported by DG ECHO.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
6 500 000	6 500 000	4 475 549

Thailand

Humanitarian needs

The number of refugees along the Thailand-Burma border has increased from 10 000 in 1984 to 142 427 in September 2004, during which time the military regime in Burma/Myanmar has strengthened its control and has continued its drive to crush the resistance of certain ethnic groups (Karen, Karenni and Mon). A continuing low-intensity conflict has led to a steady flow of refugees (600 to 800 per month over the past few years). The future of these refugees remains uncertain and their dependence on external aid is almost total. The majority of them have now been living in the camps for over 10 years where their quality of life has worsened rather than improved, as they have suffered from increasing restrictions. On top of the basic humanitarian needs (shelter, food, health care, water and sanitation), social and psychological problems are increasing.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements

DG ECHO's activities in Thailand in 2004 focused on the provision of food aid, basic health care, assistance to mine victims and mine risk education for Burmese refugees living in the camps on the Thailand-Burma border. Two decisions were adopted in 2004, granting a total of €11.45 million. Their aim was to improve the health and nutritional status of refugees in five camps and two resettlement villages where approximately 120 000 people live.

LRRD

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

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
11 650 000	11 610 000	3 375 000

1.10. Central and South America

Central America (Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama)

Humanitarian needs

In 2002 and 2003 the whole of Central America was badly hit by drought, hurricanes, tropical storms and floods. In some places 90% of the harvest was destroyed in two consecutive years. Added to this, an economic crisis in the coffee industry, problems with access to water and growing levels of social and economic discrimination led to increasing levels of acute malnutrition, especially among indigenous and remote populations in Guatemala and Honduras. Fortunately, in 2004 the effects of a moderate 'El Niño' were dissipated during the first half of the year and rainfall levels returned to normal. Nevertheless, the coping capacity of these vulnerable groups was severely weakened by the repeated natural disasters which struck them.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements

In the midst of this erratic climate, DG ECHO continued its monitoring activities in order to prevent and address malnutrition among the most vulnerable (in particular children under five, pregnant women and nursing mothers), in coordination with local health authorities. At the very end of the year a decision was taken to fund more detailed monitoring activity among indigenous groups in Guatemala, after reports of alarming levels of malnutrition had been received.

LRRD

A link with food security initiatives is in place. The EC's €12 million regional food security programme includes the same malnutrition indicators as used by DG ECHO and will give an early warning in the event of any new crises, thus taking over from the similar operation financed by DG ECHO in 2003 and 2004. Within the EC programme a fund will be established to finance preventive food security measures wherever the food security and nutritional indicators demonstrate a critical situation.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
800 000	0	0

Colombia (including Ecuador)

Humanitarian needs

For 40 years Colombia has suffered from a long-term internal conflict between government, paramilitary and guerrilla groups. As a result, over 3 million people have been displaced from their home areas since 1985, with up to 250 000 new IDPs in 2004. This represents a significant increase on 2003 and is indicative of an increased level of insecurity in rural areas,

even though the army has largely secured the urban areas and the main roads. In particular, the intensification of the army's Plan Patriota offensive in the south of the country against the FARC guerrillas has led to significantly higher levels of displacement. The demobilisation of paramilitary groups, which has now begun in certain areas, has often left those areas more insecure, with local populations having no confidence in the army's ability to take control in the absence of the paramilitaries. This in turn has generated more displacements. In addition, there has been a considerable increase in the exodus of Colombians seeking asylum in neighbouring countries: over 30 000 fled to Ecuador and 4 000 to Venezuela, increases of over 200% on the previous year.

Most IDPs settle in shanty towns, building precarious shelters out of plastic, wood and cardboard. The illegal status of many of these settlements is a major impediment to the provision of basic services such as water supply and sanitation. IDPs tend to be displaced from a rural environment, where they were able to eke out an existence through subsistence farming, to towns or cities where they have great difficulty coping with the urban lifestyle. Very quickly their food security situation deteriorates and their household economy collapses. Asylum seekers and refugees often need emergency help in terms of food and sanitation immediately after arrival in their country of exile. Later they need assistance with knowing their rights and finding their way through the process of registering as a refugee and help in integrating socially and economically in their new country. Colombia is also vulnerable to natural disasters, particularly earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and floods. In November 2004 particularly serious floods affected a substantial part of the country.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements

In its €8 million Global Plan for 2004 DG ECHO aimed, firstly, to offer emergency support to IDPs in the first three months after displacement, largely through ICRC, which has more global access to IDPs than any other humanitarian organisation in the country. 66 000 people were helped in this way, with food kits equivalent to 2 100 kcal/day, hygiene kits, kitchen kits and household kits. DG ECHO aimed to improve living conditions for IDPs in the 3- to 12-month period after displacement and to help them re-establish coping mechanisms. 63 000 IDPs received assistance in the form of nutritional supplements, distribution of non-food items, access to primary health care, improved shelter, access to safe drinking water and excrement disposal systems, education and recreational facilities for children, psychosocial assistance and community strengthening. DG ECHO also supported the UNHCR's work with refugees in Ecuador, providing emergency assistance to cover basic food, nutrition, shelter, health, water and sanitation and educational needs and helping the refugees in the reception, registration, documentation, assistance and integration process.

DG ECHO largely financed OCHA's humanitarian situation room, which continued to issue monthly reports on the humanitarian situation in Colombia, together with reports and maps on the situation in each region. Finally, at the very end of the year DG ECHO took a decision granting €500 000 in response to the serious floods to bring assistance to isolated populations who had been neglected by other relief operations.

LRRD

There are excellent links between DG ECHO and the Delegation in Bogotá, to ensure complementarity and coordination between projects funded by DG ECHO and those under the budget line for uprooted people. Where the latter is operative, DG ECHO will generally

intervene for up to 12 months after displacement, looking to hand over to the uprooted peoples programme for longer term support after this.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
8 500 000	7 528 000	4 758 100

Peru

In July 2004 a severe cold spell, known as the *friaje*, affected the Andean highlands 3 500 metres above sea level, with temperatures plunging to -30°C , snow storms and bitterly cold winds. This had widespread effects on 337 500 people, 3 300 ha of farmland and 1.3 million animals. In addition, 3 500 houses were destroyed. On 16 July the Peruvian government declared a state of emergency in 26 provinces in the five regions affected, Arequipa, Cusco, Huancavelica, Moquegua and Puno.

Humanitarian objectives and achievements

DG ECHO approved an emergency decision granting €1.9 million to help the most vulnerable local populations in the highlands of central and southern Peru. The activities included the supply of food and veterinary assistance to 200 000 head of livestock and the construction of livestock sheds, as well as training the communities and local authorities in disaster preparedness.

LRRD

Coordination with the EC Delegation and the food security unit has been strengthened to ensure full complementarity between this emergency decision and PROALPACA, the Commission's long-term project to support alpaca shepherd communities in Andean regions.

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
1 900 000	1 877 000	1 379 710

DIPECHO Andean Community, Central America and Cuba, South-East Asia and South Asia

Humanitarian needs

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

Humanitarian objectives and achievements

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

DIPECHO Andean Community

The 3rd Action Plan for the Andean region, with a budget of €4 million, was launched at the very end of 2003 and was implemented throughout 2004 through 12 projects in five different countries (Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela). On the basis of lessons learned from previous Action Plans and needs identified in the field, greater emphasis was placed on Ecuador and Bolivia, which are the most vulnerable; the funding of bi-national projects was encouraged; and coordination with national and regional authorities was improved. The dissemination of best practices and exchanges of experience between different countries in the region has also resulted in a better approach to disaster risk management.

Dipecho Andean Community (decision approved on 23 December 2003)

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
4 000 000	3 999 999.67	2 732 050.15

DIPECHO Central America

The 4th Action Plan for Central America started in the last quarter of 2004, granting 18 projects support totalling €6 million. These mainly strengthen local coping capacity in 100 municipalities in 4 countries in the region (Nicaragua, Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador). The specific feature of this programme is that, within a regional and national framework, all the projects have a direct link with local disaster management planning systems, developing and supporting early warning systems and focusing on small-scale support.

Dipecho Central America 2004 (decision approved on 13 December 2004)

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
6 000 000	5 937 192.73	3 171 096.37

DIPECHO South-East Asia

In South-East Asia the 4th DIPECHO Action Plan also began in the last quarter of 2004, investing €5.2 million in 17 projects in Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Indonesia and East Timor, including two projects with a regional dimension. The main objectives of these projects are to

support strategies that enable local communities and institutions to be better prepared for and mitigate natural disasters by enhancing their coping capacities, thereby increasing resilience and decreasing vulnerability. Each project will strengthen coping capacities at local level, integrating and coordinating activities at different levels and contributing to the identification of best practices, standardisation of preparedness programmes and the establishment of early warning protocols through the implementation of pilot demonstration activities. On the basis of lessons learnt from the previous Action Plans and of a thorough consultation process at national and regional level, particular emphasis is being placed on coordination between stakeholders at national and regional level.

Dipecho South-East Asia 2004 (decision approved on 13 December 2004)

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
5 200 000	4 890 207	2 637 103.50

DIPECHO South Asia

In South Asia the 2nd Action Plan, with a budget of €2.5 million, was launched at the end of 2003. It was implemented throughout 2004 by means of 10 projects in three countries (India, Bangladesh and Nepal). It covered the whole range of disasters, mostly at community level. It focused on training, new alternatives and dissemination, placing particular emphasis on involving women and children and on finding solutions to bridge the gaps between the authorities and the communities at village level (planning and action). The serious flooding in 2004 in North India and Bangladesh, where projects were in progress, gave an opportunity to show how a good disaster preparedness programme can improve the response capacity of communities affected by disasters.

Dipecho South Asia (decision approved on 23 December 2003)

Decisions	Contracts	Payments
2 500 000	2 499 593	1 408 796.65

LRRD

Disaster preparedness and prevention is one of the main topics for the new call for proposals under budget line B7-6000, from which European NGOs are co-financed. In addition, DG ECHO is strengthening its relationship with DG External Relations, DG Development and EuropeAid to make sure that their programmes take greater account of disaster preparedness and prevention. This is a long-term process, but progress is being made and regional DPP programmes for Latin America, Central America, the Andean Community and India are now being planned. These have been included in the regional strategy for 2002-2006 but have not yet been launched. Central America, the Andean Community and South Asia were identified by the LRRD/DPP inter-service group as the key regions in which to implement the linkage process for DPP measures.

2. HORIZONTAL ISSUES

2.1. Contractual relations with partners – FPA

The Decision on administrative support expenditure for 2004, including the grant facility for 2004, was adopted by the Commission on 30 April 2004. The call for proposals was published in May 2004 and the proposals received were evaluated between July and September. Three grants were awarded in October 2004 totalling approximately €300 000. The three projects selected (presented by Accion contra el Hambre, Spain, Oxfam/Mango, UK, and Solint, Italy), aimed at improving the financial management of humanitarian NGOs, including tendering and procurement best practices.

The first phase of the preparatory work for a contractual instrument covering specialised agencies of the Member States was completed. It included the identification of a number of entities which could benefit from these new procedures and of the type of action that could be envisaged. Meetings on this specific subject were held with Technisches Hilfswerk (THW) and the Red Cross liaison office. Development of this instrument is one of the main objectives of DG ECHO's work programme for 2005.

DG ECHO's Annual Partners' Conference was held on 6 and 7 December 2004 and brought together 240 participants, representing about 150 NGOs (i.e. approximately 82% of DG ECHO's partners). Workshops were held on security of field staff, on communication and on the mainstreaming of child-related activities into humanitarian aid operations.

2.2. Relations with major humanitarian partners and non-EU donors

On the international front, DG ECHO participated in various meetings such as the OCHA High-Level Working Group in Berne, Switzerland, the Montreux Retreat on the CAPS, the 2nd Good Humanitarian Donorship meeting in Ottawa, Canada and the ICRC Donors Support Group meeting in Brisbane, Australia at which, inter alia, humanitarian principles were discussed in depth with other major donors. Furthermore, the Head of Service visited New York in September for meetings with heads of UN agencies (UNICEF, OCHA, DPKO, etc.) on DG ECHO's concerns about the risk that UN integrated missions might not respect the humanitarian principles and other issues of mutual interest. She also addressed the UNICEF Executive Board on this occasion.

Regarding the specific problems of access for humanitarian workers to certain countries, the Head of Service attended a meeting organised by OCHA in New York in February to discuss how real progress could be made in a number of identified countries.

In relation to other major non-EU donors, regular contacts were maintained with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and Bureau for Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM) both at the "Strategic Programming Dialogue" meeting in Washington in January and in regular videoconferences throughout the year. These contacts addressed general policy issues and humanitarian operations in specific countries with a view to ensuring a coherent and complementary response. DG ECHO also voiced its concerns about the erosion of the humanitarian space. Following the ECHO/PRM/OFDA/AIDCO consultations in Washington DC on 27 January, a joint monitoring trip to Burundi and Tanzania (28.03-04.04.04) to improve donor coordination between the United States and the European Commission and draw international attention to the humanitarian needs in Burundi.

Four annual Strategic Programming Dialogue meetings were held with major partners (OCHA, UNICEF, WHO and WFP).

2.3. Relations with other Community institutions

As in previous years, DG ECHO pursued an active relationship with other Community institutions and the Member States. At Community institution level, the European Commission, through DG ECHO, remained vigilant and active throughout 2004 to make sure that the humanitarian principles remain high on the agenda both within the EU institutions and in international fora.

Thanks largely to this approach, a specific provision has been inserted in the draft Constitutional Treaty enshrining the humanitarian principles and aiming to ensure that, despite being in the “External Action” chapter of the Treaty, the apolitical nature of EC humanitarian activity should be safeguarded. However, development of the CFSP and, for example, UN integrated missions means that this vigilance must be maintained.

DG ECHO also attended numerous meetings at various levels in the Council (e.g. Civcom and Prociv) and with other Commission departments such as DG ENV (for civil protection matters) and DG Relex (on crisis management) to insist on the principles being an integral part of their work. DG ECHO participated in the annual crisis management exercise (CME04) organised by the Council Secretariat in order to underline that humanitarian aid was not part of the crisis management “toolbox” but was of a neutral nature and that military assets should be used in humanitarian operations only as a last resort and in accordance with the Oslo/MCDA guidelines. A joint meeting of DG ECHO, DG ENV and DG RELEX was held on 23 September 2004, providing an opportunity to present the mandates of the Community instruments in the fields of humanitarian aid, civil protection and EU crisis management, particularly how they interface when intervening simultaneously in an emergency. Meetings were held at senior and lower levels with officials from other departments and with the EU military staff in this regard.

With regard to the Member States, in addition to the 11 routine monthly meetings of the Humanitarian Aid Committee (HAC), DG ECHO organised two training sessions for the new Member States (one before and one after accession) to help them to develop their fledgling humanitarian policies in accordance with the humanitarian principles and best practice. A mentoring system (twinning one old Member State with one new Member State) was set up. The Irish and Dutch presidencies each convened informal HAC meetings, the former to discuss the humanitarian principles, the latter on the civil/military relationship. Outside speakers (OCHA, ICRC and EU military) attended and NATO and SHAPE also sat in as observers at the meeting called by the Netherlands.

2.4. Strategic planning, policy management tools and information systems

In 2004 DG ECHO prepared internal policy guidelines regarding children affected by humanitarian crises and a reporting mechanism to gauge more precisely the scope and impact of DG ECHO’s activities in their support. The internal policy guidelines cover the guiding principles for DG ECHO’s humanitarian activities for children together with the main areas of activity, specific child-related activities and indicators. The reporting mechanism part is based on a combination of qualitative (e.g. decision outcome reports) and quantitative elements (e.g. statistics on different beneficiary groups) and provides a link to the new project appraisal sheet (FICHOP2G).

With regard to water, DG ECHO launched a review of water and sanitation issues relating to the funding of humanitarian operations. The results of the evaluation will be available in July 2005 and will include, inter alia, operational guidelines for mainstreaming water and sanitation in emergencies together with a comprehensive review of benchmarks and indicators already established by the UN, Red Cross and major NGOs. Based on this evaluation, DG ECHO will develop a reporting methodology on water-related issues in 2005.

DG ECHO updated the format of its country strategy matrices. The update was based on a comprehensive consultation of desk officers and technical experts. DG ECHO 4 ran four training sessions for geographical units in August 2004 to enable a smooth roll-out of this tool, which was fully used to prepare DG ECHO's aid strategy for 2005. As for the content, the format of the new country strategy matrices is based on the definition of objectives and indicators, uses terminology consistent with DG ECHO's contractual frameworks and provides more comprehensive and standardised information on budgetary issues. Furthermore, in line with DG ECHO's strategic priorities, the new format provides a fully revised chapter on LRRD to facilitate structured reporting.

In 2004 DG ECHO developed its local IT environment to satisfy particular IT needs with a view to supporting the DG's mission and goals, while at the same time providing support services for Commission-wide IT tools.

With regards to DG ECHO's HOPE database, the new Decisions module was successfully rolled out improving data quality in the DG. Furthermore, following the entry into force of the new FPA in January 2004, the IT tools were adapted accordingly and all grant agreement templates were fully revised and integrated. With regard to the management of DG ECHO offices, the contract signed for integrating the management of the imprest accounts into HOPE and the development of a web-based tool to create and monitor specific contracts was completed. The application has been fully operational since July 2004. Another tool has been developed for management of experts' personal data at headquarters.

APPEL, the tool allowing DG ECHO's partners to apply electronically under the new FPA, was amended to support on-line updates of the administrative data of DG ECHO's partners and annual updates of financial and operational capacities via the internet (in line with the FPA obligation for the annual assessment of partners). This tool is a very important contribution to the e-Commission initiative.

2.5. Relations Addressing cross-cutting issues in line with DG ECHO's aid strategy for 2004 : LRRD, children and disaster preparedness

Regarding Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development ('LRRD'), DG ECHO actively participated in the review meetings on the 2003 Commission inter-service group report on LRRD and disaster preparedness held in EuropeAid in November 2004. These meetings revealed that considerable progress had been made on the transition from relief to development in many of the 15 countries and regions selected in 2003. Implementation of linkage strategies remained a constant priority at field level, with notable progress achieved in countries such as Angola, Tajikistan and Cambodia.

With regard to children, based on the interim methodology established in 2003, complemented by a new reporting mechanism for children introduced in June 2004, DG ECHO raised the profile of its cross-cutting priorities. In 2004 some 66 out of the 101 funding decisions included support for child-related activities and 79 contracts focused on or

included child-related activities (e.g. therapeutic feeding, vaccination and re-integration of child soldiers) which received a total of €46 million (€26 million in 2003). This includes two thematic funding decisions with UNICEF to enhance the response capacity of UNICEF in emergencies (e.g. stockpiling of essential drugs) and to promote child protection issues. Last but not least, DG ECHO established draft internal policy guidelines and a reporting mechanism for child-related projects. These were widely disseminated and discussed with DG ECHO's partners and will be finalised in 2005.

-With regard to DPP, a total of 16 DG ECHO funding decisions (three of which covered new DIPECHO Action Plans) included support for disaster preparedness activities. 66 contracts (31 DIPECHO) focused on or included disaster preparedness activities (e.g. early warning systems and capacity-building in local communities) which received a total of €34.2 million (of which €13.7 million was for DIPECHO). This amount is significantly higher than in previous years and includes support totalling €360 000 from DG ECHO for the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, a major milestone for global advocacy on disaster reduction. DG ECHO therefore spent 6% of its budget on disaster reduction measures, thus surpassing the 5% target set by the European Parliament. DG ECHO also made significant efforts in 2004 to reinforce international initiatives to improve disaster reduction, notably through the development of a Global Disaster Alert System with UN OCHA and the EC Joint Research Centre (€420 000).

Water was added as a priority to the DG's work programme in 2004. Accordingly, DG ECHO launched a restricted call for tenders to review water and sanitation issues in humanitarian aid. The work is scheduled in 2005. Going beyond the original scope of this objective, DG ECHO also completed a review of its approach to HIV/AIDS. This resulted in a draft concept paper and draft model guidelines for use as reference by DG ECHO and its partners.

2.6. Thematic funding

Through thematic funding, DG ECHO supports start-up activities of an innovative nature providing added value for meeting humanitarian needs and strengthening the response capacity of the wider humanitarian aid community. Thematic funding is a new way of working with international organisations and re-affirms DG ECHO's commitment to work closely with UN agencies and the Red Cross on the delivery of humanitarian aid.

The budget allocated to thematic funding in 2004 totalled €19.4 million. DG ECHO concluded thematic contracts with OCHA (€4 million), to reinforce OCHA's information management systems which are essential for the coordination and efficiency of humanitarian aid. The Indian Ocean tsunami serves as an example of how DG ECHO's support has greatly improved OCHA's information management systems. A few days after the tsunami disaster, a humanitarian information centre (HIC) was deployed to Sumatra², followed a few days later by another to Sri Lanka³. Both HICs are essential for coordination of humanitarian assistance and the management of aid in such a complex natural disaster. Thematic support in favour of OCHA was also used for the development of the Global Financial Tracking System, the Global Disaster Alert System and for the re-design of Reliefweb. The new Reliefweb offers increased coverage of forgotten emergencies and contains new views, making navigation

² <http://www.humanitarianinfo.org/sumatra/>

³ <http://www.humanitarianinfo.org/srilanka/>

much easier.⁴ DG ECHO provided thematic funding to the WHO (€3.5 million) to support its Health Action in Crises programme aiming to enhance WHO's ability to ensure a coordinated response to health emergencies. Thematic support for the WFP (€4.5 million) aims to reinforce this agency's capacity adequately to assess humanitarian needs in the food sector. In addition, DG ECHO supported UNICEF's child protection activities (€2 million) and the enhancement of UNICEF's emergency response capacities (€5.4 million) through a series of measures such as pre-positioning of essential medicines and relief items.

Since 2003 DG ECHO has also supported the development of UNHCR's new registration system (Project Profile), which makes use of biometric technology. In 2004, after the inception and development of the software and methodologies, this registration system was implemented and is now running in UNHCR operations in 19 countries. As a result, refugees are individually registered and therefore better protected in the target countries.

2.7. Training and studies

A complete set of guidelines for the different parts of the FPA was drafted and distributed. Fifteen Power Point presentations were prepared, covering the whole process, from the funding decision to the final payment of the grant. More than 100 case studies were drafted to be used as practical exercises in training sessions. In the case of grants for capacity-building, two different products were finalised and distributed: OXFAM's guide to DG ECHO funding for NGOs and the guidelines for the presentation of DG ECHO financial annexes and budgeting reporting prepared by the consortium SOLINT. A total of 42 training sessions were held. These added up to a total of 77 days of training and were attended by 904 people.

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

2.8. Communication and information

During 2004 DG ECHO implemented a range of activities communicating the values, principles and practical achievements of EU humanitarian aid. The main information outputs for the year were a successful "Youth Solidarity Day" staged for 540 young people at the European Parliament, a wide range of publications (including the DG ECHO Annual Review, various leaflets and 14 web "eye-witness" accounts), a series of high visibility poster displays and more broadcast audiovisual products featuring DG ECHO's work. As regards audiovisual activities, four high-quality video productions financed by DG ECHO through operational agreements were broadcast by 'Europe by Satellite' and three further productions were in preparation at the end of the year.

A greater emphasis on pro-active communication led to a significant increase in media interest in the EU's humanitarian work. This was in line with the objective, set in DG ECHO's information strategy, i.e. to maximise cost-effectiveness through high-impact, low-cost information operations. Activities were undertaken in close collaboration with DG PRESS and included a systematic effort to involve DG ECHO field experts, who were offered

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<http://www.reliefweb.int/>

more advanced media training. Staff from DG ECHO HQ were also occasionally authorised by DG PRESS to speak to the media where their specific expertise was required. At least 42 press, radio and TV interviews – often in high-profile humanitarian situations – were given during the year. DG ECHO featured on numerous networks including BBC World, BBC World Service, Radio France International and Deutsche Welle. Local media coverage of DG ECHO also increased in 2004, particularly in areas covered by the new field-based regional information officers (RIOs). The aim is to extend the network of RIOs to other DG ECHO regional offices.

As regards information support activities, DG ECHO provided valuable support to DG PRESS and the Commissioner's office. Between 80 and 100 "short-notice" briefings (requested early in the morning and required by midday) were supplied in response to unfolding humanitarian stories while 46 press releases were drafted.

Visibility guidelines for NGO partners were drafted, adopted and disseminated. These are designed to encourage an 'information reflex' among partners and to boost collaborative visibility actions. Progress was also made in developing joint information activities with key institutional partners, most notably UNICEF and UNHCR.

Other activities designed to improve DG ECHO's visibility and actively to communicate its humanitarian message included the expansion of information available on the DG ECHO website (with an emphasis on human interest stories) and the organisation of DG ECHO stands at a number of major events and open days.

2.9. Budgetary and human resources, audit and evaluation

DG ECHO has formal systems for regularly monitoring financial information and providing adequate management information. All relevant information is regularly communicated to management and made available on the DG ECHO Intranet. Besides detailed monthly reporting, a number of key areas have been defined for which specific indicators have been developed: indicators on financial planning (budget implementation, follow-up of RAL), indicators on financial management (numbers of transactions, payment delays, recoveries, quality checks on operations, level of de-commitments) and indicators on audits and controls. These financial indicators have been incorporated into an overall scoreboard.

Humanitarian activities are subject to financial audits. Partners are audited at headquarters on the basis of a two-year audit cycle involving an examination of their internal control systems and their use of Commission funds. For a large number of contracts, all supporting documents are verified by the auditors. In addition to these bi-annual audits, the Commission departments carry out field audits of ongoing projects. Over the year 2004 a total of 145 audits were finalised or in progress at the headquarters of the humanitarian organisations plus 32 operational (field) audits.

Human resources at headquarters numbered about 172 staff, of whom 146 were officials and 26 external staff. In 2004 management of DG ECHO's individual experts and local staff was greatly improved by the introduction of various management tools, including the creation of a financial and technical database.

DG ECHO's share of the administrative budget totalled €2.2 million in 2004. This was used to recruit external staff (359 man/months), to cover administrative expenditure for approximately 374 missions, training, conferences (€60 000 used, inter alia, for financing the

events for the launch of the UN Consolidated Appeals (CAP) and the Guidelines on the Use of Military Assets to Support United Nations activities in complex emergencies (MCDA guidelines) as well as DG ECHO's annual partner conference), cost of meetings and reimbursement of experts (about €130 000 for an estimated 140 to 150 reimbursements) and studies. In addition, DG ECHO took a number of other measures aimed at implementing human resources policies in line with the Commission reform.

DG ECHO conducts approximately ten evaluations each year on average, focusing on major country operations (i.e. operations receiving funding totalling about €50 million and which have not been evaluated in the past three years), partners and thematic issues. In 2004 evaluations were launched on operations in North Korea, Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Middle East and on disaster preparedness in the Caribbean. A number of evaluations were launched in respect of thematic and cross-cutting issues relating to IDPs, security, water and sanitation, and a concept paper on HIV/AIDS. Also, DG ECHO undertook evaluations of two of its partners: IFRC and 'Action Contre la Faim'.

DG ECHO has performed this evaluation function for many years and now has well established guidelines for evaluators, a considerable body of reports, and procedures to follow up key findings. The ex-ante evaluation needs are met through the appraisals carried out by DG ECHO's technical experts in the field and by the ex-ante evaluations, needs assessments and feasibility studies carried out by DG ECHO's NGO partners, international organisations and other major donors. DG ECHO's own ex-post evaluations are also used as input for later funding decisions and therefore contribute to ex-ante work in preparation for those decisions. As part of the 'Good Humanitarian Donorship' (GHD) initiative, DG ECHO reviewed security issues for humanitarian organisations. The review produced a generic security guide, a security training directory and a security report. These are designed to help humanitarian organisations to meet their responsibilities for the security needs of both expatriate and local personnel.

3. TABLES

3.1. DG ECHO budget 1993 - 2004 (€)

Financial decisions for EC Humanitarian aid 1993-2004 (€)	
1993	604 800 000
1994	764 100 000
1995	694 100 000
1996	656 700 000
1997	441 610 000
1998	517 642 000
1999	812 910 000
2000	491 715 000
2001	543 704 000
2002	537 790 000
2003	600 349 000
2004	570 340 000

3.2. DG ECHO contracts 1998-2004

(as of 21.2.2005 - finalised contracts)

	Financial year	Signature year*
1998	1218	1206
1999	1283	1202
2000	980	1214
2001	933	1119
2002	961	891
2003	844	878
2004	801	1030

* Including contracts from financial year n and any contracts from previous financial years

but signed in financial year n.

3.3. Financial decisions for EC Humanitarian aid by source of Finance

Source of Finance							
Year	European Development Fund (A)	Budget of the European Commission (B)				Total Budget (A) + (B)	Total Decisions
		Support Expenditure	Operational Expenditure	Disaster Preparedness	Total		
1995	46 455 000	(1)	637 500 000	5 000 000	642 500 000	688 955 000	694 100 000
1996	10 380 000	(1)	653 170 000	6 300 000	659 470 000	669 850 000	656 700 000
1997	7 420 000	(1)	430 820 000	7 000 000	437 820 000	445 240 000	441 600 000
1998	37 387 000	(1)	472 191 000	8 022 000	480 213 000	517 600 000	517 642 000
1999	83 432 000	(1)	719 450 000	7 400 000	726 850 000	810 282 000	812 910 000
2000	2 850 000	3 360 000	481 600 000	7 500 000	492 460 000	495 310 000	491 715 000
2001	20 750 000	4 800 000	510 200 000	8 000 000	523 000 000	543 750 000	543 704 000
2002	17 475 000	4 100 000	509 745 000	8 000 000	521 845 000	539 320 000	537 790 000
2003	14 105 000	5 090 000	569 499 000	12 011 000	586 600 000	600 705 000	600 349 000
2004	52 228 000	6 400 000	498 084 000	13 700 000	518 184 000	570 412 000	570 340 000

(1) Support expenditure was included in the budget lines for operational expenditure

3.4. Geographical distribution of financial decisions 2000 - 2004

(updated: 21.2.2005)

Region	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Africa	35%	33%	39%	37%	53%
Asia*	18%	22%	29%	36%	20%
Western Balkans	20%	15%	8%	1%	0%
Newly Independent States	10%	11%	8%	7%	7%
Middle East, North Africa	8%	9%	9%	8%	9%
Latin America	6%	7%	4%	2%	2%
Global	3%	3%	3%	9%	9%

* Including Iraq

3.5. Funding decisions for humanitarian aid in 2004

Decisions adopted by the Commission as of 31.12.2004 (revised 21.2.2005)

Country/sub-region	Decisions in €
AFRICA, CARIBBEAN, PACIFIC	
Angola	8 800 000
Bahamas	480 000
Burundi	18 990 000
Central African Republic	470 000
Chad	12 000 000
Congo	2 000 000
Congo (Democratic Republic)	40 000 000
Dominican Republic	1 600 000
Eritrea	1 000 000
Ethiopia	6 998 000
Grenada	2 250 000
Haiti	11 197 000
Jamaica	1 200 000
Kenya	3 850 000
Lesotho	1 000 000
Madagascar	2 000 000
Namibia	1 000 000
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	750 000
Somalia	9 150 000
Sudan	91 000 000
Swaziland	1 000 000
Tanzania	14 900 000

Country/sub-region	Decisions in €
ASIA	
Afghanistan	35 160 000
Asia (regional)	169 000
Bangladesh	5 762 000
Cambodia	3 500 000
China	2 000 000
East Timor	250 000
India	3 000 000
Indonesia	3 500 000
Iran	7 661 000
Laos	1 500 000
Myanmar/Burma	8 070 000
Nepal	4 000 000
North Korea	16 750 000
Philippines	1 650 000
Sri Lanka	6 500 000
Thailand	11 650 000
	111 122 000
Latin America	
Colombia	8 500 000
Cuba	1 000 000
Guatemala	800 000
Peru	1 900 000

Decisions adopted by the Commission as of 31.12.2004 (revised 21.2.2005)

Country/sub-region	Decisions in €
AFRICA, CARIBBEAN, PACIFIC	
Uganda	18 620 000
West Africa (Guinea, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Sierra Leone, regional)	25 300 000
Zambia	2 000 000
Zimbabwe	15 000 000
ECHO flights	9 000 000
	301 555 000
Eastern Europe, NIS	
Georgia	
Mongolia	4 000 000
Northern Caucasus (Chechnya)	1 000 000
Tajikistan	28 500 000
	8 350 000
	41 850 000
Middle East/North Africa	
Algeria (Western Sahara)	
Morocco	8 000 000
Palestinian Occupied Territories	975 000
Yemen	37 350 000
	2 530 000
	48 855 000

Country/sub-region	Decisions in €
ASIA	
	12 200 000
DIPECHO	
South Asia	
Central America	2 500 000
South East Asia	6 000 000
	5 200 000
	13 700 000
Thematic funding	
OCHA	
WHO	4 000 000
WFP	3 500 000
UNICEF	4 500 000
UNICEF	5 430 000
	2 000 000
OTHER FUNDING	19 430 000
ECHO field experts	
ECHO offices	13 500 000
Evaluation/Communication/Audit	1 800 000
	6 400 000
Total ECHO funding 2004 - as of 31.12.2004	
	21 700 000
	570 412 000

3.6. Distribution of Contracts by Partner category

(updated: 21.2.2005)

Distribution of DG ECHO Funding by Groups of Partners 2001 - 2004				
(by contracts financial year)				
	2001	2002	2003	2004
EC NGOs	62%	59%	54%	59%
United Nations	24%	28%	29%	29%
Int'l Organisations	8%	9%	12%	9%
EC Org./Gov.Org/Others	6%	4%	5%	3%

3.7. ECHO Contracts by Category and Nationality of Partners 2004

by contracts financial year - Updated
21.2.2005

PARTNER CATEGORY AND NATIONALITY	EURO	% of total decision amounts
EC/Others*		
Subtotal	13 947 230	2.74%

GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS		
Subtotal	0	0.00%

INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS (including ICRC, IFRC and IOM)		
Subtotal	43 056 094	8.47%

NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS		
Austria	4 332 496	0.85%
Belgium	11 940 610	2.35%
Czech Republic	1 780 000	0.59%
Denmark	20 343 462	4.00%
Finland	3 709 957	0.73%
France	69 879 890	13.74%
Germany	27 420 184	5.39%
Greece	500 000	0.10%
Ireland	6 717 359	1.32%
Italy	41 150 041	8.09%
Luxembourg	480 000	0.16%

Netherlands	31 080 690	6.11%
Poland	745 000	0.25%
Portugal	295 000	0.06%
Spain	17 466 381	3.44%
Sweden	1 047 340	0.21%
United Kingdom	56 847 645	11.18%
Norway	1 150 009	0.23%
Switzerland	5 170 320	1.02%
Subtotal	302 056 384	59.41%

UNITED NATIONS		
UNHCR	32 879 840	6.47%
WFP	47 392 510	9.32%
UNICEF	34 911 038	6.87%
UNRWA	8 050 000	1.58%
WHO	6 475 285	1.27%
UNDP	2 058 543	0.40%
FAO	5 544 336	1.09%
UNOCHA	9 851 302	1.94%
PAHO	1 779 548	0.35%
UNESCAP	420 000	0.28%
Subtotal	149 362 402	29.38%
TOTAL	508 422 110	100%

* Costs for DG ECHO experts and other administration costs

4. LIST OF ACRONYMS

CAPS	United Nations Consolidated Appeals for Humanitarian Crises
DIPECHO	DG ECHO's disaster preparedness and prevention programme
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
DG ECHO	Humanitarian Aid Directorate-General
EDF	European Development Found
EU	European Union
FAFA	The EC/UN Financial and Administrative Agreement
FPA	Framework Partnership Agreement (between DG ECHO and its operational partners)
FICHOP	Fiche opérationnelle (DG ECHO's project appraisal sheet)
HOLIS	Humanitarian Office Local Information System
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDP	Internally displaced persons
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
LRRD	Linking relief, rehabilitation and development
MCDA	Military and Civil Defence Assets
NOHA	Network on Humanitarian Assistance
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
SARS	Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome
SPD	Strategic Planning Dialogue
SPP	Strategic Planning and Programming
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

UNOCHA	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UNRWA	UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
UXO	Unexploded Ordnance
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organisation