



PRESENTATION OF THE ECHO FIELD NETWORK

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One strength and comparative advantage of ECHO is its worldwide network of field offices. The network's function is five-fold : it allows an up-to-date analysis of existing and forecasted needs in a given country or region, it contributes to the development of intervention strategies and policy development, it provides technical support to ECHO funded operations, it ensures adequate monitoring of these interventions and, finally, it facilitates donor's coordination at field level.

The allocation of budget to the field offices as well as the opening/closing of offices in a region or inside a country depends on the assessed needs and the humanitarian situation. Accordingly, the size and type of offices and the number of expatriated humanitarian experts ("Technical assistants") and local staff ("National staff") employed in the field varies from one location to another.

There are currently **150 international humanitarian expert positions** and **315 national staff members** in place in **48 field offices** located in more than **40 countries**.

ECHO FIELD OFFICES

In line with article 4 of the Humanitarian Aid Regulation, **ECHO's mandate** includes the following activities:

- preparation and feasibility studies for humanitarian operations and the assessment of humanitarian projects and plans;
- operations to monitor humanitarian projects and plans;
- measures to strengthen the European Union's coordination with the Member States, other donor countries, international humanitarian organisations and institutions, non governmental organisations and organisations representing them;
- technical assistance necessary for the implementation of humanitarian projects.

The **basic role of ECHO's field network** is defined as follows:

- to give headquarters an oversight on the humanitarian situation in the field and its possible evolution;
- to provide technical advice to Headquarters on needs assessment, analysis of proposals, monitoring of projects and lessons learned;
- to contribute to policy development and ensure a coherent roll-out of policy guidelines guaranteeing a consistent level of quality for ECHO supported projects;
- to represent ECHO in relevant humanitarian aid clusters/forums, to advocate with relevant stakeholders at local/regional/global level within the framework defined by Headquarters and to ensure appropriate communication and visibility actions;

This while keeping the office structures flexible, adapted to needs and acting through an appropriate resource, logistics and security management.

In order to pursue most effectively these activities, **the ECHO field network has been set up and is organised in the following manner:**

- **Country offices:** These are the most common offices and they represent ECHO in a country where humanitarian aid is implemented. The offices are staffed by expatriated humanitarian experts and national staff in charge of assessing humanitarian needs and monitoring the humanitarian projects. Some staff members have administrative functions, as they are in charge of the daily management of the offices and the necessary logistical support to operations. There are currently 22 active country offices.
- **Sub-country offices:** For very large countries and when humanitarian actions are necessary in a specific area, a second or third office can be opened in a country. However, these sub-offices remain administratively dependent of the country office. There are currently sub-country offices in DRC (Goma) and in Turkey (Gaziantep). Since the split of Sudan, Juba is no longer a sub-country office of Khartoum, but has become the country office for South-Sudan.
- **Antennas:** a temporary, small office, generally run by national staff. No international humanitarian experts are based in an antenna office. However, antenna offices are covered by such experts from other offices. The antenna conducts project assessment, monitoring and provides administrative and logistical support where necessary. Antennas are currently in place in Quito (Ecuador), Santo Domingo (Dominican Republic), Gaza (OPT), Kathmandu (Nepal), Mogadishu (Somalia), Nouakchott (Mauritania), Nyala (Sudan), Tbilisi (Georgia), Tindouf (Algeria), Harare (Zimbabwe), Bukavu (DRC) and Manila (Philippines).
- **Regional Offices (RO):** ECHO reorganised the structure of the Field Network in order to have 12 smaller Regional Offices. The 5 previous large Regional Support Offices in Amman (Jordan), Bangkok (Thailand), Dakar (Senegal), Managua (Nicaragua) and Nairobi (Kenya) thus became ROs. The other ROs are in Almaty (Kazakhstan), Bogota (Columbia), Cairo (Egypt), Islamabad (Pakistan), Kinshasa (DRC), New Delhi (India) and Yaoundé (Cameroun). These offices deal with several countries in the same region. They provide technical operational expertise and overall co-ordination for all offices and antennas in the region. They will focus more on specific needs or vulnerabilities per region.

The ECHO field network includes humanitarian aid generalists as well as different types of specialists in the areas of nutrition, food security, health, water and sanitation, protection, gender issues, DRR, logistics, aviation, administration, etc. The Field network also includes a global thematic coordination network. Its role is to provide support in the development and implementation of humanitarian policies and guidelines, amongst others by consolidating the different field perspectives. The thematic coordination network also assists ECHO headquarters in the preparation, appraisal and monitoring of the Enhanced Response Capacity programmes and in the management and functioning of the different sectorial working groups. Furthermore, the thematic coordination network supports ECHO's advocacy and coordination efforts with the clusters and partners in the field.

ECHO HUMANITARIAN EXPERTS

ECHO humanitarian experts ("Technical assistants") cover essential tasks such as the identification and evaluation of humanitarian needs, the supervision of funded operations, administrative and logistical support and communication. This work maximizes the impact of aid given to affected people and helps to improve ECHO's capacity to fix priorities for the use of aid. It also increases ECHO's rapid reaction capacity and the follow-up of aid programmes it finances.

ECHO humanitarian experts are recruited from a list of candidates drawn up following a call for applications published in the [Official Journal of the European Union](#). They are employed to undertake technical assistance missions in humanitarian aid and to work exclusively in third countries outside the European Union.

The contracts of ECHO humanitarian experts are governed by Belgian law. New experts are employed on the basis of (maximum two) fixed-term contracts with a duration of one year each. Contracts of indefinite duration can be offered to an expert upon completion of a fixed-term contract, or to experts who have already worked for the Commission in humanitarian aid. Experts may also be contracted for a short-term assignment for less than 12 months. The main goal of these short term contracts is to cover cases where a new emerging crisis needs an initial or additional support or to cover ad-hoc needs where longer-term experts are temporarily unavailable. In principle, the only humanitarian experts eligible for such short term contracts are experts who have already worked for ECHO during at least two years. Finally, experts can be hired under a "surge capacity" scheme. These experts are sent for multiple emergency postings in the course of their career, whenever an immediate response by ECHO requires experts to be sent out within 5 working days.

More information on the **entitlements and benefits of ECHO humanitarian experts** can be found in the brochure "[General Information on Entitlements and Benefits for ECHO Humanitarian Experts](#)".